

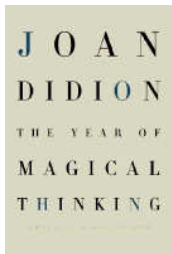
Bullitt County Public Library Recommended Reading

Well, the new year is now well under way, and (hopefully) we are all sticking to those New Year's resolutions we made on December 31. This year, one of my resolutions (there are many) is to catch up on all the books that have been piling up on, beside, and beneath my bedside table. Over the holidays, the stack just seemed to get bigger and bigger while I went about my merry way shopping, making plans, and stressing out. Now that the hoopla is over, I am finally finding time to slow down and enjoy some of those books I have been optimistically collecting. I have already discovered a few gems that I would like to share. So I hope you too can find the time to curl up and enjoy a good book!

—Tracy Weikel, February 2008

Tracy's List

THE YEAR OF MAGICAL THINKING– Joan Didion *Biography & Large Type*



At once beautiful and supremely intelligent, *The Year of Magical Thinking* is Didion's deeply personal account of the year following her husband's death. At the same time Didion was grappling with her sudden loss, her daughter Quintana was seriously ill in a nearby ICU. One must wonder what kind of strength it took to write of such debilitating and personal trauma so soon afterward—indeed, in the case of Quintana's illness, while the nightmare continued. [Sadly, Quintana died mere weeks before the book's publication.] As one of America's most acclaimed authors, Didion's lyrical style and gorgeous language are no surprise; that she was able to convey such raw personal experience so articulately, delicately balancing between the irrationalities of grief and the numbing comfort of her search for scientific understanding, is miraculous. It is no wonder *The Year of Magical Thinking* received the 2005 National Book Award for Nonfiction.

GHOST, INTERRUPTED– Sonia Singh *Adult Fiction*



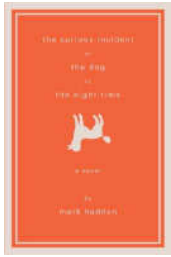
I'll be honest: I picked this book up because of its cover. After reading several books that I deemed much too serious, I was ready for something quick, light, and easy. The bright, humorous cover of *Ghost, Interrupted* caught my eye. And this story of a reluctant medium, ex-con man telekinetic, and ex-stockbroker obsessed with paranormal phenomena joining forces to launch a new ghost-busting company turned out to be just what I needed. Full of comic ironies (the medium, Ajali, is a first-generation Indian American whose parents moved to California to give their children better opportunities—and her computer programming job has just been outsourced to India), likeable characters, and a touch of romance, *Ghost, Interrupted* is a great stress reliever and just all-around good fun.

LOVING FRANK– Nancy Horan *Adult Fiction, Large Type & Audio Cassette*



This longtime bestseller definitely lived up to the hype! A fictionalized account of the adulterous love affair between Frank Lloyd Wright and Mamah Borthwick Cheney, *Loving Frank* is a richly layered and complicated story. Both were married with children, yet they chose "true love" over familial obligation and high-tailed it to Europe in 1909, amid a storm of shocked outrage and scandal-raking journalists. But *Loving Frank* goes far beyond the scandal, exploring the ideas of the day on feminism, love, motherhood, and, of course, art and architecture. The glimpses Horan provides into the creative process and (let's face it) selfish genius of the renowned architect and her complex characterization of the more historically obscure Mamah Borthwick are neither idealized nor wholly unsympathetic. Like me, you may end the book not knowing quite how to feel about Mamah and Frank; but you will definitely be glad to have read their story.

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME– Mark Haddon
Adult Fiction



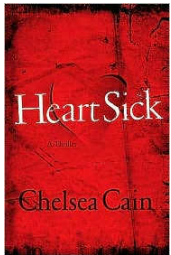
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time is a simple story told in an extraordinary way. Because its narrator, 15-year-old Christopher Boone, is autistic. The story begins on one of his habitual night-time wanderings around the neighborhood when he discovers a neighbor's dog impaled with a gardening tool. Christopher then decides to follow the example of his hero, Sherlock Holmes, and solve the crime. Being extremely literal-minded proves both a help and a hindrance to his investigation, and his discomfort with unfamiliar people makes it even tougher. Yet his incredible determination never falters and he manages to solve the crime—but not without uncovering a few secrets first. Heartbreaking, funny, and remarkably written to convey the inner workings of an autistic mind, this is a novel that is both literary and fun to read.

