



**LA CROSSE
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

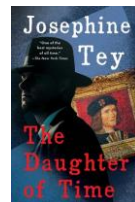
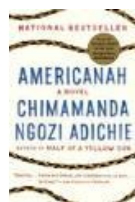
Book Kits

Need suggestions for your next book club? The La Crosse Public Library is here to help with our wide selection of book discussion kits! Each kit includes 5-10 copies of the book, discussion questions and author information. Kits circulate for six weeks and holds may be placed on the kits but cannot be reserved in advance for a specific date. Questions? Contact our Circulation team: (608) 789-7167.

Last updated 4/18/24

Title availability subject to change.

Fiction titles:



*****Americanah*** / Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Literary Fiction)

"Ifemelu and Obinze are young and in love when they depart military-ruled Nigeria for the West. Beautiful, self-assured Ifemelu heads for America, where despite her academic success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time. Quiet, thoughtful Obinze had hoped to join her, but with post-9/11 America closed to him, he instead plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London. Fifteen years later, they reunite in a newly democratic Nigeria, and reignite their passion--for each other and for their homeland"- Publisher's website.

*****Blue Heaven*** / C.J. Box (Mystery)

Fleeing the killers whom they witnessed committing murder, twelve-year-old Annie and her younger brother William escape into the woods of northern Idaho, not knowing whom they can trust and pursued by the murderers and a group of dirty cops seeking to prevent the youngsters from revealing what they know.

The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek / Kim Michele Richardson (Historical Fiction)

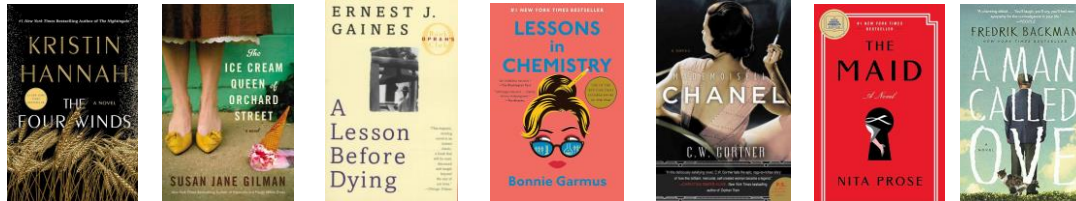
“As a member of the Pack Horse Library Project, Cussy delivers books to the hill folk of Troublesome, hoping to spread learning in these desperate times. But not everyone is so keen on Cussy's family or the Library Project, and the hardscrabble Kentuckians are quick to blame a Blue for any trouble in their small town. The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek is a story of raw courage, fierce strength, and one woman's determination to bring a little bit of hope to the darkly hollers”- Provided by publisher.

The Daughter of Time / Josephine Tey (Mystery)

While recuperating in the hospital, police detective Alan Grant tries to solve the mystery of Richard III and the murder of the princes in the Tower.

Delilah Green Doesn't Care / Ashley Herring Blake (Romance)

Pressured into photographing her estranged step-sister's wedding, Delilah Green reluctantly returns home to Bright Falls where she finds herself falling for one of the stuck-up bridesmaids after the pair are forced together during party preparations.



The Four Winds / Kristin Hannah (Historical Fiction)

“An epic novel of love and heroism and hope, set against the backdrop of one of America's most defining eras-the Great Depression. Texas, 1934. Millions are out of work and a drought has broken the Great Plains. Farmers are fighting to keep their land and their livelihoods as the crops are failing, the water is drying up, and dust threatens to bury them all. One of the darkest periods of the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl era, has arrived with a vengeance. In this uncertain and dangerous time, Elsa Martinelli-like so many of her neighbors-must make an agonizing choice: fight for the land she loves or go west, to California, in search of a better life. The Four Winds is an indelible portrait of America and the American Dream, as seen through the eyes of one indomitable woman whose courage and sacrifice will come to define a generation” -Provided by publisher.

