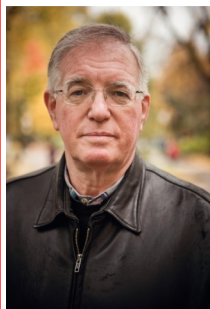




# Sunriver Books & Music

## February 2023 Newsletter

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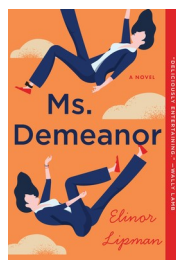
### Author Events!

Author events resume with Phil Margolin's appearance 5 PM Saturday April 8 for the latest in the attorney Robin Lockwood series set in Oregon, **Murder at Black Oaks**. Email [sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com) or stop by Sunriver Books to sign up to attend. Space will be limited.

Phil Margolin is a New York Times bestselling author and was a respected defense attorney in Portland Oregon who handled death penalty cases and appeared before the Supreme Court. He is an entertaining speaker.



### New Releases, Staff Recommendations.

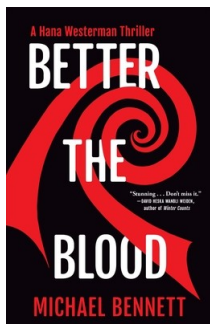


**Ms. Demeanor** by Elinor Lipman is a witty novel that is fun to read!

The Morgan girls are doing just fine. Jane is living in Manhattan, a valued litigator with a tony law firm. Jackleen is a successful dermatologist. The twins have a close supportive relationship. All is going swimmingly until Jane has an unfortunate incident, a younger man from her firm is giving off definite signs of interest. They have a few drinks on the roof deck of Jane's building, one thing leads to another. It is late, a dark night, they are alone with the warm breeze, why not indulge a little? Who was to know that a woman in the opposite building would be so scandalized she called the police and filed a complaint. The younger man got off with a light fine, but Jane is sentenced to house arrest, along with the ankle bracelet to enforce compliance. Gone is the job at the law office, who wants a convicted criminal as their defense attorney, somehow that just doesn't give the right vibe.

So, there she is with no means of support, other than her savings, locked in her building. Having only moved in a few months ago, she hasn't made any good friends in the building. A doorman mentions there is another resident sporting an ankle bracelet, Perry Salisbury. The two have a meet cute, and after a few initial bumps in the road, hit it off, thus making their respective incarcerations (albeit in their comfortable apartments) a bit more interesting. Meanwhile sister Jackleen has a few ideas up her sleeve too.

Sometimes you need something light and amusing, like a romantic comedy with a few twists. This fits the bill perfectly.



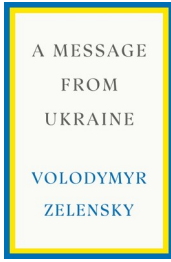
**Better the Blood** by Michael Bennett marries a wicked good police procedural mystery with history of the treatment of indigenous people in New Zealand for a fascinating story!

A clever mystery with a sympathetic serial killer (want to know how the author pulled that off? Read it and find out) adds a unique twist. There is a strong female lead and an interesting setting for a story you will not want to put down.

Hanna Westerman is a good cop, but wearing the badge carries some extra baggage for her. She is Maori, her people not always treated well by the whites. Being a police officer makes her suspicious to the Maori community and being Maori carries its own baggage with fellow cops. Hanna is single mother with a penchant for gardening and art, she does her best to serve truth and justice.

The story starts off with the hanging of a Maori Chief 160 years ago. That act of violence will reverberate throughout. Hanna is sent an anonymous video showing the location of a murder, where she will discover a drawing linking the murder to the Maori community. There were six soldiers involved in the hanging, someone is trying to rebalance that act of violence from the past by murdering a descendent of each of the soldiers. But who is seeking this rebalancing by blood? Hanna feels the pressure of discovering the killer before the murders continue. Soon she will know that the link is frighteningly close to her own family.

An exotic location, interesting characters, and a complex mystery, this is a book that covers a lot of territory and provokes thought.



