

Oldham County Public Library Book Club Kits

Here are the books the Oldham County Public Library has available in kits for book clubs. Each kit contains at least 10 paperback copies. An * at the end of a description means a large-print copy is also included in the kit. **Kits check out for eight (8) weeks and can be renewed for two (2) weeks if not reserved. Late fees are \$1 a day. Contact Bethany Morse, Public Services and Outreach Librarian, for more information or to obtain a kit for your club: (502) 222-9713 ext. 302 or bethanym@oldhampl.org.**

Web resources for book club kits:

http://www.oldhampl.org/bookclub_kits/index.html

Abundance, by Sena Jeter Naslund (Historical Fiction, Kentucky author, 2006) A fictional tale of the life of Marie Antoinette presents the story of a teenage empress's daughter who is forced to leave her family home to marry the future king of France and who rebels against the formality and rigid protocol of court life. Naslund is writer-in-residence at the University of Louisville. 539 p. *Also available to download as an audio book.*

The Alchemist, by Paulo Coelho (Fiction, 1988) An Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago travels from his homeland in Spain to the Egyptian desert in search of a treasure buried in the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself king, and an alchemist, all whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest. No one knows what the treasure is, or if Santiago will be able to surmount the obstacles along the way. But what starts out as a journey to find worldly goods turns into a discovery of the treasure found within. 167 p.

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life, By Barbara Kingsolver, with Steven L. Hopp and Camille Kingsolver ; original drawings by Richard A. Houser (Memoir, Kentucky author, 2007) Barbara Kingsolver and her family journey away from the industrial-food pipeline to a rural life in which they vow to buy only food raised in their own neighborhood, grow it themselves, or learn to live without it. 370 p.

The Art of Racing in the Rain, By Garth Stein (Fiction, 2008) A heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of family, love, loyalty, and hope, *The Art of Racing in the Rain* is a beautifully crafted and captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life...as only a dog could tell it. 321 p.

Bad Girls of the Bible, by Liz Curtis Higgs (Non-fiction, Kentucky author, 1999) Study the Bible with 10 of the Bible's best-known *femmes fatales*. Each book includes a study guide and kit includes a workbook. 276 p.

Bitsy's Bait & BBQ, by Pamela Morsi (Fiction, 2007) Against the advice of her sister, Katy takes her divorce settlement and purchases a B&B in the Ozarks. Emma hopes that a Bed and Breakfast will be a good change for her 6-year old son, little realizing that she has instead purchased a Bait and Barbeque. Emma and her sister are out of their depth, but actually manage to get the business up and running. New trouble develops when Katy's husband starts a custody battle over their son. 342 p.

The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game, by Michael Lewis (Non-Fiction, 2006) The young man at the center of this story will one day be among the most highly paid athletes in the National Football League. When we first meet him, he is one of thirteen children by a mother addicted to crack; he does not know his real name, his father, his birthday, or any of the things a child might learn in school - such as, say, how to read or write. Nor has he ever touched a football. What changes? He takes up football, and school, after a rich, Evangelical, Republican family plucks him from the mean streets. Their love is the first great force that alters the world's perception of the boy, whom they adopt. The second force is the evolution of professional football itself into a game where the quarterback must be protected at any cost. Our protagonist turns out to be the priceless combination of size, speed, and agility necessary to guard the quarterback's greatest vulnerability: his blind side.--BOOK JACKET. 299p.

The Book Thief, by Markus Zusak (Fiction, 2006) A young, illiterate German girl steals books during WWII as her family hides a Jew in the basement. *Also available to download as an audio book.* 576 p.

Bridges of Madison County, by Robert James Waller (fiction, 1992) This is the story of Robert Kincaid, a world-class photographer, and Francesca Johnson, an Iowa farm wife. Kincaid, fifty-two, is a photographer for National Geographic. A strange, almost mystical traveler of Asian deserts, distant rivers, and ancient cities, he is a man who feels out of harmony with his time. Francesca Johnson, forty-five and once a young war bride from Italy, lives in the hills of south Iowa with flickering memories of her girlhood dreams. Each of them is content, yet when Robert Kincaid drives through the heat and just of an Iowa summer and turns into her farm lane looking for directions, their illusions fall away and they are joined in an experience of uncommon and stunning beauty, an experience that will haunt them forever. -BOOK JACKET 171p.

