
The Open Door

Newsletter

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Editor: Lynn Blankman



A bouquet of spring books

Beautifully written non-fiction, richly imagined historical fiction, and unforgettable novels by both new and favorite storytellers are among this spring's offerings.

* Taylor Jenkins Reid delivers a stunning story of sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll in the 1970s in her expertly wrought novel, ***Daisy Jones and the Six***. Narrated by a character whose identity is secret until the end, the book chronicles the whirlwind rise of an iconic 70s rock group and their beautiful lead singer, revealing the mystery behind their infamous breakup. These characters are unforgettable and utterly believable, and the story line is riveting and addictive, brilliantly capturing a place and time. I was blown away by this book! So was Reese Witherspoon, who has optioned it for a series. \$27

* An obsessive history of our relationship with underground places, from sacred caves and derelict subway stations to nuclear bunkers and ancient underground cities, ***Underground*** by Will Hunt is a beautifully written exploration of the history, science, architecture, and mythology of the worlds beneath our feet, spanning continents and time. With the propulsive drive of adventure stories, Hunt shares his lifelong underground explorations in more than twenty countries, creating a fascinating narrative that is both a personal examination of his obsession and a panoramic study of how we are all connected to the underground. \$27

* Author Edward Wilson-Lee's ***The Catalogue of Shipwrecked Books*** recounts the scarcely believable but wholly true story of Christopher Columbus's son, Hernando Colón (1488-1539), who sailed on his father's last voyage at 13 and later became a humanist and scholar. One of the first great visionaries of the print

age, Hernando aspired to nothing less than to create a universal library, traveling all over Europe to acquire every printed thing he could, harnessing the vast powers of the new printing presses to assemble all the world's knowledge in one place, his library in Seville. He then devised an intricate system of cataloguing it all — in effect, the first search engine. This is a dazzling look at an astounding life. \$30

* ***Finding Dorothy*** by Elizabeth Letts is a richly imagined novel that tells the story behind "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," the book that inspired the iconic film, through the eyes of author L. Frank Baum's intrepid wife, Maud — from her time as a student at Cornell in the 1880s to the family's hardscrabble days in Chicago and South Dakota to the Hollywood film set where Maud first meets Judy Garland in 1937. Letts captures the amazing lives of Frank and Maud in a breathtaking read that is engrossing historical fiction based closely on truth — full of love, loss, inspiration, and perseverance. Best of all is Letts's wonderful depiction of Maud herself. \$28

* From bestselling author Lisa See (*The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane*) ***The Island of Sea Women*** is about female friendships and the larger forces that shape them on the Korean island of Jeju, whose culture and history is both tragic and triumphant. *Haenyeo* is the Japanese name for the deep-diving women who harvest the sea there. Through the eyes, hearts, and experiences of two of these young girls who mature and grow into women with their own families, we are transported seamlessly between their past and into a time 70 years onward. An emotional, intriguing, and deeply researched story. \$27

Lily Bartels
Book buyer

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Open Door staff favorites

* ***The Light over London***, Julia Kelly. Cara Hargraves, who works for an antiques dealer, discovers an unfinished WWII diary and a photo of a woman in uniform. She becomes eager to find the author. In 1941, Louise Keene is desperate to help in the war effort after she meets a young pilot. When her letters to him are returned unopened, she fears the worst. Kelly deftly interweaves the lives of two women, past and present, in this detailed period piece that highlights the role women play in wartime. This story is full of romance, history, courage, and suspense. Janet \$26

* ***The Black Ascot***, Charles Todd. An elegant police procedural set in England in

which a fatal accident occurs during the 1910 Ascot races. The plot involves a reinvestigation of the accident 10 years later. The Scotland Yard Inspector Ian Rutledge travels out in the countryside during the investigation and witnesses the after-effects of World War I. There are many twists and turns as he tries to find out what really happened in the original accident. John \$26.99

* ***Little French Bistro***, Nina George. What does one do when one is in a terrible marriage? After Marianne tries to kill herself, she travels out of Paris to a small town in Brittany. There she finds friends, love, and the freedom to become the woman she wants to be. Interesting and unique characters. Ellen \$16

* ***The Night Agent***, Matthew Quick. A great story of spies and intrigue in the White House. With conspiracies of Russia and presidential staff filling the media, this tale seems to be “ripped from the headlines.” Is the President involved? Death stalks anyone who knows too much. And what is the deadline all about? As bodies pile up, who will be next? A good read and an outcome we can only hope for in tomorrow’s headlines. Ken \$26.99

* ***My Brilliant Friend***, Elena Ferrante. A coming-of-age story that takes place in one of the poor neighborhoods in Naples, Italy. The colorful characters and ups and downs in their lives are very engaging, leaving you wanting more as the book ends. Luckily, this book is part 1 of a series, so...! Karen \$17

* ***Norse Mythology***, Neil Gaiman. If you like a good story based on ancient mythology, you will be entranced by Gaiman’s storytelling. Each chapter is about one or more of the ancient Norse gods, written beautifully and simply with words that flow from the page. He has included a glossary to help the reader interpret some of the ancient language. I loved it! Ellen \$15.99

* ***Noir***, Christopher Moore. A jaunt through creative survival at the fringes of

society in 1947 San Francisco, with a little Roswell, NM thrown in for fun. Thoroughly enjoyable. Eugene \$16.99

* ***The Soul of America***, Jon Meacham. An enlightening review of the difficulties America has faced and how we have inched forward toward a more perfect Union when guided by presidents with a moral compass. Meacham is a fabulous writer who brings history to life with an appreciation for our past and hope for the future. Karen \$30



New for spring

Stop in soon to see what we discovered at the New York gift show!