**A Message From Ukraine** by President Volodymyr Zelensky is a brief impassioned plea for the survival of his country and a return to the rule of international law.

It did not have to be this way! Eighty years ago the world proclaimed **NEVER AGAIN!** Well, here we are. Tanks are rolling across Europe again, mass graves of civilians murdered by a terrorist nation, and missiles slamming into apartment buildings where people like you and I are just trying to survive. After the last time, organizations were formed, alliances nurtured, the rule of international law invoked to keep peace, to restrict avaricious neighboring countries from gobbling territory belonging to their neighbors. That all broke down with Vladimir Putin's delusional belief that he is Peter the Great reincarnated to restore Russia's imperial glory and recapture the lands broken away with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Madness.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill characterized the efficacy of appeasement. As a former madman began his march across Europe, Churchill knew he must be stopped. *"It is a total defeat. Czechoslovakia will be swallowed up by the Nazis. And do not suppose that this is the end. This is only the beginning."* ~ speaking about the Munich Agreement in 1938. Churchill also made a more succinct remark. *"An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile hoping it will eat him last"*. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt also had an opinion on appeasement. *"No man can tame a tiger into a kitten by stroking it. There can be no appeasement with ruthlessness. There can be no reasoning with an incendiary bomb. We know now that a nation can have peace with the Nazis only with the price of total surrender."* Both these men knew a thing or two about dealing with a megalomaniac with a taste for the neighboring territory.

Zelensky is a remarkable person. On February 24 he quickly became one of the most targeted men on the planet as Russia invaded Ukraine and sent squads of hit men to kill Zelensky. He could have stayed safe. We were prepared to get him out of Ukraine to safety. But he didn't want "a ride" he wanted "ammunition". Not only did he stay, he visits the front, personally checking in with the soldiers defending their land. He has also proven himself a gifted orator as he speaks to groups of influential people in positions of government around the world seeking aid in defeating Putin.

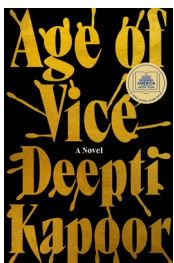
This slim volume points out that while Ukraine is fighting courageously for the survival of their country, they are also fighting for all of us. They are fighting for the rule of international law, for democracy, for a world where ruthless rogue nations do not invade neighboring countries to steal territory, for a world where smaller nations do not fear being gobbled up by larger, avaricious neighbors. The blood soaking the ground is Ukrainian, the west is only supplying the weapons.

Here is a brief excerpt from page 103.

*This year, we say "Never again" differently. We hear "Never again" differently. It sound painful, cruel — now without an exclamation mark, but with a question mark. You say "Never again"? Tell that to the people of Ukraine.*

*On 24 February, the word "never" was erased. It was shot and bombed by hundreds of missiles at 4 a.m., which woke up the whole of Ukraine. Then all we heard was "again".*

The appetite for conquest is run amok in a rogue nation, again. I hate war. While I admire Zelensky's bravery, I abhor the Russian aggression that made it necessary. It did not have to be this way. The colonial era has passed, Peter the Great is no longer the Czar of Russia. Humankind should have long evolved past war! **A Message From Ukraine** is a slim volume filled with the ideals of democracy, freedom, courage, and a love of country. It is good reading.

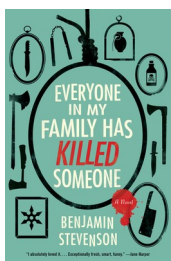


**Age of Vice** by Deepti Kapoor goes from the depth of poverty to the splash and splendor of extreme wealth for a thrilling novel.

Ajay's family suffered a string of tragedies all stemming from what should have been, in a kinder place, a minor kerfuffle. Instead, it leads to pain, suffering, and poverty. One forced solution is the sale of Ajay to a man who provides the youth to a farmer. Aja's new master is a kind man and the child likes taking care of the cattle. A few rooms are rented to tourists, a bit of side income. Ajay is a handsome child, soon an attractive young man. When the tourists come, he is happy to take care of them, learns their language and becomes a bit of a pet. Eventually he is hired by a fabulously wealthy young man, learns new skills, and new vices.

