

2024 Summer Reads Book Recommendations				
Recommended By	Title	Author	Fiction or Nonfiction	Brief description and what you liked about this book
Marnie Schulenburg	Birding to Change the World	Trish O'Kane	Nonfiction	A memoir whose title would seem to overpromise, but nope. This human rights journalist who covered human rights in war zones saw her life and career changed by Katrina, moved to Madison for a PhD in environmental studies, and with others in the 'Wild Warner' citizen group, influenced public park policy, improved the fate of countless birds and other critters, and inspired middle-schoolers and college kids to go on making a difference. Gorgeous writing to boot.
Barbara Park	A Psalm for the wild-Built	Becky Chambers	Fiction	A fictional account of a world that has rejected most modern conveniences and set aside a large area to go back to the wild. At the same time, the sentient robots left to go off to the wild. The main character meets one of these robots who is ready to explore what happened to the people during the intervening 50 years. Their philosophical conversation is fascinating.
Tim Scott	My Opposition: The Diary of Friedrich Kellner - A German against the Third Reich	by Friedrich Kellner (Author), Robert Scott Kellner (Translator)	Nonfiction	A first-person account of life during the war years in Nazi Germany by a minor bureaucrat in a provincial town.  I found the disconnect described between actual events, and how they were seen, to give some perspective on how people can see reality quite differently even in face of hard evidence (example: the Wehrmacht retreating was straightening defensive lines bringing victory ever closer). This seems a bit relevant given the election this fall.
Pam Gates	A Talk in the Woods	Cary Segall	Nonfiction	On a through-hike of the Appalachian Trail, Madisonian Cary Segall chats with many of the people he meets, recording their conversations plus his own observations as he makes his way along. If you love outdoor adventure, this book will take you on another!

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Ron Frye	Several named below by this author	Susan Vreeland	Fiction	<p>Susan Vreeland's passion for art is captured in her writings that explain the personalities of the artists, their works, their times and those around them. They bring to life learning about art without me feeling I have been lectured.</p> <p>Check out the list of Vreeland's art-related historical fiction books below for your reading possibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lisette's List presents one woman's yearning for art at a time when her family's collection of paintings had to be hidden in the south of France from Nazi art thieves.</li> <li>• Clara and Mr. Tiffany reveals the talented woman who conceived of and designed the well-loved Tiffany leaded glass lamps.</li> <li>• Luncheon of the Boating Party depicts Renoir's masterpiece, the personalities involved in its making, and the joie de vivre of late nineteenth century Paris.</li> <li>• Life Studies is a collection of stories of Impressionist painters told by people who knew them, as well as contemporary individuals encountering art in meaningful ways.</li> <li>• Girl in Hyacinth Blue traces an alleged Vermeer painting through the centuries.</li> <li>• The Passion of Artemisia illuminates Italian Baroque painter Artemisia Gentileschi.</li> <li>• The Forest Lover follows rebel British Columbia painter Emily Carr in her encounters with native peoples and cultures.</li> <li>• What Love Sees, tells the love story of a blind couple who refuse to accept limitations.</li> </ul>

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Paula Pachciarz	In My Time of Dying: How I Came Face to Face with the Idea of an Afterlife	Sebastian Junger	Nonfiction	Junger, an atheist and author best-known for "The Perfect Storm", details what happened to him in the aftermath of a near-fatal burst aneurysm. The medical saga alone is riveting, but the core of the book is his attempt to make sense of his vision of his deceased father, incorporating science, philosophy and yes, theology, in his exploration of this mystery and of the bigger question of whether there is life after death. "Would we believe in God if we didn't die?"
Karissa Sanchez Tra	Habibi	Chris Thompson	Fiction	Graphic novel that takes place in the Middle East and includes Quran stories within the life story of a young woman and boy
Anne Pryor	Tom Lake	Ann Patchett	Fiction	Set in a Michigan cherry orchard, it traces a woman's relationships with a famous actor, her three daughters, and others. Very well written. And the audiobook narrator is Meryl Streep.
Anne Pryor	Finding Me: A Memoir	Viola Davis	Nonfiction	Davis relates horrific childhood experiences and how she dealt with the resulting trauma as an adult. She also discusses the racism built into the entertainment industry. Well written and read by the author.
Anne Pryor	Small Things Like These	Claire Keegan	Fiction	Brief enough to be a novella, this story centers on one man's response to a moral crisis related to a Magdalene laundry in Ireland. Beautifully written.
Susanne Oliver	State of Wonder	Ann Patchett	Fiction	Wonderful novel with amazing plot lines, exotic setting, great inter-relationships and dialogue, so engaging!

