



# Sunriver Books & Music

## January 2021

### Newsletter

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541-593-2525

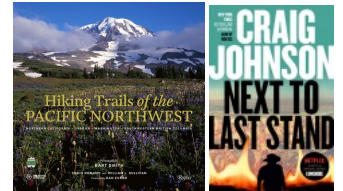


*Happy New Year!*

*May 2021 be a kinder, gentler, healthier year!*

There is already hope for 2021 to be a much happier year! Vaccine is being administered starting, as it should, with front line health care workers. Soon the risk of Covid-19 should be diminished. Sunriver Books & Music just received a \$2,500 grant from Deschutes County that will help pay some of the increased staffing costs due to the aforementioned Covid-19. The Sunriver Chamber of Commerce, in addition to the welcome funds, also brought masks, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies. Thank you to Deschutes County and Sunriver Chamber of Commerce!

At [sunriverbooks.com](http://sunriverbooks.com) there are links to video's of recent author events. Craig Johnson, Lou Diamond Phillips, and Katee Sackhoff get together for a presentation on the newest Sheriff Walt Longmire novel, **Next to Last Stand**. Photographer Bart Smith teams up with hiking guide author's William Sullivan and Craig Romano for a presentation on their gorgeous book of **Hiking Trails of the Pacific Northwest** published by Rizzoli.



#### Coming Soon!



Sunriver resident and best selling author Marie Bostwick has a new book. **The Restoration of Celia Fairchild** releases March 2nd. Please be in touch with us at Sunriver Books & Music at 541-593-2525 or [sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com) to pre-order Marie's book, she has promised to sign stock for us. Lets put Marie on the New York Time's Bestseller list by supporting her new book, purchasing a copy, and letting friends know it is soon to be available. Marie has a slew of popular titles, such as **Hope on the Inside**, **Just In Time**, and **Promise Girls**, plus many others.

**The Restoration of Celia Fairchild** is romantic comedy, great fun to read, especially in these times. Celia's dream is to be a mother. She hopes to adopt then suffers unexpected blows. Her feckless husband leaves, and she loses her job. Celia writes the Dear Calpurnia column, it has a strong readership, with devoted followers finding comfort in her down home advice. The paper has sold, and the new owner is bringing in their own team, including someone else to write the column Celia created. Chances for Celia's upcoming interview with an adoptive parent are fading. She can barely afford her Manhattan apartment, how will she convince the young birth mother to take a chance on a single unemployed writer? What is Celia to do? Soon she receives news she has inherited her aunt's home in Charleston, but it is going to bring its own surprises along with a generous number of skeletons in those old closets.



Every year our Book Clubs vote for their favorites of the books discussed. [Here are the winners of 2020's vote.](#)

#### Non Fiction Book Club's Favorites of 2020.

**Tightrope** by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. While the top 1% reap ever greater rewards there is a segment of our country falling farther and farther behind, finding the American Dream beyond their grasp. Nicholas Kristoff grew up on a farm in Yamhill, Oregon. The children riding on the number 6 bus with him share an often-tragic trajectory. Nicholas kept in touch with the children and families he knew as a child, they give a human face to the problems confronting many Americans.

Kristoff and WuDunn explore what has happened. There is the story of a Veteran in Baltimore whose injuries resulted in prescriptions for pain killers leading him into addiction and a downward spiral. There is the prison program for women addicts that actually works, helping the women to rejoin society and live productive lives. The book ranges across America, always returning to Oregon, as it tells how addiction, family violence, factories closing, and a host of issues lead to poverty and despair for far too many people in such a rich land. An intimacy and urgency in the writing takes complex issues and makes them understandable in an empathetic way. It does no good to tell people to pull themselves up by their bootstraps when they don't even have boots.



**Blowout: Corrupted Democracy, Rogue State Russia, and the Richest, Most Destructive Industry on Earth** by Rachel

Maddow, a sobering view of the global consequences of chasing after gas and oil.

Consider Project Rulison in Garfield County, Colorado. Our tax dollars at work. Austral Oil wanted to get at the gas in the Me-saverde formation but were blocked by underground shale. So, our government let them use an atomic bomb three times more powerful than the bomb that took down Hiroshima. That's right, our government let an oil company use a nuclear weapon! People lived within 5 miles of the blast site, Highway 1-70 and railroad tracks were nearby. When the desired result was not achieved, they tried again in project Rio Blanco, this time with a much bigger bomb, 10 times more powerful. The book is full of jaw dropping moments. Russian President Vladimir Putin's rise to power and involvement in the oil and gas industry brings a surreal story considering today's world events. Maddow does an excellent job of portraying Putin's ruthlessness in pursuit of his goals, his missteps, and the involvement of US companies in his rise. Plus she has an interesting way with language that makes the book entertaining too.

