

Fiction News

The Ridgefield Library's Fiction Newsletter



August 2017

AUTHORS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Allegra Goodman

Allegra Goodman's engaging stories about modern life convey a richness of character that goes well beyond the everyday settings. The worlds she creates are carefully crafted, full of closely observed detail and subtle events - events that provoke consideration of important personal

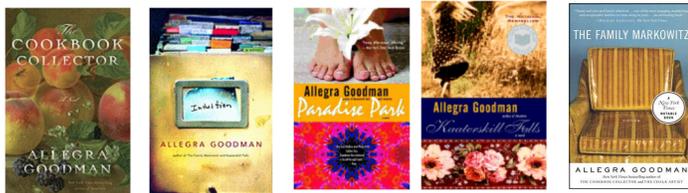
issues from religious faith to moral dilemmas that arise in business or academics to romantic loyalty. Readers are drawn in to the lives of Goodman's realistic and complex characters, and care about how they sort out the tangles they weave themselves into.



Joshilyn Jackson

Joshilyn Jackson writes refreshing, humorous Southern fiction with a twist: her picturesque settings are rife with dysfunction, her quirky characters are realistically imperfect, and her plots are full of surprises. Taking on themes of family obligations and human nature, Jackson doesn't ignore the darker side of the

South - but her affection for it comes across clearly through her astute observations, ample levity, keen eye for character, and effortless storytelling.



Partial List:

The Chalk Artist (2017)

See Staff Picks.

The Cookbook Collector (2010)

While executive Emily questions her choices about her career and a long-distance relationship with a successful man, her environmental activist sister, Jessamine, struggles with her own doubts about her beliefs and love affair.

Intuition (2006)

A trio of researchers becomes caught up in the desperate quest for a financial grant from the Philpott, a prestigious research laboratory in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Paradise Park (2001)

After being abandoned by her boyfriend in Honolulu, Sharon Spiegelman embarks on a spiritual quest in search of enlightenment, a journey that takes her from the Greater Love Salvation Church and the Consciousness Meditation Center back to Judaism and to true love.

Kaaterskill Falls (1998)

A small Orthodox Jewish sect spends summers in a Dutch community, and in 1976, the townspeople begin to resent the intrusion, and female members of the group chafe under its laws and restrictions.

The Family Markowitz (1996)

Told through weddings, deaths, holiday dinners, and dreams, the story of three generations of the Markowitz family is revealed.

Partial List:

The Almost Sisters (2017)

Leia finds her life is spiraling out of control. First she discovers she is pregnant from a one night stand, then she receives a phone call that her beloved grandmother is acting erratically. Meanwhile, she finds her stepsister in the middle of a marital crisis. Returning to her grandmother's small hometown in Alabama to figure out the future, Leia is confronted by the past including a dark family secret - Janine Walsh for *Library Reads*

The Opposite of Everyone (2016)

A fiercely independent divorce lawyer learns the power of family and connection when she receives a cryptic message from her estranged mother in this bittersweet, witty novel.

A Grown-up Kind of Pretty (2012)

Fifteen-year-old Mosey Slocumb - spirited, sassy, and on the cusp of womanhood - is shaken when a small grave is unearthed in the backyard, and determined to figure out why it's there. Liza, her stroke-ravaged mother, is haunted by choices she made as a teenager. But it is Jenny, Mosey's big-hearted grandmother, and who will stop at nothing to defend their future.

The Girl Who Stopped Swimming (2008)

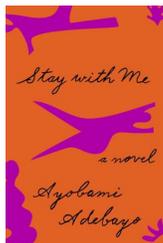
Her suburban life thrown into chaos when she is visited by the ghost of a thirteen-year-old girl who has just drowned under suspicious circumstances, Laurel begins questioning the characters of her neighbors with the help of her unpredictable sister.

Gods in Alabama by (2005)

Ten years after leaving, Arlene Fleet finds she still has not escaped Possett, Alabama, when an old classmate turns up asking questions about a crime Arlene committed in her youth, forcing her into a confrontation with her past.

NEW FICTION

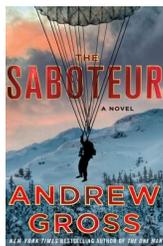
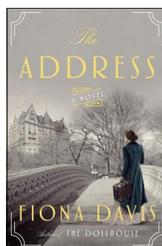
(Annotations from BookLetters and NovelList)



Stay with Me by Ayobami Adebayo. Yejide and Akin have been married since they met and fell in love at university. Secure in the love of her husband in spite of cultural pressures for him to have a polygamous marriage, Yejide is overwhelmed by shock and pain when her initial inability to become pregnant compels her husband to take a second wife, a situation that leads to her own desperate and fateful quest to conceive a child.

The Address by Fiona Davis.

This compelling novel explores the thin lines between love and loss, success and ruin, passion and madness, all hidden behind the walls of The Dakota - New York City's most famous residence. Through the story of two women living 100 years apart, Fiona Davis once again delivers a compulsively readable novel that peels back the layers of not only a famed institution, but the lives - and lies - of the beating hearts within.