As the story opens, Ajay has run over several sidewalk dwellers with his employer's Mercedes. Thrown in jail, he is at first beaten, until his connections are known. But what is the fabulously wealthy young man up too? How does it involve Ajay? What led him to be in the car when it kills five people on that New Delhi sidewalk in 2004?

Money and power intertwine in this epic story of a wealthy family and a young man plucked from poverty and obscurity.



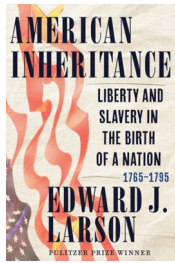
**Everyone In My Family Has Killed Someone** by Benjamin Stevenson is a clever mystery set in a remote Australian ski resort that has seen better days. It is narrated by Ernest Cunningham who has been ostracized by most of his family for a few years. Now they are having a reunion organized by his aunt Katherine at the aforementioned resort. They will all be together, Ernest, his mother, step-father, brother, step-sister, sister-in-law, wife, aunt, and uncle. In a remote, location, with a storm coming, and the body count starts rising.

The story opens a few years prior to the reunion when Ernest receives a late night phone call from his brother, Michael, who is coming over with a little problem. The problem is a dead body and a bag with \$267,000. It is this incident that leads to Ernest's banishment from the clan.

Humor, a clever mystery, and a family of killers. Which one of them is contributing to the rising body count at the ski resort?

## Black History Month

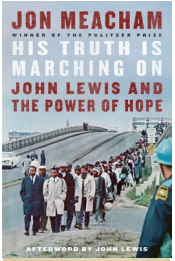
This fondness for “alternative facts” has me baffled. Facts just are, they don’t alternate. Jon Meacham (one of my favorite non-fiction authors) addressed this, in his review in the New York Times review of ***American Inheritance*** by Edward J. Larson. Here are Jon Meacham’s opening paragraphs.



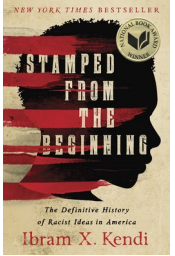
*It was as bold an assertion as it was wrong. Last September speaking in support of his state’s “Stop Woke” legislation, the Republican governor of Florida, Ron DeSantis gave a brief lecture on liberty and slavery. The American Revolution, he said, was what had “caused people to question slavery ....No one had questioned it before we decided as Americans that we are endowed by our creator with inalienable rights and that we are all created equal. Then that birthed abolition movements.*

*Facts, as John Adams once remarked, are stubborn things, and the fact of the matter is that the evils of slavery were being questioned long before 1776.*

Meacham concludes the review with this. *Someone should send several copies to Tallahassee — with express shipping.*



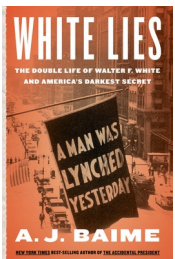
***His Truth is Marching On*** by Pulitzer Prize winner Jon Meacham is the story of John Lewis, a man who strived through non-violence and service to his country to live a life that mattered. He succeeded. We’ve lost some great men, Senator John McCain in 2018 and Senator John Lewis in 2020. It seemed 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.



***Stamped*** by Ibram X. Kendi is an incredibly powerful account of history that tells of the disenfranchisement of people of color. It is both fascinating and heartbreaking.

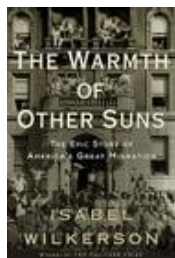
There is an old saying about history being written by the winners. It also pertains to history being written to serve the interests of people in power. Read ***Stamped*** and you will be given another perspective. Kendi writes with a scholarly adherence to facts.

Jason Reynolds co-wrote the teen version of ***Stamped***. Adding the passion of Jason Reynolds to the scholarly attitude of Ibram X. Kendi makes for an even more powerful account.

