

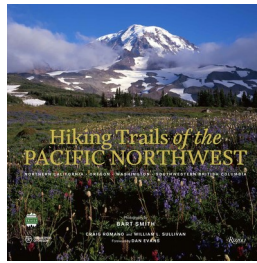
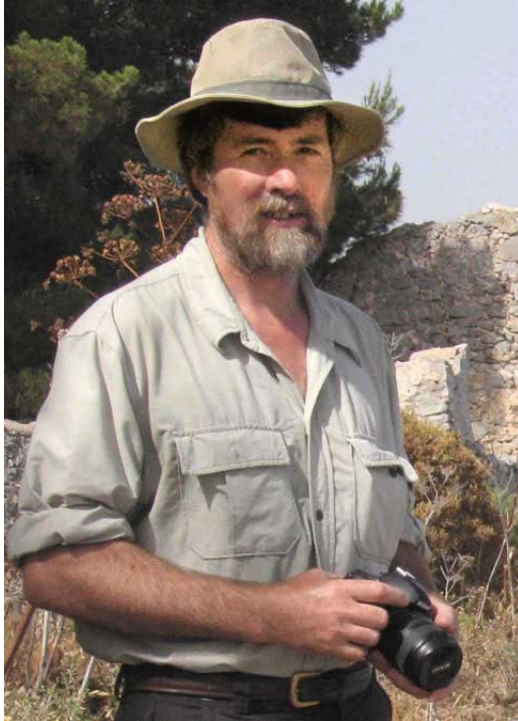


# Sunriver Books & Music

## December 2020

### Newsletter

[Sunriverbooks.com](http://Sunriverbooks.com)  
541-593-2525



Great news! Saturday December 12 at 5:00 PM we have the honor of presenting the authors of one of the books I am most excited about this year! **Hiking Trails of the Pacific Northwest: Northern California, Oregon, Washington, Southwestern British Columbia** by William Sullivan, Craig Romano, photography by Bart Smith, and introduction by former Washington Governor Dan Evans. What a star cast!

If you have anyone on your holiday gift list who enjoys the out of doors, this would be a gift they will treasure! And don't forget to have one yourself, **Trails of the Pacific Northwest: Northern California, Oregon, Washington, Southwestern British Columbia** is truly a special book!

First let me start out by saying I flat out LOVE this book! When Bill Sullivan casually mentioned he was doing a book for Rizzoli, it was exciting news and I immediately asked if he would please do an event with Sunriver Books & Music when it releases (little did I know this would be complicated with a pandemic by release date!). Even before publication, I knew this book would be special. Rizzoli does the most magnificent books filled with gorgeous photography on regions, countries, trails. I have collected many of them and knew this would be a quality publication. **Hiking Trails of the Pacific Northwest** has hikes selected by Bill Sullivan and photography by Bart Smith, I was sure it would be spectacular. It has exceeded all of my expectations!

Bill Sullivan is Oregon's hiking guru! A fifth generation Oregonian, he has hiked every major trail in our gorgeous state. A love of Oregon and knowledge of it's history and attractions is evident in Sullivan's many books. He knows all of the best places with the most spectacular scenery, sharing the them with his devoted followers. Bill has hiking guides on every region of our state: **100 Hikes in the Central Oregon Cascades, 100 Hikes in Southern Oregon, 100**

**Hikes: Travel Guide Eastern Oregon, 100 Hikes in Northwest Oregon, 100 Hikes Oregon Coast and Coast Range, Trails of Crater Lake and Oregon Caves National Monument, Oregon Favorite Trails and Tales, Atlas of Oregon Wilderness, Oregon Trips and Trails, Hiking Oregon's History** and a map to help you find the trails, **Oregon Topo Travel Reference Map**. If you want guides that inspire you to lace up those hiking books and hit the trail, these should provide a wealth of options. Oregon offers many diverse choices, from one of the world's most beautiful coast lines to the Cascade Mountain range, and the High Desert.



Sullivan is a multi-talented author of many genres. In addition to the guide books, he has also penned non-fiction books. **Oregon's Greatest Natural Disasters** (a book that can scare you witless with some of the disasters Mother Nature threw at the state, like wiping out an entire town on the Oregon Coast), **Listening For Coyote: A Walk Across Oregon's Wilderness**, **Cabin Fever: Notes from a Part Time Pioneer**, and **Little Travelers: Six Months in Europe with Two Kids**. He has fascinating historic fiction with two titles set in Norway, **Ship in the Hill** and **Ship in the Sand**, and **A Deeper Wild** set in the West. He has a fun mystery series that combines with a touch of interesting historic events; **The Case of Einstein's Violin**, **The Case of D.B. Cooper's Parachute**, and **The Case of the Reborn Bhagwan**. And a book of short stories, **Oregon Variations**, set in every county in Oregon.

We have been privileged to feature events with Bill Sullivan at Sunriver Books & Music many times. Every event has been a full house treated to a great presentation. Bill Sullivan is a man who loves Oregon, is passionate about wilderness, enjoys humor, studies history, and loves to travel. He brings a wealth of life experience and knowledge to his books and his events.

