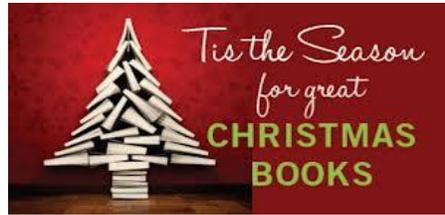


# Oakhurst Readers' 37 Best Loved Books of 2013



## ADULT FICTION

**11/22/63: A NOVEL** by Stephen King  
**A TIME TO KILL** by John Grisham  
**AN AVAILABLE MAN** by Hilma Wolitzer  
**AND THE MOUNTAINS ECHOED** by Khaled Hosseini  
**ARCADIA** by Lauren Groff  
**THE BOOK OF EBENEZER LE PAGE** by G. B. Edwards (New York Review of Books Classics)  
**DEAR MR. KNIGHTLY: A NOVEL** by Katherine Reay  
**HOME TO HARMONY** by Phillip Gulley (#1 IN SERIES OF 7)  
**HOTEL ON THE CORNER OF BITTER AND SWEET** by Jamie Ford  
**THE LEMON GROVE** by Ali Hosseini  
**THE MAGICIAN'S ASSISTANT** by Ann Patchett  
**ME BEFORE YOU** by Jojo Moyes  
**THE ROUND HOUSE: A NOVEL** by Louise Erdrich  
**THE SAMURAI'S GARDEN** by Gail Tsukiyama  
**THE UNLIKELY PILGRIMAGE OF HAROLD FRY** by Rachel Joyce

## ADULT NONFICTION (Historical, Inspiration, Memoirs, Biography)

**ANAM CARA: A BOOK OF CELTIC WISDOM** by John O'Donohue  
**THE ARTIST'S WAY: A SPIRITUAL PATH TO HIGHER CREATIVITY** by Julia Cameron  
**THE ASIAN JESUS** by Michael Amaladoss  
**DEEP RIVER: THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF ROBERT SHAW** by Keigh Burris  
**THE GEOGRAPHY OF BLISS: ONE GRUMP'S SEARCH FOR THE HAPPIEST PLACES ON EARTH** by Eric Weiner  
**HOMEGROWN DEMOCRAT: A FEW PLAIN THOUGHTS FROM THE HEART OF AMERICA** by Garrison Keillor  
**THE INSTITUTE OF HEARTMATH** (Any Book)  
**THE LUMINOUS WEB: ESSAYS ON SCIENCE AND RELIGION** by Barbara Brown Taylor  
**MARY MAGDALENE: A BIOGRAPHY** by Bruce Chilton  
**MY LONG TRIP HOME: A FAMILY MEMOIR** by Mark Whitaker  
**ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK: MY YEAR IN A WOMEN'S PRISON** by Piper Kerman  
**QUIET: THE POWER OF INTROVERTS IN A WORLD THAT CAN'T STOP TALKING** by Susan Cain  
**THEN THEY CAME FOR ME: A FAMILY'S STORY OF LOVE, CAPTIVITY, AND SURVIVAL** by Mazier Bahari and Aimee Molloy  
**WHAT REALLY MATTERS: 7 LESSONS FOR LIVING FROM THE STORIES OF THE DYING** by Karen M. Wyatt  
**WHY CHRISTIANITY MUST CHANGE OR DIE: A BISHOP SPEAKS TO BELIEVERS IN EXILE** by John Shelby Spong  
**ZEALOT: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JESUS OF NAZARETH** by Reza Aslan

## PICTURE BOOKS, MIDDLE GRADE AND YOUNG ADULT FICTION

**THE BOOK THIEF** by Markus Zusak (YA)  
**ENDER'S SHADOW** by Orson Scott Card (YA)  
**THE FAULT IN OUR STARS** by John Green (YA)  
**THE LORD'S PRAYER** illustrated by Tim Ladwig (Picture Book)  
**WHO WILL RUN THE FROG HOSPITAL** by Lorrie Moore (YA)  
**WONDER** by R. J. Palacio (MG)

## COMMENTS ARRANGED BY SUBMITTER'S FIRST NAME

### Carolyn Copenhaver

This year I asked four girls in my family to name their favorite books of 2013. Gillian St. John, 12, Kathy's granddaughter, brought me this middle grade novel to read: **Wonder** by R. J. Palacio. Having just finished it, I understand why Gillian was so moved and inspired by this story of a fifth-grade boy with a horribly disfigured face and what happens during his first year in a public school.

Zoe Copenhaver, 14, Mark's daughter chose the young adult novel, **The Fault in Our Stars** by John Green. Zoe says: "This book, about teen cancer patients, is amazing. I read every book John Green writes." I, too, found the book both brilliant and amazing.

Erica Copenhaver, 15, John's daughter was deeply moved by **A Time to Kill**, John Grisham's first novel. "I loved reading this book. It relates politics and law in a way that was exciting and understandable. I really fell in love with the characters because Grisham develops them so well."