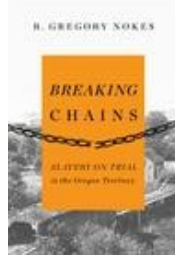


***White Lies: The Double Life of Walter F. White and America’s Darkest Secret*** by A.J. Baime. Walter F. White is one of my heroes! The man was crazy brave! I first ran across his name when doing research for a month our book clubs were focusing on Black Lives Matter. I was astounded that he is not a household name, he should be right up there with Malcom X. and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King.

Why, you might ask? Read this book and you will probably agree with me. Walter F. White was fair skinned, could easily be seen as white. He went south to document lynchings, blended in to take back north records of the cruelty. Lynching and hanging are not exactly the same thing, with lynchings they often included torture and mutilation. White made sure there was a record. There were times he barely escaped. Make no mistake, his life was on the line, a cruel death all too possible. He did his best in conversations with Presidents FDR and Truman to make progress on anti-lynching legislation. To be that brave, to make sure the victims did not die unnoticed, White deserves to be well known and respected. Complicated guy, Walter F. White.



***The Warmth of Other Suns*** by Isabel Wilkerson brings an intimate view of history. From 1915 to 1970 nearly six million blacks fled the South. Wilkerson focuses on three individuals in telling her story, giving this overwhelming exodus a human face. In 1937 Ida Mae Gladney’s cousin was almost beaten to death after being falsely accused of stealing a white man’s turkeys. Ida Mae left Mississippi heading north. In 1945 George Swanson Starling’s Florida employer was arranging a “neck tie” party. George headed to Harlem. In 1953 Robert Foster’s opportunities were limited in Louisiana, but in California he prospered becoming Ray Charles’ personal physician. Wilkerson weaves in the details of millions of people setting out for better lives. Wilkerson is the first black woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for journalism.

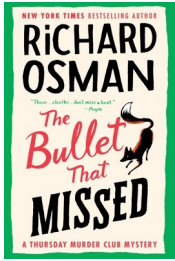


***Breaking Chains*** by Greg Nokes documents a groundbreaking case tried in an Oregon court of a freed black slave suing a white man, his former master. Robert and Mary Holmes along with three of their children were brought as property with Nathaniel Ford and his family on the Oregon Trail as Ford fled a mountain of debt back in Missouri. Ford had already sold three of the Holmes children before leaving Missouri. He promised the Holmes he would set the remaining family free after three years if they would help establish his farm in the Oregon territory. The government was giving away 640 acres to homesteading couples, enough to put Ford back on his feet financially.

Years passed without the promised release for the Holmes family. Finally Ford granted freedom to the parents, keeping the children as his property. Holmes did something courageous, he filed suit in the white man’s court to find justice for his family and free his children. It was not an even fight; Ford was well known and well regarded. Nokes details the court case and the prevailing political climate. He tells us of other slaves living in the northwest and gives us a glimpse into their contributions to history. He packs in a lot of information on Oregon in the mid to late 1800’s, if you enjoy history this book is a treasure trove of information. Greg Nokes knows how to document a story. He was a reporter for the Associated Press and The Oregonian. His last book, ***Massacred for Gold***, exposed the massacre of Chinese miners in Hell’s Canyon.



February is a great month for reading and Book Club discussions. It is still cold outside and dark early, leaving less time to enjoy our beautiful outdoors. Pleasure can be found curled up in a chair with a good book, stepping into other experiences through the pages. We have both Zoom and in-person Book Clubs. Zoom Book Clubs meet Mondays at 6 PM and in person discussions meet Mondays at 4:30. If you would like to attend a discussion, email [sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com) and let me know which Book Club meeting your plan to attend. Everyone is welcome.



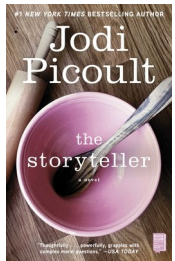
February 6 via Zoom and February 13 in person, Mystery Book Club discusses **The Bullet That Missed** by Richard Osman, the third in the popular **Thursday Murder Club** series. Join Elizabeth, Ibrahim, Ron, and Joyce for another excellent escape. They are delving into more cold cases, this time picking one that some powerful people would really like to keep firmly in the unsolved files.

