

## Library Lines

By Laura Stoll, Assistant to the Director/Office Manager

I follow a very funny Instagram account called “Subpar Parks.” Creator Amber Share pairs beautiful art with one-star reviews of national parks. For example, one post features an illustration of Joshua Tree National Park with a stunning pastel sunset and silhouettes of trees and nature. The text reads, “The only thing to do here is walk around the desert.” I laugh as I imagine the crotchety tourists who go out of their way to write negative reviews of America’s greatest natural treasures.

Reading customer reviews can be entertaining and helpful, regardless if they are negative or positive. A well-written review could lead you on a great vacation, to buy a useful new product, or pick out your next favorite read. When it comes to book reviews, a good one gives compelling reasons why someone would want to pull the title off of the shelves, teasing with short plot points, themes, or time periods.

Last month, the staff of the Kirkland Town Library was looking for some book recommendations so we asked our patrons to help. We asked people to write a brief review of a book they recently read and enjoyed. Everyone who entered was given two chances to win a mug made by our friend Jonathan Woodward at Clinton Pottery.

The overwhelming number of entries we received told me two things. First, people love Clinton Pottery and want to own a special heart-themed mug. Second, people love to read and they love to talk about books. The recommendations came from all ages and span the children’s, young adult, fiction, and non-fiction shelves.

Of the more than 70 reviews we received, here are just a few that piqued my interest and made me want to read more. If you’d like to read any of these books, stop in, give us a call at 315-853-2033, or email us at [clinton@midyork.org](mailto:clinton@midyork.org).

### Adult Fiction

“Anxious People” by Fredrik Backman. Every character has relatable depth and the humor throughout is quotable and memorable. Recommended by Janelle.

“The Art of Hearing Heartbeats” by Jan-Philipp Sendker. This is a love story of the highest caliber. Recommended by Mary.

“The House in the Cerulean Sea” by TJ Klune. A fun and charming story of a case worker meeting an interesting group of special children. Recommended by Annamarie.

“In An Instant” by Suzanne Redfearn. A page turning and a thought-provoking story. After I read it I read some of it again! Recommended by Pat.

“The Overstory” by Richard Powers. A beautifully written story about people, trees, places, time and life on earth. It’s many, many pages of profound pleasure and brilliant thoughtfulness. Recommended by Julia.

“The Third Mrs. Galway” by local author Deirdre Sinnott. Easy to read historical fiction about Utica in 1835 when members of the New York State Anti-Slavery Society were declared traitors to the Constitution in the local papers. Freedom seekers clash with slave catchers amid fear, desire, terror, and love. Recommended by Anne.

### Non-Fiction

“Empire of Pain” by Patrick Radden Keefe. An epic tale of greed and how much responsibility one family holds for the opioid epidemic. Recommended by Meghan.

“Fuzz: When Nature Breaks The Law” by Mary Roach. Scary but true. Recommended by Vern.

“Will” by Will Smith with Mark Manson. Fun, gritty, and self-effacing. Recommended by Katrena.

Young Adult

“A Curse so Dark and Lonely” by Brigid Kemmerer. A “Beauty and the Beast” spin-off. Set mostly in a magical world, with a little time spent in DC. There is more going on than first meets the eye in this story. Recommended by Eva.

“Legend” by Marie Lu. A town prodigy and a bandit have to try and save the world. Recommended by Rosalee.

“The Librarian of Auschwitz” by Antonio Iturbe. Moving - makes you think. What would I have done? Recommended by Paris.

“Scythe” by Neal Shusterman. Where everyone is at leisure and everyone is mooral, someone has to control the population. This is in the perspective of these people and it is truly eye-opening. Recommended by Gemma.

Kids

“The Little Blue Truck” by Alice Schertle. He helps a dump truck out of mud. Recommended by Luke.

“A Bad Case of Stripes” by David Shannon. A girl gets stripes on her. She eats lima beans. Recommended by Henry.

“Lola Gets a Cat” by Anna McQuinn. She finds a cat. She decides to get a cat. Her mom says no and then she says yes. Recommended by Muriel.

Thanks to everyone who took the time to write a book review. We will be sharing more of them at the KTL as well as on our website and social media. Congratulations to our four randomly-chosen winners: Jillian Giacomo, Amanda Briggs, Nikki Banghardt, and Marianne Smith!