Paige Copenhaver, 17, John's daughter selected **Ender's Shadow** by Orson Scott Card. "This book is the sister novel to **Ender's Game** and I love it because of the adventurous nature of the plot—and on top of that, the struggles the main character goes through are unreal, especially since he is a child. Nothing beats children fighting aliens."

### Donna Woolf

**The Lemon Grove** by Ali Hosseini. A novel of compassion and family in a time of political unrest. A very compelling read.

**Quiet: The Power Of Introverts In A World That Can't Stop Talking** by Susan Cain. This is a book for both Introverts and extroverts with fascinating theories as to how we come into the world and how we can respect each other's differences. It is a must read for parents whose children are the "shy" ones.

### Elaine Hoffman

**Arcadia** by Lauren Groff- Wonderful, whimsical and sad book about a little boy "Bit" who grows up in a religious commune. You follow him through to adulthood. Very good!

**Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet** by Jamie Ford. A Chinese man remembers a Japanese girl that he loved before she was taken to internment camps during WWII.

**Who Will Run The Frog Hospital?** by Lorrie Moon. An evocative, intense and satisfying story of two girls coming of age in the 1970's.

**An Available Man** by Hilma Wolitzer- A warm funny novel of a man in his 60's who is widowed and grieving. His step kids set up a personal ad for him and he finally finds life again.

**My Long Trip Home** by Mark Whitaker- A memoir of a man with a white mother and black father whose father was absent most of his life. Themes of reconciliation and redemption. Well written and engaging.

### Elise Phillips

**Deep River: The Life and Music of Robert Shaw** by Keith Burris.

**Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Quit Talking** by Susan Cain.

**Home to Harmony** by Philip Gulley.

### Ellen Gallow

**The Geography of Bliss: One Grump's Search for the Happiest Places in the World** by Eric Weiner The sub-title tells a lot about the book. Weiner travels to nine countries, as diverse as Qatar and Moldova, and writes with insight and humor about why people living in these countries are or are not happy. This book entertains as well as makes one think about what makes us happy.

**The Luminous Web: Essays on Science and Religion** by Barbara Brown Taylor. Taylor brings science and religion into dialogue in a way that left me breathless! Readable, imaginative, and inspiring.

And here is one of my favorite picture books for children: **The Lord's Prayer** illustrated by Tim Ladwig. **The Lord's Prayer** is illustrated by beautiful drawings that tell a contemporary story of a father and daughter helping an elderly neighbor. This would make a good gift for children ages 3-9 and for families with children this age.

### Jim Holmes

**Homegrown Democrat** by Garrison Keillor. Written and published in 2004, it was targeted for the 2004 Presidential election, but I was more interested in Keillor's personal reflections on how he became such a staunch supporter of Democratic ideals. Here are my impressions having read about half of the book:

Keillor describes the down home attitudes of his community in Anoka, Minnesota and his coming of age in politics with the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960. I turned to the chapter on 1960 since last week was right around the time of the 50th anniversary of the Kennedy assassination and I was curious to know how it affected Keillor's political landscape--since he was in college at the time. Instead--he focused on the flood two years after Kennedy's assassination where the Mississippi River rose up and threatened to flood the West Bank around St. Paul. He describes people working together to save neighbors' houses. Summing it up he says:

*By God, no matter what Republicans say, the people of this country really do care about each other. We are not a cold people. By God, when John F. Kennedy said "Ask what you can do for your country," he spoke to this country's heart and conscience [p. 76]*

Although clearly dated from the perspective of 2004 and prior to the Democratic congressional resurgence in 2006 and the election of Obama in 2008, this personal account has much to say about values that Keillor holds dear and ones that he shares with other Democrats. Garrison Keillor's easy style of writing makes you feel like you're sitting down in an overstuffed living room chair and listening to him talk as you read. He introduces real characters to embody the values and struggles of the middle class that tends to vote Democratic in the national elections. I recommend it for my Democratic friends and even some of my Republican friends--though they may not appreciate being lumped in the same group that he calls Republicans.

### Lois Shirley

**The Book of Ebenezer Le Page** by G.B. Edwards, published posthumously in 1981--the only book he ever published. My son Mark recommended this book. Mark told me that this about the "best book he's ever read."

I just ordered the book from Amazon, but have only read the first few pages of an incredibly long introduction (over 125 pages!--but I suppose that is also Part One of two parts of the book.) The Intro is written by John Fowles, and the setting is the Channel Islands.

Mark is a voracious reader. Actually, I doubt that "voracious" is an adequate word. Overseas I used to hide the new books in English for special times, lest he read them all at one time. Fifty years have gone by since those days. I tell this to show his love of books and reading.

