



2023 Reading Challenge

OCTOBER

A bestseller from the year you turned 18

A reader from Springfield read *A Kind of Freedom* by Margaret Wilkerson Sexton: "An insightful look into the struggles of three generations of a black family living in New Orleans. I found this book to be quite thought provoking."

A reader from Beverly read *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by JK Rowling: "Love it of course! It did irritate me that Rowling got so much credit for all her "creations." It was very well written, but most readers seemed to have no idea that she didn't create everything-she borrowed a lot from mythology!!"

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *The Bear* by Andrew Krivak: "This was an unusual and amazing story and the writing was spectacular. You found yourself in every setting that the family/girl are in...so descriptive and clear. Highly recommend."

A reader from Concord read *The Summons* by John Grisham: "Typical engaging Grisham; forgot how much I enjoyed his books; also good for a southern setting legal read."

A reader from Amherst read *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up* by Marie Kondo: "If it doesn't spark joy it should go. I thought I could use some advice on decluttering and this book gave me some insight."

A reader from Springfield read *Lonely planet Prague* by Mark Baker: "This book provided a wealth of information on our visit to Prague! Great resource for travelers!"

A reader from Braintree read *A Distant Heart* by Sonali Dev: "I loved the characters."

A reader from northampton read *salem's lot* by stephen king: "Horror at his best. Normal to beastly, drunks, Marston House crazy upon the hill in the town. Nice how it ended. Believe it or do not. It kept me on my toes."

A reader from Danvers read *Scruples* by Judith krantz: "Fun silly book."

A reader from Melrose read *Endless Night* by Agatha Christie: "This mystery didn't become compelling until the very last few pages, when we learn the narrator is completely unreliable. I keep wanting to like the works of Agatha Christie, but I am afraid they usually bore me - though not literally to death."

A reader from Chicopee read *A Likely Story* by Leigh McMullan Abramson: "This is a story about the dysfunctional family of an egotistical famous author."

A reader from Spencer read *The Hot Zone* by Richard Preston: "Bestseller from 1995. I now know way more about Ebola than I ever wanted to, because it's super scary and gross. The book was well written, easy to read and informative."

A reader from WORCESTER read *CAPTAINS AND THE KINGS* by TAYLOR CALDWELL: "THIS WAS A CAPTIVATING STORY WITH WONDERFUL DESCRIPTIONS AND MEMORABLE CHARACTERS. EVEN THOUGH IT WAS WRITTEN IN 1972 THERE ARE SO MANY ASPECTS, ESPECIALLY OF POLITICS THAT ARE TIMELY TODAY."

A reader from malden read *Falconer* by John Cheever: "The most interesting thing about this book is that John Cheever was born in Quincy, Ma. and attended Thayer Academy in Braintree."

A reader from Wilbraham read *Fear of Flying* by Erica Jong: "I read this book when I was 18 and it was not memorable. I thought that if I read it again with the wisdom of a 68 year old, I would better understand why it was/is touted as being revolutionary. I still think it is drivel. One has to get to the last chapter to gain any insight into feminist concerns. If this was the lynchpin of feminism....it is no wonder why women are still struggling."

A reader from Dartmouth read *Cujo* by Stephen King: "One of the first books that started my love of Stephen King. Scared the pants off of me."

A reader from Andover read *James Herriot's Dog Stories* by James Herriot: "I love James Herriot and was so pleased to find that a book he wrote was a best seller the year I turned 18! Always warm, funny and compassionate, James Herriot is a joy to read."

A reader from New Bedford read *I Heard The Owl Call My Name* by Margaret Craven: "Nicely written, likeable characters - I truly enjoyed reading this book."

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *Black Cake* by Charmaine Wilkerson: "I love multi-generation sagas, especially those dealing with race, class, and culture. This had it all, plus an environmental lens and a family mystery to boot. I listened to the book, and the narrator was wonderful, switching between Caribbean, British, and American accents as we heard from Eleanor, Benny, Byron, Covey, Lin, Marble,

and more. There were a lot of people to keep track of, and the novel jumped between time and perspective, but the labeling of the chapters was clear, so I was able to follow along easily. I loved how so much came together in the end."

A reader from Brewster read *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn: "I love the way this story develops. Two sides of a story told by two unreliable narrators makes for a page-turner that fully deserved the hype. Plus: one of the few books-turned-movies where the movie was just as good as the book."

A reader from Fall River read *Trinity* by Leon Uris: "Learned so much about the centuries-long struggle of the Irish people for their independence by reading this fascinating story. Lots of history, drama, and details of the landscape and lives of the Irish poor. Well worth reading!"

A reader from Braintree read *When She Was Good* by Philip Roth: "Despite it having been on the NYTimes bestseller list (positions 8-10) during the summer of 1967, I had never heard of this novel before researching for the October reading challenge. This (wordy) extended family saga, set in a 1940's Midwest American small town, offers an exercise in compassion as it focuses extensively on a psychologically damaged character."

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys: "Published 1966. On its own it's an indictment of the effects of colonization, racism, gender inequity, and misogyny juxtaposed with a beautiful and loving description of the West Indies islands. In the context of *Jane Eyre*, it's the author's spin on the backstory of Mr. Rochester and the 'mad woman' in the attic."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Naruto, Vol. 1: Uzumaki Naruto (Naruto, #1)* by Masashi Kishimoto, Katy Bridges (Translator): "This entertaining manga follows mischievous orphan Naruto Uzumaki as he works toward his goal of gaining respect and becoming a ninja and village leader, or Hokage."

A reader from Taunton read *Airs Above the Ground* by Mary Stewart: "Romance and intrigue in Austria involving three unsuspecting British citizens, the Spanish Riding School, and the world famous Lipizzaner stallions. Loved it then and did upon rereading it now! Mary Stewart was a gifted writer and storyteller. The title refers to a dressage movement only the most highly capable and trained stallions are taught to execute!"

A reader from Hampden read *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach: "Very inspirational book. don't let your limitations keep you from striving to be your best and to keep learning."

A reader from Somerville read *Doctor Sleep* by Stephen King: "Not as good as its precursor but interesting nonetheless. Stephen King has a great writing style but sometimes the fantasy is too much for me!"

A reader from Halifax read *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood: "So scary! I feel as though the dystopian view from 1985 is not so dystopian now. The state of our country is about one step away from the "future" that Ms. Atwood prophesied."

A reader from Erving read *Sleeping Murder* by Agatha Christie: "A fun read. Pretty much stood the test of time."

A reader from Attleboro read *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss: "This book about the need for each of us to care for the environment is as relevant today as it was in 1971 when it was first published. A highly recommended quick read for all ages."

A reader from Billerica read *Fourth Protocol* by Frederick Forsyth: "I like intrigue but this was stilted and forced. Not a great read for me."

A reader from Yarmouth Port read *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt: "I was 18 in 1975. I had read most of the books suggested except for this middle grade level book. Tuck explains to Winnie why no one should ever live forever. I found it very thought provoking for a young reader and much more positive than *The Picture of Dorian Gray*."

A reader from Rockland read *The Name of the Rose* by Eco, Umberto.: "A mystery set in a 14th century monastery – seven brothers dead in bizarre circumstances. Brother William turns detective in this classic novel."

A reader from Dracut read *The Optimist's Daughter* by Eudora Welty: "I did not enjoy reading this book."

A reader from Chicopee read *A Stranger in the Lifeboat* by Mitch Albom: "What would you do if you were floating on a lifeboat with a group of completely different people and you pulled a man out of the water who claims to be the Lord? This is what a group of survivors of a ship explosion contemplate, as the only way they can all be saved is if they all believe this man is indeed the Lord."

A reader from Amherst read *Johnatan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach: "Great fable with the moral that the path for each of us is already written within. People may love or hate your path but it is yours."

A reader from Groveland read *Oh The Places You'll Go* by Dr. Seuss: "A classic for a reason."

A reader from Hadley read *Leonardo da Vinci* by Walter Isaacson: "A really enjoyable read about a startlingly inquisitive and insightful character who was centuries ahead of his time. I don't read many biographies, but I felt like I couldn't put this one down because I found it so intriguing. My only complaint is that the PDF that accompanied the audiobook was low resolution. I highly recommend for anyone interested in painting, engineering, anatomy, or the renaissance."

A reader from Lancaster read *The story of Edgar Sawtelle* by David Wroblewski: "I did not see the end coming, but I guess I should have. I loved everything about this story; you love to hate what happens. I didn't realize until afterwards it's based on Hamlet, so I have additional appreciation for it."

A reader from Wilmington read *Cujo* by Stephen King: "Stephen King is the master of get-in-your-head horror. No question about it. Ending a surprise, cuz different than the movie...so sad."

A reader from Worcester read *Wild Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys: "I enjoyed where Rhys went with this, giving Rochester's wife a story. Making her a real person not just the raving madwoman in the attic. I turned 18 in 1966."

A reader from HAMPDEN read *An experiment in Criticism* by CS Lewis: "I feel I should have liked it more than I did just because it was written by CS Lewis. However, I found it laborious with outdated references. I did not gain by reading it."

A reader from Forestdale read *The Dead Zone* by Stephen King: "One touch can change the future. Loved this book."

A reader from South Hadley read *Library Lion* by Michelle Knudsen, Kevin Hawkes (ill.): "This book is so cute, I wish I'd gotten to read it when I was a kid! The lion is the absolute cutest, I wish we had a lion at my library!"

A reader from Attleboro read *At Bertram's Hotel* by Agatha Christi: "Takes place at an old-fashioned London hotel with the usual danger and murder. Typical Agatha Christi. An easy read."

A reader from Leverett read *Cruel Shoes* by Steve Martin: "I liked Steve Martin then and still like him now, but this book is terrible. It's a reminder of how his edginess didn't always work but he was willing to put it out there."

A reader from Lunenburg read *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee: "The sad truth of the situation: Atticus telling Scout that '...it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.' A mockingbird sings its sweet song and never harms anybody. Symbolically, Robinson was innocent, never hurt anyone, but was killed. The sad truth of bigotry and hatred."

A reader from Wilbraham read *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou: "Excellent memoir of the famous author's childhood and coming of age. Her life was very difficult. She was raped by her stepfather when she was eight; stabbed by her stepmother when she was in her teens; was raised primarily by her religious grandmother in Sparks, AR, but also spent time with her mother and her father in CA. Despite these and other difficulties, she was a serious, excellent student and became the first Black woman trolley conductor in San Francisco. Recommended for the story of perseverance and resilience."

A reader from Franklin read *The Wedding* by Danielle Steel: "Standard Danielle Steel book, which I have not read in a long time. Following the lives of several people with a couple of main characters and those around them. It should have had a better title as the wedding is the last chapter and any mention of a wedding doesn't even happen for at least half the book."

A reader from Hopkinton read *P is for Peril* by Sue Grafton: "A good mystery written in first person, a quick read. The plot had a few twists and turns, the characters were interesting and enough were likeable enough to want to check out the rest of the books in this series."

A reader from Abington read *Sophie's Choice* by William Styron: "Loved the book though having seen the movie in 1982 I was surprised by the amount of material in the book that I didn't recall and that seemed tangential to the main stories of Sophie and Sophie+Nathan. Given all that content I was also surprised by the short length of the section actually devoted to her "choice" in this nearly 600 page novel."