## Fiction Book Club favorites of 2020.



**Unsheltered** by Barbara Kingsolver is set in two different centuries, both eras where lies trumped truth, and superstition overruled science. Kingsolver illustrates the human toll with insight, humor, and compassion. While showing the cost of leadership built on false promises and lies, it also illustrates the strength of the human spirit with characters who will not be broken by their times as they make their way through the maze of survival set before them. She uses real historic characters in Vineland, such as Mary Treat and Charles Landis.

Vineland was established as a utopian society by Charles Landis in 1862; it was a society that may have professed to be forward thinking but embraced many lies and miscarriages of humanitarian principles in the treatment of its poorer residents and immigrants. Kingsolver cleverly drops her fictional characters into a falling down house in this community during two time frames.

Willa Knox worked with her husband, Iano, toward financial security all their lives, intending to inhabit the American dream. Willa was a journalist, Iano attained coveted tenure at a Virginia college and they purchased a home in a good neighborhood where other professors also resided. This was their dream. Then it became a nightmare; the college closed, with no jobs for professors, the property values in their neighborhood crashed obliterating their equity. Meanwhile Willa's job as a reporter also evaporated.

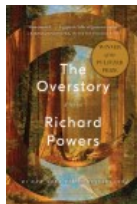
Every lie of a better life during the Trump administration was visited on Willa and Iano. Iano was competing with people half his age for teaching positions with no hope of tenure. He accepted a job in New Jersey where Willa inherited a home in Vineland, a home literally falling apart. Their high achieving son lost his job in finance, and their 26 year old daughter returned home. Iano's father is old and ill, needing care. Four generations were living in the crumbling Vineland edifice. The only hope for salvaging the structure is historic designation and a grant for major repairs if they can discover that someone of note resided in the ancient dwelling.

In the late 1800's in the same abode, Thatcher Greenwood lived with his mother-in-law, wife, and sister. It was falling down then too. He had accepted a position as science teacher at the local high school, thinking that he would be teaching young minds about science and the need to question, to think critically. Instead he found that the Vineland school expected all natural phenomena to be explained either in the Bible or by the intervention of angels. It is an angst ridden, but eminently likeable, Thatcher who strikes up a friendship with their neighbor, Mary Treat. He is shocked and delighted to find that Mary is a self-educated scientist, with important publications to her credit and a lively correspondence with Charles Darwin. In the dark days that will follow, as Thatcher battles for some truth in his teaching, his visits with Mary are a ray of sunshine.



**Deep River** by Karl Marlantes. Finland in 1901 was ruled by Russia, its young men drafted to serve in the Russian army, dissent ruthlessly put down. Aino's older brother escaped to America. Her passions for political action were ignited by her teacher. Those passions deepened when Russian soldiers were billeted in the family's farmhouse, eating the best of the rapidly diminishing food supply. Any attempt to protect themselves, to defy Russian cruelty was met with crushing force. As Aino fell in love and defied the Russians, she learned the cost of resistance.

She fled to her brothers in America, near Astoria. Her story is seamlessly entwined with the history of the Pacific Northwest, a history that included charismatic Joe Hill and the labor movement. If you enjoy two days off a week and an 8 hour work day, thank the labor movement. They fought hard for more humane working conditions. **Deep River** is not only a story of history, it is also the story of a strong, independent woman's struggles to balance family and commitment to a cause. When Aino does marry, it is no surprise that her passion for the greater good and damage at the hands of the Russians do not pave the way for a harmonious relationship. Marlantes mines his family's past in writing this epic of a woman's struggle to make a difference.



**Overstory** by Richard Powers, winner of the Pulitzer Prize. **Overstory** is an epic blending the story of trees and people, twining our need for them with our destruction of them. There is an extensive cast of characters, spanning many years and environments. It opens with Norwegian Jorgen Hoel and Vi Powys pelting stones at Chestnut trees in Brooklyn's Prospect Park to dislodge and enjoy the nuts. They will marry and settle in the Midwest, carrying with them the treasured seeds of a Chestnut Tree to plant their own grove. From there the story travels through time and place, giving a moving portrait of the lives of trees and man. Great reading.



**Chances Are** by Richard Russo. Traversing the turbulent sixties, to the changes coming in 2015, Russo captures the feelings of the times with pitch perfect clarity. Teddy, Lincoln, and Mickey met in college, different as night and day, but somehow, they fit with each other perfectly, were known as the Three Musketeers. The story opens with the three men, now 66, reuniting for a weekend at Martha's Vineyard where Lincoln has a summer home inherited from his mother that he is grappling with selling. It has been a few years since they have seen each other, and the setting takes them back to their college days when they were all a bit in love with the fourth member of their group, their d'Artagnan, Jacy, a fiery young woman who faced life with gusto. They remember sitting tensely by a small TV, waiting to learn their lottery numbers for the draft, numbers that could mean the difference between living or dying in the jungles of Vietnam. They remember the weekend Jacy disappeared. These memories lead to an owning up of their lives, the choices that they made, the choices that their circumstances lead them to, and the chance that possibilities were still open to them. A heartfelt, often funny, lovely story about three ordinary men.

