



# Sunriver Books & Music

## June Newsletter

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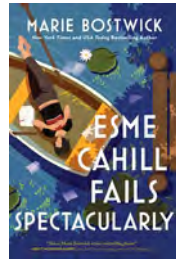
### Craig Johnson Returns! Saturday September 9 at 5 PM.

Pre-purchase a copy of **The Longmire Defense** for a ticket to attend. Contact [sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com).

The Sheriff Walt Longmire series are New York Times Bestsellers with a long list of awards. The Longmire series inspired the hit Netflix drama, Longmire.

Each new book in the series is a chance to connect with Sheriff Walt Longmire, Vic, and Henry Standing Bear and learn what they have been up to lately. Always a fun read!

We are grateful for Craig Johnson's loyalty to Sunriver Books! He is the star of our lineup!



Saturday June 24 at 5 PM Marie Bostwick presents her latest novel, **Esme Cahill Fails Spectacularly**. Marie Bostwick is familiar to many Central Oregon residents, she lived in Sunriver and was an active member of the quilting community. Space will be limited, register to attend this free event by emailing [sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com). There will be refreshments and drawings for prizes.

Esme had a rough start in life, until her grandparents stepped in, taking the small girl to live with them in their rustic resort with cabins on a lake ideal for fishing outside Asheville North Carolina. They were kind people and did well by Esme. Both her grandmother Adele and grandfather George loved reading. She grew up wanting to write and feeling the place to be was New York City, never mind her grandfather's assertion Thomas Wolfe did just fine coming from North Carolina. Esme had another reason for wanting to leave, her mother, Robyn, was finally coming home. Esme wanted to be long gone before the woman who had failed so spectacularly as a mother arrived. So, at 19 she headed out to the big city.

Years went by, success as an author never came, nor did the promised visits home. When her grandmother dies, she finally heads home, arriving to find the rustic resort along the lake shore much changed. In the past it was well maintained and inviting, now it all looks worn and shabby, things are definitely not right.

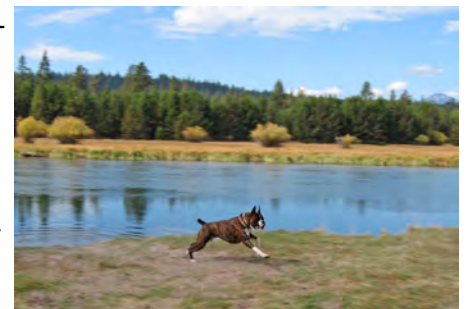
The story moves between Esme's life as a woman seeking a measure of success and the war years when her grandmother Adele was young. Adele also dreamed of succeeding as an artist, hoped to see her paintings hanging on art gallery walls.

I enjoy books that give a shout out to other works of literature and have interesting characters. This succeeds on both counts! It is a lovely story about the measure of what success really means, the intrinsic value of art, the bonds of family, and the rewards of friendship.

*Flashman July 2, 2002- January 31, 2015*

Please remember not to leave your pets in a parked car, temperatures can soar within minutes causing death. If you see a dog in a parked car in Sunriver, please call the Sunriver Police Department 541-593-1014 or 911 so they can rescue the animal. Animals can be in severe distress in minutes, parking in the shade on our hot days will not save them. It is too hot to leave an animal safely in the car, even in shade temperatures will be deadly.

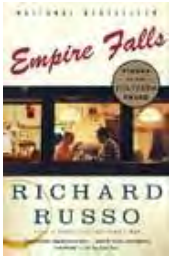
Dr. Wendy Merideth of Sunriver Veterinary Clinic 541-593-8128 alerted us to the danger of mushrooms. Every year dogs ingest poisonous mushrooms, sometimes fatally, always requiring prompt medical attention. In the Deschutes National Forest be cautious of leg hold traps that can grievously injure a pet, or a person



## A Month of Maine!

Every year we focus for the month of June on a region, state, or city in the USA. As a lead up to the 4th of July, it is a good time to celebrate the diversity, varied landscape, and regional cultural differences that make the USA a special place. This is a vast country with a rich cultural diversity. From north to south, east to west, our landscape and customs change dramatically. Each part is unique, made so by the variety of people and the grandeur of the land. This year we focus on Maine. Join us in reading books set in Maine!

