

2018 Book Selections for Newcomer's Book Club

January 24 - Before We Were Yours, by Lisa Wingate

Discussion Leader: Ginny Koch

From the '30s to 1950, a woman named Georgia Tann, who ran the (Memphis) Tennessee Children's Home Society, stole poor children from their families and newborn babies from single mothers and sold them to celebrities, politicians and others who could afford them. It was all done under the guise of helping orphaned and abandoned children find good homes, but it was actually human trafficking. Based on true events.

March 28 - The Boys in the Trees: A Memoir by Carly Simon

Discussion Leader: Betty Ann Williams

Simon was the first artist in history to win a Grammy Award, an Academy Award and a Golden Globe Award, for her song "Let the River Run" from the movie *Working Girl*. Her memoir is surprisingly candid as she recalls a childhood enriched by music and culture, but also one shrouded in secrets that would eventually tear her family apart. She captures moments of creative inspiration, the sparks of songs, and the stories behind writing "Anticipation" and "We Have No Secrets" among many others. Romantic entanglements with some of the most famous men of the day fueled her confessional lyrics, as well as the unraveling of her storybook marriage to James Taylor.

May 23 - The Japanese Lover by Isabel Allende

Discussion Leader: Louise Judd

In 1939, as Poland falls under the shadow of the Nazis, young Alma Belasco's parents send her away to live in safety with an aunt and uncle in San Francisco. There, as the rest of the world goes to war, she encounters Ichimei Fukuda, the quiet and gentle son of the family's Japanese gardener. Unnoticed by those around them, a tender love affair begins to blossom. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the two are cruelly pulled apart as Ichimei and his family, like thousands of other Japanese Americans are declared enemies and forcibly relocated to internment camps run by the United States government. Throughout their lifetimes, Alma and Ichimei reunite again and again, but theirs is a love that they are forever forced to hide from the world. Decades later, Alma is nearing the end of her long and eventful life. Irina Bazili, a care worker struggling to come to terms with her own troubled past, meets the elderly woman and her grandson, Seth, at San Francisco's charmingly eccentric Lark House nursing home. As Irina and Seth forge a friendship, they become intrigued by a series of mysterious gifts and letters sent to Alma, eventually learning about Ichimei and this extraordinary secret passion that has endured for nearly seventy years.

July 25 - Extra-Ordinary Adventures: a Novel, by Daniel Wallace

Discussion Leader: Sue Asp

Edsel Bronfman works as a junior executive shipping clerk for an importer of Korean flatware. He lives in a seedy neighborhood and spends his free time with his spirited mother. Things happen to other people, and Bronfman knows it. Until, that is, he gets a call from operator 61217 telling him that he's won a free weekend at a beachfront condo in Destin, Florida. But there's a catch: the offer is intended for a couple, and Bronfman has only seventy-nine days to find someone to take with him. The phone call jolts Bronfman into motion, initiating a series of truly extraordinary adventures as he sets out to find a companion for his weekend getaway. Open at last to the possibilities of life, Bronfman now believes that anything can happen. And it does.

September 26 - Girl in Translation, by Jean Kwok

Discussion Leader: Betty Schwartz

When Kimberly Chang and her mother emigrate from Hong Kong to Brooklyn squalor, she quickly begins a secret double life: exceptional schoolgirl during the day, Chinatown sweatshop worker in the

evenings. Disguising the more difficult truths of her life like the staggering degree of her poverty and the weight of her family's future resting on her shoulders, Kimberly learns to constantly translate not just her language but herself back and forth between the worlds she straddles. Through Kimberly's story, author Jean Kwok, who also emigrated from Hong Kong as a young girl, brings to the page the lives of countless immigrants who are caught between the pressure to succeed in America, their duty to their family, and their own personal desires.

November 28 - A Gentleman in Moscow, by Amor Towles

Discussion Leader: Joyce Dennis

This book immerses us in another elegantly drawn era with the story of Count Alexander Rostov. When, in 1922, he is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, the count is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin.

Other Books Suggested:

Small, Great Things, Jodi Picoult.

Ruth Jefferson is a labor and delivery nurse with more than twenty years' experience. During her shift, Ruth begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The hospital complies with their request, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders or does she intervene? What follows is a study of race, the judicial system, and the prejudices that all of us have

The Hummingbird, Stephen P. Kierman

Deborah Birch is a seasoned hospice nurse who never gives up—not with her patients, not in her life. But her skills and experience are fully tested by the condition her husband, Michael, is in when he returns from his third deployment to Iraq. Tormented by nightmares, anxiety, and rage, Michael has become cold and withdrawn. Still grateful that he is home at last, Deborah is determined to heal him and restore their loving, passionate marriage.

But Michael is not her only challenge. Deborah's primary patient is Barclay Reed, a retired history professor and fierce curmudgeon. An expert on the Pacific Theater of World War II, Barclay is suffering from terminal kidney cancer and haunted by ghosts from his past, including the academic scandal that ended his career. Barclay's last wish is for Deborah to read to him from his final and unfinished book—a little-known story from World War II that may hold the key to helping Michael conquer his demons. Together, nurse, patient, and soldier embark on an unforgettable emotional journey that transforms them all, offering astonishing insights into life and death, suffering, and finding peace