Craig Romano moved to Washington in 1989, hiking more than 30,000 miles in this gorgeous state. Washington has some of the most breathtaking scenery in the world. Drive the North Cascades highway, stopping off frequently for hikes, and you will see what I mean. Breathtaking. Romano was raised in New Hampshire and has traveled extensively.



I like Romano's hiking guides and have used several, I especially like **Best Hikes With Dogs Inland Northwest**. The absolute best way to hike is with a dog by your side! Romano gets this! I have wonderful memories of hikes with my dogs! Lucky, a great German Shepherd, doing her best to keep me from stepping off cliffs while looking more at the scenery than where my feet were going and having the good sense to not pursue a black bear. Snooks, a sweet Rottweiler who loved all creatures, he would always spot wildlife first, being quietly still, and alert me to the joy of encountering another species. Mugsy, a Boxer who loved all hiking but showed a particular joy for coast walks where she danced with joy on the beach. Flashman, a Boxer who adored hiking and was so well behaved, he wasn't even flustered when a moose walked over and lay down just a short distance (a few feet) from where he and I had been eating lunch (this was moose approaching sitting person and dog, running would not have been the best option, sitting quietly worked better). Kipling has to get over her unfortunate attitude toward other members of her species before she is gifted the joy of hiking, we sincerely hope she improves soon. Anyone who pens a hiking book about taking along man's best friend has my vote. I digress, sorry.

Romano's many hiking guides include **Day Hiking Olympic Peninsula, Day Hiking Eastern Washington, Day Hiking North Cascades, Day Hiking Central Cascades, Day Hiking San Juans and Gulf Islands, Day Hiking Mt. St. Helens, Day Hiking Columbia River Gorge, 100 Classic Hikes Washington, Best Wildflower Hikes Washington, Winter Hikes of Western Washington, Urban Trails: Vancouver, Longview, Battle Ground, Camas, Yacolt Burn State Forest, Backpacking Washington, Urban Trails Bellingham, Chuckanut Mountains, Western Whatcom, Skagit Valley, Urban Trails Olympia, Capitol State Forest, Shelton, Harstine Island, Urban Trails Seattle, Shoreline, Renton, Kent, Vashon Island, Urban Trails Everett: Western Snohomish County, Camano Island, Whidbey Island, Urban Trails: Eastside, Issaquah Alps, Redmond, Snoqualmie Valley, and Urban Trails Tacoma, Federal Way, Auburn, Puyallup, Anderson Island**. Whew! That is a lot of hiking! No wonder he has 30,000 miles in the beautiful state of Washington!



Bart Smith is AMAZING! That is just the best word to describe his passion and photography. He has many books with Rizzoli. I know because they are prized on our personal book shelf. I was certain the photography in **Hiking Trails of the Pacific Northwest** would be spectacular. Bart Smith was the first person to walk all thirty trails of the America's National Trail System. That is 36,000 or so miles of trail! I discovered Bart Smith's photography over twenty years ago with an amazing book about the Pacific Crest Trail with Karen Berger (who had the good sense to keep her boots on while hiking the trail) and Dan Smith. Sadly, it is now out of print. Great book. Smith was one of the photographers on Rizzoli's 2016 release of **The Pacific Crest Trail** by Mark Larabee, Barney Scout Mann, and Cheryl Strayed (whose position on hiking boots is less certain). He was the photographer for **America's Great Hiking Trails** with authors Karen Berger and Bill McKibben published by Rizzoli. Bart Smith's photography is featured in many Rizzoli publications including America's **National Historic Trails**. I can attest to the beauty of each of the above books because I have

them all (plus more!). Bart Smith's photography will inspire some of us to go see the trails featured. For others the spectacular images will allow us to see places we will never go, to admire the grandeur of the wilderness. For anyone who picks up a Bart Smith book, there will be validation of the need to preserve the wilderness, right there in living color proof of what is important.

Each of the authors will speak, then Bart Smith will lead us on a visual tour of some of the best hikes in **Hiking Trails of the Pacific Northwest**. And this is one time a Zoom event might be even better than in person because hopefully I will have it up on our website; <https://www.sunriverbooks.com/> to be enjoyed again later or shared with friends. Find the Zoom registration link at [sunriverbooks.com](https://www.sunriverbooks.com/).



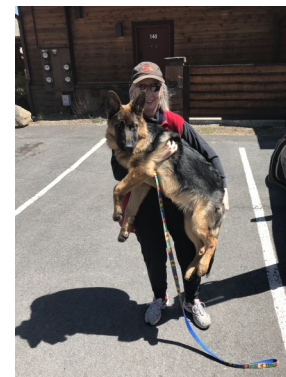
### December 27– January 2 Share the Holiday Spirit! Donate a book to Three Rivers School!

It is hard for school districts to find the funds to keep their libraries and classrooms thriving with good literature. Help fuel the school children's passion for reading. Buy any book in the children's section at 35% off, we keep the book and deliver it to Three Rivers School with your name & address. The first child to read the book will write you a thank you note, thereafter the book is available for the Three Rivers students.

A \$19.99 book would cost you \$12.99, a \$16.99 book will be \$11.05, a \$12.99 book becomes \$8.44, \$9.99 reduces to \$6.49, and \$6.99 is just \$4.54.