Chosen by a Horse, by Susan Richards (Non-fiction, 2006) An elegant and often heartbreaking tale filled with animal characters as complicated and lively as their human counterparts, this is an inspiring story of courage and hope and the ways in which all love—even an animal's—has the power to heal. 256 p.

The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother, by James McBride (Memoir, 1996) This is the remarkable story of Ruth McBride Jordan, the two good men she married, and the 12 good children she raised. Jordan, born Rachel Shilsky, a Polish Jew, immigrated to America soon after birth; as an adult she moved to New York City, leaving her family and faith behind in Virginia. Jordan met and married a black man, making her isolation even more profound. The book is a success story, a testament to one woman's true heart, solid values, and indomitable will. Ruth Jordan battled not only racism but also poverty to raise her children and, despite being sorely tested, never wavered. (*Amazon Reviews*) 256p.

Creeker: A Woman's Journey, by Linda Scott DeRosier (Non-fiction, 1999, Kentucky author) A humorous and poignant memoir of an educated and cultured woman coming of age in Appalachia. It is the story of relationships, the impact of the past on the present, and DeRosier's struggle to maintain a sense of self while remaining loyal to the people and traditions that sustained her. A top-seller at the annual Kentucky Book Fair in Frankfort. 248 p.

Eat, Pray, Love, by Elizabeth Gilbert (Non-fiction, 2006) Gilbert leaves behind an excruciating divorce, tumultuous affair, and debilitating depression as she sets off on a yearlong quest to bridge the gulf between body, mind, and spirit. 334 p. *Also available to download as an audio book.*

Gilead, by Marilynne Robinson (Fiction, 2004) As the Reverend John Ames approaches the hour of his own death, he writes a letter to his son chronicling three previous generations of his family, a story that stretches back to the Civil War and reveals uncomfortable family secrets. Winner of the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. 256 p. * *Also available to download as an audio book.*

The Glass Castle: A Memoir, by Jeannette Walls (Non-fiction, 2005) Gossip columnist Jeannette Walls tells the remarkable story of her life growing up the child of nomadic alcoholic parents who finally settle in West Virginia. 288 p.

The Good Earth, By Pearl S. Buck (Fiction, 1931) In the sixty years since this remarkable novel won the Pulitzer Prize, it has become one of the great modern classics. In it, Pearl Buck portrays a China when the last emperor reigned and the vast political and social upheavals of the twentieth century were but distant rumblings. This moving story of the honest farmer Wang Lung and his selfless wife O-lan illuminates the sweeping changes that have occurred in the lives of the Chinese people during this century. 547 p.

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society, By Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows (Fiction, 2008) London, 1946: writer Juliet Ashton receives a letter from a stranger, a founding member of The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society. And so begins a remarkable tale of Guernsey during the German occupation, and about a society as extraordinary as its name. 278 p.

Hannah Coulter, by Wendell Berry (Fiction, 2004, Kentucky author) The most recent installment in Wendell Berry's long story about the citizens of fictional Port William, Kentucky. In his unforgettable prose, readers learn of the Coulters' children, of the Feltners and Branches, and how survivors "live right on." Berry is the author of more than 40 books of fiction, poetry and essays. He has farmed a hillside in his native Henry County, Kentucky, for more than 30 years. A former professor of English at the University of Kentucky, he has received numerous awards for his work, including the T. S. Eliot Award, the Aiken Taylor Award for Poetry, and the John Hay Award of the Orion Society. 190 p.

