

Read any good books lately?

*Local librarians and
book lovers share
their summer
reading selections*

Summer's right around the corner. Do you know where your beach reads are?

If not, don't despair. You still have a little time to hit your local library or bookstore to stock up. To help guide you through the myriad of titles in which to choose, we asked local librarians and bookworms to recommend a few good books that would be ideal for a solid summer reading list. They didn't disappoint and shared many novels and nonfiction titles both new and not-so-new.

Here are their picks, along with their brief descriptions of each book. Happy reading!

Prudence Fallon

Adult services/reference librarian,
Tiverton Library Services

"The London Train" (2011), by
Tessa Hadley

"It is for adults and features two loosely connected stories. One about a man whose life goes into free-fall as a father and husband, the second about his barely remembered lover who has let idealized memory dangerously



impact her life. Tessa is a Welsh writer (which is my homeland) and uses two genres (the novel and the short story) to tell her tale, which I find interesting."

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Amy Greer

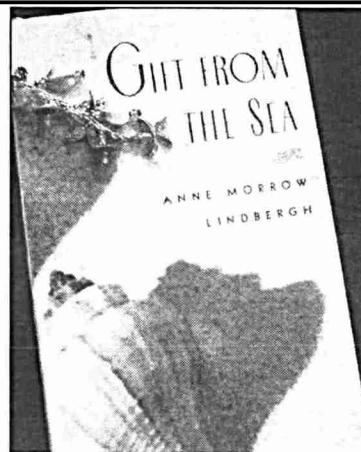
Community services librarian, Barrington Public Library

■ "The Warmth of Other Suns" (2010), by Isabel Wilkerson

"To tell the story of the African-American migration from the Jim Crow South to the tense western and northern cities, Wilkerson uses the personal narratives of three people who migrated north or west between 1930 and the 1960s. Through the eyes of these incredible narrators, Wilkerson brings us into the terror, frustration and triumph experienced by the 6.5 million African-Americans moving north or west. Wilkerson's book is moving, educational, eye-opening and wonderfully written — a perfect read on some long, summer afternoons."

■ "A Map of Home" (2009), by Randa Jarrar

"Winning the Arab American Book Award, selected by the Arab American Museum in Dearborn, Mich., Jarrar's novel is filled with warmth, laughter, heartbreak and change. Nidali, the daughter of an Egyptian-Greek mother and Palestinian father, is experiencing the rapid, difficult changes of the Middle East in the 1970s. When her family moves to Texas, Nidali and her family make the difficult transition into a new culture, language and place, far away from family and friends. In this coming-of-age novel, Jarrar captures the moving experience of a young woman straddling two cultures while trying to determine who she is and who she wants to be."



Debbie Barchi

Director, Barrington Public Library

■ "Gift From the Sea" (1955), by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

"Although this classic was written in 1955, it is the book I most recommend to those who like quiet, perceptive, contemplative reading. Lindbergh (wife of American aviator Charles Lindbergh) reflects on the various stages of a woman's life and relationships, from youth to old age, using as metaphors the various shells she finds along the beach. This is a small but evocative book that can easily slip into a purse, pocket or beach tote."

■ "Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet" (2009), by Jamie Ford

"Although a work of fiction, this powerful book brings us back to the tension and terror of the early days of World War II in the United States, when tens of thousands of Japanese, many of them native-born American citizens, were taken from their homes and sent to detention facilities in the United States, without ever having been charged with any crimes. The hero of the novel is a young Chinese-American boy, trying to understand the chaos he witnesses around him, falling in love for the first time, and breaking away from the traditions and prejudices of his parents."

Kathleen Odean

Local author of "Great Books for Girls" and several other guides to books for youngsters

■ "The Pick-Up Game" (2011), edited by Marc Aronson and Charles R



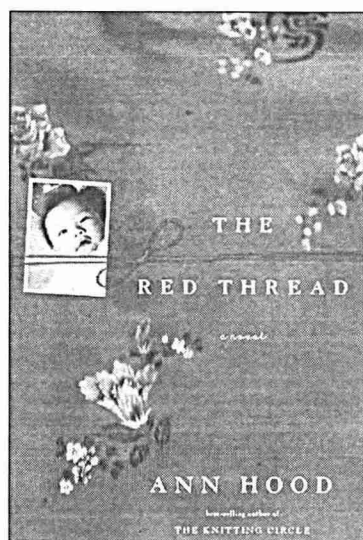
Smith Jr.

"This is a terrific set of interrelated stories by different authors about a day of games and different players at a public basketball court in New York City."

■ **"Delirium"** (2011), by Lauren Oliver

"In a slightly futuristic Portland, Maine, everyone gets an operation at age 18 to cure them of falling in love. But Lena falls in love first and doesn't want to be cured of her 'delirium.'"

