

Book Club Kits

If you belong to a book discussion group, or would like to start one, you're invited to check out our selection of Book Club Kits! Each kit contains 8 copies of a title selected by our librarians, along with a folder containing book discussion questions, author biography, and book reviews. The kits are checked out to one person who is responsible for all of the materials. The kits check out for 6 weeks and may not be renewed or placed on hold.

New kits will be added throughout the year.

Single copies of books may not be checked out from a kit.

Kits must be returned only to the Novi Public Library.

Return the kit to the circulation desk as they will not fit through the drop box.

Book Club Kits must be returned in their entirety. Items cannot be returned separately.

Incomplete kits will not be accepted and will incur fines once the due date is reached.

Overdue Book Club Kits will be fined \$1.00 a day to a maximum of \$25.00.

Replacement cost of an entire kit is \$100.00. Replacement cost of the individual items will depend on the cost of each item.

Brief Synopses of Available Book Club Kits

Fiction

Arranged by Author's Last Name

Half of a Yellow Sun by Chimamanda Adichie

Re-creates the 1960s struggle of Biafra to establish an independent republic in Nigeria, following the intertwined lives of the characters through a military coup, the Biafran secession, and the resulting civil war.

Away by Amy Bloom

Arriving in America alone after her family is destroyed in a Russian pogrom, Lillian Leyb receives word that her daughter Sophie might still be alive and embarks on a risky odyssey that takes her from New York's Lower East Side to Siberia to find the missing girl.

March by Geraldine Brooks

As the North reels under a series of defeats during the first years of the Civil War, one man leaves behind his family to aid the Union cause. His experiences will change his marriage and challenge his ardently held beliefs.

The Memory Keepers Daughter by Kim Edwards

In a tale spanning twenty-five years, a doctor delivers his newborn twins during a snowstorm 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.

Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides

Calliope's friendship with a classmate and her sense of identity are compromised by the adolescent discovery that she is a hermaphrodite, a situation with roots in her grandparent's desperate struggle for survival in the 1920s.

One Thousand White Women by Jim Fergus

An Indian request in 1854 for 1,000 white brides to ensure peace is secretly approved by the U.S. government in this alternate-history novel. Their journey west is described by May Dodd, a high-society woman released from an asylum where she was incarcerated by her family for an affair.

Madame Bovary by Gustave Flaubert

Emma Bovary becomes bored with her life and embarks on an affair.

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet by Jamie Ford

When artifacts from Japanese families sent to internment camps during World War II are uncovered during renovations at a Seattle hotel, Henry Lee embarks on a quest that leads to memories of growing up Chinese in a city rife with anti-Japanese sentiment.

Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen

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.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time by Marc Haddon

Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy

Tess Durbeyfield is driven by family poverty to claim kinship with the wealthy D'Urbervilles, and meeting her "cousin" Alec proves to be her downfall. When Angel Clare offers her love and salvation, she must choose whether to reveal her past or remain silent in the hope of a peaceful future.

Five Quarters of the Orange by Joanne Harris

A sensual novel follows a woman as she returns to the French village where she lived as a girl during the German occupation.

Loving Frank by Nancy Horan

Fact and fiction blend in a historical novel that chronicles the relationship between seminal architect Frank Lloyd Wright and Mamah Cheney, from their meeting, when they were each married to another, to the clandestine affair that shocked Chicago society.

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

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.

Friday Night Knitting Club by Kate Jacobs

Gathering for their weekly knitting club at a small yarn shop on Manhattan's Upper West Side, a group of friends shares such challenges as raising children, navigating the ups and downs of their careers, and pursuing uncertain relationships.

The Known World by Edward P. Jones

When a plantation proprietor and former slave--now possessing slaves of his own--dies, his household falls apart in the wake of a slave rebellion and corrupt underpaid patrollers who enable free black people to be sold into slavery.

Mister Pip by Lloyd Jones

On a copper-rich tropical island shattered by war, on which survival is a daily struggle, eccentric Mr. Watts, the only white man left after the other teachers flee, spends his day reading to the local children from Charles Dickens's classic "Great Expectations."

The History of Love by Nicole Krauss

Sixty years after a book's publication, its author remembers his lost love and missing son, while a teenage girl named for one of the book's characters seeks her namesake, as well as a cure for her widowed mother's loneliness.

The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri

A portrait of the immigrant experience follows the Ganguli family from their traditional life in India through their arrival in Massachusetts in the late 1960s and their difficult melding into an American way of life.

Angry Housewives Eating Bon-Bons by Lorna Landvik

From the initial formation of The Freesia Court Book Club and over the course of the next thirty years, five women in small-town Minnesota share the events, triumphs, tragedies, hardships, joys, and sorrows of their lives.

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo by Stieg Larsson

Forty years after the disappearance of Harriet Vanger from the secluded island owned and inhabited by the powerful Vanger family, her octogenarian uncle hires journalist Mikael Blomqvist and Lisbeth Salander, an unconventional young hacker, to investigate.

Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West by Gregory Maguire

This "New York Times" bestseller--the basis of the Tony Award-winning musical "Wicked"--introduces Elphaba, a smart, prickly, and misunderstood creature who will grow up to become the infamous Wicked Witch of the West in Oz. Now, her side of the story is told.

The Piano Tuner by Daniel Mason

In 1886, piano tuner Edgar Drake leaves London for the jungles of Burma, where he has been asked to repair a grand piano belonging to a British army officer who uses the piano and music to help keep the peace among warring local Burmese princes.

The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency by Alexander McCall Smith

Working in Gaborone, Botswana, 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.

The Road by Cormac McCarthy

In a novel set in an indefinite, futuristic, post-apocalyptic world, a father and his young son make their way through the ruins of a devastated American landscape, struggling to survive and preserve the last remnants of their own humanity.

Empress Orchid by Anchee Min

A fictional portrait of the last empress of China follows Orchid, a beautiful teenager from an aristocratic family, who is chosen to become a low-ranking concubine of the emperor and rises to a position of power in the Chinese court.

Suite Francaise by Irene Nemirovsky

A story of life in France under the Nazi occupation includes two parts--"Storm in June," set amid the chaotic 1940 exodus from Paris, and "Dolce," set in a German-occupied village rife with resentment, resistance, and collaboration.

The Time Traveler's Wife by Audrey Niffenegger

Passionately in love, Clare and Henry vow to hold onto each other and their marriage as they struggle with the effects of Chrono-Displacement Disorder, a condition that casts Henry involuntarily into the world of time travel.

Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton

A Zulu country parson arrives in Johannesburg and finds that his sister has become a prostitute and his son a murderer.

The Dante Club by Matthew Pearl

In 1865, the preparations of the Dante Club--led by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Oliver Wendell Holmes--to release the first translation of Dante's "The Divine Comedy" are threatened by a series of murders that re-create episodes from "Inferno."

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer

In 1946, writer Juliet Ashton finds inspiration for her next book in her correspondence with a native of Guernsey, who tells her about the Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society, a book club born as an alibi during German occupation.

The Tenderness of Wolves by Stef Penney

When her teenage son disappears in the aftermath of a brutal murder, a determined mother sets out from her snow-covered nineteenth-century settlement to find him, an effort that is hampered by vigilante groups and the harrowing forces of nature.

Nineteen Minutes by Jodi Picoult

In Sterling, New Hampshire, 17-year-old high school student Peter Houghton has endured years of verbal and physical abuse at the hands of classmates. His best friend, Josie Cormier, succumbed to peer pressure and now hangs out with the popular crowd that often instigates the harassment. One final incident of bullying sends Peter over the edge and leads him to commit an act of violence that forever changes the lives of Sterling's residents.

Sarah's Key by Tatiana De Rosnay

On the sixtieth anniversary of the 1942 roundup of Jews by the French police in the Vel d'Hiv section of Paris, American journalist Julia Jarmond is asked to write an article on this dark episode during World War II and embarks on investigation that leads her to long-hidden family secrets and to the ordeal of Sarah, a young girl caught up in the raid.

Miss Julia Speaks Her Mind by Ann B. Ross

Shortly after the death of her husband, a wealthy Southern widow is visited by an impoverished young woman with a small boy. A mistress? A son? Julia Springer can't believe it, only to discover that the whole town has known for years. But she will rise to the occasion when the boy is kidnaped.

American Pastoral by Philip Roth

A former athletic star, devoted family man, and owner of a thriving glove factory, Seymour "Swede" Levov finds his life coming apart during the social disorder of the 1960s, when his beloved daughter turns revolutionary terrorist out to destroy her father's world.

The Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafon

A boy named Daniel selects a novel from a library of rare books, enjoying it so much that he searches for the rest of the author's works, only to discover that someone is destroying every book the author has ever written.

The Reader by Bernard Schlink

Not until he becomes a law student after World War II does Michael Berg realize that the woman who found him ill and nursed him through hepatitis was illiterate and possibly a Nazi war criminal.

The Thirteenth Tale by Diane Setterfield

When her health begins failing, the mysterious author Vida Winter decides to let Margaret Lea, a biographer, write the truth about her life, but Margaret needs to verify the facts since Vida has a history of telling outlandish tales.

Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout

At the edge of the continent, in the small town of Crosby, Maine, lives Olive Kitteridge, a retired schoolteacher who deplores the changes in her town and in the world at large but doesn't always recognize the changes in those around her.

The Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiyami

In turbulent sixteenth-century Japan, orphaned Taro is taken in by a general serving the great warlord Takeda Shingen and grows up to become a samurai fighting for the enemies of his dead family.

Luncheon of the Boating Party by Susan Vreeland

Renoir is inspired to paint "Luncheon of the boating party" when his other work is criticized by Emile Zola, and while doing so is drawn into lives of the thirteen people featured in it as they enjoy a Parisian summer during the late 1800s.

Montana, 1948 by Larry Watson

Story of the events of the summer of the author's 12th year, which altered his view of his family and the world forever.