THE FEAST OF LOVE– Charles Baxter *Adult Fiction*



A skillful blend of soap opera plot and the philosophical musings of its characters, *The Feast of Love* is a truly beautiful book that explores love in all of its forms and phases. Author Charles Baxter introduces us to a disparate group of characters and has them tell their stories to an insomniac writer named, believe it or not, Charlie Baxter. There is Bradley, the sad-sack, twice-divorced, sort-of painter who owns a coffee shop; Chloé, an eternally hopeful young ingénue (despite her parents' indifference) who is mad about her boyfriend Oscar; and Harry, the aging philosophy professor who is deeply in love with his wife but can't figure out how to help his troubled son. The voices of these characters and others combine to offer up stories of love and loss that are poignant, funny, sometimes a little bawdy, and, in the end, almost mystical. This is probably a love-it-or-hate-it book. Personally, I loved it.

HEARTSICK– Chelsea Cain *Large Type*



Despite its flaws—serial killer Gretchen Lowell seems to me to be a caricatured combination of Hannibal Lecter and *Basic Instinct's* Catherine Tramell, plus there are a ridiculous number of coincidences—*Heartsick* still managed to keep me completely hooked. What really makes this novel work is the spectacular pacing and the book's "hero," damaged police detective Archie Sheridan. Two years ago, Archie was a happy family man and the lead detective on the trail of a serial killer. But after being trapped and tortured by the very killer he set out to catch, Archie is a different man. He is now divorced, addicted to painkillers, and struggling with a perverse dependence on his former captor, whom he visits regularly in prison. Despite all this, Archie is a sharp-witted and dynamic character. When he returns from a two-year leave to head the task force gunning for Portland's newest serial killer, we can't wait to see how his balancing act will turn out. Unexpected moments of wry humor and the well-developed tension between the main characters—Archie, Gretchen, and Susan, a spunky reporter with issues of her own—kept me fascinated and wanting more. Lucky for me (and you!), this is only the first book of a planned series featuring the same characters.

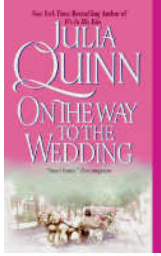
I LOVE YOU, BETH COOPER– Larry Doyle *Adult Fiction*



At the beginning of this laugh-out-loud adventure, super-geek Denis Cooverman decides to deliver a valedictory speech that his classmates won't soon forget. He declares his love for head cheerleader Beth Cooper, inciting disbelief and hilarity among his audience and incurring the wrath of Beth's muscle-bound military boyfriend. What follows is a hilarious, rollicking escapade that mirrors the best teen comedy films, but with a great deal more wit and imagination. I pretty much giggled my way through the entire book—there might even have been a snort or two! Sometimes the sense of humor was a little uncomfortable for me, as were the allusions to teen drinking and drug use and sexual activity, although there are no graphic or truly offensive scenes.

All in all, *I Love You*, Beth Cooper is chock full of priceless scenes and clever one-liners that will delight anyone who has ever attended high school.

ON THE WAY TO THE WEDDING– Julia Quinn *Adult Fiction*



Combining the best elements of Shakespearian comedy with *The Graduate* (the interrupt-the-wedding-of-of-your-true-love part, *not* the seduced-by-an-older-woman part), Julia Quinn's final installment of her popular Bridgerton series is a must-read for fans of historical romance. Gregory, the last of the eight Bridgerton siblings, finally meets his match in Lucy Abernathy, a practical, slightly obsessive compulsive young lady who definitely doesn't believe in love at first sight, who scarcely believes in romantic love at all. While Gregory, having grown up surrounded by his siblings' happy marriages, is a self-described hopeless romantic who has been waiting for the day when he will fall in love. The twist is that when Gregory is finally hit by the thunderbolt he has been anticipating, the object of his affection is not the heroine but Lucy's best friend, Hermione. But Hermione has her sights set on someone else and, in their combined attempt to get Hermione to fall for Gregory, Gregory and Lucy discover one another. Of course, a few more obstacles pop up—most notably Lucy's own engagement to the unusual Lord Haselby and the interference of various family members. Lighthearted and spiced with Julia Quinn's cheeky style and witty dialog, *On the Way to the Wedding* is a delightful read and a worthy conclusion to the Bridgerton saga.

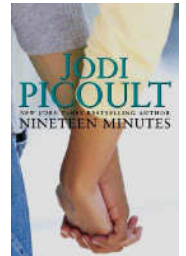
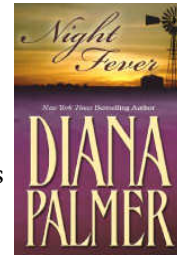
More Great Picks from Library Staff

Barbara C. (Ridgway Memorial)

NIGHT FEVER– Diana Palmer

Adult Fiction & Large Type

Rebecca Cullen has a lot of responsibility for a woman of twenty-four: she works a full-time job, oversees the family farm, supports her ailing grandfather, and is raising her two teenage brothers. Things get really bad when seventeen-year-old Clay is arrested on drug charges. Rebecca wants to keep her brother out of jail, but can she convince sexy prosecutor Rourke Kilpatrick to go easy on him?



