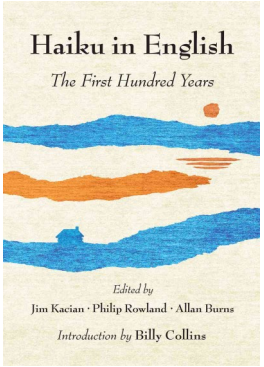
Dory L.'s blog

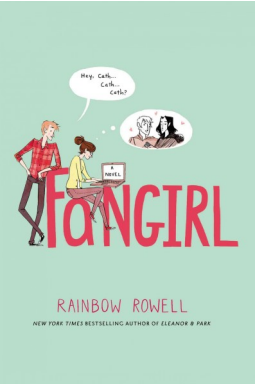
Little Jewels--Haiku



view in catalog
ISBN:
9780393239478
If you like haiku or are merely curious about the art, dive into this book. It traces the origin of the form in English from Ezra Pound?s ?In a Station at the Metro? through the effusive Beats (Kerouac, Gary Snyder, and Allen Ginsburg) to contemporary masters of these powerful small poems. In the introduction, Billy Collins describes his love for these small gems and unlike many of the other artists included here, he writes in the familiar 5-7-5 syllabic pattern.
Here are a few of my favorite haiku included in the collection. But alas, there were so many good ones, it was hard to choose a small sample:

passport check
my shadow waits
across the border --George Swede**Read more »**
For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years Poetry
Posted by Dory L. on Jan 2, 2014

Fangirl



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ISBN:
9781250030955

Over Christmas after a Griffy walk, gift-giving and catching a new flick, I picked up this this YA book about a Nebraska college freshman obsessed with writing fan fiction. Now if you don?t know what that is?I didn?t until a patron explained it to me a couple of years ago--it?s a new trend where people (mostly young) write new endings, beginnings, and middles, sequels and prequels for books they love in the style of the author.

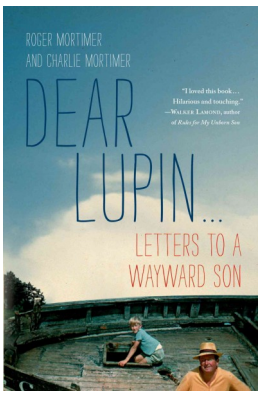
"Fan Fiction is what literature might look like if it were reinvented from scratch after a nuclear apocalypse by a band of brilliant pop-culture junkies trapped in a sealed bunker," Lev Grossman said in *Time* magazine. Cath loves the Simon Snow series--magical fantasty--and the book includes many postings from the invented FanFixx.net where her tag-name is Magicath.

But when Cather enters college, life gets complicated. First of all, her twin Wren decides not to room with her. And Wren already abandoned fan fiction as too juvenile for a college student. Do you notice the wordplay in the twins? names? Their parents had expected one child whom they planned to call Catherine. **Read more »**

For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Fangirl Fiction

Posted by Dory L. on Dec 26, 2013

Dear Lupin



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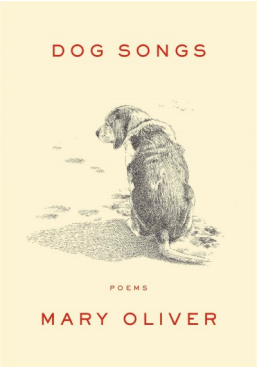
ISBN:
9781250038517

