

Librarian's Shelf by Rachelle McPhillips

Read Outside the Box @ your library™

At the beginning of each new year, many of us resolve to make this the year we eat right, workout more, finish that home renovation project, or get a better handle on our finances.

These are great things to incorporate into your life and the Columbus Public Library has resources for all of them! You'll find cookbooks to support healthier habits, DVDs to get that workout in the comfort of your own home, as well as how-to guides for your budding do-it-yourselfer. Starting January 17, anyone looking to learn more about all things financial can take a free online course with the help of a grant from the FINRA Investor Education Foundation through Smart Investing @ your library™, a partnership with the American Library Association. This program is sponsored by the Nebraska Library Commission and the Northeast Library System.

Aside from the regular resolutions, I'd like to propose one more: "Read outside the box." Reading is a wonderful way to relax, escape, and expand your world. I find it is a great comfort to visit and enjoy the same authors, characters, and genres year after year. Every once in a while, a friend or library guest will suggest a book that I'd never pick up on my own and I find I love it! Even if I don't love it, I am glad I had that reading experience just the same. Imagine having an opportunity to have that sense of wonder and discovery eleven times a year.

The Columbus Public Library Book Discussion Group usually meets at the library on the last Thursday of the month. These book discussions are free, relaxed, and everyone is welcome to join us. Every year, book club participants tell me how much they appreciate book club and the opportunity to read things they wouldn't have discovered on their own. "Reading outside the box" – whether they love, hate, or didn't finish the book – is the most cited reason to keep coming back to book club.

Our first meeting this year will be held at 7:00p.m. on Thursday, January 29. Attendees at this first discussion will be invited to help us select our reading list for March through December of 2015.

"Benediction" by Kent Haruf is our selection for January. About this novel set in the high plains of Colorado, chronicling the last days of "Dad," Library Journal says:

"Haruf captures the sadness and hardship, the joys and triumphs behind the lives of ordinary people. Benediction has an understated Our Town quality that's all the more powerful in the hands of this master storyteller. This is exceptional fiction not to be missed."

On Thursday, February 26, we will talk about "Friday Night Lights: A Town, A Team, and a Dream" by H.G. Bissinger. This non-fiction book published in 1990 follows the aspirations of a high school football team in Texas. It inspired a movie and a television series that ran for several seasons. This should also inspire lively discussion for readers in a football-centric state.

Copies of all book club titles are made available for checkout at the front desk several weeks before the book club meets.

For questions about any of our resources and programs, please call 402-564-7116 option 2 or stop in for a visit.

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