* Herb and flower kits from **Urban Agriculture**. Fun and easy windowsill gardening. An Oprah favorite!

* Cards and luggage tags from **R. Nichols**. A delightful world of collage artistry in vivid colors and fun images.

* Beautiful wooden earrings from **Vermont Bentwood Handcrafts**. Lightweight and durable in rich colors.

* Hand-crafted sculpted vases from Thailand by **Art Floral Trading**. Inspired by nature, simple but elegant, evoking images of the sea.

* Handmade, ecologically friendly products from **BeHome**. Set your table in style!

* Fun socks from **Woven Pear**. Hand-dyed and dipped, of highest-grade cotton blend. Each sock is unique!

Lil Bertalan
Karen Monaco Haber
Gift buyers

Dear friends,

A big thank you to customers who participated in our Shop2gether program for Hamilton Hill Arts Center and to everyone who purchased a book to be donated to the Arts Center’s new library! You helped us celebrate Black History Month in a meaningful way.

In the month of April, our community partnership will be with the Reading Is Fun (RIF) program. On April 6, 12-4 pm, RIF is celebrating the 2nd Annual Reading Is Fun Jamboree at Schenectady High School. RIF mobilizes volunteers to teach reading-readiness, conversational skills, and vocabulary to Schenectady’s most challenged youngsters ages 4-9. Currently there are 80 volunteers in 11 elementary schools. For more information on RIF and/or the Reading Jamboree: www.readingisfun.org.

As we look forward to spring, we can’t wait to show you what is new in great reading for the entire family as well as exciting new gift ideas!

Janet Hutchison
Owner



Books for girls and boys

Spring's new children's offerings include beautiful picture books and outstanding fiction. Available now or as noted.

* **Because**, Mo Willems, Amber Ren. *New York Times* bestselling author and illustrator Willems composes a powerful symphony of chance, discovery, persistence, and magic in this moving tale of a young girl's journey to center stage. Amber Ren brings the story to life in her picture book debut. 3-5 \$17.99

* **Another**, Christian Robinson. What if you ... encountered another perspective? Discovered another world? Met another you? What would you do? Come along on an imaginative, playful journey into another world with the Caldecott and Coretta Scott King honoree in his debut as author-illustrator. 4-8 \$17.99

* **The Bear, the Piano, the Dog, and the Fiddle**, David Litchfield. In this charming, gorgeously illustrated follow-up to the award-winning *The Bear and the Piano*, a fiddle-playing dog and his human pal share the joy of music, and discover that, even through sad times and far-apart times, good friendship lasts forever. 4-7 \$17.99

* **Believe**, Robert Sabuda. All of life's possibilities are just a page turn away in this beautiful pop-up book from renowned paper artist Sabuda. Throughout, phrases and images evoking potential (an acorn, an egg, a paper airplane) are answered by a glorious 3-D image on the following spread (a towering tree, a flock of birds, a rocket soaring upward). A perfect gift for graduates of any age! 5-8 \$27.99 (April 9)

* **Diary of an Awesome Friendly Kid: Rowley Jefferson's Journal**, Jeff Kinney. Rowley writes his own journal! And a biography of Greg! But it turns out Rowley is no good at the job, and the bio of Greg is one big hilarious mess. 8-12 \$13.99 (April 9)

* **Because of the Rabbit**, Cynthia Lord. A sensitive tale about a girl who's starting public school after being homeschooled, a boy who doesn't fit in and might ruin her chances for a true best friend, and a rescued rabbit. 8-12 \$17.99 (March 26)

* **A Drop of Hope**, Keith Calabrese. Times are tough. Jobs are scarce and miracles are in short supply. But something strange is happening in If Only, Ohio. An old well has suddenly, impossibly, begun to grant wishes. And three sixth graders — Ernest, Ryan, and Lizzy — are the only

ones who know why. But as more wishes are made, the secret gets harder and harder to keep. 8-12 \$16.99

Kathleen Kemp
Children's book buyer

Calendar

Check website and Facebook for updates!

Saturday, March 2, 1-2:30 pm: Liz Zunon will sign *I Am Farmer*.

Tuesday, March 5, 7 pm: Louise Penny will talk at Shenendehowa High School. Sponsored by the Clifton Park Library.

Saturday, March 9, 1-2:30 pm: Amy Crockford will sign *My Happy Place*.

Saturday, March 23, 1-2:30 pm: Allison Lassieur will sign *Journey to a Promised Land*.

Sunday, April 28, 2 pm: Samantha Cotterill will discuss and sign *I Am Glitter* at SCPL.

Sunday, May 5, 11 am: We will celebrate Children's Book Week with students who participated in our annual writing contest.

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Complete details are available in the store.



What's in your basket?

We have oodles of Easter goodies—lovable bunnies, squeezable lambs, fuzzy ducks, lots of “just right” toys and games, not to mention our beautiful collection of spring flowers, wreaths, eggs, nests—and, of course, wonderful books!