Evidence of Things Unseen by Marianne Wiggins

Falling in love during the Second World War, a soldier and a glassblower's daughter eventually have a son, who in adulthood finds his own love affair impacted by the fallout of the atomic age.

A Room of One's Own by Virginia Woolf

Describes the domestic obligations, social limitations, and economic factors which impede literary creativity in women.

The Shack by William P. Young

Four years after his daughter is abducted and evidence of her murder is found in an abandoned shack, Mackenzie Allen Philips returns to the shack in response to a note claiming to be from God, and has a life-changing experience.

Non-Fiction

Arranged by Call Number

The Faith Club by Ranya Idliby (201.5 Idliby)

Traces how three American women of different faiths worked together to understand one another while identifying the connections between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, during which they openly discussed the issues that divided them.

Annie's Ghosts by Steve Luxenberg (306.875 Luxenberg)

When Washington Post senior editor Luxenberg's mother passed away, the family discovered that she had a sister, Annie, who was confined to a mental institution in 1940, when she was 21. Along with 5000 others, Annie's existence was treated as a shameful secret, until she was nearly forgotten entirely. Luxenberg uses his tools as an investigative journalist to unearth the circumstances surrounding Annie's commitment and in doing so sheds welcome light on a heartbreaking chapter in American history. A fascinating detective story that will appeal to anyone who has ever had a family member with mental illness or had their assumptions about family tested by a secret revealed.-

***Arc of Justice* by Kevin Boyle (345.73 Boyle)**

Follows the 1925 murder trial of African-American doctor Ossian Sweet, who was accused of murdering a white person during a mob attack on his home, and includes a history of the Sweet family and a portrait of his attorney, Clarence Darrow.

***The Devil in the White City* by Erik Larson (364.152 Larson)**

An account of the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 relates the stories of two men who shaped the history of the event--architect Daniel H. Burnham, who coordinated its construction, and serial killer Herman Mudgett.

***Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson (371.822 Mortenson)**

One man's campaign to build schools in the most dangerous, remote, and anti-American reaches of Asia: in 1993 Greg Mortenson was an American mountain-climbing bum wandering emaciated and lost through Pakistan's Karakoram. After he was taken in and nursed back to health by the people of a Pakistani village, he promised to return one day and build them a school. From that rash, earnest promise grew one of the most incredible humanitarian campaigns of our time--Mortenson's one-man mission to counteract extremism by building schools, especially for girls, throughout the breeding ground of the Taliban.

***Marley and Me* by John Grogan (636.752 Grogan)**

Follows the life story of an exuberant Labrador retriever who gets into perpetual trouble and experiences a range of inspiring adventures, from shutting down an entire beach to guarding a seventeen-year-old neighbor after a stabbing attack

***Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver (641.097 Kingsolver)**

Follows the author's family's efforts to live on locally- and home-grown foods, an endeavor through which they learned lighthearted truths about food production and the connection between health and diet.

***Julie & Julia* by Julie Powell (641.5 Powell)**

Recounts how the author escaped the doldrums of an unpromising career and lackluster Queens apartment by mastering every recipe in Julia Child's 1961 classic, *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, a year-long endeavor of humor and accomplishment that transformed her life.

***I Feel Bad About My Neck* by Nora Ephron (814.54 Ephron)**

A collection of essays offers a humorous look at the ups and downs of being a woman of a certain age, discussing the tribulations of maintenance and trying to stop the clock, menopause, and empty nests.

Eat, Pray, Love by Elizabeth Gilbert (910.4 Gilbert)

Traces the author's decision to quit her job and travel the world for a year after suffering a midlife crisis and divorce, a journey that took her to three places in her quest to explore her own nature and learn the art of spiritual balance.

Alive on the Andrea Doria! By Pierette Domenica Simpson (910.91 Simpson)

On July 25, 1956, the Swedish liner Stockholm rammed the Italian luxury liner Andrea Doria. The following morning, the Doria capsized. Of the 1,706 people aboard only 46 perished (along with 5 on the Stockholm) making this rescue the greatest in maritime history. However, the reason for the collision has never been revealed for the general reader before this book.

Biographies

Arranged by Last Name

Expecting Adam by Martha Beck

Describes how a mother struggled to cope when her unborn second child, Adam, was diagnosed with Down syndrome, her decision to keep her son, and his magical influence on her life.

Falling Leaves by Adaline Yen Mah

The daughter of a wealthy Hong Kong businessman describes her very difficult childhood and the psychological abuse she suffered at the hands of her stepmother.

The Color of Water by James McBride

A young African American man describes growing up as one of twelve children of a white mother and black father, and discusses his mother's contributions to his life and his confusion over his own identity.

The Tender Bar by J.R. Moehringer

In a memoir of growing up with a single mother, the author describes how he received valuable life lessons and friendship from an assortment of characters at the neighborhood bar, who provided him with a kind of fatherhood by committee.

The Glass Castle by Jeanette Walls

The child of an alcoholic father and an eccentric artist mother discusses her family's nomadic upbringing, during which she and her siblings fended for themselves while their parents outmaneuvered bill collectors and the authorities.