Icy Sparks, by Gwyn Hyman Rubio (Fiction, 1998, Kentucky author) Set in the mountains of eastern Kentucky, this novel provides an insightful snapshot of life in rural Appalachia in the 1950s through the eyes of Icy Sparks, who suffers from Tourette's Syndrome. A 1998 *New York Times* Notable Book and a 1999 Oprah's Book Club pick. 308 p. *Also available to download as an audio book.*

The Kite Runner, by Khaled Hosseini (Fiction, 2003) A 2004 ALA notable book, *The Kite Runner* traces the unlikely friendship of a wealthy Afghan youth and a servant's son, in a tale

that spans the final days of Afghanistan's monarchy through the atrocities of the present day. Also a 2003 winner of *School Library Journal's* Adult Books for High School Students and the 2004 Alex Award for Best Fiction for Young Adults. 368 p. *

Life of Pi, by Yann Martel (Fiction, 2001) Winner of the prestigious Booker Prize in 2002, *Life of Pi* explores issues of religion and spirituality through the eyes of protagonist Piscine "Pi" Molitor Patel, an Indian boy who survives 227 days shipwrecked in the Pacific Ocean. The book, written by a Canadian author, was also chosen for CBC Radio's *Canada Reads* 2003 competition. 401 p. *Also available to download as an audio book.*

The Memory Keeper's Daughter, by Kim Edwards (Fiction, 2005, Kentucky author) In a tale spanning 25 years, a doctor delivers his newborn twins during a freak snowstorm in Lexington and, rashly deciding to protect his wife from their baby daughter's affliction with Down Syndrome, turns her over to a nurse, who secretly raises the child. 401 p. * *Also available to download as an audio book.*

Mercy, By Jodi Picoult (Fiction, 1995) Police chief of a small Massachusetts town, Cameron McDonald makes the toughest arrest of his life when his own cousin Jamie comes to him and confesses outright that he has killed his terminally ill wife out of mercy. Now, a heated murder trial plunges the town into upheaval, and drives a wedge into a contented marriage: Cameron, aiding the prosecution in their case against Jamie, is suddenly at odds with his devoted wife, Allie -- seduced by the idea of a man so in love with his wife that he'd grant all her wishes, even her wish to end her life. And when an inexplicable attraction leads to a shocking betrayal, Allie faces the hardest questions of the heart: when does love cross the line of moral obligation? And what does it mean to truly love another? 400 p.

My Sister's Keeper, by Jodi Picoult (Fiction, 2004) Conceived to provide a bone marrow match for her leukemia-stricken sister, teenage Anna begins to question her moral obligations in light of countless medical procedures and decides to fight for the right to make decisions about her own body. Winner: 2005 *School Library Journal* Best Fiction for Young Adults and 2005 Alex Award for outstanding adult book that teenagers can enjoy; 2004 *Booklist* Editors' Choice Best Fiction for Young Adults; 432 p.

The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency, by Alexander McCall Smith (Fiction, 1998) Called "a little gem of a book" by *Publisher's Weekly*, this is the first of eight novels in the worldwide bestselling *No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* series. Mma (aka Precious) Ramotswe is Botswana's only female private detective. You'll follow the tales of a missing child, a wayward daughter, a philandering partner and a curious conman. Mma Ramotswe uses her unconventional methods, as well as her warmth, wit and intuition on her way to solving the problems of her clients, along with some help from her friend Mr J. L. B. Matekoni, proprietor of Tlokweng Road Speedy Motors. The book also explores conditions in Botswana in a way that is both penetrating and light. Images of this large woman driving her tiny white van or sharing a cup of bush tea with a friend or client while working a case will linger pleasantly. 235 p.