A reader from Sagamore Beach read *Water ship Down* by Richard Adams: "Fiction fantasy about a warren of rabbits their lives and adventures. Tense at times, great characters and entertaining to read."

A reader from AMHERST read *The Fixer* by Joseph Finder: "Full of twists and turns, this book is a real page turner."

A reader from Hudson read *The Celestine Prophecy* by James Redfield: "Definitely just a vehicle for preaching, and I was overly aware of the not great writing (there was a lot of 'we walked to the table and ate' and 'I walked to the window and looked down the hall')."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown: "Did not enjoy this book. Lots of fun action that I felt went nowhere."

A reader from Bolton read *Pretend you don't see her* by Mary Higgins Clark: "Not a huge fan."

A reader from Beverly read *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn: "I have seen the movie before and knew the story, but it was interesting to read the book and see how it all plays out on the page. It was interesting, although I got a little bored in the second half and didn't really like the ending."

A reader from Conway read *A Day No Pigs Would Die* by Robert Newton Peck: "Easy read (Young Adult). I kept waiting for the reason for the title to become clear and then was surprised when it happened. Enjoyed this story."

A reader from Brookline read *Cinnamon Skin* by John D. MacDonald: "Travis McGee, 'salvage consultant' and his cerebral friend Meyers solve the mystery of the boat explosion that killed Meyers' niece. The trail leads through Florida and into Mexico, making this a book enjoyable both as a mystery and for armchair travel."

A reader from Reading read *The Bookshop* by Penelope Fitzgerald: "I enjoyed the interesting characters but sometimes found it confusing to follow her style of writing and language."

A reader from Salem read *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes: "The year I turned 18 was 2011. The book I decided to read was one by an author I was already very fond of, Julian Barnes. The sense of an ending was my favorite book so far for this challenge. I found the book to be powerful, moving and thought provoking."

A reader from Irvine CA read *Ramona the Brave* by Beverly Cleary: "First grade is hard, especially when your teacher rarely smiles. Be a Mr. Cardoza, not a Mrs. Griggs!"

A reader from Hanson read *The Great Train Robbery* by Michael Crichton: "The Victorian era time frame was fascinating as well as the details and the mastermind behind this infamous train robbery."

A reader from Belchertown read *The Sun and Her Flowers* by Rupi Kaur: "I enjoyed many of the poems in this collection. However, I felt that the titled poems were almost always better without their title, and some of the poems lacked concrete language."

A reader from Monson read *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini: "A very powerful and emotional story of women trying to survive during a time of political unrest."

A reader from Wakefield read *Drowning Ruth* by Christina Schwarz: "This was a slow book, but one that explored love, family, secrets and what we do to protect the people we care about. It wasn't filled with twists and turns but was a good read that kept me interested."

A reader from Monson read *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry: "What a wonderful story about how a person's prejudice can guide actions and how that bias can be turned around once a person searches and recognizes a new path. When George refuses to sell his property and decides the family

can move to a new neighborhood, Mama says 'He finally came into his manhood today, didn't he? Kind of like a rainbow after the rain.' I enjoyed reading the play!"

A reader from Springfield read *The Hundred Dresses* by Eleanor Estes: "Wanda, an immigrant from Poland, arrives in school with one blue dress that she wears daily. The other girls make fun of her and her father moves to another town. However, after Wanda relocated, she sent Maddie and Peggy each a picture of them wearing one of her dresses. She understood they were not like the girls, they had good hearts."

A reader from Methuen read *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd: "A beautiful coming of age story that deals with tough topics such as racism, loss of a loved one and abuse but also the positive love of found family. I also enjoyed learning more about bees, those special creatures so important to sustaining life."

A reader from Lowell read *Six Years* by Harlan Coben: "This book kept my interest the whole way because of all the twists! Interested in reading more by this author for sure."

A reader from Leominster read *The Accidental Tourist* by Anne Tyler: "It was a thoughtful, quiet novel about a man, his dog, and the two different women in his life. It was both funny and sad, and ultimately very satisfying."

A reader from Bolton read *A Light in the Attic* by Shel Silverstein: "Silly, funny, thought-provoking and always re-readable. Imagination, laughter and understanding are all celebrated."

A reader from Amherst read *Easter Parade* by Richard Yates: "A mostly depressing account of a dysfunctional family. I wanted to stop reading it and make another choice but it kept drawing me back in. May read again at some point so I will reserve any further comments."

A reader from Paxton read *11/22/63* by Stephen King: "This is my first Stephen King read and I absolutely loved it! Not my usual genre at all but I enjoyed the time travel, the characters, and the historical elements."

A reader from Leeds read *Oh, the Places You'll Go* by Dr. Seuss: "How fun to discover that a book that is a bestseller and often gifted at graduation came out the year I turned 18 and graduated from high school."

A reader from Hampden read *The Rescue* by Nicholas Sparks: "I've never read any of his books. The book itself was okay as I wanted to learn more about the child versus the love story that was to develop."

A reader from Scituate read *Daddy* by Danielle Steel: "It was fun to pick a book to read as an adult that I probably snuck as a teenager."

A reader from Northborough read *The Stars Shine Down* by Sidney Sheldon: "Well written but not a great story."

A reader from Belchertown read *I Remember* by Joe Brainard: "Quirky read as to author's recollection as to what was happening at the time (1970). I was 18 and I was constantly saying "I remember that." Good read."

A reader from Naples read *Psycho* by Robert Bloch: "Psycho is a horror novel by American writer Robert Bloch. The novel tells the story of Norman Bates, a caretaker at an isolated motel who struggles under

his domineering mother and becomes embroiled in a series of murders. Loved reading to see changes Hitchcock made. Was a great reading year: other books that year: A Separate Peace, Flowers for Algernon, Advise & Consent, Hawaii, Goodbye Columbus, A Raisin in the Sun, To Sir with Love, Sweet Bird of Youth, The Hustler, and The Elements of Style with Revisions. Lots to choose from. I read several others for the first time or again.”

A reader from Medford read *Sleeping Murder* by Agatha Christie: “This was a fun challenge! It's been a while since I've read any Agatha Christie, so I appreciated the chance to read another one of her mysteries. It was like spending time with an old friend, and while the characters were focused on a group of possible suspects, I suspected two additional individuals, one of whom turned out to be correct. :)”

A reader from Plainville read *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom: “I've heard of this book many times but had never read it. It's very philosophical, and so much resonated with me and some experiences in my life lately. I'd definitely recommend this book to others.”

A reader from Fitchburg read *The Parsifal Mosaic* by Roert Ludlum: “This was like reading a Tom Cruise movie.”

A reader from Florence read *Nemesis* by Agatha Christie: “Not one of her best but still an ok read. Interestingly enough I have read many of the bestselling books of 1971.”

A reader from Seekonk read *The Honorary Consul* by Graham Greene: “Interesting novel about the kidnapping of an Honorary Consul in Argentina but mostly about a doctor and the political and personal reasons he attempts to save him.”

A reader from Dracut read *Rainbow Six* by Tom Clancy: “Reliving the world of pre 9-11 military thrillers. 1998.”

A reader from Lynnfield read *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Moshin Hamid: “Really interesting and tense read. Hard to describe without spoiling the impact of reading this for the first time, but highly recommended.”

A reader from Fairhaven read *Give war a chance : eyewitness accounts of mankind's struggle against tyranny, injustice, and alcohol-free beer* by O'Rourke, P. J.: “The book was a collection of dispatches originally published in magazines. I wasn't paying very much attention to the war in the Middle East in 1992 (first Gulf War) but it's clear that nothing much has changed in world politics in the last 30 years. How very depressing.”

A reader from Fitchburg read *Ragtime* by E.L.Doctorow: “Set in the years before WWI, he weaves a great story intertwining both fictional characters with historical figures...ingeniously structured.”

A reader from Springfield read *The Appeal* by John Grisham: “2008 brings us *The Appeal* by John Grisham. Interesting perspective of the political side of getting those elected to office that either make a difference or corrupt the system. I was a little disappointed the book focused on the political aspect more than the actual case.”

A reader from Middleboro read *On the Street Where You Live* by Mary Higgins Clark: “This book was suspenseful in trying to figure out the murderer! It also became a bit confusing with all the characters spanning the two centuries.”

A reader from Salem read *Last of the Breed* by Louis L'Amour: "1986 was a year of Bourne, Stephen King, Danielle Steele, and Judith Krantz. I was reminded that I had read many of the bestsellers back then, but I had never read Louis L'Amour. He tells a good story, but it was not an easy read. I'm glad I read it though!"

A reader from Northampton read *Up the Down Staircase* by Bel Kaufman: "On the surface this is a light, humorous novel about a young idealistic teacher's first year teaching. The setting is an underfunded, overcrowded, urban public high school. The reality of the struggles, of coping, the hopes and yes, even some successes of teachers and students is presented not in a conventional writing style but rather through snippets of conversation, sentences from bureaucratic memos and student essays. This writing style is a powerful way to show the failure to provide students and teachers with what is needed and yet also the dedication and tenacity of teachers and students."

A reader from Attleboro read *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach: "This was given to me by a friend for my high school graduation. Embarking on my college career, it contained a great story about not limiting yourself and striving to reach for the stars."

A reader from Beverly read *Shogirl* by Steve Martin: "Love Steve Martin and liked his writing style but unfortunately did not like the book. The overall sentiment was misogynistic and cringey. Would love to see him rewrite the story in a more modern way."

A reader from Rochester read *Because of Winn-Dixie (movie-tie in edition)* by Kate DiCamillo: "I cheated a little here, but when I saw that the movie tie-in edition was a bestseller in the year I turned 18, I knew that was the book I wanted to read. I've never read it because I've tended to shy away from 'dog books'. My loss, because this book was excellent and I'm glad I finally read it!"

A reader from Worcester read *A Civil Action* by Jonathan Harr: "A very well written book about a lawyer who pursues a difficult case of proving that two Woburn companies poisoned the water of the town and caused the deaths of local children."

A reader from Bourne read *Jonathan Livingston Seagull a story* by Richard Bach: "I haven't read this book since it was popular 'back in the day'. I remember that I loved the music that came out at the time to accompany the book. The book was good, you need to be in a reflective mood to absorb the content and meaning of the book. The photos were very good. I have always loved to watch seagulls fly since I first read this book."

A reader from Attleboro read *All the presidents men* by Carl Bernstein: "I thought it was boring. Too much info about numbers and people who did different things. It was hard to follow."

A reader from Worcester read *Everything's Eventual* by Stephen King: "Very creepy!"

A reader from Reading read *Cardinal of the Kremlin* by Tom Clancy: "The number one hard cover bestseller in 1988, this book is part of the Jack Ryan series. An espionage thriller, the novel tells the story of a CIA agent who races to rescue an American mole in the Soviet Union before he is exposed by the KGB. A great read if you enjoy this type of story."

A reader from Westborough read *Green Darkness* by Anya Seton: "Wounds and mistakes from the past are hurting a husband and wife today. They overcome these mistakes and bring healing to their souls."

A reader from Somerville read *Breathing Lessons* by Anne Tyler: "A peek into one day in the lives of married couple Ira and Maggie. Maggie is a busybody who drives her family crazy with her antics and intrusions. I appreciated the story and Anne Tyler's wonderful writing but was not a fan of the main character so wasn't completely won over. I would like to try another book by Anne Tyler so I'm glad I discovered her."