Both titles are fiction, for teens 14 and up.



Pam Grove

Leads a book club at George Hail Library in Warren

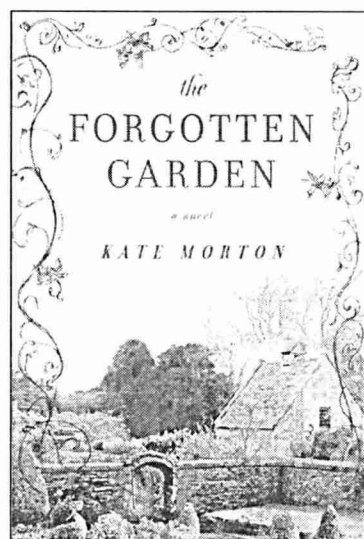
■ **"The Red Thread"** (2010), by Ann Hood

"'The Red Thread' is a terrific book about six couples who decide to adopt little girls from China and the woman who helps them. What makes the book most interesting is that Ann Hood not only tells the stories of the adoptive families, she also presents us with the stories of the families that give up their daughters for adoption. And, like the American couples, each one does so for a variety of reasons. Doing this added a richness and fullness to the story which made the 'adoption story' fresh and new."

■ **"Unbroken"** (2010), by Laura Hil- lenbrand

"'Unbroken' tells the remarkable true story of the record-breaking Olympic runner, World War II veteran and prisoner of war Louis Zamperini. Zamperini's plane was shot down over the Pacific and he and two other men survived over 40 days on a leaky life raft in the shark-infested waters. However, when the survivors finally wash ashore it is on a Japanese-controlled island and the men are taken as POWs. The majority of the book chronicles Zamperini's time in various POW camps. But this is not a story of torture; it is a story of survival and the strength of the human spirit and the incredible will to live. But most of all, it is the story of human dignity. 'Unbroken' is non-fiction at its best."

Ms. Grove writes a book review blog, "Pam's Picks" (<http://warren-pampicks.blogspot.com>), for the library.



Cheryl Stein

Circulation coordinator at Rogers Free Library in Bristol who leads the library's Adult Reading Group

■ **"The Forgotten Garden"** (2009), by Kate Morton

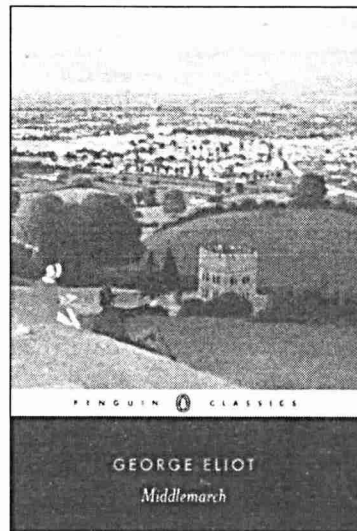
"A story of outer and inner journeys as Nell, abandoned as a child, leaves her adoptive parents in Australia and travels to England to trace her story, to find her real identity — a quest that ultimately leads her to Blackhurst Manor on the Cornish coast and the secrets of the doomed Mountrachet family."

■ **"The Good Earth"** (1931), by Pearl S. Buck

"A classic I recently read for the first time and loved."

■ **"Tender at the Bone: Growing Up at the Table"** (1998), by Ruth Reichl

"A memoir about how, at a very early age, Reichl discovered that 'food could be a way of making sense of the world ...'"



Joyce May

Adult services librarian at Weaver Library, East Providence

■ **"Middlemarch"** (1874), by George Eliot

"This summer I will be reading George Eliot's 'Middlemarch' and I am inviting my book clubs and the community to read it with me. We will read it all summer and meet every two weeks to discuss our reading. Folks can e-mail me (ep-libraryjoyce@yahoo.com) for more details."

■ **"Faith"** (2011), by Jennifer Haigh

"'Faith' is about a woman who has been estranged from her family for 20 years who returns to Boston to defend her brother, a popular Catholic priest at the center of a scandal. It is a heavy topic but I will read anything that Haigh writes as she nails the truth when it comes to families and siblings. An older book of hers, 'The Condition,' starts out in an old summer home on the Cape. Readers might like to start with this as they will have to put

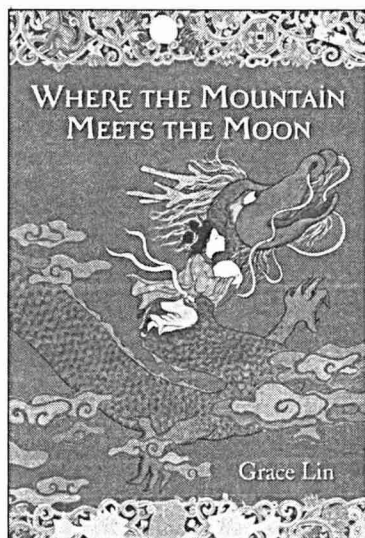
themselves on reserve for 'Faith.'"