The Ice Cream Queen of Orchard Street / Susan Jane Gilman (Historical Fiction)

Russian immigrant Malka arrives in 1913 Manhattan, where she struggles to survive and learns trade secrets from an Italian ice peddler before setting off across America in an ice cream truck.

**** *A Lesson Before Dying*** / Ernest Gaines (Historical Fiction)

A young illiterate African American man witnesses two black robbers kill a white store owner in Louisiana in the late 1940s, and he is the one convicted.

*****Lessons in Chemistry*** / Bonnie Garmus (Historical Fiction)

"Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing as an average woman. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with—of all things—her mind. True chemistry results. But like science, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later Elizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single mother, but the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show *Supper at Six*. Elizabeth's unusual approach to cooking ('combine one tablespoon acetic acid with a pinch of sodium chloride') proves revolutionary. But as her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo" -Publisher's website.

Mademoiselle Chanel / C.W. Gortner (Historical Fiction)

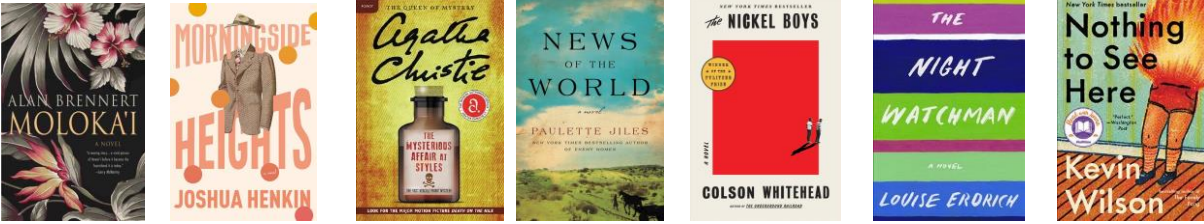
A creative reimagining of the life of iconic fashion designer Coco Chanel traces the development of her exceptional sewing skills in an orphanage, her transformation into a couturier, and the private struggles behind her subsequent fame.

The Maid / Nita Prose (Mystery)

"Molly Dunn is not like everyone else. She struggles with social skills and interprets people literally. Her gran used to interpret the world for her, codifying it into simple rules that Molly could live by. Since Gran died a few months ago, twenty-five-year-old Molly has had to navigate life's complexities all by herself. No matter--she throws herself with gusto into her work as a hotel maid. ... But Molly's orderly life is turned on its head the day she enters the suite of the infamous and wealthy Charles Black, only to find it in a state of disarray and Mr. Black himself very dead in his bed. Before she knows what's happening, Molly's odd demeanor has the police targeting her as their lead suspect... A Clue-like, locked-room mystery and a heartwarming journey of the spirit, *The Maid* explores what it means to be the same as everyone else and yet entirely different--and reveals that all mysteries can be solved through connection to the human heart" - Provided by publisher.

A Man Called Ove / Fredrik Backman (Literary Fiction)

A curmudgeon hides a terrible personal loss beneath a cranky and short-tempered exterior while clashing with new neighbors, a boisterous family whose chattiness and habits lead to unexpected friendship.



Molokai / Alan Brennert (Historical Fiction)

Seven-year-old Rachel is forcibly removed from her family's 1890s Honolulu home when she contracts leprosy and is placed in a settlement, where she loses a series of new friends before new medical discoveries enable her to reenter the world.

Morningside Heights / Joshua Henkin (General Fiction)

"When Pru Steiner met and married Spence Robin--her dazzling young hotshot English professor at Columbia--she thought she knew what she was signing up for. But thirty years later, when Spence develops early-onset Alzheimer's, the peaceful (if ambivalent) life Pru has built for herself begins to crumble. Spence is no longer the Great Man she fell in love with, and as his needs become more pronounced, Pru finds herself short on money, overwhelmed by responsibility and, for the first time in decades, in need of companionship. Further complicating things is Arlo, Spence's son from an earlier marriage, who feels he has never lived up to his father's expectations, and who might be Spence's best hope. Moving and deeply felt, *Morningside Heights* is a warm-hearted story about love in the face of illness, about the support networks that surround us, and about what a marriage means when your partner is no longer the person you fell in love with" - Provided by publisher.