I?ve always loved collections of letters. Perhaps, it?s the draw of reading words meant for a specific person?a stranger that you will never meet. Some books of letters are huge and it?s like tackling a life in a thousand plus episodes. But these letters, written by an apprehensive English father beginning during the rock and roll, drug days of the late 60s and 70s, are a more manageable 187 pages.
All the letters were penned by the father, Roger, a former military man, and POW who later became a racing columnist for the *Sunday Times*. In them he offers tons of advice to his wild, drifter son, Charlie. Providing much of the humor in this book are Charlie?s comments that describe his reactions to his Dad?s words at the time.
The letters begin with a young Charlie as he flunks out of elite Eton. Soon he leaves with a record of very bad grades for a lowly ?crammer? school. No ?firsts? or ?seconds? or even a degree for this young man. Soon Charlie embarks on a series of low-paying jobs in agriculture, oil, and real estate. Even when he lands a promising job, he can?t stick with it and bolts off for long vacations to Greece, Africa, and South America. For his Greek trip his dad advises, don?t talk politics. Don?t do drugs; you may land in a gaol. Watch the alcoholic drinks there, they are incredibly strong. Later, when Charlie sets off for vagabonding through South America, his dad asks, have you ever considered a life in the church? **Read more »**
For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Dear Lupin... :Letters to a Wayward Son Family Relationships Nonfiction
Posted by Dory L. on Dec 17, 2013

Dog Songs



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ISBN:
9781594204784
Who can resist a good dog book? OK so there are a few cat people out there (right here beside me in fact), and bird people, snake people, even for Heaven?s sake, skunk lovers and gerbil-groomers. But what makes this book special is that it?s a book of poems that gives tribute to the special dogs in renowned nature poet Mary Oliver?s life.
There?s Luke, the junkyard dog, Benjamin, the canine that is always dragging a chewed-through rope, Bear the small curly-haired who hates to stay overnight at boarding, Bazougey ?that dark little dog/ who used to come down the road barking and shining,? Ricky, the talker, and Percy named after the famous poet Shelley. Oliver penned a tribute to this hound mischievously patterned after Christopher Smart?s ?For I will Consider My Cat Jeoffrey.?
Luke was ?born in a junkyard, / not even on a bundle of rags/ or the seat of an old wrecked car/ but the dust below.? This beautiful German Shepherd loved flowers: ?her dark head// and her wet nose/ touching/ the face/ of everyone.? In the poem?s closing Oliver expresses one thing dogs show us about the world: ?we long to be--/ that happy/ in the heaven of earth--/ that wild, that loving.?

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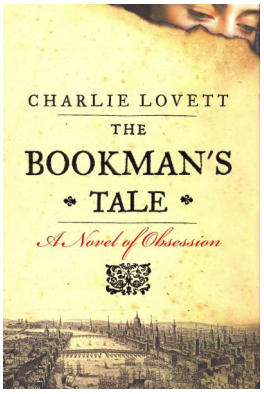
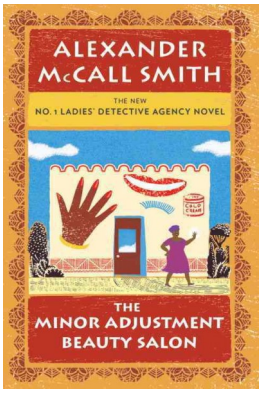
For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Dog Dog Songs: Thirty-five Dog Songs and One Essay Poetry
Posted by Dory L. on Dec 16, 2013

Recommended Reads from Library Staff



view in catalog
ISBN:
9780670026470
It's that time of year again when lots of publications and websites publish their recommended books of the year. This year I polled library staff to see what some savvy readers had discovered in 2013. MCPL folks had lots of nifty recommendations. So whether you are looking for books to help you through the long dark nights of winter or searching for that perfect gift for a loved one or friend, here are some suggestions from some local book people. We do have paper copies of this list and other 2013 favorite book lists available at the Information Desk at the main lLibrary.
FICTION
And Everyday Was Overcast by Paul Kwiatkowski FICTION Kwiatkow
Described on the cover as an illustrated novel, this work is more a scrapbook interspersed with stories detailing the author's coming of age in southern Florida. The photos don't match the stories exactly and are stronger as a result. They cover drug use, adolescent violence, and teenage sexuality.
The Bookman?s Tale: a novel of obsession by Charles C. Lovett FICTION Lovett
Anyone who loves the hunting, buying and selling of rare and old books should read this. Filled with emotion, intrigue, mystery, suspense, and tragedy, it also covers love lost and gained as well as the quest for Shakespeare and his writings. Very well written and hard to put down! **Read more »**
For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Best of Lists Recommended Reads from Library Staff
Posted by Dory L. on Dec 10, 2013 Add new comment