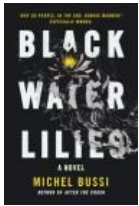
## Mystery Book Club favorites of 2020.



**The Paragon Hotel** by Lindsay Faye captures pitch perfect the anything goes attitudes of the 1920's. Well, almost anything goes, clearly as the story progresses some things do not go, such as friendship between black and white.

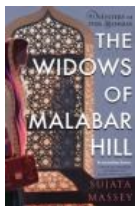
Alice James flees New York City with a bullet wound in her side, hoping the first train west, trying to cover as much land as possible away from her potential pursuers, dangerous men. The wound is serious, her condition deteriorating, perhaps soon to prove fatal if not for the kindness of Max, a black Pullman porter who risks taking a white woman to the all-black **Paragon Hotel** where he persuades Dr. Pendleton to tend to her wound and a reluctant Maveen, the hotel manager, to provide shelter.

There Alice makes the acquaintance of a lively cast of characters, including the beguiling Blossom Fontaine, a songstress with serious talent. When Davy Lee, a small boy goes missing, a scamp of a fellow who has delighted Alice with his joyful attitude, she cannot help but get involved. A dangerous undertaking considering the nefarious activities of the Ku Klux Klan. In alternating chapters, the tale goes back to Alice's days in Harlem and how she came to be sporting that bullet hole. A page turning romp of a book that wildly entertains while also illuminating the less savory aspects of Oregon's early history.



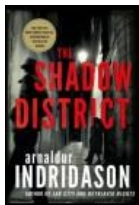
**Black Water Lilies** by Michel Bussi takes us into the heart of Monet's Giverny where three women lived with their passions and sorrows. Two would perish, only one would survive. The first, our narrator is an elderly woman, accompanied by her beloved German Shepard, Neptune. The second, Stephanie, is a teacher, sensual and beautiful, at the peak of young life but unfulfilled. The third, Fanette, is only a child, but a child with an awesome talent and the promise of an exciting career as an artist.

The murder of a prominent man in the community confounds the police. Jerome Morval, collector of art and women, was found in the stream feeding Monet's garden. His death was excessive; stabbed, battered with a rock, and drowned. Inspector Laurenc Serenac and Inspector Silvio Benavides agree the case is complicated but employ different methods in trying to untangle the threads of the crime, Silvio painstakingly accumulating evidence and Laurenc focusing on the people, especially the attractive young teacher. Was the murder the result of Morval's philandering ways? Or did it have something to do with the Water Lilly paintings by Monet he coveted? Little do they know the answer and danger may be within the secrets held tight by three women.



**The Widows of Malabar Hill** by Sujata Massey Fascinating detail about life in 1920's Bombay combines with a clever mystery to make this a pleasure to read. Perveen Mistry has overcome the poor decisions of her youth that have imbued in her a passion for woman's rights, achieved a degree in law at Oxford, and joined her father's law firm as the first woman to practice law in India. While she is not allowed to argue cases in court, the wheels of change grinding slowly, she is able to help with all the contractual aspects of a law practice. To this end, looking over the estate of Omar Farid, she notices some suspicious aspects to the paperwork and is concerned about the welfare of the 3 widows who live in strict purdah.

Of course there will be something less than on the up and up, a murder will occur, and Parveen will be involved in the investigation. What really sets this engaging series launch apart is the great use of interesting historic detail.



**The Shadow District** by Arnaldur Indridason. Current day an elderly man dies in his bed, the police do not find it suspicious. His neighbor is shocked, he may have been in his 90's, but he was in great shape, this was an unexpected death. When the medical examiner takes a look, it is clear the man was murdered. But why kill a guy in his 90's? Time would take care of the problem before too long without the risk of a murder investigation.

In 1944 Iceland was coming to terms with housing American soldiers, gaining independence, and trying to keep those same soldiers from the local women. It was a losing proposition as young women would sneak out of the house to meet their soldier beaux. The dead man had old clippings from the 1944 murder of a young woman behind the National Theater.

Konrad has recently retired from the police, but the death of this man and the link to the past, of a murder committed the year of his birth in the neighborhood he grew up, catches his imagination and he is compelled to get involved. His former partner, admitting the police department is overworked, accepts his help and the game is afoot. Indridason presents a complex plot, with sympathetic characters, elegantly linking the time frames.