■ **"Basketball Junkie: A Memoir"** (2011), by Chris Herren and Bill Reynolds

"Chris' memoir of basketball, heroin addiction and an amazing recovery is compelling (a must for beach reads) and it has local flavor, too."

■ **"Cutting for Stone"** (2009), by Abraham Verghese

"This novel ... is an incredibly moving story of twin brothers, Ethiopia, a mission hospital and the world of medicine. Its description as 'an enthralling family saga of Africa and America, doctors and patients, exile and home' definitely rings true. Verghese, a surgeon and teacher at Stanford, wrote two memoirs about being a doctor before publishing this novel."



Peggy Gossage

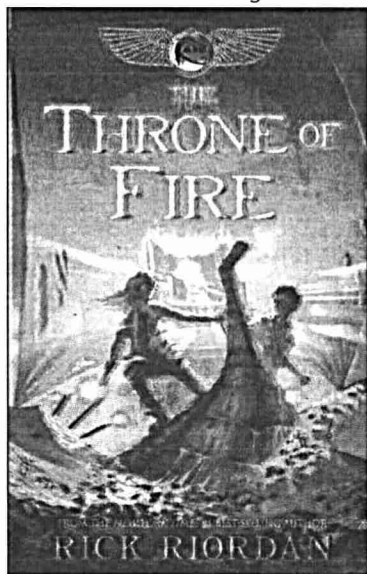
Children's librarian at George Hail Library, Warren

"Where the Mountain Meets the Moon" (2009), by Grace Lin

"I'm glad to recommend a book for kids and parents to read together. This is a tale full of excitement, danger, magic and humor in which a young girl, Minli, sets out on an amazing journey seeking the old Man of the Moon. On the way she befriends a gentle dragon and together they encounter many magical creatures and exciting adventures as they travel together to Never Ending Mountain. This is a beautifully written story full of Chi-

nese folklore and enriched with lively full color drawings at the beginning of each chapter."

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Anika Denise

Local children's book author

■ **"The Throne of Fire"** (2011), by Rick Riordan

"For kids, a great beach read is a page-turner, with vivid characters and lots of action and adventure. Rick Riordan's 'Kane Chronicles' series delivers on all fronts. This book has everything: danger, intrigue, sorcery, Egyptian deities bent on destroying the universe and two industrious siblings at the novel's center."

■ **"The Three Weissmanns of Westport"** (2011), by Cathleen Schine

"For adult beach reads, I have a few criteria. The first is that that the book is available in paperback, so I can throw it in my beach bag, sand and all. And just like the kiddies, I want to be transported by a summer novel — utterly engrossed. Throw in a little humor, witty dialog and memorable characters and I'm gone. Cathleen Schine's 'The Three Weissmanns of Westport' is my pick for this beach read season. It's the story of Betty Weissmann, who has just been dumped by her husband of 48 years, exiled from her elegant New York apartment and finds herself 'finding herself' in a run-down Connecticut beach cot-

tage."

Ms. Denise leads a story hour every Thursday at 10:30 a.m. at Barrington Books. The bookstore has a summer reading challenge for kids; learn more at www.Barrington-Books.com.

Carolyn Magnus

Director, Portsmouth Free Public Library

■ **"A Lesson in Secrets"** (2011), by Jacqueline Winspear

"The Maisie Dobbs" series by Jacqueline Winspear is wonderful for beach reading. Winspear's debut novel 'Maisie Dobbs' (2003) introduces the maid when Maisie has just lost her mother and enters service to help her father make ends meet. She becomes a nurse during World War I and falls in love with a young doctor. After the war, Maisie starts her own detective agency and investigates a case of infidelity. Maisie is intelligent, sensitive and very likable. If you like the first novel, there are seven more in the series."

■ **"Sudden Sea: The Great Hurricane of 1938"** (2003), by R. A. Scotti

"Our book club is reading 'Sudden Sea.' I love reading about areas that are familiar to me and I remember my parents talking about it. The 1938 hurricane has been covered many times but Scotti focuses on a few people's experiences which lends an immediacy to her account that is both exciting — and terrifying. There's nothing like sitting at the beach on a beautiful day and reading about how quickly things can change."

And two from us ...