Several years ago, a rising star in local TV news, Bethany Waites, was murdered when her car went over a cliff into the sea. By all accounts she was talented and investigating something big. Mike Waghorn is the lead talent on the local news show, South End Tonight, he and Bethany were close friends. It doesn't take the **Thursday Murder Club** long to have him on board with helping their investigation.

Of course, Joyce has a crush on Mike. There is electricity between Ron and Pauline, two strong people who fit together nicely. Good to see Ron enjoying some female companionship. Ibrahim has fallen in love with Joyce's dog, Allen. Nothing wrong with that, I am besotted with my dog too! Shows good sense to appreciate canine company, and Ibrahim is a paragon of good sense. Speaking of electricity, PC Donna De Freitas and Bogdan are definitely shooting off sparks. DCI Chris Hudson is a new, much improved, man since he started keeping company with Patrice. It is grand to see them involved in rewarding relationships.

Not all is sunshine and joy. Connie Johnson's rage against Ron and Bogdan is smoldering as she awaits her trial for crimes that should put her away for a good long while. She has vowed to kill Ron and Bogdan for their role in her arrest. It is not an idle threat; she seems to be running her criminal enterprises from inside the jail. And Elizabeth is being blackmailed into killing an old acquaintance. She definitely has the skill set to accomplish the task, the threat that motivates her is serious. But will she carry out the execution?

Steven Spielberg is making a movie of **The Thursday Murder Club**.



February 20 via Zoom and February 27 in person Fiction Book Club discusses **The Storyteller** by Jodi Picoult. The story centers around a young woman with secrets of her own, who befriends an elderly man and discovers his secrets will have repercussions that reverberate through her own life in unexpected ways.

Sage Singer is an atheist Jew working as a baker at Our Daily Bread, a bakery owned by a former Nun, Mary DeAngelis, adjoining the Our Lady of Mercy Shrine. The work suits Sage, it allows her to work all night, alone and away from people, doing something that has been in her family for generations, baking. Sage doesn't like to be around people, her face is scarred and she worries about the reaction of others when they see her. She is secretive about the way she was disfigured.

A staple of Sage's life is the grief support group she has attended for the past three years, trying to deal with her grief from the death of her mother. Recently an elderly man, Josef Weber, has been attending the sessions. Josef is known as a kind man in the community, Mary likes him. He walks his Dachshund, Eva, and stops by the bakery frequently. He has secrets too.

Sage and Josef develop a friendship. He is not concerned about her face, is able to look at it without reaction. In reality Josef has seen worse. They spend time together, going to the grief support group, chatting at the bakery, and playing chess. They take comfort in each other's company. And then one day, Josef tells Sage his secret and requests a significant favor. It changes everything.

It has been just about 80 years since the world said **NEVER AGAIN**. And yet, today tanks roll across the Eastern Front, apartment buildings are shredded by the tools of war, and the world has learned the name of Bucha. This is a timely novel, reminding us of the cost of evil to all concerned.

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

Everyone is welcome, Meetings are held in person at 4:30 & via Zoom at 6 PM on Mondays.

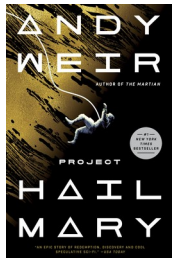
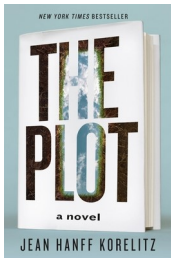
#### March

March 6 Via Zoom & March 13 in person **The Plot** by Jean Hanff Korelitz Mystery Book Club  
March 20 via Zoom & March 27 in person, **Project Hail Mary** by Andy Weir, Fiction Book Club.

#### April

April Deschutes County Library Novel Idea **L.A. Weather** by Maria Amparo Escandon, 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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