
Kennebecasis Public Library – Book Club Program

Librarian: Madaline Boutilier

Email: Madaline.boutilier@gnb.ca **Phone:** (506) 849-5314 and ask for her.

Contact Madaline by email or phone to let her know that they are a part of the HIVE book club and what books the club wants brought in, when they are needed, and any future titles wanted if it has been decided.

Looking for Jane, by Heather Marshall

About the Author: Heather Marshall was born and raised in Canada, where she lives with her family and their giant golden retriever. After completing two Master's degrees, Heather worked for several years in politics and communications before finally turning her attention to her true passion: storytelling. Her debut novel *Looking for Jane* was an instant #1 bestseller and dominated the Toronto Star and Globe and Mail bestseller charts for 28 total weeks over the course of 2022-2023, including 5 consecutive weeks at #1.

A) Here are 17 discussion questions to help kick-off discussion. Members can take turns reading the question aloud.

1. Did you know about the postwar maternity homes and the underground networks offering illegal abortions before reading this book? How do these chapters of history inform your understanding of women's rights in Canada?
2. Due to an unfortunate mistake, the letter addressed to Nancy doesn't arrive to her in 2010. What do you think might have happened if she had received it then?
3. St. Agnes's Home for Unwed Mothers is not a welcoming place for the women who are sent there. How are the girls made to feel small or powerless? Where and how do they find joy, despite their situation?
4. The power of a mother's love is a central theme throughout the novel. How do the women in the novel express their love for their children, either adopted or biological, or during pregnancy? When does that love help heal relationships? When does it cause unintentional harm?
5. The novel also explores the mother-daughter relationship, particularly through Nancy, but also Angela. How are these women shaped by their mothers' decisions, and how do those choices affect their own attitudes toward pregnancy & motherhood?

6. Similarly, why is it so important to Angela to reunite Nancy with her biological mother?
7. What are the social expectations of women during the 1960s and onward, and how do the women in the novel fulfill or circumvent these expectations? For example, what barriers does Evelyn overcome while pursuing medical school or working as a doctor? What pressures might Frances also experience?
8. Dr. Morgentaler warns Evelyn that the costs of illegally providing abortion are high. What risks do Evelyn—and others fighting for women's rights—face? Why are the risks worth it?
9. Describe the impact that witnessing Clara's illegal abortion has on Nancy. How does it change their relationship as cousins? How does it help set Nancy on the path to Jane?
10. Contrast the experience Nancy has at Clara's abortion against her own. What do their stories highlight about freedom of choice and the importance of accessibility?
11. How does Angela's storyline illustrate the evolution of women's rights? In what ways do they still need to advance?
12. Consider the ways friendship and family are portrayed in the novel. What brings people together? What do these examples say about our need for human connection?
13. Discuss the role of secrets through the characters of Frances, Sister Agatha, Nancy, and Evelyn. What is accomplished when they share their stories or secrets with one another? What happens when they don't?
14. The novel underscores that time as a force can drive the characters' decisions and regrets. How does the passage of time influence Evelyn, Nancy, and Frances as their lives unfold?
15. Were you surprised by the revelation about Evelyn and Maggie's final days at St. Agnes's?
16. In the author's note, she says that more than 300,000 mothers in Canada are estimated to have been forced into the postwar-era maternity home system. What

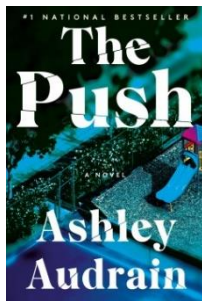
do you make of the government's lack of apology or interest in reparation to the survivors of these homes?

17. What is the significance of the title Looking for Jane?

B) Book questions and discussion from Book Club Members.

C) Discussion and choosing of the next book to read (by popular vote).

Here are some of the more popular books with availability from the Public Library:



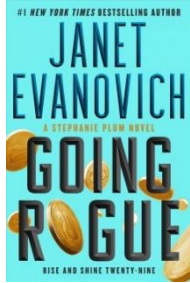
Title: The Push

Author: Ashley Audrain

Pages: 307

Call Number: F AUD

Abstract: A tense, page-turning psychological drama about the making and breaking of a family, told through the eyes of a woman whose experience of motherhood is nothing at all what she hoped for--and everything she feared. Blythe Connor is determined that she will be the warm, comforting, supportive mother to her new baby Violet that she herself never had. But in the thick of motherhood's exhausting early days, Blythe doesn't find the connection with her young daughter she expected. She's convinced that something is wrong with Violet--the little girl is distant, rejects affection, and behaves maliciously first towards Blythe and then the children at preschool. Or is it all in Blythe's head? Her growing obsession with her daughter's behaviour causes a rift in her marriage to her eminently rational architect husband, Fox. Fox doesn't see the Violet Blythe sees; he sees a wife who is overwhelmed and can't handle the day-to-day basics of being a mother. And the more Fox dismisses her fears, the more Blythe begins to question her own sanity.... Then her son, Sam, is born and Blythe has a fresh start on motherhood. With Sam, she feels the natural connection she had so longed-for with Violet. And Violet seems to love her little brother, too. Until the day that Violet's behaviour turns tragic. The devastating fall-out forces Blythe to face the truth about herself, her past, and her daughter. The Push is a novel about mothers and their children and about how an unspeakable act can reverberate and change the lives around us forever. It's a book that is impossible to put down and impossible to forget.