One Thousand White Women: The Journals of May Dodd, by Jim Fergus (Fiction, 1998) Author Jim Fergus was doing research for a biography on Little Wolf, chief of the Cheyenne, when he came across this bit of information: Little Wolf had proposed trading 1,000 white women for 1,000 horses as a peacekeeping gesture with the U.S. government. The idea captured Fergus's imagination, and he wrote a novel as if the exchange actually happened. *One Thousand White Women*, a regional book award winner of the Mountains & Plains Booksellers Association, is considered an "alternate-history" novel. It is the story of the 1854 western journey of the women as described by May Dodd, a high-society woman released from an asylum where she had been incarcerated by her family for an affair. 304 p. *Also available to download as an audio book.*

Olive Kitteridge, by Elizabeth Strout (Fiction, 2008) At the edge of the continent, Crosby, Maine, may seem like nowhere, but seen through this brilliant writer's eyes, it's in essence the whole world, and the lives that are lived there are filled with all of the grand human drama—desire, despair, jealousy, hope, and love.—BOOK JACKET *Pulitzer Prize Winner. 270p.*

Peace Like a River, by Lief Enger (Fiction, 2001) The quiet 1960s midwestern life of the Land family – father Jeremiah, and children, Reuben, Davy and Swede – is upended when Davy kills two teenage boys who have come to harm the family. On the morning of his sentencing, Davy escapes from his cell and the Lands set out in search of him. Their search is at once a heroic quest, a tragedy, a love story, and a haunting meditation on the possibility of magic in the everyday world. The 2002 "Book Sense Book of the Year" award-winner for adult fiction (given annually to books considered "hidden treasures" by the American Booksellers Association) and the 2002 Alex Award winner for Best Fiction for Young Adults. 313 p.

Pretty Birds, by Scott Simon (Fiction, 2005) This novel about Sarajevo in 1992 tells the story about a time and place when civilians fought back. Simon has an eye for the telling detail and for the larger picture: the ineffectual Blue Helmets (UN troops), the shaky alliance between Bosnian Muslims and fundamentalist Arabs. He even manages a cliffhanger ending. A magnificent tribute, not just to the Sarajevans whose siege Simon reported, but to the indestructible human spirit. (*Kirkus Reviews*, March 15, 2005). 368 p.

Pride and Prejudice, by Jane Austen (Classic Fiction, 18th century) Wealthy Mr. Darcy and spirited Elizabeth Bennett dislike each other at first sight, and each must contend with their pride and prejudices while Elizabeth's mother plots economically advantageous marriages for all her daughters. (*Novelist*) This 2007 paperback edition of Austen's classic novel includes trivia, notes, lists, facts and inspiration on almost every page, as well as group discussion questions. 360 p. *Also available to download as an audio book.*

Quaker Summer, by Lisa Samson (Christian Fiction, 2007) *Publishers Weekly Review*: One of the most powerful voices in Christian fiction, Samson delivers what seems, on the surface, to be just another Christian women's novel, but in reality is a staggering examination of the Christian conscience. Unlike many Christian novelists, Samson does not tidily resolve every single problem her heroine faces, but instead paints an emotionally and spiritually luminous portrait of a soul beckoned by God. (*Publishers Weekly*, vol 254, issue 4, p161) 320 p.

foreword: "I began this book, without exactly knowing I was doing so, on September 12, 2001. ... This is a collection of essays about who we seem to be, what remains for us to live for, and what I believe we could make of ourselves. It began in a moment but ended with all of time." 267 p.

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan, by Lisa See (Fiction, 2005) A story of friendship set in 19th-century China follows an elderly woman and her companion as they communicate their hopes, dreams, joys, and tragedies through a unique secret language. 272 p. *Also available to download as an audio book.*

Sophie's World, By Jostein Gaarder (Fiction, 1994) One day fourteen-year-old Sophie Amundsen comes home from school to find in her mailbox two notes, each with a question: "Who are you?" and "Where does the world come from?" From this irresistible beginning, Sophie Becomes obsessed with questions that take her far beyond what she knows of her Norwegian village. Through successive letters, she enrolls in a kind of correspondence course, covering Socrates to Sartre with a mysterious philosopher. 507 p.