The Mysterious Affair at Styles / Agatha Christie (Mystery)

When a wealthy, elderly woman is poisoned, Belgian detective Hercule Poirot seeks the murderer among a large group of friends and relatives. First book introducing Hercule Poirot.

News of the World / Paulette Jiles (Historical Fiction)

"In the aftermath of the Civil War, an aging itinerant news reader agrees to transport a young captive of the Kiowa back to her people in this exquisitely rendered, morally complex, multilayered novel of historical fiction from the author of *Enemy Women* that explores the boundaries of family, responsibility, honor, and trust." - Provided by publisher.

*****The Nickel Boys: A Novel*** / Colson Whitehead (Historical Fiction)

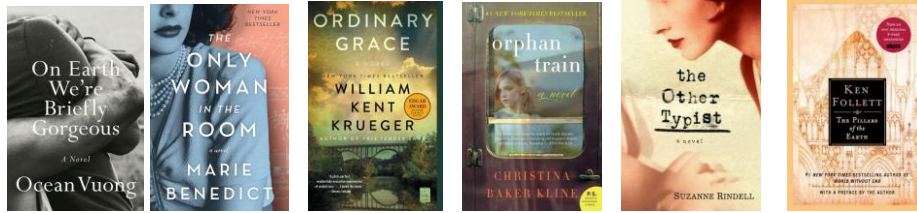
The story of two African American boys sentenced to an abusive reform school in Jim Crow-era Florida.

*****The Night Watchman*** / Louise Erdrich (Literary Fiction / Cultural Heritage)

Sweeping novel set in the 1950s that powerfully weaves together the story of past and future generations of Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, who carried the fight against Native dispossession from rural North Dakota to Washington, D.C.

Nothing to See Here / Kevin Wilson (Humorous Fiction)

A most unusual story of female friendships, parental love, and spontaneous combustion.



On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous: A Novel / Ocean Vuong (Literary Fiction)

Written in the form of a letter from a Vietnamese American son to his illiterate mother, this story unearths their family's past and present while delving into a brutally honest exploration of race, class, and masculinity.

The Only Woman in the Room / Marie Benedict (Historical Fiction)

Hedy Kiesler is lucky. Her beauty leads to a starring role in a controversial film and marriage to a powerful Austrian arms dealer, allowing her to evade Nazi persecution despite her Jewish heritage. But Hedy is also intelligent. At lavish Vienna dinner parties, she overhears the Third Reich's plans. One night in 1937, desperate to escape her controlling husband and the rise of the Nazis, she disguises herself and flees her husband's castle. She lands in Hollywood, where she becomes Hedy Lamarr, screen star. But Hedy is keeping a secret even more shocking than her Jewish heritage: she is a scientist. She has an idea that might help the country and that might ease her guilt for escaping alone -- if anyone will listen to her.

*****Ordinary Grace*** / William Kent Krueger (Psychological/ Historical Fiction)

Looking back at a tragic event that occurred during his thirteenth year, Frank Drum explores how a complicated web of secrets, adultery, and betrayal shattered his Methodist family and their small 1961 Minnesota community.

*****The Orphan Train*** / Christina Kline (Historical Fiction)

Close to aging out of the foster care system, Molly Ayer takes a position helping an elderly woman named Vivian and discovers that they are more alike than different as she helps Vivian solve a mystery from her past.

The Other Typist / Suzanne Rindell (Historical Fiction)

Working as a typist for the NYC Police Department in 1923, Rose Baker documents confessions of harrowing crimes and struggles with changing gender roles while clinging to her Victorian ideals and searching for nurturing companionship before becoming obsessed with a glamorous newcomer and her world of bobbed hair, smoking and speakeasies.