Title: Going Rogue: Rise and Shine Twenty-Nine

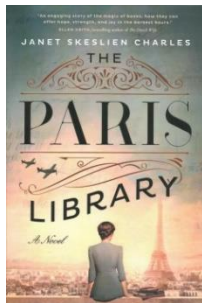
Author: Janet Evanovich

Pages: 324

Call Number: F EVA

Abstract: Monday mornings aren't supposed to be fun, but they should be predictable. However, on this particular Monday,

Stephanie Plum knows that something is amiss when she turns up for work at Vinnie's Bail Bonds to find that longtime office manager Connie Rosolli, who is as reliable as the tides in Atlantic City, hasn't shown up. Stephanie's worst fears are confirmed when she gets a call from Connie's abductor. He says he will only release her in exchange for a mysterious coin that a recently murdered man left as collateral for his bail. Unfortunately, this coin, which should be in the office--just like Connie--is nowhere to be found. The quest to discover the coin, learn its value, and save Connie will require the help of Stephanie's Grandma Mazur, her best pal Lula, her boyfriend Morelli, and hunky security expert Ranger. As they get closer to unraveling the reasons behind Connie's kidnapping, Connie's captor grows more threatening and soon Stephanie has no choice but to throw caution to the wind, follow her instincts, and go rogue.



Title: The Paris Library

Author: Janet Skeslien Charles

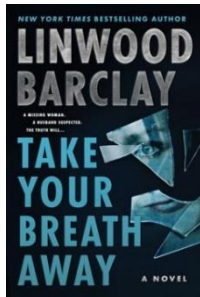
Pages: 353

Call Number: F SKE

Abstract: Paris, 1939. Young, ambitious, and tempestuous, Odile Souchet has it all: Paul, her handsome police officer beau; Margaret, her best friend from England; her adored twin brother Remy; and a

dream job at the American Library in Paris, working alongside the library's legendary director, Dorothy Reeder. But when World War II breaks out, Odile stands to lose everything she holds dear - including her beloved library. After the invasion, as the Nazis declare a war on words and darkness falls over the City of Light, Odile and her fellow librarians join the Resistance with the best weapons they have: books. They risk their lives again and again to help their fellow Jewish readers. When the war finally ends, instead of freedom, Odile tastes the bitter sting of unspeakable betrayal. Montana, 1983. Odile's solitary existence in gossipy small-town Montana is unexpectedly interrupted by Lily, her neighbor, a lonely teenager longing for adventure. As Lily uncovers more about Odile's mysterious

past, they find they share a love of language, the same longings, the same lethal jealousy. Odile helps Lily navigate the troubled waters of adolescence by always recommending just the right book at the right time, never suspecting that Lily will be the one to help her reckon with her own terrible secret. Based on the true story of the American Library in Paris, *The Paris Library* explores the geography of resentment, the consequences of terrible choices made, and how extraordinary heroism can be found in the quietest of places.



Title: Take your Breath Away

Author: Linwood Barclay

Pages: 354

Call Number: F BAR

Abstract: One weekend, while Andrew Mason was on a fishing trip, his wife, Brie, vanished without a trace. Most everyone assumed Andy had got away with murder--it's always the husband, isn't it?--

but the police could never build a strong case against him. For a while, Andy hit rock bottom--he drank too much to numb the pain, was abandoned by all his friends save one, nearly lost his business, and became a pariah in the place he once called home. Now, six years later, Andy has finally put his life back together. He sold the house he once shared with Brie and moved away. To tell the truth, he wasn't sad to hear that the old place was razed and a new house built on the site. He's settled down with a new partner, Jayne, and life is good. But Andy's peaceful world is about to shatter. One day, a woman shows up at his old address, screaming, "Where's my house? What's happened to my house?" And then, just as suddenly as she appeared, the woman--who bears a striking resemblance to Brie--is gone. The police are notified and old questions--and dark suspicions--resurface. Could Brie really be alive after all these years? If so, where has she been? It soon becomes clear that Andy's future and the lives of those closest to him depend on discovering what the hell is going on. The trick will be whether he can stay alive long enough to unearth the answers.

D) Date of next meeting: Thursday, March 23, 2023, at 1:30PM.