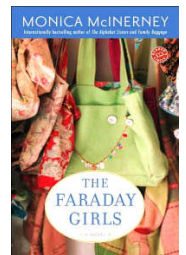
NINETEEN MINUTES– Jodi Picoult *Adult Fiction, Large Type & CD Book*

It only took nineteen minutes to change everything in the sleepy town of Sterling, New Hampshire. When a shocking act of school violence devastates the town, residents must seek justice and understanding before healing can begin.

FOLLOW THE STARS HOME– Luanne Rice

Adult Fiction

Devoted single mother Dianne Robbins has closed her heart to the idea of romance, even though her former brother-in-law has been secretly in love with her for years. But will she rethink things when Tim, the husband who deserted her after learning their daughter had spinal bifida, reappears in her life?



THE FARADAY GIRLS– Monica McInerney

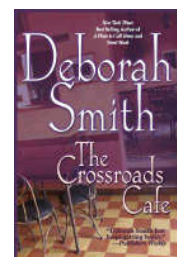
Adult Fiction

When the five Faraday sisters gather with their family for their annual celebration of Christmas in July, family secrets are revealed.

THE CROSSROADS CAFE– Deborah Smith

Adult Fiction

Cathy Deen was the next big thing in Hollywood until a car accident left her perfect face with horrific burn scars. When she returns to her Southern hometown she meets and falls in love with another damaged soul, a man who is burying himself in grief and booze after his wife and children were killed in 9/11.

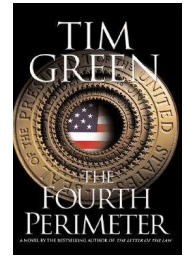


Cindy (Ridgway Memorial)**THE TEA ROSE– Jennifer Donnelly *Adult Fiction***

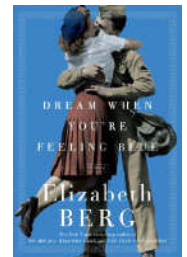
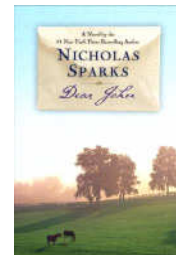
A lush novel that has been compared to *The Thornbirds* and *A Woman of Substance*, this epic tale traces its heroine from the slums of 1888 London to Manhattan, where she becomes a great success. But eventually the memories of lost love and old haunts take her back to London to confront her past.

**THE FOURTH PERIMETER– Tim Green *Adult Fiction***

Former Secret Service agent Kurt Ford is devastated when the death of his son Collin, also a Secret Service agent, is ruled a suicide. He doesn't believe it, especially when he learns a number of other young agents—all witnesses to a secret meeting involving the President—have recently died. Kurt becomes obsessed with finding the truth and punishing those responsible for the murders, even if the killer turns out to be the President himself!

Nancy (Mount Washington)**DEAR JOHN– Nicholas Sparks *Adult Fiction & Audio Cassette***

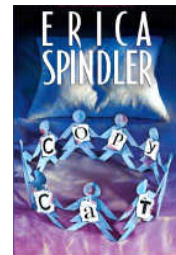
John and Savannah were in love and planning a life together. But after 9/11, John feels duty-bound to re-enlist. During the long separation, Savannah falls in love with someone else and agrees to marry him though she can't forget about John. John's heart is broken when he receives her "Dear John" letter and must come to grips with the fact that his true love is now married to someone else.

**DREAM WHEN YOU'RE FEELING BLUE– Elizabeth Berg*****Adult Fiction & Large Type***

This story of love and sisterhood set in the midst of World War II-era Chicago comes from the best-selling author of *Open House*.

Mary (Dorothea Stottman)**COPY CAT– Erica Spindler *Mystery***

Homicide detective Kitt Lundgren was devastated when she failed to catch the Sleeping Angel Killer even after sacrificing her marriage and time with her terminally ill daughter in her pursuit. Five years later, the killings start again and Kitt teams up with M.C. Riggio, the detective leading the new case. But when Kitt starts getting calls from someone claiming to be the Sleeping Angel Killer and offering to help catch his copy cat, Kitt and M.C. must decide what to believe and who to trust.

Pam (Lebanon Junction)**DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY: OR WHEN I GET BACK ON MY FEET YOU'LL BE SORRY– Julia Fox Garrison *Biography***

Thirty-something Julia Garrison suffered a stroke and was told by the professionals (whom she dubbed Dr. Jerk, Dr. Panic, and Nurse Doom) that she would never walk again. This is the funny and inspiring true story of her year-long battle against the medical community and her fight to regain her life.



To check for availability, ask at your local library location
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