No one we contacted mentioned these two books, but we will:

■ **"Freedom"** (2010), by Jonathan Franzen

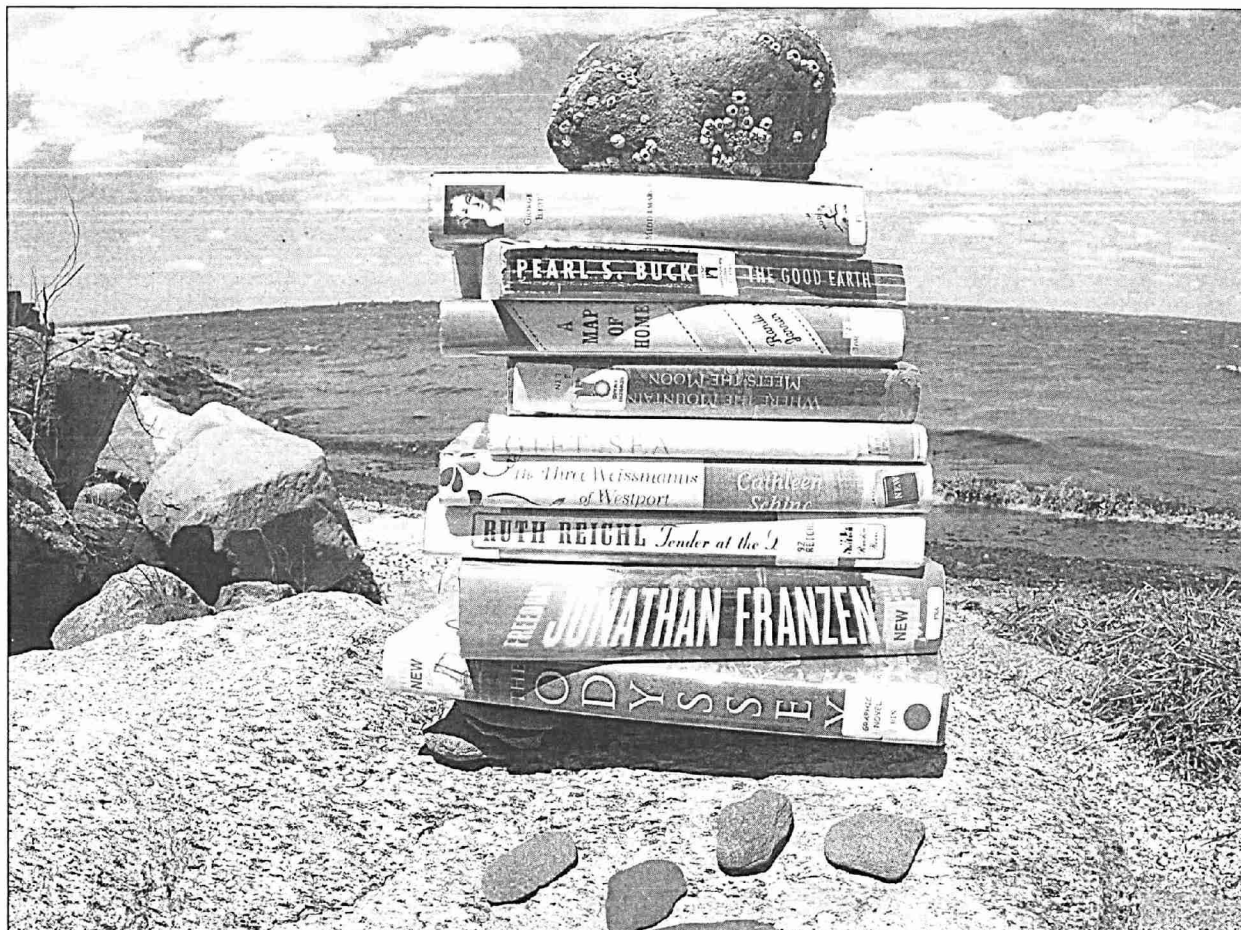
Franzen thumbed his nose at Oprah when she selected "The Corrections" for her book club in 2001, an awkward public brouhaha that painted the author as a prima donna in the minds of many. With "Freedom," one of the most talked-about (and debated) novels in recent memory, he was more gracious and even appeared on her

show. Follow a Midwestern couple, the Berglunds, who slowly lose track of each other as their story unfolds over the last few decades leading up to the Obama administration.

■ **"The Odyssey" (2010), by Gareth Hinds**

Nope, this isn't the original 8th century BC work by Homer that had you slapping yourself awake during

middle school. Gareth Hinds makes it accessible by turning the epic poem into a watercolor graphic novel. (He did the same for "Beowulf" in 2007.) Recommended for grades 7 and up.



RICHARD W. DIONNE JR.

Everyone has their own idea of what constitutes a perfect "beach read."