### Leon Clymore

**Why Christianity Must Change or Die: A Bishop Speaks to Believers in Exile** by John Shelby Spong.

### Lou Clymore

I just finished **The Book Thief**. Imagine enjoying a book narrated by Death. What an odd approach to telling a story. It turns out to be a book one could read over and over picking up all the parts you likely missed the first few times through.

**Me Before You** by JoJo Moye turned out to be a much deeper book than I first thought. The author had done much research on quadriplegia and has family members who are quadriplegics. Yes, it was a love story but it explored the rights of the individual to choose how he or she wishes to live or die.

Donna Goddard was reading it in the backseat of our Camry as we drove home from DC after the Waging Peace Conference. She would chuckle every once on a while so I asked her about it and she agreed to loan it to me. I like it a lot because it is devoid of the f-word and violence and is telling a jolly good story.

### Margaret Blevins

I am reading a charming novel called **The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry** by Rachel Joyce. It is a selection of my neighborhood book club.

### Margaret England

I have enjoyed several books this year. Some are from our Oakhurst Book Club, including **The Samurai's Garden** by Gail Tsukiyama, **The Magician's Assistant** by Ann Patchett, and **The Round House** by Louise Erdrich. I just finished **Orange is the New Black** by Piper Kerman. These four books held my attention and were thought provoking. They provided lively discussions for the Oakhurst Book Club Members.

I especially liked **Orange is the New Black**. It was insightful about life in a prison and how hopeless life is for the inmates. They have very little control over their lives and there seems to be very little opportunity for prisoners to learn skills to better themselves when they leave prison. Two other books I enjoyed are **And the Mountain's Echoed** by Khaled Hosseini and **Then They Came for Me** by Maziar Bahari.

### Mary Margaret Yearwood

I just read **Dear Mr. Knightley** by Katherine Reay. It is precious. Sam, short for Samantha, has been given a grant to get a Master's in Journalism. Besides attending class she is required to write her donor who has named himself Mr. Knightley after a Jane Austen character because Sam is in love with the classics. Sam is a previous foster child who is known for not connecting with her foster families. But in writing **Dear Mr. Knightley**, Sam begins to connect for the first time with herself, her donor, and the people who love her.

### Paula Buford

Any of the books from the **HeartMath Institute**. They allow you to breathe through your heart and synchronize your heartbeat and allow your heart to send healing throughout your body. Very simple 3-4 step exercises you can do throughout the day to shift your mood and energy. Many employers, including the military, are using HeartMath, and the research shows it lowers stress and keeps people more physically healthy as well.

Any book by John O'Donohue. He has **Anam Cara** on CD--it's not exactly the same text as his book, but his voice is magical!

Maybe my top recommendation is **The Artist's Way** by Julia Cameron. I'd had it for probably 20 years and pulled it out when I started teaching a class on guided meditation and journaling--I've never consistently journaled. I started doing the "morning pages" (just stream of consciousness journaling) last January and I feel like I've awakened to my life and creativity! As evidence, I was the first person to turn in my Advent meditation this year and I'm usually the last!

### Sharlyn Menard

As a new member I really appreciate this. With my seminary focus this past year, I don't have a lot of fiction books to share. Here are my contributions:

**Zealot** by Reza Aslan. Aslan artfully recreates the setting of first century Palestine and portrays a 3-dimensional picture of Jesus as a prophet of his times. Very readable and thought-provoking.

**What Really Matters: Seven Lessons for Living from the Stories of the Dying** by Karen M. Wyatt, Karen Wyatt writes true stories of actual patients she worked with as a hospice physician. The book is organized in three sections, the groundwork, the lessons, and the harvest. Her years working in hospice gave her many opportunities to learn the truths offered by our living and dying. A touching and tender reflection of our shared humanity.

**The Asian Jesus** by Michael Amaladoss, Using nine images from Asian literature, culture, and religion, Amaladoss takes us on a journey of viewing Jesus through various lenses as guru, avatar, the satyagrahi and even dancer. If you are familiar with Asian religions or not this is a good read.

**Mary Magdalene: A Biography** by Bruce Chilton. For anyone who wants a readable book with reasonable scholarship on the role of Mary Magdalene in the Christian story.

### Sue Bucholdz

**1/22/63: A Novel** by Stephen King. This is not a Stephen King horror book. It is a gripping story of "what ifs" regarding the Kennedy assassination. The story involves a man named Jake Epping, who travels back in time to prevent the JFK assassination. Along the way, he meets various characters that become part of his life and the story. I'm sure King wrote this knowing it's the 50th anniversary of Kennedy's death this year. But there is minimal politics in the book. It was the best book I read last year and I have given it to at least 5 friends to read. I hated for the book to end, but King wraps up the story the best way possible.

**These gently edited lists are published in June and December on behalf of the Oakhurst Baptist Church Library Committee.**  
**Compiler: Carolyn Copenhaver. Committee Co-Chairpersons: Harold Hoffman and Jan Murphy**