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Marnie Schulenburg	Lillian Boxfish Takes A Walk	Kathleen Rooney	Fiction	An 85-yr-old woman takes a long solo walk thru Manhattan on the last night of the year, 1984. She starts out wearing a mink and finishes 10 miles later in a bomber jacket. One walk on one night, yet spanning six decades. To me, it was about her falling in love with the world. The author achieved universality in that theme. It's such a charming tale, and if examined under a microscope, unbelievable. But you come to know Lillian, her rough and fine edges, and by the end, it's not unbelievable at all.
Kent Wenger	Far From the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity	Andrew Solomon	Nonfiction	I don't know if I've ever read a book that made me think as much as this one did. It really digs into deep questions such as what makes a life worthwhile.
Nancy Wunderlin	Poverty by America	Matthew Desmond	Nonfiction	Well researched, compelling argument about why poverty persists in America. He also helps you image what America would look like without poverty and suggests real solutions.
Mary Frantz	sea people	christina thompson	Nonfiction	true history of the settling of pacific islands over past 15 centuries. Her husband is new zealand Maori, which gives their explorations a dimension of authenticity.
Barbara Chatterton F	Troubled Traveler	John Gernandt	Nonfiction	Intriguing, fascinating story of a young man's adventures deep into Mexico's numerous cultures to prepare him for unique and ultimately successful brain surgery.
Barbara Chatterton F	Family Portrait: American Prose Poetry 190-1950	Robert Alexander	Fiction	A rich variety prose from famous poets and Authors from 1900-1950
Johanna Hatch	When Women Were Dragons	Kelly Barnhill	Fiction	A magical realism/alternate history of the 1955 "Great Dragoning" when over 200,000 women transformed into dragons, the government cover up, and the lives of those they left behind.
Lynne Siegfried	The Rediscovery of America	Ned Blackhawk	Nonfiction	History of the colonization of America from perspective of the Native Americans

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Johanna Hatch	Stolen	Ann-Helen Laestadius (translated by Rachel Willson-Broyles)	Fiction	The story of Elsa, a young Sami woman that touches on indigenous rights, xenophobia, and climate change through a mystery focused on the illegal killing of a Sami community's reindeer herd.
Dirk Herr-Hoyman	Eruption	Michael Crichton	Fiction	A Hawaiian volcanic eruption, Crichton's last book.
Jesse Garst	Ancillary Justice	Ann Leckie	Fiction	Sequels also recommended.
Deesa Pence	The 5 People You Meet in Heaven	Mitch Albom	Fiction	
Suzanne Gernandt	The Saftkeep	Yael van der Wouden	Fiction	
Mary Mullen	All the Little Bird Hearts	Viktoria Lloyd-Barlow	Fiction	Debut by an author with autism.
Mary Mullen	Bad Cree	Jessica Johns	Fiction	
Marty Drapkin	What Happened to You	Oprah Winfrey and Bruce D. Perry	Nonfiction	About brain response to trauma and brain resilience
Toby Wacker	The Steerswoman (series)	Rosemary Kirstein	Fiction	appears to be classic fantasy, has a lot of logic, thinking
Al Nettleton	The Pioneers: The Heroic Story of the Settlers Who Brought the American Ideal West	David McCullough		
Millie Moffett	The Kite Runner	Khaled Hosseini	Fiction	a story of two friends, a long separation, redemption and forgiveness
Aileen Nettleton	Lessons in Chemistry	Bonnie Garmus	Fiction	engaging story of being a chemist in '60's, her treatment and "solution"
Karen Smith	The Wild Edge of Sorrow: Rituals of Renewal and the Sacred Work of Grief	Francis Weller		deals with grief of the loss of nature and different species related to climate change - does include a simple ritual to allow others to grieve for nature and the effect on the participants. He is a psychologist.