It is not expensive to spread the joy of reading

## Meet Kipling!



If you have stopped by Sunriver Books & Music lately, you may have already met Kipling. She is often there with me. I thought you might like to know a little about her.

Kipling was born on Thanksgiving 2019. Over New Year's 2019 Carolyn Barr let us know her good friend Cheryl Fellers's daughter-in-law Shelley Fellers was in town with puppies from her beautiful German Shepherd. Kipling crawled into my lap and here she is. I grew up with German Shepherds, they are great dogs. Kip is usually to be found by my side. She is full of puppy energy. loves people, but is not so fond of dogs yet (we are working on an attitude adjustment with trainer Jane Devlin).

Kippy's first days were on Shelley and Richard Fellers' beautiful horse training facility near Oregon City. Kipling gamboled with her mother and siblings in pastures, ponds, and forests. Pure puppy joy! Kipling came home with us in mid-February and howled in despair half way back to Sunriver! We were clearly kidnapping her from paradise. In addition to missing her first home, Kip was shocked that she had to share with cats! Oh my! Before Kipling could enjoy puppy classes and socialization with other canines, the country was in lockdown due to the pandemic.

Kipling's issues with others of her species are not entirely from lack of puppy classes. When she was a little thing of four months, she was attacked by a huge Golden Retriever. We were taking her on an evening walk, just a couple blocks from our home. It is dark early that time of year, the large dog shot out of the darkness with no warning, jumped on Kipling and grabbed her around the throat. It took Rich and I both to get the dog off of her, Kip was screaming and terrified. The attack caused damage to her spine. Her uncertain relationship to her fellow canines is understandable. Dogs are welcomed at Sunriver Books & Music, but Kip may bark and will have a bit of a time out in her crate where she feels safe. Hopefully this will improve over time with training. For now, she is trying to learn.

Please do not try to feed Kipling anything. She has a sensitive stomach and is on a special diet. .

Kipling is passionate, smart, funny, and loving. She adores people. We are grateful to have her in our lives! It is our goal to give Kip the best dog life with lots of walks, pets, fun classes, and companionship.

## Our Book of the Month Club is a gift that keeps on giving throughout the year.

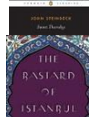
A Book of the Month Club subscription is a particularly good choice this year. When many of us are trying to avoid non-essential trips and stay at home, a surprise book arriving every month gives something to look forward to and hours of enjoyment reading. Readers on your gift list will be delighted! And purchasing a Book of the Month Club subscription for yourself will be a great way to discover a new book every month without leaving home. Its been a tough year, be nice to yourself with the indulgence of a surprise book every month.

I am honored to be trusted selecting books for you and take seriously choosing books for Book of the Month Club. We try to have well written books that might be a bit less known, an undiscovered treasure. For instance, most passionate readers know John Steinbeck penned **Cannery Row** set in Monterey California. A Book of the Month Club selection was **Sweet Thursday** by John Steinbeck, less well known and also humorous. Other past selections include **Bastard of Istanbul** by Elif Shafak, **So Brave Young And Handsome** by Leif Enger, **Skeletons At The Feast** by Chris Bohjalian, **The Air Between Us** by Deborah Johnson, **City of Thieves** by David Benioff, **In The Skin of a Lion** by Michael Ondaatje, **A Man Called Ove** by Fredrik Backman, **We Were The Lucky Ones** by Georgia Hunter, **Arthur & George** by Julian Barnes, **Transcription** by Kate Atkinson and **Housekeeping** by Marilynne Robinson, What will 2021 bring? Purchase a Book of the Month Club subscription and enjoy the surprise every month.

Picked up in the store the first six month subscription of 2021 costs \$103.93 and a subscription for all of 2021 costs \$ 203.88.

Mailed in the USA the first six month of 2021 subscription costs \$ 115.93 and a subscription for all 2021 costs \$ 227.88.

**Give a gift that keeps on giving! Purchase a Book of the Month Club subscription and enjoy a surprise book every month of the year! Purchase a subscription for yourself too and spread the joy!**





## Holiday Shopping during COVID-19.

COVID-19 cases have increased in Oregon, and across the nation. Limiting shopping trips, social distancing, staying home as much as possible, and taking healthful walks in the out of doors are good strategies. To help with this, we will happily deliver in Sunriver and offer curbside service behind the store. Email Deon at [sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com) for help with shopping lists. I am happy to suggest gifts, send links with descriptions, and do what I can to make this holiday safer for you.

Keeping our staff and community safe is important, we have implemented the following to that end.

Current hours are 11-5 Monday - Saturday & 11-3:50 Sunday. That may change or a closure may occur if COVID-19 numbers keep climbing.

Only 5 shoppers are allowed in the store at a time for careful social distancing (at least 6 feet between yourself and other shoppers).

We require properly worn masks, this means above the nose and below the chin for everyone except children 3 or younger. Masks are not to be removed or lowered to speak or for any reason while in the bookstore.

No one with a cold, or flu like symptoms will be allowed access. We deliver in Sunriver or provide curbside service if you are not feeling well.