## Classics Book Club favorite of 2020.



Nobel Prize winner John Steinbeck's rollicking **Tortilla Flat**. Written to be a bit of a play on the Arthurian legends, Danny and his pals embark on their own series of adventures in Monterey California. Danny is set on avoiding responsibility, not into the idea of hard toil and savings. He is surrounded by a cadre of like-minded friends prone to trouble. When he inherits a couple houses, the responsibility of owning property sits heavily upon him.

**Black Lives Matter!**

May 2021 bring change in racial justice, giving equality in opportunity, and allowing people of color to feel with confidence police are there to help and protect, not harm.

Black Lives Matter sparked protests in the aftermath of George Floyd's cold-hearted killing by police. Those protests may, with new leadership, lead to substantive change that stops the killing of people of color, bringing in a new era where law enforcement officers are viewed as defenders not as a danger. It was upsetting to watch news reports of those peaceful protests calling attention to the need for change being overtaken by groups, unconnected with the protestors, intent on destroying property, harming people, thus damaging the cause the protestors were trying with so much passion and care to inspire the nation to embrace. The violence often overshadowed the message. And the message was important! It needed to be heard!

I believe change is needed but real progress will not be achieved without all parties at the table; activists, government, police, victim's advocates, community groups. With everyone involved in the process, they can share their goals, what challenges need to be overcome, and how to achieve what is possible. Working together, trying to understand each other's needs, lets try to make society safe for all.

Clearly people of color have died at the hands of police in cases that should never have resulted in death. Tragically it keeps on happening! But when I think of police, I also remember police running into the conflagration of the Twin Towers, where many would lose their lives, because they felt heart deep their duty to protect and defend. They had families and lives that needed living; they chose to risk their lives for all of the people in those towers, no matter the color. I see people like our Sunriver Police Chief Cory Darling and Black Butte Police Chief Denny Kelley and I do not see racists, I see good people who care. Definitely change is needed in police culture and procedures, definitely all citizens need to be able to rely on police helping not harming. Definitely there are police officers who should not be carrying a weapon and need to go. We must not excuse the lethal actions of police, it has to be stop. We should also acknowledge that many police strive to be good cops. Let's work together for change. Let's root out racism not just in police departments, but throughout our country. Let's aspire for our country to embrace all ethnicities, to have police departments that are there to protect us from violence not inflict it, let's have a nation that fulfills Dr. Martin Luther King's dream where people "will not be judged by the color of their skin but the content of their character".

To achieve a society that embraces equality and justice, being informed is important. Our Book Clubs voted to read in January books that focus on Black Lives Matter. The choices are well written, tell interesting stories, and invite us to try understanding a little better what faces people of color. Book Clubs meet at 6 PM on Mondays via Zoom. Email [sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com) to sign up to attend and receive the Zoom link. Everyone is welcome.



January 4 Mystery Book Club discusses **Heaven, My Home** by Attica Locke. Darren Mathews was raised by his uncles after his father's death in Vietnam. They were upright, strong men and they did well by him. His mother was a whole other ballgame, not a positive influence at all. Now she holds incriminating information that could end his career with the Texas Rangers and possibly put him behind bars.

His marriage has endured some bumpy patches, they are not rock solid but trying to work on it, and one of the ways that compromise was struck was Darren agreeing to a desk bound job instead of being out in the field. It is in this frame of mind he is ordered back into the field, testing his tenuous hold on his wife's affections and peace with his blackmailing mother. A nine-year-old boy is missing, the son of a white supremacist. Something happened in the dark of vast Caddo Lake. No one seems to know where Levi is, worse he is a pawn in law enforcement's eagerness to get the goods on the bad guys. But Darren holds tight to his mission, what happened to the little boy?

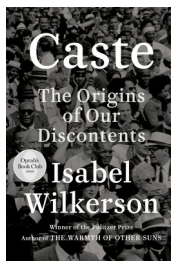


January 11 Fiction Book Club discusses **The Vanishing Half** by Brit Bennett, a story of twin sisters, both light skinned enough to pass for white, but only one chooses that path.

Deseriee and Stella run off to the big city, New Orleans, leaving behind the small town where their mother toils as a housekeeper in the homes of wealthy whites. The two girls have that special closeness twins experience, when Stella disappears, it leaves a devastating hole in Deseriee. For years she will wonder what became of her twin.

Deseriee eventually returns to her small town, bringing along a dark-skinned daughter, Jude, who is not accepted by the lighter hued children in the community. Her childhood is marked by solitude, taking comfort in reading. She is blazing smart and lightening fast, building her school years around study and running. Years later Jude will go to UCLA on a track scholarship and bump into Stella's blond, blue eyed daughter Kennedy, a young woman who has no idea of her Black ancestry.

Told from a variety of perspectives, 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.



January 25 Non-Fiction Book Club discusses **Caste** by Isabel Wilkerson. **Warmth of Other Suns**, Wilkerson's last book, 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. She 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.

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