A reader from Beverly read *The Wee Free Men* by Terry Pratchett: "A sharply written and intelligent book from Terry Pratchett and the start of the Tiffany Aching series. An excellent read."

A reader from Greenfield read *Midnight* by Dean Koontz: "Enjoyed the nod to The Island of Dr. Moreau with updated twist as well as the other pop culture references. The horror is more the human than monsters again."

A reader from Wakefield read *Drowning Ruth* by Christina Schwarz: "There's a mystery at the center of the book, but the real story is the relationships between its central female characters. The characters are complex and the author challenges you to withhold judgement until you get the full story on the very last page."

A reader from Chicopee read *Breathing Lessons* by Anne Tyler: "Story of a one day road trip that explores a 28 year marriage with all its expectations and disappointments."

A reader from Lee read *Home: A Memoir of my Early Years* by Julie Andrews: "This was a nonfiction bestseller in 2008 about the early life of Julie Andrews. It was interesting to learn about her home life, since it's very different than what I expected. I also enjoyed reading about her Broadway days."

A reader from Weymouth read *The Pioneers The Heroic Story Of The Settlers Who Brought The American Ideal West* by David McCullough: "The Pioneers tell the story of settlement of Ohio thoroughly. David McCullough is a good author."

A reader from Norton read *The Other* by Thomas Tryon: "This is a book about a set of male twins, one good and one bad, and their emotional attachment to one another. A psychological horror story that left me feeling like I had been punched in the gut."

A reader from Quincy read *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman: "Definitely not my cup of tea. I can see how this would be upsetting to kids, though."

A reader from Hopedale read *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon: A Pop Up Book* by Stephen King: "I turned 18 in 1999, and I grew up near Bangor Maine, so when Stephen King was on the bestsellers from 1999, I felt like I had to! Then I found a Pop Up Book version of The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon - so fun! It's been a LONG time since I've held a Pop up book, I loved it!"

A reader from Scituate read *The Hall Mills Murder Case* by William Kunstler: "Interesting story but all the testimony and evidence was very confusing. Never really knew who committed the crime."

A reader from Agawam read *Another Brooklyn* by Jacqueline Woodson: "This is a book steeped in the past that makes you think about everything in your childhood that has culminated into who you are as a person today, just like the main character."

A reader from Salem read *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafón: "This title had been in my TBR pile for a while, so October's theme was the perfect excuse to finally pick it up. I loved it, but what struck me most while reading is that I know next to nothing about Spanish politics and history."

A reader from Boston read *Housekeeping* by Marilynne Robinson: "A it was interesting to read about how death and suicide reaches across the generations and how those later generations deal have to deal with that in all areas of their life."

A reader from Beverly read *The Summer Book* by Tone Jansson: "A wonderful set of stories about a grandmother and granddaughter on an island off the Finnish coast during the summer."

A reader from Amesbury read *Hard Eight* by Janet Evanovich: "Funny, though a bit darker than some of the others in this series."

A reader from Dracut read *Random Winds* by Belva Plain: "I think she was riding the wave of her first book, *Evergreen*, and that's why this book was such a hit. It was just OK. Probably the biggest issue was you never knew what timeframe you were in; there were hardly any references so as the book progressed, and you knew time did too, but you didn't know when you were. The story itself wasn't something to really hold your attention."

A reader from Beverly read *The Meltdown* by Jeff Kinney: "I loved the comedy in this children book bestseller. 5 stars"

A reader from Boston read *Tales of the City* by Armistead Maupin: "I was working my way through college at our Public Library so looking at the Best Seller list from the year I was 18 brought back lots of memories...of the Reserve List! I decided to pick something I didn't remember. It was so 1970s!"

A reader from Boston read *The girl on the train* by Paula Hawkins: "Great character building, turning a routine into something wild, with a satisfying twist at the end that I did not see coming."

A reader from Elbridge read *Angle of Repose* by Wallace Stegner: "This book was SO well written. A professor in his 50's, retired due to extreme poor health, writes the story of his Grandmother, who was a pioneer in the West in the late 1880's. This book is primarily about her, but we also learn the professor's story. It pictures a world I really can't imagine; this is as close as I'll get."

A reader from Berkley read *Cruel Shoes* by Steve Martin: "This book was interesting and funny."

A reader from East Falmouth read *Honor Thy Father* by Gay Talese: "This inside look at a group of people who were very much in the public eye when I was a teenager was very interesting to me. I am posting a photo of the book with my High School yearbook just for fun!"

A reader from Pepperell read *Bonfire of the Vanities* by Tom Wolfe: "A commentary on race, wealth, justice and male egos that still rings true in 2023."

A reader from Beverly read *Holes* by Louis Sachar: "I like how the previous generations of Yelnats affected Stanley's story."

A reader from Basking ridge read *Harry Potter and The Sorcerers Stone* by JK Rowling: "This series is still a warm hug for me but JK Rowling can eat shit."

A reader from Bolton read *Holidays on Ice* by David Sedaris: "A series of short stories. David Sedaris has been in my to read list for a while. I didn't connect with this one at all."

A reader from Amherst read *Where Eagles Dare* by Alastair McLaea: "This is an action thriller with an intricate plot, having you trying to figure out who are the bad guys. Reminiscent of Ian Fleming. Not great, but enjoyable."

A reader from South Hadley read *The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula LeGuin: "Even after 50+ years this book remains thought provoking and relevant."

A reader from Middleboro read *The Mist* by Stephen King: "The master of horror for an October read. The Mist is set in a small town, everyone knows everyone. But no one knows why or how a mist has engulfed the town and is killing people. read on if you dare. oh yeah the story is good!"

A reader from Sandwich read *The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins: "The book violated Chekhov's gun principle - not in a red herring kind of way, but in a plot hole kind of way. The characters were flat and the ending was predictable within the first 100 pages. It's wild to me that this book became a number one bestseller."

A reader from Malden read *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by JK Rowling: "Loved it again."

A reader from NORTHAMPTON read *THE ALCHEMIST* by Paulo Coelho: "NO THANKS!"

A reader from Attleboro read *Love in the Time of Cholera* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez: "This book did not keep my interest. It was long and drawn out and I did not find the characters likable."

A reader from Dennis Port read *The Bridges of Madison County* by Robert James Waller: "None of the books on the best seller list for the year I turned 18 appealed to me much. This one ended up being pretty good. I'll have to check out the movie for comparison."

A reader from Sandwich read *Maurice* by E. M. Forster: "Not my favorite E. M. Forster book by far. Written in 1913 but published much later. Perhaps needed a bit more editing for today's readers."

A reader from Northfield read *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach: "What a blast from the past! Jonathan wanted to fly, not depend on fishing boats and stale bread for survival. He wanted freedom. He was outcast from the Flock and found a mentor to help him with his goal. So much symbolism in this story. It could be applied to modern times."

A reader from Beverly read *The Davinci Code* by Dan Brown: "Re-read this book for the challenge. Was fun to get back into the adventure of uncovering the secret truth! Makes me want to reread the whole series!"

A reader from Burlington read *On Writing* by Stephen King: "A must-read for any King fan. The 20th anniversary audio edition is especially good because it includes an essay by Owen King and a very funny conversation between Stephen King and Joe Hill."

A reader from Wilmington read *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* by Anne Tyler: "The family was so dysfunctional, I found it sad. It bothered me that the mother admittedly had a favorite child out of her three children, and the other two knew it wasn't them. This book won a few awards, which surprised me, as I didn't think it was the best book."

A reader from Spencer read *Heartburn* by Nora Ephron: "Wow, this was dated. Does anybody remember drinking Tab?"

A reader from Longmeadow read *The Host* by Stephenie Meyer: "I don't know how I missed this when I was 18, especially since I was definitely a Twilight fan at the time! I had no idea Stephenie also released this that year. I loved this story. I don't read sci-fi, so this was a nice little dip into the genre. I love a good love-triangle turned love-square turned happy ending!"

A reader from Medford read *Answered prayers* by Danielle steel: "Always wondered what Danielle Steel had to offer... and now I know!! Laughed a lot and overall enjoyed my time with this book!!"

A reader from Chelmsford read *Q. B. VII* by Leon Uris: "I loved this novel when I read it in 1971. What I remembered most was the verdict of the trial. Upon rereading it now, I realized what a great author Uris was and why he had been one of my favorites."

A reader from Newton read *Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt: "It's always interesting to read a memoir and think about the writer's perceptions of this world. I found it interesting and tragic."

A reader from Melrose read *Misery* by Stephen King: "Suitably creepy and suspenseful. Classic King. Great October read. 4/5."

A reader from Northampton read *When You Are Engulfed in Flames* by David Sedaris: "I read this book when it first came out, but had a much bigger appreciation for the humor 15 years later! It was a great example of how your experiences shape your humor and tastes."

A reader from Stoneham read *Plum Island* by Nelson DeMille: "First John Corey book. Interesting read."

A reader from Sutton read *Lucky Man: A memoir* by Michael J Fox: "Great perspective on taking very difficult health news and finding the positives in life."

A reader from Falmouth read *The house on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros: "Beautiful book, powerful vignettes with spare language that reveal a whole world."

A reader from Beverly read *Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer: "Wow. I do not recall the events that led to this book as I was 18 and had different priorities and awareness than I do now. This book was riveting, and I definitely appreciated it more now that I ever could have back in 1997!"

A reader from Whately read *Travels with My Aunt* by Graham Greene: "The book is about a retired bank manager who meets his eccentric Aunt Augusta at his mother's funeral. Shortly thereafter they decide to travel together. The book got very good reviews but I didn't enjoy it as much as I thought I would."

A reader from Sunderland read *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach: "I remember reading this when I was 18, and it seemed like such an enlightening book at that time."

A reader from Erving read *Travels With Charley* by John Steinbeck: "I enjoyed reading about most of his meetings with the people that he met on his road trip around the country. I didn't enjoy reading how people in the South treated the African American people and the racism in that part of the country & unfortunately much of it still happens almost 60 years later. If only people were more accepting of other races life would be much happier for all."

A reader from Melbourne read *The Word* by Irving Wallace: "Timeless in its tale of religious hypocrisy and business corruption for monetary gain. Book was very dated in style (long, long chapters and tiny print) and some sexist behavior that was not unusual at that time, but seems somewhat shocking now. That said, I found it very enjoyable because that's just the way it was when I turned 18."

A reader from Belchertown read *Portnoy's Complaint* by Philip Roth: "This is the first book I've read by Philip Roth and I did not enjoy it. I found it very tiresome as the narrator went on and on complaining about his Jewish upbringing causing him all his sexual problems."

A reader from Hopkinton read *The Last Juror* by John Grisham: "Slow moving story, but the main character's growth and change over the story is what I enjoyed most. And a twist ending!"

A reader from Erving read *The last precinct* by Patricia Cornwell: "I couldn't finish this book due to it not being a book I would normally read, I have been through some things in my life that make it so I can't relate them in books. I got to chapter 6, and not that it isn't a good book, I'm sure to those who like these crime type books, that it is a great book, I just don't want the flash backs. I'm sorry."

A reader from SWANSEA read *The Clocks* by Agatha Christie: "Not Christie's best; Hercule Poirot is elderly but can still help his young colleague to solve the mystery of a dead man found in a room full of clocks all set to the wrong time. It was fun reading her again."