We have an entrance door and exit door with a doorperson at the entrance to facilitate hand sanitizing and number of shoppers in the store.

Hand sanitizer is to be used when entering the store. We also have hand sanitizer stationed around the store for your convenience.

Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

If you have trouble accessing the store, get in touch with Deon at [sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com) and I will try to arrange a time when the store is closed for you to make your purchases.

Please know we do not enjoy these restrictions. It is not functionally probable to meet expenses while limiting customers to 5 at a time. We like having customers in to browse, sit in chairs, talk about books, attend events. All these parts of the experience that make bookstores fun are impacted by the need to keep people safe during the pandemic. A vaccine is in the works, hopefully within a few months we can return our comfortable chairs to the main floor and open the doors without limiting shoppers.

We understand some feel COVID-19 is either a hoax or not any more dangerous to most people than the flu. Everyone has a right to their opinion and we respect their right to disagree on the severity or even existence of COVID-19. However it is also possible to be wrong. If we are wrong, if COVID-19 is not dangerous, the only inconvenience our shoppers will experience is the discomfort of wearing a mask for a little while and maybe a dislike for hand sanitizer. The downside is not severe. On the other hand, if the scientists are right, and the number of dead and seriously ill are heartbreaking proof of their claims, then not wearing a mask and following a safe protocol puts others at risk. It is proven COVID-19 is contagious days before symptoms appear. While everyone may have the right to their opinion, they do not have the right to endanger the health of others based on that opinion. By refusing to safely wear a mask and hand sanitize, they may cause the grocery clerk, family friend, significant other, or relatives to sicken and possibly die before they even know they are contagious. I do not want anyone in the community, on our staff or in my family to become ill because someone was dismissive of COVID-19. We take seriously these measures to keep our customers, staff, and family safe.

We are sorry if you disagree and our rules are upsetting to you, but inside Sunriver Books & Music we are going to strive to keep people safe. A vaccine will be available within a few short months, how many people will die so close reaching safety?

## Holiday Gift Suggestions.

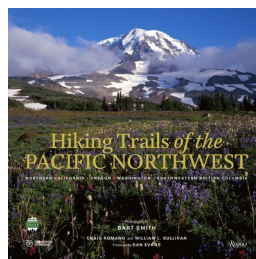
Games make fun gifts! Probably our most popular game is Dog-opoly. There are also opoly game featuring cats, horses, and a variety of other interests.

Bananagrams is a word games. If you have someone on your list who enjoys scrabble, Bananagrams is a great size for traveling.

Puzzles are popular. We carry Ravensburger and Chronicle.

Pens make great gifts! Pictured is Playhouse By Frank Lloyd Wright from Acme Studio for \$79.99. Add a journal for a special gift To be treasured.

Enchanted Boxes are beautiful gifts.

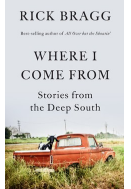


Picture books are great gifts! This year we have a wonderful new picture book centered on the beauties of the Northwest, **Hiking Trails of the Pacific Northwest** by William Sullivan, Craig Romano, and Bart Smith. We have a variety of other titles available too.

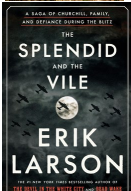
## Top Ten Non Fiction 2020



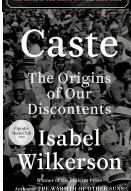
***The Promised Land*** by President Barack Obama proves it is possible to govern in a thoughtful manner, with empathy and kindness, while also making the hard choices that come with governing a large, powerful country. Obama shares his decision making processes as he faced such formidable challenges as taking office during the worst recession since the Great Depression (although that has been topped now) and an Ebola outbreak (also been topped now). His deliberation, openness to the council of experts, and care are evident. It also gives us hope President Elect Joe Biden can return us to a place where understanding and kindness are real. Obama is open about the cost of living in the White House on his family, and his more private moments.



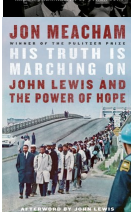
***Where I Come From*** by Rick Bragg, oh joy! A new book by Rick Bragg, one of our favorite authors! Rick Bragg grew up poor in Alabama, rose to become the Miami bureau chief for the New York Times, and won the Pulitzer Prize. He is a professor of journalism at the University of Alabama. His new book is a compilation of essays he wrote for Southern Living. Bragg is a proud southern man, his tales portray a culture both long held and evolving. We need to understand each other, Rick Bragg provides an empathetic view of his part of the world. Besides, the man is funny and talented to boot. Always a pleasure to read!



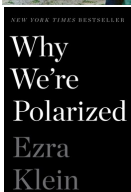
***The Splendid and the Vile*** by Erik Larson gives both a detailed and intimate look at Winston Churchill and England during WWII. Larson shows Churchill with all of his passion, eccentricities, and determination. We might all be doing long armed salutes if not for Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It was by no means a sure bet that England could win the war on their own. Most of mainland Europe folded quickly under Hitler's onslaught. Churchill needed Roosevelt and the might of the US to defeat a madman. Roosevelt's country was just emerging from a depression with no enthusiasm for a distant war. The elegant president and the earthy prime minister rose to the challenge of defeating tyranny.