Suite Francaise, by Irene Nemirovsky (Fiction, 2004) Considered to be the earliest work of literary fiction about World War II and written during the actual period that it depicts, *Suite Francaise* is the story of life in France under the Nazi occupation. It includes two parts – "Storm in June," set amid the 1940 exodus from Paris, and "Dolce," set in a German-occupied village. Nemirovsky, a French writer of Russian Jewish origin, was only able to complete two installments of her planned five-part series. She was arrested in July 1942 as a Jew and died in Auschwitz of typhus. Her two daughters, thinking the notebook containing the novel was a journal that would be too painful to read, preserved the volume but did not examine it until 1998. A 2006 *New York Times Notable Book*. 416 p. * *Also available to download as an audio book.*

The Sweet Potato Queens' Book of Love, by Jill Conner Browne (Humor, Non-fiction, 1999) Is your club looking for something light? Need a book that will make you laugh? A lot? Then this is the book to try! The first in a five-book series, the Sweet Potato Queens will have you serving up "Danger Pudding" and discussing not only "The Five Men You Must Have," but "Men Who May Need Killing." 210 p.

A Thousand Splendid Suns, by Khaled Hosseini (Fiction, author of [The Kite Runner](#), 2007) Both born in Afghanistan a generation apart and with very different ideas about love and family, Mariam and Laila are brought together by war, by loss and by fate. As they endure the ever escalating dangers around them -- in their home as well as in the streets of Kabul -- they form a bond that will ultimately alter the course of their lives and the lives of the next generation. 415 p.

Three Cups of Tea, by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin (Non-fiction, 2006) In 1993, Greg Mortenson was the survivor of a failed mountain-climbing attempt, wandering lost through Pakistan's Karakoram Himalaya. After he was nursed back to health by the people of an impoverished Pakistani village, Mortenson promised to return and build them a school. From that rash, earnest promise grew Mortenson's one-man mission to counteract extremism by

building schools, especially for girls, throughout the breeding ground of the Taliban. Award-winning journalist David Oliver Relin has collaborated on this spellbinding account of Mortenson's accomplishments in a region where Americans are often feared and hated. *Time Magazine* "Asia Book of the Year;" Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Nonfiction Award. 349 p.

Twilight, By Stephanie Meyer (Fiction, 2005) The first book of the Twilight Saga introduces Bella Swan and Edward Cullen, a pair of star-crossed lovers whose forbidden relationship ripens against a backdrop of small-town suspicion and a mysterious coven of vampires. 498 p.

Water for Elephants, by Sara Gruen (Fiction, 2006) Ninety-something-year-old Jacob Jankowski remembers his time in the circus as a young man during the Great Depression, and his friendship with Marlena, the star of the equestrian act, and Rosie, the elephant, who gave them hope. Winner of the 2007 "Book Sense of the Year" award for adult fiction (given annually to books considered "hidden treasures" by the American Booksellers Association) and the 2007 Alex Award for Best Fiction for Young Adults. 352 p. *Also available to download as an audio book.*

A Year of Living Biblically, by A. J. Jacobs (Non-Fiction 2007) From the bestselling author of *The Know-It-All* comes a fascinating and timely exploration of religion and the Bible. Raised in a secular family but increasingly interested in the relevance of faith in our modern world, A.J. Jacobs decides to dive in headfirst and attempt to obey the Bible as literally as possible for one full year. He vows to follow the Ten Commandments. To be fruitful and multiply. To love his neighbor. But also to obey the hundreds of less publicized rules: to avoid wearing clothes made of mixed fibers; to play a ten-string harp; to stone adulterers. The resulting spiritual journey is at once funny and profound, reverent and irreverent, personal and universal and will make you see history's most influential book with new eyes. 332 p.

The Zoo Keeper's Wife, By Diane Ackerman (Non-Fiction 2007) Jan and Antonina Zabinski were Polish Christian zookeepers horrified by Nazi racism, who managed to save over three hundred people. Yet their story has fallen between the seams of history...Diane Ackerman recreates Antonina's life as "the zookeeper's wife," responsible for her own family, the zoo animals, and their "Guests" - Resistance activists and refugee Jews, many of whom Jan had smuggled from the Warsaw Ghetto. Ackerman explores the role of nature in both kindness and savagery, and she unravels the disturbing obsession at the core of Nazism: both a worship of nature and its violation, as humans sought to control the genome of the entire planet.--BOOK JACKET. 268 p.