

Potomac Community Library

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress by Dai Sijie-- During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, two boys are sent to the country for reeducation. Their lives take an unexpected turn when they meet the beautiful daughter of a local tailor and stumble upon a forbidden stash of Western literature.

Bel Canto by Ann Patchett -- When terrorists seize hostages at an embassy party, an unlikely assortment of people is thrown together, including American opera star Roxanne Coss, and Mr. Hosokawa, her biggest fan.

Beloved by Toni Morrison -- After the Civil War ends, Sethe longingly recalls the two-year-old daughter whom she killed when threatened with recapture after escaping from slavery 18 years before.

The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother by James McBride -- The author writes about his mother, who ruled over her family of 12 children with an iron hand, giving them an education and a faith in God but no information about herself. As an adult, James decided to explore his mother's past and his Jewish heritage.

Doomsday Book by Connie Willis -- A crisis linking the past and future strands an Oxford student in the most dangerous year of the Middle Ages.

Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal by Eric Schlosser -- A study of the fast food industry in America examines its internal pitfalls and external effects.

Freshwater Road by Denise Nicholas -- Middle class black Michigan co-ed spends Freedom Summer in rural Mississippi attempting to register black voters. Culture clash for her and readers.

Garden Spells by Sarah Addison Allen --A successful caterer in Bascomb, North Carolina, Claire has always remained tied to the legacy of the Waverly family, until her peaceful life is transformed by Tyler Hughes, an art teacher and new next-door neighbor, and by the return of her prodigal sister, Sydney.

Girl with a Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier -- A poor seventeenth-century servant girl knows her place in the household of the painter Johannes Vermeer, but when he begins to paint her, nasty whispers and rumors circulate throughout the town

Isaac's Storm: A Man, a Time and the Deadliest Hurricane in History by Erik Larson -- This book is based on Isaac Cline's personal accounts of a devastating hurricane that wreaked havoc in Galveston, Texas, in September 1900. After it was all over, more than 8,000 people were dead.

Life of Pi by Yann Martel -- Possessing encyclopedia-like intelligence, unusual zookeeper's son *Pi* Patel sets sail for America, but when the ship sinks, he escapes on a *life* boat and is lost at sea with a dwindling number *of* animals until only he and a hungry Bengal tiger remain.

Like Water for Chocolate by Laura Esquivel -- At the beginning of the 20th century, Tita, the youngest of three daughters, is expected to serve her mother for the rest of her life, but in order to show her love to Pedro, who is engaged to her sister, Tita cooks for him.

The Lottery by Patricia Wood -- Having learned essential life skills from his grandmother that helped him overcome his low IQ, Perry finds himself without a caregiver at the age of thirty-one and wins a fortune by playing the *lottery*, a windfall that brings him more family than he ever wanted.

My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult -- 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.

The Monk Downstairs by Tim Farrington -- After twenty years in a contemplative monastery, Michael Christopher moves into a San Francisco apartment, where he confronts a major spiritual crisis and finds himself drawn to his landlady, Rebecca.

The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency by Alexander McCall Smith -- Working in Gaborone, Botswana, sleuth Precious Ramotswe investigates several local mysteries, including a search for a missing boy and the case of the clinic doctor with different personalities for different days of the week.

Persuasion by Jane Austen -- The story of Anne Elliot and the love she once had for a naval officer. She was persuaded by her family that he was not suitable, and regretfully, she let him slip away. Years later, they meet again.

Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiyama -- Stephen, 20, leaves Hong Kong for Japan to recuperate from tuberculosis just as the Chinese prepare to invade, and in a small town, he develops strong relationships.

Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd -- After her "stand-in mother," a bold black woman named Rosaleen, insults the three biggest racists in town, Lily Owens joins Rosaleen on a journey to Tiburon, South Carolina, where they are taken in by three black, bee-keeping sisters.

Their Eyes were Watching God by Zora Neal Hurston -- Meet the unforgettable Janie Crawford, an articulate African-American woman in the 1930s. Janie's quest for identity, through three marriages, on a journey to her roots, is traced.

Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson -- Greg Mortenson is nursed back to health in a rural Pakistani village after failing in his attempt to climb the second highest mountain in the world, K2. Learning about these people and grateful for their assistance to him, he pledges to build a school in their village. After the founding of the Central Asia Institute and 55 schools later, Mortenson and his co-author, journalist David Oliver Relin, recount the details of living in this dangerous region amidst Taliban supporters hostile toward Americans.

Waiting by Ha Jin -- The story of Lin Kong, an ambitious and dedicated Chinese doctor, who finds himself torn between two very different women--the educated and dynamic nurse with whom he has fallen in love and the traditional, meek, and humble woman to whom his family married him when they were very young.

We Need to Talk about Kevin by Lionel Shriver -- In a series of compelling and introspective letters to her estranged husband, Franklin, Eva Khatchadourian dissects her married life and her mothering of her son Kevin and daughter Celia in the aftermath of Kevin's Columbine-like school slaying of seven classmates, a cafeteria worker, and a teacher.