A reader from West Falmouth read *The Battle of the Villa Fiorita* by Rumer Godden: "Charming story and well-written in a unique, interesting style."

A reader from Oakham read *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by Robert M. Pirsig: "I read this back in the 1970s, and I remember feeling lost. I got more out of it this time, but I still could not follow the author/protagonist through the labyrinth of philosophical pursuit of "Quality." Also I thought he was cruel to his son. I did enjoy the chronicle of his road trip, and his depiction of the rugged Western terrain."

A reader from EAST FALMOUTH read *Ramona the Brave* by Beverly Cleary: "This children's book is a classic, initially published in 1975 when I was 18. It was a fun break to read this sweet story."

A reader from Hampden read *Mrs. Arris Goes to Paris* by Paul Gallico: "This book is a lovely antidote to today's troubled world situation. A lesson in opening one's eyes to dispel the prejudices we hold."

A reader from Erving read *At Bertram's Hotel* by Agatha Christie: "Though I had seen Agatha Christie plays. I have never read one of her novels. This was a 1965 best seller. Christie has a delightful, very British style of writing. Though this is a mystery, it is also basically a fun read because of Christie's descriptions and gentle humor. And now I want to read more of her mysteries, apparently, Miss Marple, one of the main characters, is a regular in Agatha Christie's books. I'll enjoy meeting her again!"

A reader from Melrose read *The Wise Man's Fear* by Patrick Rothfuss: "This book was a fine addition to the high fantasy world! I recommend this series (start with the 1st book of the series-The Name of the Wind) and continue onward with #2 as well as #2.5!"

A reader from Attleboro read *The Runaway Jury* by John Grisham: "Gets better the more that I read it and the older that I get! Great author."

A reader from Salem read *The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins: "I didn't really care for this book, the characters both unlikable and unrelatable. It got interesting toward the end of the book, but there was too much stuff prior that I didn't like very much before then."

A reader from Marriottsville read *The Agony and The Ecstasy* by Irving Stone: "Incredible Story! All 800+ pages!!! I learned so much history about Michaelangelo and the difficult life of such a gifted artist and sculptor. Their lives were controlled by others, especially the popes. And the popes and their lives were so political as they were all ego maniacs. There was little spirituality in those days. I also was fascinated by the Italian towns and the gorgeous architecture described by Stone. It was a truly exemplary learning experience and I would highly recommend it to anyone willing to give it the time in needs to read and digest!"

A reader from Gill read *Last Seen Wearing* by Colin Dexter: "Love the Inspector Morse books! Always a good read!"

A reader from Baldwinville read *The Constant Princess* by Philippe Gregory: "I didn't like the style of the narrative, but I enjoyed learning more about the early life of Katherine of Aragon."

A reader from Wilmington read *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul* by Jeff Kinney: "I like how Manny has a crush on a pig. I like how it is a wild adventure."

A reader from Springfield read *Bared to You* by Sylvia Day: "This book is like a better Fifty Shades of Grey and if you thought you liked Anastasia Steele-Grey then you'll love Eva Tremel. I love how strong the main character is and how she is not afraid to set her boundaries and what she expects from her relationships."

A reader from Wakefield read *The Postcard Killers* by James Patterson and Liza Marklund: "It was alright, I didn't really love it. The ending wasn't as satisfying as I wish it had been. It annoyed me that the authors kept including characters last names throughout multiple chapters. Like it's the middle of the book so I really need to be reminded of one of the main characters' last names?"

A reader from Franklin read *High Fidelity* by Nick Hornby: "This was difficult to read because the main character/narrator was so unlikable. Ultimately there were some interesting observations and thoughts, maybe some character growth, which made the book a worthwhile read."

A reader from Braintree read *Black Hills* by Nora Roberts: "Boring and borderline rapey. Kind of like where she doesn't want to want it so as he's making a move, she's playfully saying saying "no" but in actuality she's enjoying it. But it's uncomfortable to read."

A reader from Leominster read *The Summons* by John Grisham: "This was my first Grisham novel. I have seen and enjoyed film adaptations of his work but unfortunately, this novel did not summon my appreciation."

A reader from Harwich read *Cancer Ward* by Aleksander Solzhenitsyn: "I have been wanting to read this book for a long time (although the Russian authors are SO a hard to read — the names!!) and the "assignment" made it happen. A great book. Glad I read it."

A reader from Palmer read *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini: "A very powerful book about women."

A reader from Scituate read *Wanderlust* by Danielle Steel: "This novel largely followed the typical Danielle Steel formula. The interesting part was reading about the societal norms of that time though the book's setting was in the 1930s. The treatment of lesbians has certainly improved which is good to note."

A reader from East Bridgewater read *Playing for Pizza* by John Grisham: "It's not a typical John Grisham lawyer novel and was a quick listen during weekend driving / chores. If you like football & want to salivate about Italian food, this one might be for you. I need some fresh parm & prosciutto, stat!"

A reader from Beverly read *An Indecent Obsession* by Colleen McCullough: "This book seemed very different from what I remember how the author's other book, *The Thorn Birds*. I am feeling ambivalent about this. I found the final sentence illuminating though - "And understanding that duty, the most indecent of all obsessions, was only another name for love." It's not where I thought the book would end."

A reader from Weymouth read *The Butter Battle Book* by Dr. Seuss: "I never heard of this book before and was surprised by it."

A reader from West Yarmouth read *Bus 9 to Paradise* by Leo Buscaglia: "In quotes from the book: 'The World is full of possibilities; and, as long as there are possibilities, there is hope.' 'Our challenge is to break out of our limitations, self-imposed or otherwise, and accept the fact of our limitless self, vitally interacting with a limitless universe.' and my favorite: 'We truly have an obligation to become the best possible human beings we can.' Inspirational, if at times dated, lol."

A reader from Sandwich read *Jailbird* by Kurt Vonnegut: "The author's style is really different from a lot of books that I have read. Sometimes it was hard to follow and a lot of names were referenced throughout the book which at times made it confusing. I am surprised it was a best seller but it may have been the time period it was written in."

A reader from Andover read *On Writing* by Stephen King: "King includes a good deal of autobiographical details here, which I enjoyed."

A reader from Enfield read *Where are You Now* by Mary Higgins Clark: "I could not get into this book. I thought the author included random extra information that did not add anything to the plot. The ending was disappointing."

A reader from Amherst read *Tuesdays With Morrie* by Mitch Albom: "This book is so famous, I'm glad to have finally read it even though it wasn't my favorite book ever. Morrie's wisdom was the best part. The parts about Mitch and his own life seemed vague and cliched."

A reader from Shelburne Falls read *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn: "By far my favorite book so far in the reading challenge! This thriller immersed me in the joys and struggles of a troubled marriage with two fleshed out protagonists, as well as a brilliant whodunnit."

A reader from Rochester read *Ring of Bright Water* by Gavin Maxwell: "The descriptions are fantastic. Very cozy to read. Gives a sweet feeling and joy."

A reader from Santa Cruz read *October 1964* by David Halberdtam: "Great sports book! Interesting stories of Micky Mantle and Roger Maris. Wonderful details about the drama associated with the 1964 World Series."

A reader from Reading read *Day of the Jackal* by Frederick Forsyth: "I had heard of this title because I had heard of the movie, though I have not yet seen it. After reading the book, I'll watch the 1973 film, because the story seems designed for film."

A reader from Middleboro read *Mistral's Daughter* by Judith Krantz: "I thought it was an especially 80's book. Its settings seem to be more important than it's characters. So many things of the 80's are over the top wealth/wealthy people- oriented. The little that we can grasp of character is finally seen in the last generation of Lunel women."

A reader from Hopkinton read *The Day of the Jackal* by Frederick Forsyth: "Very dated spy thriller yet still tensely told--would make an excellent streaming series. Original film did not live up to the book."

A reader from Beverly read *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach: "I read this book years ago when it swept through my high school, and I liked it well enough. I found it entertaining to read the book again, but I don't find it profoundly meaningful like we tried to convince each other back in the day."

A reader from Dracut read *Chocolat* by Joanne Harris: "This is a true testament of almost judging a book by its cover. This book quickly became one of my all time favorites. I am longing to taste the chocolate sweets so elegantly described in Harris' unfolding witch hunt, battle of morals, and wholesome take on the balance of life and death. I recommend this to anyone interested in crying, laughing, and feel truly human."

A reader from Wilbraham read *Secret of Santa Vittoria* by Crichton: "I didn't care for this book at all. It was made into a movie. Maybe that's better."

A reader from Scituate read *I know why the caged bird sings* by Maya Angelou: "It is a privilege to be admitted into the private world of a great woman like Maya Angelou. She helps the reader to grow and learn as she unfolds the stories of her youth...the sacred and the profane."

A reader from Lowell read *The Russia House* by John le Carre: "I had a really hard time getting into this book. I'm not really into spy thrillers to begin with, but, thought I would give this a chance seeing as it was a best-seller that was also made into a movie. I figured it would have some action, but, there wasn't really any at all. I found it painfully long at some points while reading. I also thought there were too many characters and it was hard to tell who was who."

A reader from peabody read *Scruples* by Judith Krantz: "I remember reading this book years ago. It left a favorable impression on me. I decided to read it again. Boy have my tastes changed!!!"

A reader from Hatfield read *A Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson: "I've known about the book for decades but somehow never read it. I'm glad this challenge pointed me in its direction!"

A reader from Salem read *Fourth Wing* by Rebecca Yarros: "I really liked it, and I can understand why it was so popular this year!"

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Airframe* by Michael Crichton: "I've enjoyed several of Crichton's books, but it took until now to get to *Airframe* because the premise never really interested me much. And

unfortunately, this book met those expectations—it's a bit too technical and dry for what it could have been and didn't really hold my attention."

A reader from STOUGHTON read *A Dirty Job* by Christopher Moore: "Interesting concept but I did not enjoy the characters or writing style."

A reader from Forestdale read *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee: "It was better the second time around. I understood it better."

A reader from worcester read *Julie and the Wolves* by Jean Craighead George: "Really great to read a Newbery Award winner, even as an adult. So much to learn in this book about nature, about family, and about learning what is important in our lives."

A reader from Stoneham read *Sleeping Murder* by Agatha Christie: "Interesting, written in 40s as Miss Marple's last case. Only published in 1976."

A reader from Hopkinton read *Napalm and Silly Putty* by George Carlin: "This was one of the few best sellers for that year that wasn't a murder mystery or thriller. I tried reading it, and while some of the bits made me laugh out loud, most of the language was just too vulgar to keep my interest."

A reader from Marriottsville read *The Agony and the Ecstasy* by Irving Stone: "What a journey! The incredible life of Michaelangelo and the trials and tribulations of an artist and sculpturer in the 1600's. Learned so much about the art and art world, the history and politics of the time period, as well as the influence and lies of the popes in those days. Every word of this 800+ book was a delight!"

A reader from Lynnfield read *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins: "Entertaining, I watched the movies but it was great to go back and read more details."

A reader from Braintree read *The Christmas Box* by Richard Paul Evans: "A great quick christmas story that can be read each year to celebrate the season."

A reader from North Reading read *King of Torts* by John Grisham: "Spoiler alert for no one: John Grisham knows how to write a legal thriller! I headed way back to 2003 for this bestseller, and it didn't disappoint. Conspiracy theories, moral questionability, millions of ill-gotten dollars, this was a fast and easy read."