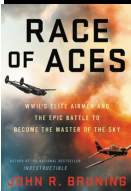
***Caste*** by Isabel Wilkerson is our January Non-Fiction Book Club selection. Wilkerson's last book, ***Warmth of Other Suns***, was also a Book Club selection, and a favorite of the year. She writes powerfully about the disparity caused by dividing people into castes, or classes. Wilkerson is a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, yet when she went on an interview, her subject doubted she was the journalist he expected because of the color of her skin. Wilkerson uses history to show how we got to where we are today and points a way forward. India, Nazi Germany, and the US all endured systems based on ethnicity or color.



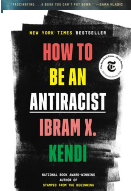
***His Truth is Marching On*** by Pulitzer Prize winner Jon Meacham is the story of John Lewis, a man who strived through non-violence and service to his country to live a life that mattered. He succeeded. We've lost some great men, Senator John McCain in 2018 and Senator John Lewis in 2020. It seemed fitting that in this chaotic election the home states of Georgia for John Lewis and Arizona for John McCain played a part in defeating a man who disrespected them. Both put their lives on the line for their country. John McCain in the jungles of Vietnam and John Lewis on the Edmund Pettis Bridge in Selma Alabama when he marched with Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. John Lewis was a man of great faith and strong convictions willing to work hard for the betterment of his fellow man. This is his story.



***Why We Are Polarized*** by Ezra Klein is about the partisan divide in this country and how it is tearing our democracy apart. Klein is spooky smart; able to observe patterns and potential outcomes. He writes of how politics has become a cult of identity. People see themselves as Democrat or Republican, with even Independents leaning more toward one party than the other, and willing to vote based on party affiliation, or basically against the other side rather than toward the greater good. Many people today watch news that agrees with their beliefs, rather than exploring and questioning. Demographics play a part. With the Electoral College a presidential candidate can win the vote and lose the election. It is not one person one vote, the votes that count are the Electoral College. Klein's book is a wake up call.



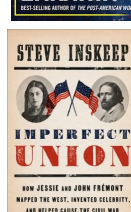
***Race of Aces*** by John Bruning is a thrilling account of our pilots flying against tremendous odds in the Pacific during WWII. The war was not going well in the Pacific when Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, known as the Ace of Aces in WWI, challenged the young men to try and best his record. They were flying touchy machines prone to mechanical error against more seasoned pilots in a hostile landscape. Yet they gave it their all. Gerald Johnson, one of the best flyboys, was from Eugene, Oregon.



***How To Be An Antiracist*** by Ibram X. Kendi challenges assumptions about race and attitudes. I had the pleasure of hearing Professor Kendi speak in Baltimore Maryland this year, he gave me a lot to think about. Often people who decry the loudest that they are not racist have attitudes and actions that are indeed racist. Racism is more subtle, even those who try to be sensitive to the issue can, without intending, harbor racist attitudes and actions. Kendi's book show us a new way to view race and make positive changes.



***Ten Lessons For A Post Pandemic World*** by Fareed Zakaria is a blueprint for what comes after. Zakaria argues for competent governance. There are a host of issues facing us; a huge gap between those that have and those that do not, school debt that places a burden on young people seeking an education, and a health care system that is not working for everyone. He compares today's pandemic to plagues in the past, touches on forms of government, and evaluates globalization. Although there are challenges and lessons from the past to be learned, Zakaria explores the possibility for meaningful progress.

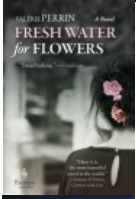


***Imperfect Union*** by Steve Inskeep is the story of John and Jesse Fremont, with strong connections to the west. John was born in the south to a family a bit on the off side of society. In the Northeast, he fell in love with the daughter of a Senator, and a power couple that influenced the future of the west was born. John crossed the USA many times, was instrumental in the wresting of California from Spain, had influence in Oregon, and led an eventful life with his boot prints all over the history book. Meanwhile Jesse was back east much of the time, in the halls of government, seeking influence for her adventurous husband. Handsome John with his daring exploits was a darling of the press, often with the encouragement of his beautiful wife who knew how to use celebrity. If you are interested in US history, this is a must read.

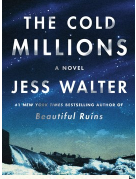
## Top Ten Fiction of 2020.



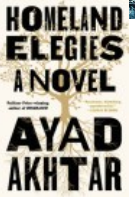
***The Paris Hours*** by Alex George is an elegant time machine transporting the reader to the Jazz age in Paris, those golden hours between the wars. Ravel's music dances through the air, Proust writes feverishly, Hemingway smolders, Josephine Baker seduces with a smile that lights up the room. And the language! Alex George is a wordsmith using gorgeous prose, this is a book you will not want to put down and will look forward to reading again! Alex George made me hear the music.