### Fiction Books Set in Maine.



**Empire Falls** by Richard Russo, winner of the Pulitzer Prize. Empire Falls Maine fell on hard times; the three mills closed, unemployment is high. Like many mill towns, Empire Falls has not been able to wrest itself from the subtle control of the mill owner. Although no longer running the mills, there is always the hope of reopening. Still very wealthy, Mrs. Whiting owns most of the businesses in town and is not suffering from her mills' closure in the way the town's residents do. Miles has been under her thumb since he left college to return home to care for his mother. Twenty years on he is still managing and cooking at the Empire Grill for Mrs. Whiting, kept in line by her promise to will the restaurant to him. The theme of family and generations runs through the story. Miles' reprobate father, Max, is always getting into trouble and avoids any responsibility. Miles loves his daughter, Tick, is very proud of the girl. His wife is leaving him for a slick health club owner. He has all these issues swirling around in his life and is making little progress in resolving them until a secret and a tragedy force him to get his life in order. Written with Russo's empathy and humor.



**The Guest Book** by Sarah Blake. 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. And yet, the characters are vibrant, often likeable, and engaging. Thereby making their actions all the more shocking. 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!

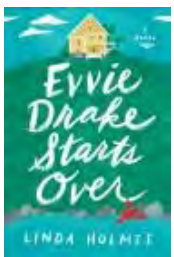


**Flying Solo** by Linda Holmes. Laurie Sassalyn's fortieth birthday is fast approaching. While her brothers are paired off, some married with children, Laurie is not. She has just cancelled her engagement on short notice, the wedding announcement were already sent, the gifts all arrived. It took her months to send everything back. Far from being upset, she feels relieved. She likes owning her Seattle home, her neighborhood, her routine. Laurie writes nature articles with a scientific bent. She travels a lot, trudges through marshes, hikes in the woods. It is a life that suits her.

As a young girl with brothers, she often took refuge in her great aunt Dot's big house to escape the chaos and noise. Her aunt had never married, but led an interesting life, traveling the world, reading voraciously, being involved in all sorts of craft projects, taking photographs. Aunt Dot was a woman who lived life with gusto. Laurie learns a lot from her great-aunt. When Dot dies at 93, no one else has the time to go through her things. Laurie volunteers, and heads cross country to Maine and her hometown. The place where her first love, her high school sweetheart, still lives. This small town is in so many ways familiar to Laurie, her best friend lives here, she has roots. In reconnecting with them, she rekindles many memories and feelings.

Going through Dot's things, Laurie finds a beautifully carved duck hidden under bedding in a trunk. It is a beautiful duck, why is it hidden in the trunk? It doesn't seem to fit with the rest of Dot's things. Soon this lovely duck will be in need of rescue and Laurie is determined to find out just exactly what this duck meant in Dot's life.

Funny and heartwarming, this is the story of a woman solving a mystery about her aunt's life, while she is personally faced with the choice of two possible lives. Not every woman must follow the same path.



**Evvie Drake Starts Over** by Linda Holmes. Evvie Drake was busting loose, taking off from her home town in Maine and heading for parts unknown, on the day Dr. Tim Drake died. Evvie never made it out of town and no one knows the secret of handsome Dr. Drake's widow. Even her best friend Andy is clueless that Evvie's deep sadness is not due to her husband's untimely demise, that it is a far more complicated.

Andy is a good guy, his wife left him with his two small daughters. He is a devoted father, teaches at the local school, and meets Evvie for breakfast every Saturday morning at the Compass Café. He likes to help his friends, knows money is tight for Evvie, and thinks it might do her good to have someone else around.

That fits just fine with the needs of another of Andy's pals, he has been buddies with Dean Tenney since school days, long before Dean became a star big league baseball pitcher. Dean's had some recent troubles, a brilliant athlete, he got the yips and cannot pitch anymore. Humiliated by the press, far too big a celebrity to be left to suffer in obscurity, and depressed about his career; he needs to get away to somewhere he won't be constantly noticed. Andy figures Evvie renting Dean the small apartment at the back of her house would solve a lot of both their problems. Thus, begins a friendship that will challenge them both as they do their best to find equilibrium in a changed world.

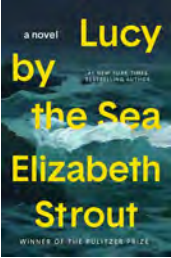
This is a fun novel about friendship, secrets, and not letting life get away from you.



## Fiction Books Set in Maine.



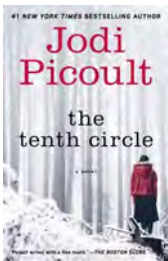
***Olive Kitteridge*** by Elizabeth Strout, winner of the Pulitzer Prize, is told in a series of linked short stories. They are bound together by Olive, an irascible retired school teacher. She frets over the way her small Maine town is changing, Olive isn't big on change, enjoys watching birds, and generally has strong opinions. She can be kind, but also hard. Her adult child finds her overbearing, sometimes mean. Olive can have difficulty expressing affection. Olive and Henry have been married for twenty five years, some better than others. Henry is kind, easy going, a counter to Olive's determined way of moving through her world. In some of the stories, Olive is only mentioned, but she is always a presence. As the stories progress, a richer understanding of Olive occurs, illustrating the deep care she feels for the people around her and her community. ***Olive Kitteridge*** was filmed as a mini series by HBO.