A reader from Beverly read *Clear and Present Danger* by Tom Clancy: "I had already read other bestsellers from 1989, like Amy Tan's "Joy Luck Club" and Salman Rushdie's "Satanic Verses." So I thought I'd give Tom Clancy a try. Definitely not my genre! He spends so much time describing types of bullets or planes or missiles. I will confess to skimming through several paragraphs of detail. Now I know, not my cup of tea."

A reader from Shrewsbury, Ma read *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein: "I have always loved Shel Silverstein so it was fun to reread these poems!"

A reader from Uxbridge read *The Selfish Gene* by Richard Dawkins: "I am only about 100 pages in, but plan to finish it. Love the clever writing and the concept that we are just survival machines for genes! Genes are the beings who live forever since they just keep moving along - we are the carriers for these beings! I'm enjoying how he is explaining the balancing act of aggression."

A reader from Hanson read *A Light in the Attic* by Shel Silverstein: "I wanted to revisit this as it was a book I read to my son. Some poems are silly others are thoughtful."

A reader from Worcester read *Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold: "Surprising and unexpected!"

A reader from Holden read *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan: "This book was not on my radar as an 18-year-old. That's a good thing, because I appreciated it more reading it in a more, ahem, advanced age. It's a nicely told story of family and community."

A reader from Lynnfield read *World Without End* by Ken Follett: "This is one of my favorite series, and I've been doing a re-read in anticipation of the latest book that just came out (The Armour of Light)."

A reader from Somerville read *Needful Things* by Stephen King: "I guess I missed this one when it first came out, though I was a huge Stephen King fan growing up (I'm from Maine, it's required!) My favorite thing about his books is how well fleshed out his characters are, and that was definitely the case here. It makes the horror all the more visceral when the people seem real. This was creepy, but the real horror manifested in the characters and how they treated each other. It was quite chilling!"

A reader from Marblehead read *Firestarter* by Stephen King: "I loved this story about power and the lack of power."

A reader from Hampden read *Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood: "I loved this book and I loved reading it again! Margaret Atwood is an amazing woman and writer."

A reader from Salem read *Under the Dome* by Stephen King: "More of a character study-type book than I think I'm generally used to with King, but an interesting exploration of human nature when certain societal standards are stripped away."

A reader from Belchertown read *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* by J.K. Rowling: "Loved it and brought me back to high school."

A reader from Worcester read *The Orchard Keeper* by Cormac McCarthy: "Not a best seller but a prize winning first novel chosen for its portrayals in an elusive, evocative mountain-space telling."

A reader from Dracut read *Anansi Boys* by Neil Gaiman: "This book is technically a sequel to *American Gods*, but I read that so long ago I barely remembered it and I got through this one fine. Interesting twist on mythology set in the modern era."

A reader from Northampton read *Freakonomics* by Steven Levitt: "18 years later, the thoughts behind this book are not really big news, but it is interesting to think about the early stages of this high-data world we live in."

A reader from Merrimac read *If Life is a Bowl of Cherries, What Am I Doing in the Pits?* by Erma Bombeck: "I remember reading this when I was a teen and thought it was hilarious. Some 45 years later with a husband and two grown children, it is even more hilarious now!! Parenting mishaps never go out of style!"

A reader from Holden read *Tuesdays With Morrie* by Mitch Albom: "I've had this on my bookshelf for many years and just hadn't ever read it. Now that I have, I wonder why! What a lovely book. As a teacher, this book describes the kind of relationships that I have had the great fortune of forming here

and there throughout the years. I can only hope to live my life half as fully as Mitch Schwartz did and have half the impact on students as he had!”

A reader from MARSTONS MILLS read *Midnight In the Garden of Good & Evil* by John Berendt: “Interesting since based on true story. Rather plodsome at times with depth of detail. That being said, it still kept me interested.”

A reader from Cambridge read *All the president’s men* by Woodward and Bernstein: “Great to read so many years after the event! And unfortunately, some things never change...”

A reader from Enfield read *Gone Girl* by Gilliam Flynn: “At first I didn't care for it too much but once the story picked up it was really good.”

A reader from Melrose read *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century* by Barbara Tuchman: “Very long (as it seems a lot of 1978 bestsellers were!), with some boring stretches, but unexpectedly riveting. Also unexpected was the relevance to today's world.”

A reader from Thorndike read *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul* by Jeff Kinney: “I love this series, quick fun reads that are enjoyable to revisit! I genuinely laugh out loud at most, and the road trip shenanigans in this installment had me laughing to the point of tears.”

A reader from Lowell read *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel: “It’s one of my all-time favorites, and I loved rereading it, especially since it’s been an ongoing target of book bans. Bechdel said in an interview recently that she’s writing autofiction comics now...!!!”

A reader from Melrose read *Frog and Toad: All Year* by A Lobel: “It is a gentle classic children's book. Holds up.”

A reader from Hudson read *The Andromeda Strain* by Michael Crichton: “Re-reading this book after more than 50 years have passed, allowed me to see the plot in a different light. During the 1960's the cold war and the space race were very much in the forefront on the daily news. The way the microorganisms multiplied and evolved in the novel made me think about how the Covid 19 virus has changed over time and how it has influenced our daily life. The concern for biological weaponry continues today.”

A reader from Danvers read *Drown* by Junot Diaz: “Being an immigrant, I love immigrant stories and I can see why this book made Junot Diaz a sensation. The narrator in the story Yunior is spellbinding as he tells the story of his family and their journey from Santa Domingo to New Jersey.”

A reader from Plainville read *Mockingjay* by Suzanne Collins: “This was a bestseller book in 2010. I have read this book and series many times. I decided to reread the series to get ready for the new movie release of *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*! I was excited to find out it also coincided with the October Reading Challenge!”

A reader from Dracut read *The Thornbirds* by Colleen McCullough: “One of my favorite stories. Reading this again felt like visiting an old friend. Powerful story, memorable characters.”

A reader from Longmeadow read *Four Blind Mice* by James Patterson: “Four Blind Mice is a thrilling and suspenseful novel that will keep readers on the edge of their seats. It is also a thought-provoking story about the horrors of war and the corruption of power. Story revolves around a group of three Army Rangers who committed war crimes during the Vietnam War. The Rangers, nicknamed ‘The Three Blind

Mice,' killed unarmed villagers and painted their bodies red, white, and blue. Cross and Sampson realize that the Three Blind Mice have resumed their killing spree, and they must race against time to stop them before they strike again."

A reader from SOUTH YARMOUTH read *I Am Asher Lev* by Chaim Potok: "I learned a lot about Hasidic Jews and about art and about traditions and expectations. The genius involved in being an artist (or any creative, really) and the sacrifices needed to be made to follow that path are immense. I greatly enjoyed this book."

A reader from weston read *clark the shark* by Bruce Hale: "I learn they you should stay calm and wait your turn and people will want to be your friends with you. and sometimes you have to think extra."

A reader from Weymouth read *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt: "Mostly the book had me wondering whether I would opt for life everlasting if I were able to drink from a 'fountain of youth.' Granted the Tucks had no clue that is what they did when they drank from the spring they found in the wood. What a surprise that must have been when they realized they were not growing older and that injuries did not affect them. Ultimately I did agree with the family's decision to try and keep the spring a secret so others would not be subject to that same fate."

A reader from weston read *clark the shark* by Bruce Hale: "I learned i should wait my turn to and people will want me to be friends with kids. and i should always be calm."

A reader from Belchertown read *I Remember* by Joe Brainard: "Joe Brainard's memories pour out of him across the pages and as you read, you remember as well. So many things I forgot but thanks to Joe they came spinning back. Fun read, quirky. Not for everyone."

A reader from Haverhill read *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak: "A different perspective during the holocaust. A sad story, but a great book."

A reader from Wakefield read *Waiting to Exhale* by Terry McMillan: "I had read this book many years ago when I was younger than the main characters so it was interesting to reread it now that I am older than them. I couldn't help to think how the book's events and characters' relationships would be different now (30 years later) given advances in technology."

A reader from Attleboro read *The Dibert Principle* by Scott Adams: "I thought it was an interesting perspective about businesses and ideas about how to run them in the mid-late 1990s."

A reader from Yorba Linda read *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt: "Drink some special spring water and live forever! Definitely written in the style of 1975. Kind of old fashioned. Interesting idea!"

A reader from Woods Hole read *Trustee from the Toolroom* by Nevil Shute: "Lovely gentle explorations of problem solving if all kinds. Very refreshing to get lost in the pages of this quiet story."

A reader from Falmouth read *Ragtime* by E.L. Doctorow: "There are good reasons why this book is on the list of Modern Library's 100 Best Novels. There's a wonderful mix of historical characters and fictional characters, and their stories come together in such an unexpected way. The story is gripping, and the writing is compelling. Read it - you won't be sorry!"

A reader from READING read *The Aquitaine Progression* by Robert Ludlum: "My first book by this author! Since I love Tom Clancy, this was a good choice for me. I will definitely look up more of his work!"

A reader from Seekonk read *An Unsuitable Job for A Woman* by P. D. James: "I thought it was a great book revealing what life was like at this time in history. I'm going to look for more books by the author."

A reader from Scituate read *Indian Killer* by Sherman Alexie: "It kept my attention and was brought up challenging topics of tropes, stereotyping groups of people. Complex characters and unsettling ending made it very engaging."

A reader from Belchertown read *The Crystal Cave* by Mary Stewart: "A fantasy with a bit of history as well this book is enjoyable to read. I probably read it when it was first published but I don't remember it!"

A reader from South Hamilton read *The Camera Never Blinks* by Dan Rather: "An engaging memoir covering not only the author's experience but also the US experience of a number of key events and movements from 1950 through the mid 70s. Written with clarity, humor and honesty, those of us who remember the Evening News broadcasts of such pivotal days are taken back to see more clearly how each story unfolded."

A reader from Weymouth read *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee: "Loved it, of course. One of the best ever."

A reader from Sandwich read *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach: "The determination, resilience and fortitude which dominates this creature's existence is inspiring. Wish that I could soar above the clouds, frolic in the ocean and walk the shore."

A reader from Belchertown read *Unsuitable Job for a Woman* by P D James: "Entertaining but not one of P D James' best work; the ending was hard to believe."

A reader from Norwell read *Cujo* by Stephen King: "The year 1981 seemed a...surprising one to me for bestsellers in the US. Three cookbooks, a few escapist novels, and a book of children's poetry? A Light in the Attic (which I also read) by Shel Silverstein was on the NYT Bestsellers list. Anyway, I read Stephen King's *Cujo* and was reminded of his talent with suspense, similar to that of *The Stand*. The subplot of domestic squabbling was tedious drivel to me."

A reader from Belchertown read *Cell* by Stephen King: "My first Stephen King and perfect for October. Zombie genre that makes me stare at my phone every now and then!"

A reader from Lunenburg read *The immortal life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot: "This was a re-read for me. Really a fascinating and heartbreaking story of injustice, science, and progress for humanity."

A reader from Rockland read *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou: "I have wanted to read this book for so long. Maya Angelou's autobiography pulls at my heartstrings with its honest emotion."

A reader from Salem read *Suzanne's Diary for Nicholas* by James Patterson: "I generally don't read Mr. Patterson's books but I LOVED this one. It was emotional, it was gripping and it just great."