***Fresh Water For Flowers*** by Valerie Perrin is one of those special books, that defy description and make you glad that it was written. Valerie Toussaint is the cemetery caretaker in a small French town. She feeds stray cats that make their way to this sanctuary, and takes in the dog of a dead woman. Valerie is a good person who is kind to those in need of kindness, furred or human. Her life is ordered around her tasks, until a policeman shows up, wanting to understand his mother's instructions for burial. He takes an interest in Valerie. From this encounter, her past will intrude, challenging her to face her tragedies and reach for the future with hope. This is a lovely story!



***The Cold Millions*** by Jess Walter. Rye's sole surviving family is his handsome big brother Gig, a charismatic young man who was caught up in the labor movement. Rye doesn't possess his elder brother's fever for politics. His dreams are smaller than changing the world, he just wants a home and people around him he cares about. Gig's passions are not solely occupied by the rights of workers, he is also passionate about Ursula, a stunning beauty accompanied by a cougar (yes, the large kitty type complete with fangs). The brothers will run afoul of powerful interests. Walter paints a vivid picture of Spokane in the early 1900's and gives us unforgettable characters.



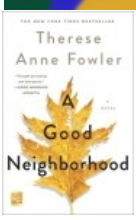
***Homeland Elegies*** by Ayad Akhtar. America changed after 9/11, wounded by this tragic assault some in the country focused on revenge against all Muslims, immigrants were viewed differently. Especially Middle Eastern immigrants. And then Trump happened, harking in an era of racial hatred.. Born on Staten Island, by the time he is in college, his father, a cardiologist, has lost a fortune investing in real estate, and in one of those odd coincidences is treating another real estate investor with bankruptcy problems, Donald Trump. With humor, anger, and empathy, the story gives a view of the immigrant experience. Akhtar mined his family history in writing this powerful work of fiction.



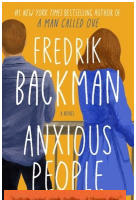
***Valentine*** by Elizabeth Wetmore is the story of women and how their lives can be torn asunder by the violence that men do. The story opens February 15, 1976 amidst the Texas oil fields with teenage Gloria Ramirez cowering in the mesquite bushes while nearby her attacker lies passed out drunk in his truck. Knowing he will kill her if he awakens, Gloria slips off to walk toward a distant farm house where Mary Rose Whitehead will discover the broken young girl. The aftermath of the attack has a profound impact on the community as various factions weigh in. Seeking justice, a woman will act with wide ranging consequences.. Beautifully written, ultimately uplifting, and important.



***The Vanishing Half*** by Brit Bennett is the story of twin sisters, both light skinned enough to pass, but only one chooses that path. The other leaves and then returns to the small southern town of her birth and to her mother, bringing with her a dark-skinned daughter. Told from a variety of perspectives, this is a fascinating story with characters it is easy to care about. It is a big story with an intimate feel traversing the USA and asking questions about the way we view each other.



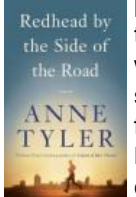
***A Good Neighborhood*** by Therese Anne Fowler. Oak Knoll was a place where neighbors knew each other. Professors and other middle class people could live close in to their jobs. When the rich decide the generous yards are perfect for tearing down the old houses to build McMansions, conflict follows. Valerie Alston-Holt is a professor, dedicated gardener, and the neighborhood's go to person on all issues ecological. A towering oak tree old enough to have experienced serious history graces the yard of her modest home. Her son is a music prodigy, finishing his last year of high school with a scholarship to a prestigious college. The new house next door, with its large footprint on the land, threatens the root system of the ancient oak. Valerie Holt is black with a biracial son, the new neighbor, Brad Whitman, is white with an attractive daughter. Complications ensue.



***Anxious People*** by Fredrik Backman. An open house on an apartment in Sweden goes horribly awry when an inept bank robber takes the apartment viewers hostage. Several people are attending the open house when the armed bank robber arrives; a young couple expecting their first child, a wealthy woman, a retired couple who spend their lives fixing up real estate to resell, and an elderly widow. Actually, the day isn't going too pleasantly for the police either, as the disgruntled hostages are not that easy to interview, sometimes doubting the efficiency of the police officer's questions, and clearly not holding the police in the kind of regard people in authority would prefer. Everyone in the story has a secret that Backman carefully reveals.



***A Burning*** by Megha Majumdar. Jivan is a Bangladeshi slum dwelling Moslem girl striving for a better life. Overcome by emotion when a terrorist attack leaves death behind at the nearby train station, she posts a comment that has tragic repercussions. PT Sir is a teacher who seizes the opportunity for future benefit by hitching himself to a politically connected right wing group, doing their bidding. Lovely is a hijra, denied one future, she grasps another. They each have a role in determining Jivan's fate. Lovely is a great character, granting moments of humor and sparkle as darker themes of corruption and injustice are explored.



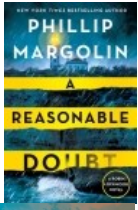
***Redhead by the Side of the Road*** by Anne Tyler. Micah has determined to live life small, take no risks, and keep his pleasures simple. He has a group of adoring sisters, and their families, a woman friend he avoids committing to, and a routine that works for him. Micah is self-employed, running an IT rescue sort of operation out of his car. He helps people navigate issues with their home computers. He also manages a Baltimore apartment building in return for a basement unit, a home he keeps scrupulously clean. So, all is going along comfortably, although perhaps a bit rigidly, when a couple things happen. His woman friend, Cass, is being evicted over her cat and a young man shows up under the impression Micah is his father. A total surprise to Micah. As these two issues get out of hand (in often hilarious ways) Micah's staid existence is blown apart and he is forced to confront what he really wants his life to be.