**** *The Pillars of the Earth* / Ken Follett (Historical Fiction)**

Set in twelfth-century England, this epic of kings and peasants juxtaposes the building of a magnificent church with the violence and treachery that often characterized the Middle Ages.



***A Reliable Wife* / Robert Goolrick (Historical Fiction)**

Ralph Truitt, a wealthy businessperson with a troubled past who lives in a remote nineteenth-century Wisconsin town, has advertised for a reliable wife; and his ad is answered by Catherine Land, a woman who makes every effort to hide her own dark secrets.

***Remarkably Bright Creatures* / Shelby Van Pelt (General Fiction)**

"After Tova Sullivan's husband died, she began working the night shift at the Sowell Bay Aquarium, mopping floors and tidying up. Keeping busy has always helped her cope, which she's been doing since her eighteen-year-old son, Erik, mysteriously vanished on a boat in Puget Sound over thirty years ago. Tova becomes acquainted with curmudgeonly Marcellus, a giant Pacific octopus living at the aquarium. Marcellus knows more than anyone can imagine but wouldn't dream of lifting one of his eight arms for his human captors—until he forms a remarkable friendship with Tova. Ever the detective, Marcellus deduces what happened the night Tova's son disappeared. And now Marcellus must use every trick his old invertebrate body can muster to unearth the truth for her before it's too late. Shelby Van Pelt's debut novel is a gentle reminder that sometimes taking a hard look at the past can help uncover a future that once felt impossible." - Provided by publisher.

**** *The Snow Child* / Eowyn Ivey (Magical Realism)**

1920s Alaska is a difficult place for Jack and Mabel. Drifting apart, the childless couple discover Faina, a young girl living alone in the wilderness. Soon, the couple come to love Faina as their own. But when they learn a surprising truth about the girl, their lives change in profound ways.

**** *Such a Fun Age* / Kiley Reid (Coming of Age / Literary Fiction)**

A page-turning story about race and privilege, set around a young black babysitter, her well-intentioned employer, and a surprising connection that threatens to undo them both.

***The Summer Book* / Tove Jansson (Domestic / Literary Fiction)**

Meet Sophia, a six-year-old awakening to existence, and her grandmother, nearing the end of hers, as they spend the summer on a tiny unspoiled island in the Gulf of Finland.

*****The Underground Railroad: A Novel*** / Colson Whitehead (Historical Fiction)

A magnificent tour de force chronicling a young slave's adventures as she makes a desperate bid for freedom in the antebellum South.

Non-Fiction titles:



Ace / Angela Chen

"Ace delves into the lives of those who identify using the little-known sexual orientation of asexuality and shows what all of us can learn-about desire, identity, culture, and relationships-when we use an asexual lens to see the world" -Provided by publisher.

*****The Boys in the Boat*** / Daniel Brown

Meet a group of working-class youths from the University of Washington rowing team, emerged from obscurity to defeat a field of elite international rivals at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Sports fans who love a good "Cinderella story" will cheer this fast-paced, emotionally charged account of the players' and coaches' struggles set against stark Depression-era realities.

A Crack in the Edge of the World / Simon Winchester

A Crack in the Edge of the World is the definitive account of the San Francisco earthquake and a fascinating exploration of a legendary event that changed the way we look at the planet on which we live.

Dead Wake / Erik Larson

A chronicle of the sinking of the Lusitania discusses the factors that led to the tragedy and the contributions of such figures as Woodrow Wilson, bookseller Charles Lauriat, and architect Theodate Pope Riddle.

Dementia Reimagined: building a life of joy and dignity from beginning to end / Tia Powell, MD

"The cultural and medical history of dementia and Alzheimer's disease by a leading psychiatrist and bioethicist who urges us to turn our focus from cure to care. In demystifying dementia, Dr. Powell helps us understand it with clearer eyes, from the point of view of both physician and caregiver. Ultimately, she wants us all to know that dementia is not only about loss--it's also about the preservation of dignity and hope" -Provided by publisher.

