

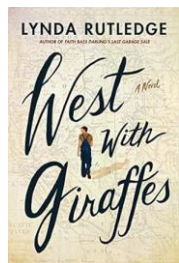


Youngstown Free Library

240 Lockport St. Youngstown, NY 14174
(716) 745-3555
www.youngstownfreelibrary.org

Afternoon Book Club's reading choices for 2024-2025

Here are the books we will be discussing at these meeting dates:



Tuesday, September 17th at 1:30 pm: *West with Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge

"'Few true friends have I known and two were giraffes...' Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave. It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes. Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, *West with Giraffes* explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late."



Tuesday, October 15th at 1:30 pm: *At the Coffee Shop of Curiosities* by Heather Webber

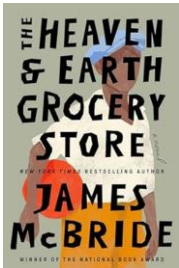
"When Ava Harrison receives a letter containing an unusual job listing one month after the sudden death of her ex-boyfriend, she thinks she's being haunted. The listing -- a job as a live-in caretaker for a peculiar old man and his cranky cat in Driftwood, Alabama -- is the perfect chance to start a new life. A normal life. Ava has always been too fearful to even travel, so no one's more surprised than she is when she throws caution to the wind and drives to the distant beachside town. On the surface, Maggie Mae Brightwell is a bundle of energy as she runs Magpie's, Driftwood's coffee and curiosity shop, where there's magic to be found in pairing the old with the new. But lurking under her cheerful exterior is a painful truth -- keeping busy is the best way to distract herself from the lingering loss of her mama and her worries about her aging father. No one knows better than she does that you can't pour from an empty cup, but holding on to the past is the only thing keeping the hope alive that her mama will return home one day. Ava and Maggie soon find they're kindred spirits, as they're both haunted -- not by spirits, but by regret. Both must learn to let go of the past to move on -- because sometimes the waves of change bring you to the place where you most belong."

NOTE: Meet author Heather Webber at the Lockport Public Library on Monday, October 28th at 6:30 PM. This is a free program with no registration required. Sponsored by the Friends of the Lockport Public Library, Inc.



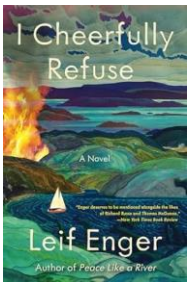
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Tuesday, November 19th at 1:30 pm: *Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride

"In 1972, when workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, were digging the foundations for a new development, the last thing they expected to find was a skeleton at the bottom of a well. Who the skeleton was and how it got there were two of the long-held secrets kept by the residents of Chicken Hill, the dilapidated neighborhood where immigrant Jews and African Americans lived side by side and shared ambitions and sorrows. Chicken Hill was where Moshe and Chona Ludlow lived when Moshe integrated his theater and where Chona ran the Heaven & Earth Grocery Store. When the state came looking for a deaf boy to institutionalize him, it was Chona and Nate Timblin, the Black janitor at Moshe's theater and the unofficial leader of the Black community on Chicken Hill, who worked together to keep the boy safe. [...] McBride shows us that even in dark times, it is love and community--heaven and earth--that sustain us."



Tuesday, December 17th at 1:30 pm: *I Cheerfully Refuse* by Leif Enger

"The transcendent latest from Enger (*Peace Like a River*) is at once a dystopian love story, a nautical adventure, and a meditation on loss, kindness, and natural beauty. The story unfolds in a near-future America where the billionaire class has complete control and reading has been abandoned. Even so, narrator Rainy and his wife, Lark, have found happiness in a small town on the shores of Lake Superior. Their idyll ends with the arrival of a new boarder, Kellan, a fugitive from a billionaire's work camp. After Lark is murdered by Kellan's pursuers, Rainy leaves his home in a small sailboat, both to escape the killers and in the hope that he'll find Lark's spirit among the islands where they fell in love. He weathers violent storms while sailing to various lakeside towns, where outsiders are easy targets for extortion and robbery. In a desperate world where kindness is a luxury, Rainy befriends the few people willing to help him, including a young girl who joins him on his journey, and discovers a path forward. In lesser hands, Enger's story could veer toward fatalism, but it's clear he holds the same infectious optimism as Lark, who believes 'the best futures are unforeseen.' This captivating narrative brims with hope."

When you are ready to read, please contact the Library and request the book title you'd like. Please plan to request your book(s) 1-2 weeks before you plan to start reading. We usually meet at the Lewiston Senior Center. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call or email Sonora at 716-745-3555 or smiller@nioga.org