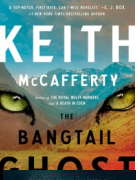
## Top Ten Mystery of 2020.



***The Next To Last Stand*** by Craig Johnson shows us what it means to be an honorable law officer, making it his life's work to protect and defend. Charley Lee Stillwater's death by heart attack at the Wyoming Home for Soldiers and Sailors presents Sheriff Walt Longmire with a conundrum. Why does Charley have a shoebox with a million dollars and a painting? Custer's Last Fight by Cassilly Adams depicting the Battle of the Little Big Horn was painted in three giant panels. A fire in Fort Bliss Texas destroyed the painting in 1946, or did it? And away we go! A video of our author event with Craig Johnson, Lou Diamond Phillips, and Katee Sackoff can be viewed at [sunriverbooks.com](http://sunriverbooks.com).



***A Reasonable Doubt*** by Phil Margolin blends magic and a complex plot into a mystery that is great fun to read! The clever premise is superb! Robert Chesterfield is a master magician with a posh British accent, but not a nice guy. Both Regina Barrister and Robin Lockwood, her protégé, represented him at different times. Decades later, both attorneys are in the audience when the magician is killed in front of a crowd with no one aware of the crime or able to identify the killer! What a great mystery! Margolin's legal thrillers set in Portland Oregon all have excellent plots, but this one is a topper!



***Bangtail Ghost*** by Keith McCafferty has inspiration in the author's own life when a cougar decided to escort him out of the Montana woods one day. Sheriff Martha Ettinger assisted by Sean Stranahan have a dead woman, who perhaps was prey to a cougar. As more deaths occur and fear mounts, it is the evil that men do Sheriff Ettinger and Stranahan will have to uncover, even as the hunter becomes the hunted. Scenes of Montana are beautifully described, with the perfect moody atmosphere for murder.



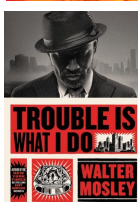
***Long Bright River*** by Liz Moore is so much more than a police procedural about the deaths of four unfortunate women at the wrong end of society's ladder. It is the story of a community in Philadelphia ravaged by opioid addiction, the strength of a fierce bond between sisters, the power men often wield against women, and the harm when police forget their mission to protect and defend all citizens. Mickey and Kacey were raised by their grandmother. Their paths diverged, Mickey became a cop and Kacey an addict and prostitute. The sisters are estranged, but Mickey still watches out for her sibling. When Kacey disappears at about the same time the murders start, Mickey takes action that puts her at great risk in so many ways.



***Moonflower Murders*** by Anthony Horowitz brings Susan Ryeland from Crete back to England in order to solve the mystery of missing woman whose parents believe there might be clues in one of Alan Conway's Atticus Pund mysteries, a series she edited. Susan thought she was finished with Alan Conway, after all the man is dead, but she is persuaded to dig into the mystery. Perhaps she should have reflected on how much trouble and chaos anything related to Conway could involve



***The Missing American*** by Kwei Quartey. Emma Djan wanted to be a homicide cop like her father. When her career path is destroyed, she is happy to find work as a private detective for a respected agency. Gordon Tilson, a middle-aged widower from Washington D.C., has been counseling people through their grief in an online Facebook community, but has never gotten over his own despair and loneliness. Lately Gordon found hope for a future with Helena, a widow in Ghana. Despite his son Derek's misgivings, Gordon hops a plane to Ghana, intending to surprise Helena. Soon thereafter, poof! Gordon disappears. Derek follows after his father, worried about what might have happened. When Emma is put on the case, it quickly grows more complicated with powerful people involved and danger around every corner.



***Trouble is What I Do*** by Walter Mosley. Damn, this man can write! Leonard McGill, a New York PI, once tangled with a deadly assassin and lived to tell the tale. Now the marker is being called. Catfish Worry is a 92 year old Mississippi Bluesman with a promise to keep, he wants McGill to help and his friend would like McGill to oblige, common sense says it is a marker he best honor if he likes surviving. Years ago Catfish made a promise to a white woman he once loved, to deliver a letter to her granddaughter revealing her black ancestry. The white family is rich, well connected, and powerful. News of this sort may not be welcome, thus making the delivery of the letter quite dangerous.



***The Red Lotus*** by Chris Bohjalian. Alexis and Austen had more of a meet quirky than meet cute. She was the emergency room doctor when he came in with a bullet wound suffered while playing darts at a bar. His wounds were not severe, there was a definite attraction, and it turns out they work in the same hospital. Austen is a money man, not involved in the medicine. Months later Alexis is thinking this is a man she could spend her life with. They are on a biking vacation in Vietnam when things spin out of control. Austen took a solitary ride, away from the rest of the tour, to the sites where his uncle was killed in battle and his father wounded, a pilgrimage. When he doesn't return, Alexis is determined to find out what happened.

