

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2016****The Bohemian Flats by Mary Relindes Ellis**

In *The Bohemian Flats*, Mary Relindes Ellis's rich, imaginative gift carries us from the bourgeois world of fin de siècle Germany to a vibrant immigrant enclave in the heart of the Midwest and to the killing fields of World War I. Shell shock, as it was called, lands Raimund Kaufmann in a London hospital, a victim of the war but also of his own, and his brother's, efforts to get out of Germany and build a new life in America. While his recovery eludes him, his memory returns us to Minneapolis, to the Flats, a milling community on the Mississippi River, where Raimund and his brother Albert have sought respite from the oppressive hand of their older brother, now the master of the family farm and brewery. In Minnesota the brothers confront different forms of prejudice, but they also find a chance to remake their lives according to their own principles and wishes—until the war makes their German roots inescapable.

**Facilitator: Randy Gerdin**

**OCTOBER 5, 2016****The Girl With No Name: The Incredible True Story of a Child Raised by Monkeys by Marina Chapman, Lynne Barrett-Lee**

In 1954, in a remote mountain village in South America, a four-year-old girl was abducted, and then abandoned deep in the Colombian jungle. That she survived is a miracle. Two days later, half-drugged, terrified, and starving, she came upon a troop of capuchin monkeys. Acting entirely on instinct, she tried to do what they did: she ate what they ate and copied their actions, and little by little, learned to fend for herself. So begins the story of her five years among the monkeys, during which time she gradually became feral; she lost the ability to speak, lost all inhibition, lost any real sense of being human, replacing the structure of human society with the social mores of her new simian family. But society was eventually to reclaim her. At age ten she was discovered by a pair of hunters who took her to the lawless Colombian city of Cucuta where, in exchange for a parrot, they sold her to a brothel. When she learned that she was to be groomed for prostitution, she made her plans to escape. But her adventure wasn't over yet...

**Facilitator: Marlys Swenson**

**NOVEMBER 2, 2016****Breakfast at Sally's: One Homeless Man's Inspirational Journey by Richard LeMieux**

One day, Richard LeMieux had a happy marriage, a palatial home, and took \$40,000 Greek vacations. The next, he was living out of a van with only his dog, Willow, for company. This astonishingly frank memoir tells the story of one man's resilience in the face of economic disaster. Penniless, a failed suicide, estranged from his family, and living "the vehicular lifestyle" in Washington state, LeMieux chronicles his journey from the Salvation Army kitchens to his days with "C"—a philosopher in a homeless man's clothing—to his run-ins with Pastor Bob and other characters he meets on the streets. Along the way, he finds time to haunt public libraries and discover his desire to write.

LeMieux's quiet determination and his almost pious willingness to live with his situation are only a part of this politically and socially charged memoir. The real story of an all-too-common American condition, this is a heartfelt and stirring read.

**Facilitator: Ann Martinson**

**DECEMBER 7, 2016****Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen**

The story of two starkly different English sisters: Elinor Dashwood, the epitome of prudence and self-control, and her younger, more impetuous sister Marianne, who embodies emotion, openness and sheer enthusiasm.

**Facilitator: Alyce Tracy**

**JANUARY 4, 2017****The Japanese Lover by Isable Allende**

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 their opulent mansion 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.

**Facilitator: Bette Vandersteen**

**FEBRUARY 1, 2017****Leaving Time by Jodi Picoult**

Alice Metcalf was a devoted mother, loving wife, and accomplished scientist who studied grief among elephants. Yet it's been a decade since she disappeared under mysterious circumstances, leaving behind her small daughter, husband, and the animals to which she devoted her life. All signs point to abandonment.....or worse. Still Jenna, now thirteen years old and truly orphaned by a father maddened by grief steadfastly refuses to believe in her mother's desertion. So she decides to approach the two people who might still be able to help her find Alice: a disgraced psychic named Serenity Jones, and Virgil Stanhope, the cynical detective who first investigated her mother's disappearance and the death of one of her mother's co-workers. Together these three lonely souls will discover truths destined to forever change their lives. Deeply moving and suspenseful, **Leaving Time** is a radiant exploration of the enduring love between mothers and daughters.

**Facilitator: Marie Heikkila**

**MARCH 1, 2017****A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman**

Meet Ove. He's a curmudgeon, the kind of man who points at people he dislikes as if they were burglars caught outside his bedroom window. He has staunch principles, strict routines, and a short fuse. People call him *the bitter neighbor from hell*, but must Ove be bitter just because he doesn't walk around with a smile plastered to his face all the time?

Behind the cranky exterior there is a story and a sadness. So when one November morning a chatty young couple with two chatty young daughters move in next door and accidentally flatten Ove's mailbox, it is the lead-in to a comical and heartwarming tale of unkempt cats, unexpected friendship, and the ancient art of backing up a U-Haul. All of which will change one cranky old man and a local residents' association to their very foundations.

**Facilitator: Shirley Halyburton**

**APRIL 5, 2017****Ghost Boy by Martin Pistorius**

In January 1988 Martin Pistorius, aged twelve, fell inexplicably sick. First he lost his voice and stopped eating. Then he slept constantly and shunned human contact. Doctors were mystified. Within eighteen months he was mute and wheelchair-bound. Martin's parents were told an unknown degenerative disease left him with the mind of a baby and less than two years to live. Martin was moved to care centers for severely disabled children. The stress and heartache shook his parents' marriage and their family to the core. Their boy was gone. Or so they thought. Ghost Boy is the heart-wrenching story of one boy's return to life through the power of love and faith. In these pages, readers see a parent's resilience, the consequences of misdiagnosis, abuse at the hands of cruel caretakers, and the unthinkable duration of Martin's mental alertness betrayed by his lifeless body. We also see a life reclaimed—a business created, a new love kindled—all from a wheelchair.

**Facilitator: Bob Bipes**

**MAY 3, 2017****My Grandma Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry by Fredrick Backman**

Elsa is seven years old; her grandmother is seventy-seven years old. She is Elsa's best, and only, friend. At night Elsa takes refuge in her grandmother's stories, in the Land of Almost-Awake and the Kingdom of Miamas where everybody is different and nobody needs to be normal. When Elsa's grandmother dies and leaves behind a series of letters apologizing to people she has wronged, Elsa's greatest adventure begins. Her grandmother's letters lead her to an apartment building full of drunks, monsters, attack dogs, and totally ordinary old crones, but also to the truth about fairytales and kingdoms and a grandmother like no other.

**Facilitator: Sandy Madsen**

**JUNE 7, 2017****The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah**

Viann and Isabelle have always been close despite their differences. Younger, bolder sister Isabelle lives in Paris while Viann lives a quiet and content life in the French countryside with her husband Antoine and their daughter. When World War II strikes and Antoine is sent off to fight, Viann and Isabelle's father sends Isabelle to help her older sister cope. As the war progresses, it's not only the sisters' relationship that is tested, but also their strength and their individual senses of right and wrong. With life as they know it changing in unbelievably horrific ways, Viann and Isabelle will find themselves facing frightening situations and responding in ways they never thought possible as bravery and resistance take different forms in each of their actions.

**Facilitator: Roberta Harper**