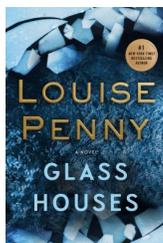
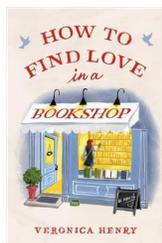


The Saboteur by Andrew Gross. Putting aside his personal needs to join the Norwegian resistance during World War II, engineer Kurt Nordstrum makes a daring escape to England to transmit secret evidence of the Nazis' progress towards building an atomic bomb, in a thriller inspired by a true story.

How to Find Love in a Bookshop

by Veronica Henry.

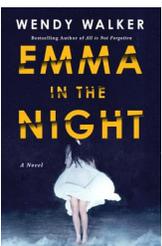
Nightingale Books, nestled on the main street in an idyllic little village, is a cozy haven and welcoming getaway for the literary-minded locals. But owner Emilia Nightingale is struggling to keep the shop open after her beloved father's death, and the temptation to sell is getting stronger. This is an enchanting story of a bookshop, its grieving owner, a supportive literary community, and the extraordinary power of books to heal the heart.



Glass Houses by Louise Penny. When a mysterious figure appears in Three Pines one cold November day, Armand Gamache and the rest of the villagers are curious. Then wary. From the moment its shadow falls over the village, Gamache, now Chief Superintendent of the Surete du Quebec, suspects the creature has deep roots and a dark purpose. What can he do? But when the figure vanishes overnight and a body is discovered, it falls to Gamache to discover if a debt has been paid or levied.

Emma in the Night by Wendy Walker.

Three years ago, the Tanner sisters disappeared: fifteen-year-old Cass and seventeen-year-old Emma. Three years later, Cass returns, without her sister Emma. Her story is one of kidnapping, of a mysterious island where the two were held. But to forensic psychiatrist Dr. Abby Winter, something doesn't add up. Looking deep within this dysfunctional family Dr. Winter uncovers a life where boundaries were violated and a narcissistic parent held sway.



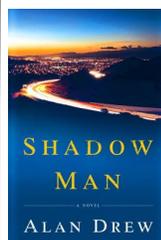
For a more extensive list of new fiction, mystery, and science fiction and fantasy titles, visit www.ridgefieldlibrary.org

STAFF PICKS

Elise's Picks

The Chalk Artist by Allegra Goodman.

Struggling to control her rambunctious classroom and impart a love of literature, Nina, an idealistic first year high school teacher, finds solace in the company of Collin, an easygoing, talented 23-year old artist. Trouble ensues when Nina unwisely decides to introduce Collin to her powerful father, hoping he will offer Collin a job as an illustrator at Arkadia, his hugely successful virtual reality company. Nina and Collin's story is interwoven with another cautionary tale. Unbeknownst to Nina, one of her most promising students, Aidan, has become obsessed, to the point of addiction, with Arkadia's revolutionary new video game. Praised by the *Wall Street Journal* "as a romantic realist who dazzles with wit and compassion," Allegra Goodman's new novel champions the power of literature and teaching and the importance of forging real versus virtual relationships, but she also manages to capture the creativity and seductive beauty of the video gaming world.



Shadow Man by Alan Drew.

Disillusioned with big city policing and trying to save his marriage, LAPD detective Ben Wade moves back to his small hometown. Formerly ranch land that developers have turned into planned communities, Santa Elena prides itself on its excellent schools and peaceful streets, the type of idyllic community where neighbors leave their doors unlocked. Two predators shatter the town's false sense of security, a serial strangler and a formerly well-respected community leader, and Ben finds himself at the center of both investigations. The increasingly desperate manhunt for the strangler hangs on his knowledge of all the hiding places in the hills near the town, but more troubling, only Ben knows why a young swim star may have committed suicide. An engrossing psychological thriller, with a flawed but fascinating lead character, *Shadow Man* has won the respect of reviewers for courageously "exposing truths that most crime fiction doesn't go near." (*Kirkus Reviews*)

Dorothy's Picks

Goodbye, Vitamin by Rachel Khong.

Ruth is having a thirty-something crisis. Her fiancé left her, and she quit her job to move back home to help her parents. Her father, a college history professor, is showing signs of Alzheimer's, and her mother has her own coping issues. When her father's teaching privileges are revoked, one of his younger colleagues engages Ruth in a plot to convince him that he is still employed by the college. In this quirky and endearing novel, Ruth recounts her day-to-day efforts to keep her family in some semblance of normalcy. It is both funny and heartbreaking in the way life can be.



Between Them

REMEMBERING MY PARENTS
Richard Ford

Between Them: Remembering My Parents
by Richard Ford.

Can a child ever really know one's parents? Award-winning novelist Ford explores this question in this moving memoir. Ford's father was a travelling salesman, and in the years between their marriage in 1923 and his birth in 1944, his parents worked as a team going from hotel to hotel with no permanent address. Ford's parents had long thought they would be childless, and his arrival radically changed their lives. His mother stopped accompanying his father on his travels, and for the first time in their marriage his parents spent weekdays apart. Ford explores his parents' lives before his birth and speculates on how his needs changed the trajectory of their relationship. This is both a son's loving tribute to his parents and a testimony to the dignity of their "ordinary" lives.