The Minor Adjustment Beauty Salon



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ISBN:
9780307378415

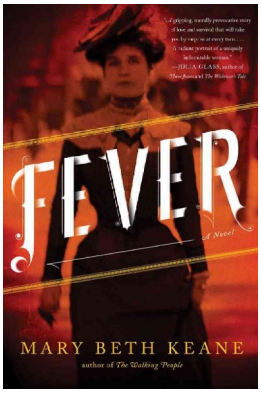
In the bustle and tensions of the holiday season, it was great to take a couple of nights off and travel to Botswana in Alexander McCall Smith?s latest book in the No. 1 Ladies? Detective Agency Series. As usual the mysteries--there are two of them here--are interwoven with descriptions and a philosophy of living a moral life in Africa. Grace Makutsi, who scored an amazing 97% on her secretarial school final exam, is married now and expecting a baby yet she has not yet talked to Precious Ramotswe about taking any leave. Before she does, her little son arrives along with a pesky aunt, the matriarch of the family who swoops in to take charge of Grace?s household.

While Grace is gone, giving birth and settling into motherhood, Mma Ramotswe faces two problems: an acquaintance has opened a new beauty salon, the one of the title, but she is receiving daily threats from an anonymous source. Whoever is doing it is scaring away all her customers and this threatens the business. Also, a female lawyer has contacted the ?traditionally built? detective about an inheritance issue: a nephew is supposed to inherit a farm from a famous politician, but is Liso the actual nephew or someone posing as him? Precious discovers that if Liso is not who he claims to be, the lawyer will inherit the bulk of the estate. Coincidentally--or maybe not--this lawyer was having an affair with the politician Mma Ramotswe discovers. **Read more »**

For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Mystery The Minor Adjustment Beauty Salon

Posted by Dory L. on Dec 9, 2013 Add new comment

Dispelling Dark Myths



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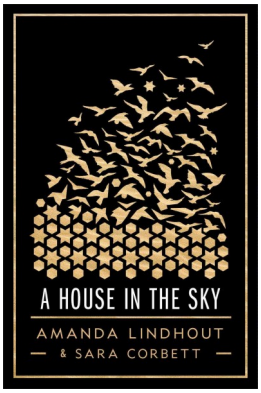
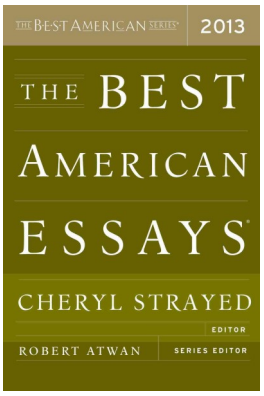
ISBN:
9781451693416
Did you ever hear the story of ?Typhoid Mary? as a child? I remember a gaggle of us neighborhoods kids scaring each other with stories of the woman whose myth lived long after she died. It?s not a person we learned about in school, yet just the mention of her name culled up disease, darkness and death. That?s one reason I was happy to come across this sympathetic portrait of an Irish-American woman who was much maligned by the press.
Not a biography, this fictional account relies on many true-to-life details to make its story highly believable. Young Mary Mallon emigrated from Ireland at age fifteen to stay with an aunt. She soon went to work and started as a laundress--hot dirty work that offered no hope of advancement. Being smart and clever, Mary noticed that the cooks were paid much more and had more freedom. She also liked the creative aspect of crafting fine meals for the wealthy of early 1900s New York City.
Mary got her big break as a substitute cook, and she turned one success into a career. By the time she was 17, she received an excellent summer gig in Oyster Bay, but unfortunately fever swept through the summer place leaving the baby she loved and several other members of the household dead. **Read more »**
For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Fever Fiction Historical
Posted by Dory L. on Dec 3, 2013 Add new comment