Gender Queer: A Memoir / Maia Kobabe

"Maia Kobabe, who uses e/em/eir pronouns, thought that a comic of reading statistics would be the last autobiographical comic e would ever write. Started as a way to explain to eir family what it means to be nonbinary and asexual, Gender Queer is more than a personal story: it is a useful and touching guide on gender identity— what it means and how to think about it— for advocates, friends, and humans everywhere." - Provided by publisher.

Heart Berries: a memoir / Terese Marie Mailhot

Powerful, poetic memoir of a woman's coming of age on the Seabird Island Indian Reservation in the Pacific Northwest, capturing her troubled childhood, early and tumultuous motherhood, into her adult struggles with mental health and personal identity.



*****Hidden Figures*** / Margot Lee Shetterly

An account of the previously unheralded but pivotal contributions of NASA's African American women mathematicians to America's space program; describes how they were segregated from their white counterparts by Jim Crow laws in spite of their groundbreaking successes.

*****Into the Wild*** / Jon Krakauer

In April 1992, a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter.

It Came from the Closet: Queer reflections on horror / edited by Joe Vallese

"Twenty-five narrative essays by contemporary LGBTQ writers reflecting on queerness in horror film, from Hitchcock to Halloween." -Provided by publisher.

Killers of the Flower Moon: the Osage murders and the birth of the FBI / David Grann

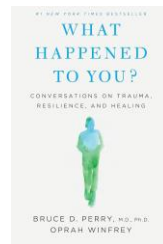
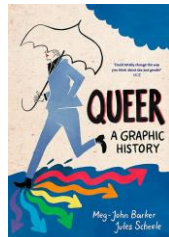
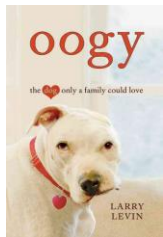
Presents a true account of the early twentieth-century murders of dozens of wealthy Osage and law-enforcement officials, citing the contributions and missteps of a fledgling FBI that eventually uncovered one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history.

**** *The Latehomecomer*** / Kao Kalia Yang

Presents the journey from refugee camp to America and the hardships and joys of a family's struggle to adapt in a strange culture while holding onto traditions that are passed down from her beloved grandmother.

**** *The Library Book*** / Susan Orlean

On the morning of April 29, 1986, a fire broke out at the Los Angeles Public Library. Susan Orlean tells the story of the aftermath, the search for the cause, and the enduring love of libraries.



Oogy: the dog only a family could love / Larry Levin

Presents the heartwarming story of a puppy brought back from the brink of death, and the family he adopted.

Queer: A Graphic History / Meg-John Barker and Jules Scheele

A kaleidoscope of characters from the diverse worlds of pop-culture, film, activism and academia guide us on a journey through the ideas, people and events that have shaped queer theory. From identity politics and gender roles to privilege and exclusion, the book explores how we came to view sex, gender and sexuality in the ways that we do; how these ideas get tangled up with our culture and our understanding of biology, psychology and sexology; and how these views have been disputed and challenged.

Waking Up White / Debby Irving

For twenty-five years, Debby Irving sensed inexplicable racial tensions in her personal and professional relationships. As a colleague and neighbor, she worried about offending people she dearly wanted to befriend. As an arts administrator, she didn't understand why her diversity efforts lacked traction. As a teacher, she found her best efforts to reach out to students and families of color left her wondering what she was missing. Then, in 2009, one moment launched an adventure of discovery and insight that drastically shifted her worldview and upended her life plan.

What Happened to You?: conversations on trauma, resilience, and healing / Bruce D. Perry, M.D.,Ph.D.and Oprah Winfrey

Oprah Winfrey, sharing stories from her own past, and a renowned brain development and trauma expert discuss the impact of trauma and adversity and how healing must begin with a shift to asking, "What happened to you?" rather than "What's wrong with you?".

** Notable Book or Award Winner