A reader from Hopkinton read *The Plains of Passage* by Jean Auel: "I enjoyed Jean Auel's writing style and appreciate the time she took to research the time period."

A reader from Buckland read *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold* by John LeCarre: "I had not read this before and I was happy to have a reason to do so. It was a challenge to follow the thread but it was an enjoyable challenge. I can see why it was popular when it first came out."

A reader from Middleboro read *Blink* by Malcolm Gladwell: "I really enjoyed the perspective this book brought me on many different topics. There were a few parts but I really enjoyed listening to and learning from it!"

A reader from Essex read *The Praise Singer* by Mary Renault: "Interesting novel about Ancient Greece."

A reader from Plainville read *Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt: "Worthy of its best-seller status."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Red Sky at Morning* by Richard Bradford: "It was an engaging coming-of-age novel set during World War II. The narrator and his family relocated to New Mexico from Mobile, Alabama, when his father went to war. Many interesting population dynamics play into the story."

A reader from Wilmington read *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes: "This was a very emotional book, but a really enjoyable read."

A reader from Lakewood read *Watership Down* by Richard Adams: "Unique and a great read. It really kept me wanting to read to find out what would happen next."

A reader from Weymouth read *The Pale Horse* by Agatha Christie: "The Pale Horse was full of twists and turns. Agatha Christie has woven a tale of a skillful murderer who leaves a trail of bodies that appear to be dying of natural causes. The actual murderer has brilliantly devised a system of helpers who unwittingly aid in the plot. All of this makes it harder for Mark Easterbrook to solve the mystery."

A reader from Auburn read *Couples* by John Updike: "So many 'layers' and the ambiguity is intentional. Updike is lyrical and sensual but the writing devolved into being simultaneously disembodied and too intimate. I wanted to like it but lost interest quickly."

A reader from North Dighton read *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon: "Read on the recommendation of a former student. I didn't mind the book but had a difficult time connecting with the story."

A reader from Paxton read *Beautiful Boy* by David Sheff: "This book helped me to better understand the complexity of addiction and allowed me to walk in the shoes of a family experiencing addiction."

A reader from Salem read *Calypso* by David Sedaris: "The book was a great collection of essays by David Sedaris. I love the way he so seamlessly combines humor and gravitas in his essays. I especially liked the essays about his mother."

A reader from Wilmington read *Trinity* by Leon Uris: "Trinity begins with the Irish famine of the 1840's and chronicles 3 families of Irish farmers, British Aristocracy and Scottish shipyard workers. It is a rich history of family, tradition, and heartbreak."

A reader from Ludlow read *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee: "I don't recall reading back then but think I must have seen movie, because I picture Gregory Peck as Atticus. Love it, hard to pause reading. So much racial stuff I was less aware of then, though raised, then to be relatively colorblind. My parents

were immigrants (Newfoundland so spoke English) thus they knew about fitting in. Thanks for this one!!!!!"

A reader from Attleboro read *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* by Cheryl Strayed: "This was a reread for me. I still don't like the fact that she ate her mom's ashes. I recently finished hiking the 48,400 footers in New Hampshire and that combined with this book makes me want to hike the AT!"

A reader from Andover read *Jaws* by Peter Benchley: "This book is so much better than the movie! The details and descriptions enhance the story (even though the movie is really excellent!)"

A reader from Sutton read *The Missing Piece* by Shel Silverstein: "This simple story with even simpler illustrations made me begin to reevaluate the value that process can have over product. It isn't until the end of the "character's" quest to find its missing piece that it appreciates the journey more than the destination."

A reader from Sandwich read *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury: "Even though this book was considered a most popular novel 70 years ago in 1953, there are aspects of this dystopian novel that could be considered precursors of today's political correctness by means of extreme tactics. Books led to inequality and should be banned and houses burned. In reality, literature is key to our humanity and an enlightened civilization."

A reader from Marblehead read *Bright Lights, Big City* by Jay McInerney: "VERY eighties!! I can see why Jay was the literally darling when he wrote it, it really captured a moment in time."

A reader from Amherst read *The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K. LeGuin: "Excellent science fiction by the daughter of AL Kroeber, famous anthropologist. Her books show the influence of anthropology as she creates new worlds for the reader. On the planet, Winter, the people are neither male nor female, but go through a cycle 'kemmer' when they change so that people can be either male or female during that time, become pregnant or impregnate the other. It is also a story of political intrigue as an envoy, Genli Ai from a universe-wide federation seeks to have Winter join the federation of planets—a political struggle among two nations ensues as they decide if either of them will accept the federation and Ai."

A reader from Harwich read *The Orchard Keeper* by Cormac McCarthy: "The Orchard Keeper, by Cormac McCarthy, is his first, and essentially foundational, novel in which many of the themes of his later works take root. McCarthy, who died in June of this year, was brilliant and compelling; he wrote about human frailty, moral intransigence, and 'the evil that men do.'"

A reader from Hartland read *A Distant Mirror* by Barbara Tuchman: "Fascinating and engaging history of the middle ages."

A reader from Tewksbury read *1876* by Gore Vidal: "Although fiction, I had no idea of the historical events taking place around the fictional characters. I have research to do."

A reader from Chicopee read *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah: "With the current horrors being inflicted upon the peoples of Palestine, and the indifference of leading governments, this was a timely yet painful book regarding WWII. Wonderfully written and heavily researched, this book reminds us of the many innocent lives ruined and taken by those in power, and the shame that befalls on those not standing in solidarity + action."

A reader from Rochester read *Scruples* by Judith Krantz: "Scruples was a best seller in 1970. The book gives you a look into the lives of the fashion industry, movie making and lives of those who live and work in Beverly Hills and Hollywood."

A reader from Esse read *The Tommyknockers* by Stephen King: "I struggled with this book. I usually love Stephen King books but this couldn't grab my attention."

A reader from Worcester read *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote: "This was a detailed murder of the Clutter family in Kansas. It was a real life case story and was banned in some states as too graphic and violent. It was the first time that I read a book that was so graphic and violent."

A reader from Centerville read *Pet Sematary* by Stephen King: "I first read this book when I was in my early 20s. And my impression of Stephen King stays the same: he's a good storyteller but not a good writer. It's a creepy read though."

A reader from Franklin read *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins: "I first read this book back in middle school and it was well worth reading again. It holds up as a dystopian modern classic that goes into a lot more sophisticated themes than many YA books do."

A reader from Beverly read *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini: "A beautiful insight into daily life amidst changes in Afghanistan from the Soviet occupation to just after September 11th. The story of the women and their connection is powerful."

A reader from Plymouth read *Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins: "I'm OBSESSED! I can't believe I didn't read this series or even watch the movies when they first came out! Katniss might just be my new favorite book character of all time. Loved it. I can't wait to binge read the rest of the books now."

A reader from West Yarmouth read *Rose Madder* by Stephen King: "Enjoyed this book very much. Have liked quite a number of Stephen King novels and this did not disappoint. Very relatable characters and insights into abusive relationship and one woman's pursuit to be free, find strength and start a new life. It was both haunting and powerful. Heard still in development of being made into movie and cannot wait for it to come out."

A reader from Three Rivers read *Skipping Christmas* by John Grisham: "Why are people always in each other's business. If someone wants to go on a cruise why not. The ending was cute however when the neighborhood came together."

A reader from East Taunton read *Black Holes and Baby Universes And Other Essays* by Stephen Hawking: "Complex but accessible - I really enjoyed this book."

A reader from Waltham read *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold: "Absolutely engrossing. Vividly, poignantly written."

A reader from Stoneham read *Stardust* by Neil Gaiman: "Neil Gaiman is such a great world builder. I couldn't put this book down."

A reader from Fitchburg read *The Lucky One* by Nicholas Sparks: "I love a good Nicholas Sparks book. I read this when I was 18 and it was nice to return to it."

A reader from Shutesbury read *Sula* by Toni Morrison: "Toni Morrison writes each line with great care and meaning."

A reader from Turners Falls read *The Other Side of Midnight* by Sidney Sheldon: "Good read, however it was hard for me to fully comprehend the strong character attractions and how that formed these women's lives."

A reader from Hampden read *Salems Lot* by Stephen King: "I reread this book after reading it back in the day. As soon as I read the jacket the story came back. A good classic horror story."

A reader from Melrose read *Pelican brief* by John Grisham: "Fun read."

A reader from Amherst read *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, by Judith Viorst: "I had never read this book or read it to my children. I really enjoyed it. Everyone can have a bad day but, hopefully, there is always tomorrow. That is an universal message."

A reader from YARMOUTH PORT read *Peyton Place* by Grace Metalious: "Reminded me that many issues were never faced in the 50's. Many turned a blind eye to great human issues. Every one wanted to read the novel especially after it was banned."

A reader from Worcester read *The Cider House Rules* by John Irving: "The subject matter was a lot deeper than I anticipated and the book had a dark tone about it."

A reader from Woods Hole read *Trout Fishing in America* by Richard Brautigan: "I was hoping for some reminiscences of life in 1967 my 18th year. Well, not so much. I found it terribly rambling (drug infused writing?). The book is composed of short stories - the last couple made the most sense. The author went on to be a very prolific writer - so perhaps I should give a later book a read."

A reader from Amherst read *House of Spirits* by Isabel Allende: "Interesting and enjoyable."

A reader from Barnstable read *DeadEye Dick* by Kurt Vonnegut: "Living on the street where Kurt Vonnegut lived in Barnstable MA, I was excited to see Deadeye Dick as a bestseller from the year I turned 18. A wonderfully quirky novel in true Vonnegut style. Fascinating character development as Vonnegut weaves the character through a range of experiences and emotions."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Just Wait Until You Have Children of Your Own* by Erma Bombeck, Bill Keene: "Fun, 1970s view of teenagers."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* by Robert Fulghum: "I loved it, still relevant after all these years."

A reader from Montague read *My Name is Asher Lev* by Chaim Potok: "Beautifully written story of a young Hasidic Jew who aspires to be an artist. About his inner conflicts between his faith and his art. Read it many years ago and enjoying it now."

A reader from Salem read *The Devil in a White City* by Eric Larson: "I thought the dual narrative was engaging. Larson is a great storyteller and he is able to recreate history with excruciating detail. I just wish he'd included some working class perspectives/histories as well."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett: "I read the first few chapters of this book a decade ago and I'm so glad I finally got around to finishing it! Heartbreaking at times, but ultimately hopeful."

A reader from Attleboro read *Dinner at the homesick restaurant* by Anne Tyler: "Family over everything. Glad they finally figured it out."

A reader from Braintree read *The Snare of the Hunter* by Helen MacInnes: "Unfortunately, I did not enjoy this book. I felt the story line was confusing and lost sight of the character development very quickly."

A reader from Lowell read *Loves Music, Loves to Dance* by Mary Higgins Clark: "I enjoyed the fast pace of the book and how the reader was introduced to several individuals who could be the killer. This kept me guessing until the last quarter of the book. I also really enjoyed the 90s references, like answering machines, video tapes & cassettes."

A reader from Wilmington read *Crocodile on the Sandbank* by Elizabeth Peters: "Story about how women were/are considered less than men, yet are valuable part of society. This takes place in the late 1800s."

A reader from Hadley read *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi: "The surgery descriptions were hard to read. But overall I enjoyed the personal journey and humanity revealed in the author's reflections."