A House in the Sky



view in catalog
ISBN:
9781451645606
This memoir is as compelling as any thriller, and much better written than most. In it a young Canadian describes how she escaped her family?s poverty and dysfunction in a small town in Alberta by reading *National Geographic* mags cover to cover. The family was so poor that she had to earn money to buy the used magazines herself, but while reading them she not only discovered the world, but was able to dream of a better, more interesting life.
Amanda didn?t have the money for college, so instead she became a waitress at high-end clubs and restaurants in Calvary when the money from oil and gas was flowing. She soon began to travel internationally to South America, India, Pakistan, and Nepal. Edgy, dangerous places appealed to her and those far off the tourist track. She went to **Read more »**
For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews A House in the Sky: a Memoir Memoir Nonfiction
Posted by Dory L. on Nov 21, 2013 Add new comment

The Best American Essays 2013



view in catalog

ISBN:
9780544103887

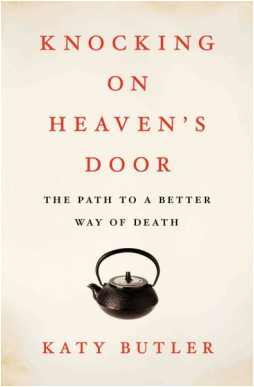
The Best American Series may seem like a boring reading choice, but whenever I choose a volume from it, I am rewarded to discover new and unfamiliar authors. Plus, reading this series helps me to nudge my book selections in fresh directions. Wilderness writer Cheryl Strayed edited *The Best American Essays 2013* and her intriguing selections offered lots of surprises. Here are examples of a few of the titles: ?Free Rent at the Totalitarian Hotel,? ?Highway of Lost Girls,? ?My Father?s Women,? ?I?m Jumping off the Bridge,? and ?Confessions of an Ex-Mormon.? In ?I?m Jumping off the Bridge? Kevin Sampsell, a bookseller at Portland?s Powell Books?my favorite bookstore in the world, described dealing with a suicidal patron and how artfully he handled it. But as the essay continues, you realize that the bookseller had considered suicide himself.

In the chilling ?Highway of Lost Girls? Vanessa Veselka decided to investigate the murder of some female hitchhikers in the 1980s. During that time period, she had a terrifying experience while hitchhiking. A truck driver had exited the highway and transported her down a back road. He stopped and pulled out a knife demanding that she climb in the **Read more »**

For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Essays Nonfiction The Best American Essays 2013

Posted by Dory L. on Nov 12, 2013 1 comment

Knocking on Heaven's Door



view in catalog

ISBN:
9781451641974

If you are taking care of a very sick parent or other close relative, this is the book for you. Katy Butler, a journalist, tells the end-stories of both her parents. She lived on the left coast; they, in Connecticut when one day her father, Jeffrey, suffered a severe stroke. Shortly after the stroke, his cardiologist recommended a pacemaker, and her mother and Katy agreed. This was without talking about any of the ramifications while he was well and could understand the consequences. His GP was against it; he had seen too many patients with hearts ?outliving? the rest of their bodies.

Jeffrey recovered somewhat but by this time his type A wife has made him surrender both his belt and his wallet. The former Wesleyan history professor was bored silly. During a week visit, Katy arranged for her dad to be picked up by a special van and brought to the pool where he used to swim. Katy made the journey with him two days to show him the ropes, and bought him a new watch that thrilled him. His wife had also hidden his nice silver watch. Katy?s dad loved the cheap watch and the sense of independence it gave him. After Katy left, he continued the van/swimming trips for a long time.

The book also covers Katy?s extremely difficult relationship with her mother. Did you guess that there were issues? Katy?s two brothers took little part in caretaking their Dad because they did not get along with their mother either. She was very controlling about their diet as adults, their haircuts, their clothes, and especially their failures in life. **Read more »**

For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Knocking on Heaven's Door: the path to a better way of death Nonfiction

Posted by Dory L. on Nov 7, 2013 Add new comment

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