***Lucy by the Sea*** by Elizabeth Strout is an excellent book to read now, while the country is grappling with being so divided. It is set during the Covid 19 pandemic. Lucy's ex-husband, William, is determined to save those he loves from what he recognizes as a dangerous virus that will take lives. They have been divorced for decades, but William still cares about Lucy. He persuades her to join him for a couple weeks away at a house in Maine. She packs light, thinking she is leaving her Manhattan apartment for just a couple weeks. At first Lucy doesn't realize the danger, but as they watch the nightly news, seeing the refrigerator trucks filled with bodies from overflowing morgues, and then the virus takes people close to her, she acknowledges her world is changing.

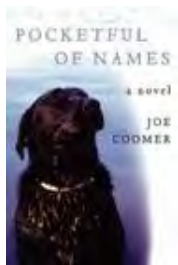
One of the aspects I find compelling about this story, is the way William and Lucy are able to navigate living in a place where not everyone shares the same opinion of Covid-19 or of politics. They get on without hating those with other views. Yes, there are times they are angry, but there is also compassion. When did we stop evaluating those we live around based on their kindness, and start judging them on their politics or their reaction to a virus? I think William and Lucy make errors, feel judgmental at times, as humans are wont to do, but they move toward kindness and respect for others and that is a direction we all should emulate.

It is also an interesting story about family, community, and starting over. I am glad I read it, enjoyed the times spent with William and Lucy.



***Tenth Circle*** by Jodie Picoult. Interesting stories with social relevance are Jodie Picoult's bailiwick. And she usually has a wicked twist that can catch the reader by surprise. ***Tenth Circle*** explores date rape and the aftermath. Trixie is a young teenager, suffering first love. She takes it hard when she is dumped by her boyfriend, Jason, a popular older boy well liked in their Bethel Maine hometown for his prowess in hockey. Later, they both attend the same party. Trixie returns home in obvious distress, claiming he raped her.

Daniel, her father, is a graphic artist working on a story about a father following his daughter into the circles of hell to save her. Trixie only knows her father as a gentle person, an artist. He grew up in an Alaskan Eskimo village where he was bullied until he became a violent hell raiser. He left that all behind, put aside rage, to be an artist and family man. When Trixie takes off to Alaska, he goes after her. Dante's influence runs through the book, as a shadow, Trixie's Mom, Laura, is a professor teaching ***Dante's Inferno***. Fast pace, lots of tension, good story.



***Pocket Full of Names*** by Joe Coomer is a fabulous book. Hannah lives alone on the small Maine island she inherited from her uncle Arno, a fisherman. Hannah believes her art is the driving force of her life. She is confident that she creates art for the sake of art alone, that she is not influenced by praise or rejections. She believes she is truly independent, not needing approval or help from anyone. Her perceptions are about to be challenged.

Life starts to change with the arrival of a dog from the sea. Soon people are coming to her small island too. Over the course of a year, she begins to realize that needing others is not weakness.

Joe Coomer writes with humor and beauty.



***The Lowering Days*** by Gregory Brown. The lush, green riverbanks of the Penobscot River in Maine are more than a setting for this lovely novel, they are its heart. David, Link, and Simon Ames are bound to this land in deep ways, protective of its wild beauty. Raised to love nature by their artist mother and boat building father, they thrive. But there is a threat to the land, a paper company reopening; its mill will bring needed jobs to the community and poison the river, causing devastation to the Penobscot Native Americans living along its shore. When the paper mill burns down, the consequences reverberate through the community, especially in the Ames family. The story is a stark reminder of the differences between those who believe the land is there to use and those who believe it should be protected and preserved.



***The Murder Rule*** by Dervla McTiernan. Hannah was raised by a single mother with issues. Nonetheless she excelled, is now in her third year of law school in Maine and doing well. But Hannah is going to abandon her goals in order to stop the release of a prisoner. To do so, she will have to leave her fragile mother, Laura, behind.

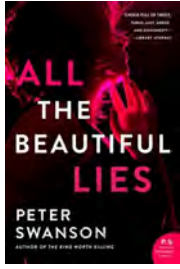
Laura left home as a young woman, took work as a maid at a resort and cleaned houses for wealthy people on the side to make extra money. She kept a journal, writing of her burgeoning friendship with Tom, a young man whose privileged life was a barrier to understanding each other, he couldn't really imagine Laura's reality. Chapters alternate from Hannah's perspective and Laura's journal.