A reader from Reading read *Curtain* by Agatha Christie: "Poirot's last case. I remembered the really good plot from having watched the PBS series. The show was more interesting and stylish than the book; one time when the movie really improved a book."

A reader from West Falmouth read *Love Story* by Erich Segal: "Totally brought me back to the year I turned 18, especially since this book was also a movie."

A reader from Middleboro read *Takedown Twenty* by Janet Evanovich: "Although I had heard of Janet Evanovich, this was my first time reading one of her books. I liked the light hearted and comical vibe that she included in the mystery novel."

A reader from SCITUATE read *Tikki Tikki Tembo* by Arlene Mosel / Blair Lent: "Tikki tikki tembo-no sa rembo-chari bari ruchi-pip peri pembo , a Chinese first born son, originally published in 1968 delighted children when I taught, my own children and now my grandchildren and their classmates. The name rolls off your tongue and the illustrations delight children of all ages as well as the story of Chinese names."

A reader from Attleboro read *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* by Ocean Vuong: "While there were some lengthy graphic scenes I had to skip over, Ocean Vuong's novel *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* touches on the dignity of the human person and on trauma passed down through generations. Vuong's poetic nature definitely comes through in this book - four stars."

A reader from Dedham read *Ordeal by Innocence* by Agatha Christie: "Thia book has everything! A murder trial, crimes of past and present, vengeance and is one of Agatha Christie's favorites!"

A reader from West Barnstable read *Slapstick* by Kurt Vonnegut: "Vonnegut's darkly humorous take on the future was ok but I learned that I don't appreciate his style as much as I did when I first read some of his works 40-50 years ago."

A reader from Sandwich read *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey: "I first learned about the 7 habits in a training class in the 1990s, but I had never read the book until now. The 7 habits are foundational to how I've tried lived my life personally and professionally. Reading the book was a great refresher for me. The 7 habits are as relevant today as they were 30 years ago!"

A reader from Saugus read *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak: "I loved how this book was narrated by death."

A reader from Fitchburg read *The Godfather* by Mario Puzo: "One of the greatest books of all time. It's easy to get swept away with the colorful Corleone family. This is a must read book!"

A reader from Methuen read *The Butter Battle Book* by Dr. Seuss: "World events at the moment, unfortunately, make this title more relevant than I would like. Maybe more adults should be reading this 'children's' book!"

A reader from Weymouth read *All Things Bright and Beautiful* by James Herriot: "A breath of fresh air in today's world. A simpler time. Heartwarming!"

A reader from Quincy read *Against Medical Advice* by James Patterson and Hal Friedman: "I turned 18 in December of 2008, and have struggled with mental health issues since I was a child. Against Medical Advice resonated with me- it was told in a straightforward and funny but honest way- and I'm really glad I read it!"

A reader from Reading read *Sophie's Choice* by William Styron: "I had seen the movie SOPHIE'S CHOICE some years ago. Now I read the book and found it very sad and moving. It is the story about a Polish Catholic survivor of a Nazi concentration camp."

A reader from Lowell read *Gone girl* by Gillian Flynn: "Very dark, not something I would normally read."

A reader from Wakefield read *Forever* by Judy Blume: "I read this originally as a teen, but it still held up. What was out-of-date was addressed in an afterward piece in the audiobook version. I wish I reread it when my children were teens. I'll have to when my grandson becomes of age (and be wise like the grandmother in the book)."

A reader from Amesbury read *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay* by Michael Chabon: "A great book for the literary comic book fans among us."

A reader from Bolton read *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell: "I enjoyed Malcolm's take on the practical applications of scientific lessons."

A reader from Lowell read *Reading Like a Writer: A Guide for People Who Love Books and for Those Who Want to Write Them* by Francine Prose: "This book was a bit stuffy for me at first, but eventually I grew to appreciate the author's work. It's not as much a "love letter to reading", as it is a love letter to classic literature more than anything."

A reader from Tewksbury read *How to Be Your Best Friend* by Mildred Newman & Bernard Berkowitz: "It was a gentle reminder of the importance of remembering and treating yourself as your best friend. Allowing yourself to be the most important person you can count on for true joy."

A reader from Springfield read *Silent Night* by Mary Higgins Clark: "This is what you get when you throw hallmark movies, the simplistic idea of faith that kept "The Secret" on the best seller list, and a watered down episode of CSI in a blender. Too bland to be a real thriller, too afraid to have anything but the most unrealistic happy ending, and too unpleasant to appeal the family Chanel version of Christianity. But hey it was short!"

A reader from Weymouth read *interview with the vampire* by Anne Rice: "Very dark and sad ... a tragic tale that was very compelling."

A reader from Springfield read *Wallflower at the orgy* by Nora Ephron: "A collection of articles that Nora Ephron wrote for cosmopolitan and other magazines, about American cultural icons of the time, such as Craig Claiborne, Helen Gurley Brown and Mike Nichols. She was a very witty writer and treats all of the topics with a nice touch of cynicism."

A reader from Brockton read *Sophie's Choice* by William Styron: "This was a sad, tragic story."

A reader from Boston/ Yarmouth read *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith: "This is the sweet, sad but hopeful coming of age story of Francie Nolan, a young girl growing up in a Brooklyn tenement during the early 1900's. I enjoyed her strong, smart, engaging and resilient character which is still relatable today!"

A reader from Braintree read *Fablehaven* by Brandon Mull: "This middle grade book is enjoyable, bringing together the story of fantastic all creatures in a sanctuary with the growth and development of the two protagonists (who also connect more with their family)."

A reader from Florence read *The French Lieutenant's Woman* by John Fowles: "First, it was shocking to find a bestseller from the year I turned 18!! Victorian angst at its finest."

A reader from Hampden read *Profiles in Courage* by John F. Kennedy: "This book became a best-seller, again, in 1963 when JFK was assassinated. Kennedy uses 8 historical: 'trials' that faced various U.S. Senates in America's history. In each case, only one courageous Senator put the Constitution and democracy over self in order to preserve our national values. When one observes the U.S. House over the past seven years, one wonders if we'll ever see another profile in courage. Read this book to see how prescient Kennedy was."

A reader from Plymouth read *Cold Mountain* by Charles Frazier: "I am not usually a fan of Civil War stories, but the characters in this had such depth that it was more about them anyway and not the dynamics of the war."

A reader from Northampton read *You Only Live Twice* by Ian Fleming: "The first James Bond novel I've read - much stranger and less of a typical thriller than I expected. I'm not sure how accurate the Japanese setting is, but the garden of poisonous plants is fascinating."

A reader from Westminster read *The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boom with Elizabeth and John Sherrill: "I had heard of Corey Ten Boom and never realized what her heroic deeds were during WWII and working with the Dutch resistance. A very gripping story of Nazi horrors and those trying to help do good in this world."

A reader from RANDOLPH read *Where Eagles Dare* by Alistair MacLean: "This is a WWII rescue adventure involving spy's, double agents, set behind enemy line in an Austrian castle where German High Command was headquarters. Plenty of bravery by the British and American rescuers, along with brutal Germans and German spies who infiltrated British MI6."

A reader from Northfield read *Insomnia* by Stephen King: "I really enjoyed this book. I do love Stephen King books in general but I really enjoyed this one. It was a long book and took me longer than I had hoped to read it but it was well worth it."

A reader from Centerville read *The five people you meet in heaven* by Mitch Albom: "I'm surprised that I have never read it before. It was a quick and meaningful read. Even though it was a short novel, each chapter gave me some time for reflection. I have always been drawn to the subject of life after death and it gave me a different perspective of the subject."

A reader from Lynnfield read *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens: "This book helped me realize that long periods of isolation and loneliness are a big turn-off for me. There were some parts I liked, but the parts I didn't like far outweighed the pros. It was also incredibly slow-paced and boring at times."

A reader from Lowell read *Diary* by Chuck Palahniuk: "A roller coaster ride between horror and fairy tale."

A reader from Niantic read *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman: "Published 1973, an illustrated edition of S. Morgenstern's classic tale of true love and high adventure. Funny with side remarks on classic tale. Definitely not a book I read when I was 18!"

A reader from East Weymouth read *Different Seasons* by Stephen King: "I'm not normally a Stephen King reader. He's good but too scary/creepy for me. These were 4 novellas/short stories. Rita Hayworth and the Shawshank Redemption, Apt Pupil, The Body (movie Stand by Me) and The Breathing Method. In the Body, the main character describes having a good imagination... 'You see things you'd just as soon not see, things that keep you awake until first light.' Pretty much describes what I don't read more of him!"

A reader from Simsbury read *The Bourne Supremacy* by Robert Ludlum: "I have not finished it yet, but I enjoyed the Bourne movies, so the book challenge for October worked well. I have never read Ludlum...will have to try more!"

A reader from Beverly read *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil: A Savannah Story* by John Berendt: "Love this book! Amazing characters and wonderful writing."

A reader from East Sandwich read *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles: "Stay out of the tree!!!"

A reader from ROCHESTER read *Love Story* by Eric Segal: "Sweet, short, predictable Romeo & Juliet story with some lovely prose and a touching ending. I read it first in 1970 and saw the film the novel was written for as a marketing campaign. Later in life I even bought a 1952 MGB, just like Oliver's. The novel came out on Valentine's Day, 1970, and the film premiered in December."

A reader from Wellesley read *The Thirteenth Tale* by Diane Setterfield: "I've always thought this was a bestseller I should have read at the time because of its bookish plot, but I don't really think I missed out on anything."

A reader from Stoneham read *Cashelmara* by Susan Howatch: "I hated this book and the characters; could hardly read it. I don't remember a lot about Edward I and Edward III but the nasty stories of Edward II, Piers Gaveston, Hugh Despenser, Roger Mortimer and Queen Isabella and the hot poker which the author set in Victorian times as the basis for the book made me dread turning every page."

A reader from Amherst read *The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins: "reminiscent of high school reads. we were very into Gillian Flynn, gone girl types."

A reader from Reading read *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom: "Surprisingly relevant and modern for a book that's over 20 years old."

A reader from Tewksbury read *Trinity* by Leon Uris: "An interesting overview of Irish history that I knew nothing about. The main character, however, was a little too perfect to believe. More like historical romance novel than historical fiction."

A reader from Westford read *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi: "I found this book very moving and insightful."

A reader from Dracut read *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* by Seth Grahame-Smith: "A different take on the original *Pride and Prejudice* novel by Jane Austen, although not my favorite retelling."

A reader from Lowell read *The Tiger's Wife* by Tea Obreht: "Amazing - I would not have picked this book up if it weren't for this challenge so glad I did."

A reader from Hudson read *Tai-Pan* by James Clavell: "This novel's subject is the founding of Hong Kong, and it's a compelling story. Central to the many Chinese, British, and American characters is Dirk Struan, the head, or tai-pan, of the most successful trading company, and his adventures make exciting reading."

A reader from Woods Hole read *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown: "Intriguing read.. following the trail of clues was fun to read..."

A reader from Florence read *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry: "This was a favorite of my daughters' when she was the age of the protagonist, ten, and I enjoyed the chance to finally read this book myself. The story of the Holocaust, bravery, and friendship was written for children but doesn't condescend and features strong women and girls throughout, as well as the resistance of the occupied Danish people."

A reader from Boston read *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* by John Berendt: "I read this when it was released but I sure didn't remember much of it. I really loved this prompt!"