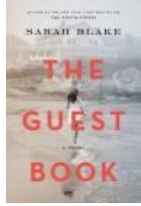


***Death in the East*** by Abir Mukherjee. If you enjoy historic fiction set in other cultures, there is a lot to like in this great series! Abir Mukherjee is Scottish, his parents immigrated from India, giving him perspective on both cultures. Captain Wyndham and Sergeant Banerjee of the Calcutta police are both honorable men, intent on justice. In 1905 Wyndham was a young London Constable determined to find out who killed Bessie Smith. In 1922 Wyndham is in Assam to try and kick the opium addiction he brought back from WWI when he sees someone from his past and summons Sergeant Banerjee to his aid.



***Squeeze Me*** by Carl Hiaasen has him at his maniacal best! He manages to combine ecological disasters (pythons running amok, or maybe slithering fast, in Florida), the plight of immigrants and a President gone rogue. If you are fond of Trump, this is probably not your book. If you wake every morning a bit jumpy, reaching for the news to find out what new disaster is taking place, this might give you a little comedic relief. Hiaasen creates a great new character with Angie, a diminutive woman who probably likes animals a better than humans and works catching the wildlife that gets on the wrong side of Florida's human inhabitants. The local Sheriff and a Secret Service agent are trying diligently, albeit at times futilely, to limit the damage from the President and marauding wildlife. The name Trump is not mentioned in the book, still for those of us a bit dazed and shocked by the last few years, Hiaasen provides much needed relief and a lot of laughs.

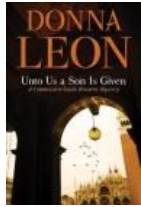
Holiday Seasons can be stressful, this year may be especially challenging as the country battles the pandemic altering holiday plans and traditions. Book Clubs grant escape into the pages of a story. Safely attend via Zoom Mondays at 6 PM. Email [sunriver-books@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriver-books@sunriverbooks.com) to sign up to attend and receive the Zoom link.



December 7 the Fiction Book Club discusses *The Guest Book* by Sarah Blake. Compulsively readable, this elegant subtle novel takes the reader intimately into three generations of the Milton family, wealthy bankers living what seemed a charmed life. In the 1930's Kitty and Ogden are a golden couple, living within the rules of their social class. In the 1980's their grandchildren will face the harsh truth of those societal norms.

Each chapter leads the reader eagerly to the next, wanting to find out what happens in this family drama that illustrates so perfectly the influence of society and the cruelty therein. Kitty seems lively and likeable; then she will utter a shocking bigoted sentiment that is perfectly acceptable to her social class. In her time, the upper class did not fraternize with Jewish or Black, no way.

As the book progresses, each generation holds the reader's interest until the final pages when the cost of society's rot is disclosed in the damage to the human soul. This brave novel, populated with fascinating characters, is a true gift to the reader. I could not put it down!



December 14 the Mystery Book Club discusses *Unto Us A Son Is Given* by Donna Leon.

Gonzalo Rodriguez de Tejada is lonely and old. Once the darling of the art crowd, he now feels irrelevant. A young man takes his fancy, someone to care for him. Italian inheritance law requires the bulk of an estate go to the family. Gonzalo chooses to adopt the young man in order to bequeath him a fortune thus hoping to secure his affection.

Commissario Brunetti's father-in-law would appreciate having discreet inquiries to the background of the young man; he fears Gonzalo, one his oldest friends, is being foolish. Two people die suddenly, leaving to Brunetti's sorrow proof inheritance, fortunes, and family make for treachery and betrayal. Venice with its twisting allies, aquamarine canals, and shifting mist is the perfect setting for a crime that begins in longing.



### Upcoming Book Club Dates for Monday Evenings at 6:00 PM

Everyone is welcome, Meetings are held via Zoom. On Mondays at 6 PM.

**Times and dates are tentative due to current situation.**

**Happy New Year! May 2021 bring peace, good health, and happiness!**

**January.**

**Black Lives Matter!**

January 4, *Heaven, My Home* by Attica Locke [Mystery Book Club](#)

January 11, *The Vanishing Half* by Britt Bennett [Fiction Book Club](#)

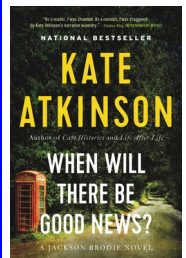
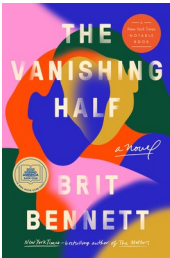
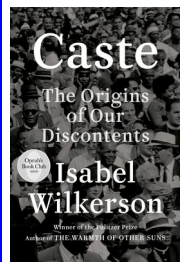
January 25, *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson [Non-Fiction Book Club](#)

**February**

February 8, *When Will There Be Good News Origin* by Kate Atkinson . [Mystery Book Club](#)

February , *Women in the Castle* by Jessica Shattuck [Fiction Book Club](#)

**Comment on book clubs, look up future book clubs, or find more information at [Sunriverbooks.com](http://Sunriverbooks.com)**



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