The news announced that Michael Dandridge's original conviction has been overturned with help from the efforts of the Innocence Project, a new trial may start soon. He was convicted of rape and murder; the stakes are high. Hannah leaves Maine, heads south to UVA law school intent on doing the nearly impossible, being accepted by the Innocence Project assigned to the Dandridge case. She is willing to lie, manipulate, do whatever it takes. The Innocence Project hopes to free him, Hannah is determined to doom him.

## June 2023 Book Clubs

Book Clubs this June take part in our Month of Maine. Every June we concentrate on a state, city, or region in the USA to appreciate our country as we approach the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. It is good to reflect on the diversity, rich cultural heritage and natural grandeur of the USA, realizing that diversity is at the heart of our country.

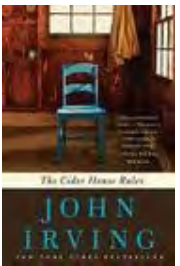
Book Clubs are a great way to read interesting books and meet other passionate readers. Everyone is welcome. Book Clubs meet on Mondays in person and via Zoom. To attend a Book Club discussion, email [sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com](mailto:sunriverbooks@sunriverbooks.com) and let us know which discussion you plan to attend, I will send the discussion notes the weekend prior to the meeting.



June 5 via Zoom at 6 PM and June 12 in person at 4:30 PM Mystery Book Club discusses ***All the Beautiful Lies*** by Peter Swanson. Harry Ackerman is a handsome young man; he takes after his father Bill, a book scout with a passion for reading. Bill moved the family from New York where he is partners in a bookstore, to Maine after the death of his wife. He opened a second bookstore in the small town. Bill married again, Alice was his real estate agent, they seemed happy together.

Harry didn't see as much of his father once he went away to college, but they remained close. Graduation weekend is just a few days away when Harry gets the call from a weeping Alice. Bill fell to his death walking the path along the cliff. Harry rushes home, trying to comfort a distraught Alice. Then things start to get a little strange. Alice is younger than Bill and sexy as all get out to boot. She seems to be coming on to Harry, is it just grief and the need for closeness? Or is it something else?

Grace McGowan shows up in town asking for a job at Bill's bookstore. But she seems more interested in Harry and what happened to Bill than working at the bookstore. And what did happen to Bill? Why did he fall from a path he walked so often? The police start to have suspicions too, leading them to believe Bill may have been murdered.

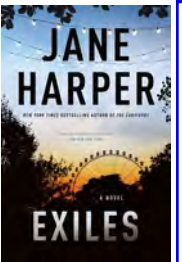


June 19 via Zoom at 6 PM and June 26 in person at 4:30 PM, Fiction Book Club discusses ***The Cider House Rules*** by John Irving. Set in rural Maine, it is the story of Dr. Larch, an ether addicted abortionist, who runs the St. Cloud orphanage and Homer Wells, one of the orphans.

Homer develops a father son relationship with Dr. Larch, the older man caring for and training the younger. While Dr. Larch is clearly pro-choice, Homer is opposed to abortion. Homer leaves the orphanage with a young couple, finds love, breaks his heart, and ultimately faces hard choices in trying circumstances.

This is not only a wonderfully written story; it is also apt for our times. For the past 50 years women have been in charge of their own bodies. That is changing in many states. At the time this story is set, abortion was illegal. It is a view of the past relevant to current events.

While the story is about significant issues, it is also often very funny, and has characters the reader cannot help but care about. To write a novel on such an explosive topic with such a deft touch is genius. It was made into a successful movie starring Michael Caine.



### 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.

#### July

July 10 via Zoom and July 17 in person, ***Exiles*** by Jane Harper, Mystery Book Club.

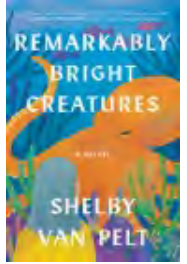
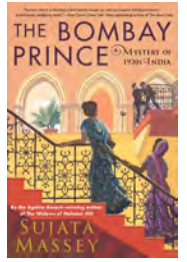
July 24 via Zoom and July 31 in person, ***Fencing With the King*** by Diana Abu-Jaber Fiction Book Club.

#### August

August 7 via Zoom and August 14 in person, ***The Bombay Prince*** by Sujata Massey Mystery Book Club

August 21 via Zoom and August 28 in person, ***Remarkably Bright Creatures*** by Shelby Van Pelt 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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