A reader from Worcester read *Ninth House* by Leigh Bardugo: "Leigh Bardugo is incredibly smart, and this book makes that more than obvious. There are so many moving parts that all somehow manage to come together in ways you'd never expect to craft a wildly engaging setup for the rest of the series."

A reader from Melrose read *The 900 Days The Siege Of Leningrad* by Harrison E Salisbury: "This book speaks of the ordeals and terror experienced by all the civilians during the siege. The author gives intricate details of what it was like to live in Leningrad during that time. The book also gives details of the military strategies of both the Russians and the Germans. It makes me question why countries continue to invade other countries. Having lived through this time, how could Russia invade Ukraine. The futility of war is obvious! 'Those who do not study history are doomed to repeat it.'"

A reader from Brookline read *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shafer and Annie Barrows: "Listened to this one on audiobook and really appreciated the multiple characters! It made the different medium nods that normally come across only visually for me work."

A reader from Hamilton read *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides: "Loved the writing. Story was very interesting and I liked all the ground it covered, spanning the different family members over many years."

A reader from Worcester read *Looking for Alaska* by John Green: "I loved the book's unusual structure and voice of the narrator, Miles 'Pudge' Halter."

A reader from West Whately read *Smiley's People* by John Le Carré: "The list of bestsellers from 1979 left me somewhat uninspired. I hadn't read any of them at the time (though I did see the movie version of one). I'm happy I decided to jump into this particular book - the writing was deft and the character development was masterful. Despite it being the last in Le Carré's Karla trilogy, I was able to keep up."

A reader from Salem read *Heartless* by Marissa Meyer: "This was a unique and refreshing retelling of the classic character of the Queen of Hearts. It delved into her origins as well as the experiences and losses that led to her becoming the "embodiment of ungovernable passion" that Carroll originally portrayed. I connected to the main two characters and was rooting for their love story, while knowing the ending would likely be an unhappy one."

A reader from South Easton read *The Rule of Four* by Ian Caldwell & Dustin Thomason: "Reminiscent of adventurous mysteries by Dan Brown and Steve Berry."

A reader from Plymouth read *Heaven Is For Real* by Todd Burpo: "I'm not much of a non fiction reader usually so that may have been why I didn't enjoy this book as much as others. I did feel good about finally reading something that I remember being so popular when it came out."

A reader from Weymouth read *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom: "I had heard of Tuesdays with Morrie, but had never read it. Turns out this was a bestseller when I turned 18 and I can see why. The advice shared in the book is timeless - seize every moment and build a life in service to others."

A reader from Sutton read *Every Breath* by Nicholas Sparks: "It's crazy to think that two people from such different worlds could be so drawn to each other."

A reader from Craryville read *The Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie: "It reads like a completely contemporary novel. Perhaps that is the brilliance of it."

A reader from Plymouth read *Pet Sematary* by Stephen King: "My first Stephen King book! I enjoyed the plot and was drawn into the characters and plot. Did not see that ending coming!"

A reader from North Reading read *Our Endangered Values* by Jimmy Carter: "This book was scary in that it showed exactly what was going to happen today twenty years ago, and apparently no one was able to stop that from happening. It was definitely a very interesting read that I would recommend to most people, and of course, Jimmy Carter remains both a wonderful writer and an excellent human being. I finished this book in the nick of time last night at 11:59 p.m.! I'm very glad I got it in, especially since it worked out to be a surprisingly frightening book for Halloween."

A reader from Somerville read *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart: "There honestly wasn't enough lying. I think I would have enjoyed the writing style more at 18, but still found the plot conceit corny and dry."

A reader from Charlton read *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood: "I was surprised this book was a bestseller in 1986 as it's so popular now. Provided a grim look at how a society could treat women."

A reader from Greenfield read *A Breath of Snow and Ashes* by Diana Gabaldon: "I love the Outlander book series and was pleasantly surprised that the next one in my queue also was a bestseller the year I turned 18. These books provide a lot of texture and depth to learning about many notable historical events in Scotland and America. This one takes place at the start of the American Revolution and really conveys the tension that was building before a war erupted accompanied by little trials and tribulations of homesteading in the wilds of America."

A reader from Somerville read *Doctor Sleep* by Stephen King: "Not as good as the shining but still an interesting read! Love Stephen King."

A reader from Hanover read *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* by J.K. Rowling: "It was wonderful to read this book again. I didn't read this book when I turned 18. It was nice to read the book with my son this time."

A reader from Leominster read *For One More Day* by Mitch Albom: "Quick read, challenges your belief of time and if our loved ones ever really leave us."

A reader from Northfield read *Delores Claiborne* by Stephen King: "I saw the movie with Kathy Bates years ago. I think if the movie was not already ingrained in my head I might have liked the book better. But it is still an excellent book and story line as far as Mr. King goes!"

A reader from Plymouth read *Fault in Our Stars* by John Green: "Heart breaking and beautiful!"

A reader from Hopkinton read *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach: "I enjoyed this much more when I was 18. This second reading did nothing for me."

A reader from Weston read *Diary of a Wimpy Kid Cabin Fever* by Jeff Kinney: "This book was very good it held up with my high expectations. I love all of the diary of the Wimpy Kid series and this was just as good."

A reader from Sandwich read *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom: "Beautiful story."

A reader from Scituate read *The Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin: "Somehow missed reading this book when I was younger even though I owned a copy. I had wanted to read it for quite awhile. Did not hold my interest as much as I had anticipated even though I love reading mysteries."

A reader from Beverly read *The Salzburg Connection* by Helen MacInnes: "What an interesting book of historical fiction and spy novel."

A reader from Leominster read *Dead Until Dark* by Charlene Harris: "Loved every second of it! Instantly moved through the next few in the series! Action, adventure, humor, love..it's all there!"

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *Rush Limbaugh is a Big Fat Idiot* by Al Franken: "Amazing how much, yet how little, has changed in politics."

A reader from Wilmington read *'Tis* by Frank McCourt: "Angela's Ashes was required reading at my Irish Catholic High School that I attended (BC High). But I had no idea that McCourt wrote two more sequels to his memoir. 'Tis picks up where Ashes ends and continued Frank's adventures as a new/young

immigrant working in New York. The style is carried over from *Ashes* into the two sequels. While I am an immigrant myself, I can see all of the trials and tribulations that Frank went through from his youth all the way through all of his divorces/challenges in all of his relationships from his mum and da and all of his siblings and all of his loves and his friends. While I understand this is non-fiction and a memoir, I actually found a lot of parallels between his life and a recent work I just finished reading *Martin Eden* by Jack London where a "lowly" man learned and gained knowledge through the public library. But that's fiction and this is Frank's real life where he utilized the public library. It was great to find that parallel in autodidacticism. I hope that people who are against immigration read this book to see just how much harder it is for any immigrants to read it to broaden their horizons."

A reader from Longmeadow read *The Beatles: The Authorized Biography* by Hunter Davies: "I was in junior high when the Beatles arrived on the scene and was a HUGE fan of all things Beatles. This book was an essential must-have for all Beatles fans, but I did not read it when it was published in 1968. In fact, it has remained unread on my bookshelf for more than 50 years until I chose to read it for the Challenge - and I am SO GLAD I waited! As only books can do, I thoroughly enjoyed being transported back in time to relive and remember such a magical time in my life. Wonderful!"

A reader from Northfield read *Nemesis* by Agatha Christie: "Solving crimes has come a very long way since 1971. It was refreshing to meet characters who were independent of cell phones, internet, high tech surveillance devices and dependent on attentive listening, observation and interpersonal relationships. The motivation for murder seemed to have a universality to it which was both disturbing and reassuring at the same time. I have to say I feel some resentment at having spent time with so many stereotypical characters and settings: ditsy females, patriarchal males, and English garden tours."

A reader from East Taunton read *Scumble* by Ingrid Law: "I loved this book because it showed you can overcome your weaknesses by working on self discipline and your strengths."

A reader from Stanford read *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D.Salinger: "Although it is deemed a classic story, it is a book more relevant to high schoolers. Since I am well beyond that, I could not relate to the book nor did I enjoy it. There is no clear plot line."

A reader from Hanover read *The Lioness of Boston* by Emily Frank: "Isabella Stewart Gardner...an extraordinary woman who left an outstanding legacy in Boston. Too good."

A reader from Fitchburg read *Who Moved My Cheese?* by Spencer Johnson: "This was an interesting, short best seller from the year I turned 18. Essentially the take away was that to make this journey of life a bit easier, you have to be resilient in this life and be okay with plans changing."

A reader from KINGSTON read *Beloved* by Toni Morrison: "Beloved was a difficult read for me. Toni Morrison's writing was exhausting for me as a reader. I found myself rereading sections to comprehend the story line. I will appreciate *Beloved* more in time, as I let all of it settle in my mind."

A reader from Hudson read *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafon: "Disappointed in this read - I was unable to connect with the characters or what motivated them to so blindly dedicate themselves to their obsession. There is a distinct lack of well-rounded female characters who are neither sex objects nor pathetic in some way."

A reader from Lowell read *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown: "The Da Vinci Code was a mega bestseller that I had somehow not read in all this time. I can see why so many people enjoyed it - there is a lot of cliffhangers throughout and a mystery to be solved. I missed the wave of hype surrounding it years ago, so it felt like an average book to me. Enjoyable enough to finish!"

A reader from Seekonk read *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls: "Really beautifully written, hard to read at times due to subject matter. Author does a fantastic job of telling the story of her childhood and her parents in a really honest, but tender way."

A reader from Danvers read *Kafka On The Shore* by Haruki Murakami: "What a fantastical book! A slow start for me but couldn't put it down after."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Mystery of the Moss-Covered Mansion* by Carolyn Keene: "I chose to read this book and the 1941 mystery upon which it was based. Unfortunately, they were two very different stories, so there was little to compare or contrast. But reading about Nancy, George, and Bess did bring back happy childhood memories!"

A reader from Fitchburg read *Trace* by Patricia Cornwell: "An interesting story about a former CME and crime in Virginia."

A reader from Northampton read *Twilight* by Stephenie Meyer: "October was the perfect time of year to read this vaguely spooky story, though most of the book was somewhat slow and boring as not much seemed to happen in the first 75% of it. I'm not sure if I've said this about a book before, but the movie was 'better.'"

A reader from Salem read *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel: "I was revisiting this after many years, and it was still compelling and fascinating -- but maybe a little more tedious than I remember, in parts."

A reader from Fall River read *The Unsinkable Walker Bean*. by Aaron Renier: "A cozy and magical pirate book! Was excited to read another graphic novel!"

A reader from Amesbury read *When You Are Engulfed in Flames* by David Sedaris: "David Sedaris never fails to amuse, while also managing to make me stop and think."

A reader from Beverly read *The Sun is Also a Star* by Nicola Yoon: "Fast, fate, young love."

A reader from Northampton read *Half Broke Horses* by Jeanette Walls: "Interesting story about Jeannette Walls grandmother who was a very unique and strong woman."

A reader from Harrisburg read *Song of Susannah* by Stephen King: "Not my favorite of the Dark Tower series, but still such a great book."

A reader from Chester read *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* by John Berendt: "Very fascinating look at the deep south. It is non-fiction but it reads like fiction."

A reader from Salem read *The women* by T.c boyle: "I thought I would love it, as I'm a fan of frank Lloyd weight. However, I did find the narration grating."