About Lake Oswego Reads

What is the purpose of this program?
To provide an enjoyable common reading experience for the entire city of Lake Oswego and promote the public library as an educational and cultural hub for the community. This program is designed to bring the community together by inviting participants to read a novel and enjoy a series of events which expand on the cultural, social and political themes that tie that novel together.

Who can participate?
Anyone high school aged or older.

What would I be required to do?
Read the book, discuss it and/or attend events. These events are conveniently located and free of charge.

What are the guidelines for book selection for Lake Oswego Reads?
The selected book must:
• Be for high school aged readers and older.
• Appeal to a wide range of readers.
• Strengthen civic pride, foster discussion among residents, and bring the community together through the common bond of reading.
• Offer opportunities for additional citywide special events.
• Be affordable and available in paperback, audiobook, and eBook.
• Author and/or authority available to speak.

Who selects the book?
The Steering Committee for Lake Oswego Reads, consisting of librarians, community leaders, high school English teachers and high school students: https://www.ci.oswego.or.us/loreads/steering-committee

The book is selected from suggestions from the public and the committee. Suggestions can be given to Cyndie Glazer at: cglazer@ci.oswego.or.us.

Previous Lake Oswego Reads Titles:

2007 — The Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafón

In honor of Zafón's tale of mystery and intrigue in Barcelona, we held events celebrating Spanish culture, history and cuisine. Frequent discussion groups on the novel complemented a special art exhibit by local artists and students, a lecture by the author, a concert of Spanish music by the Lake Oswego Millennium Concert Band, Sangria Saturdays at Graham's Book & Stationery, a special night of Spanish cuisine at Tucci and more.

2008 — Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

Greg Mortenson's story of building schools for girls in Pakistan after an attempt to climb K2 inspired the community to learn more about rural Pakistan and its culture. Events included a special tea-infused dinner at FiveSpice Bistro, a Pakistani Market, a Himalayan tea tasting, a harrowing lecture by a Pakistani immigrant, cooking classes focused on Pakistani cuisine, lectures by the authors, and charity drives.

2009 — Stubborn Twig by Lauren Kessler

Kessler's account of one Japanese family's struggles with racism in Oregon during World War II drove us to study all aspects of Japan and Japanese immigrants. Featuring a personal account of the Japanese internment camps, a speech by Lauren Kessler, a demonstration of traditional brush calligraphy, a concert by renowned koto master Mitsuki Dazai, mah jong and origami lessons, and a re-enactment of the trial of Minoru Yasui, the Lake Oswego community embraced all aspects of the story.

2010 — The Whistling Season by Ivan Doig

To complement Ivan Doig's old-fashioned story of education and intrigue on the prairie, we hosted events that evoked the time-period and themes central to the plot. From an old-fashioned hoe down and horse show to a police captain's talk about people living secret lives in Lake Oswego and even a spelling bee, we brought the novel to life in our community.

2011 — Cutting for Stone by Abraham Verghese

The story of twin brothers born to a doctor and a nun and orphaned at birth, the book spans decades and generations, moving through history and hospitals in India, Ethiopia and America. The community explored the novel through art exhibits by local artists and students, Ethiopian coffee and cuisine, Indian dance demonstrations, guest talks about Ethiopian culture and history, discussions of contemporary health issues, and a presentation by the author.

2012 — Mink River by Brian Doyle

The story of the small Oregon coast town of Neawanaka and its people was the perfect book to do a community read and celebrate a book that was written by one of our own Lake Oswego residents, Brian Doyle. There were a total of 31 programs at 20 venues and a whopping 10,000 participants. Of the 31 events, 28 were free, including a barbecue dinner that tied into the book attended by 600 people. During February there was an opportunity to learn Gaelic, have a “cow” barbecue, listen to opera, learn about crows, see 25 artists’ paintings inspired by the book, ride a bicycle with the mayor, see a photo exhibition inspired by the book, and visit the Public Works Department and operate a piece of heavy equipment. There was such a sense of happiness and friendliness during the entire month.

2013 — Running the Rift by Naomi Benaron

The book tells the story of Jean Patrick Nkuba, a gifted Rwandan boy, from the day he knows that running will be his life to the moment he must run to save his life, a ten-year span in which his country is undone by the Hutu-Tutsi tensions. While Running the Rift was the centerpiece of Lake Oswego Reads, the 28 events in 28 days offered lectures, Rwandan music & food, book discussions, art and photo shows and fun activities including an 8K fun run. Nineteen local artists and many high school art students displayed original artwork based on their reading of Running the Rift. Three Lewis & Clark College Rwandan exchange students shared their experiences. Thanks to the Friends of the Library, Naomi Benaron spoke at the Lake Oswego High School auditorium to 600 people. The nationally recognized, award winning Lake Oswego Reads program brought our community together for the seventh time during February with over 12,000 people in Lake Oswego reading and/or participating in the community reading program.

2014-Celebrating William Stafford

This year Lake Oswego Reads was proud to join Oregon Reads in the statewide celebration of William Stafford’s centennial! Poet William Stafford had a close tie to Lake Oswego, having lived here for many years, and throughout the month of February we celebrated that tie by exploring some of his many poems and highlighting other works by this prolific author. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen weather conflicts, six events had to be cancelled, but we still hosted eighteen events that brought together community members to commemorate our venerable former Poet Laureate. Some of these events included a screening of the award-winning documentary *Every War Has Two Losers* with filmmaker Haydn Reiss, meet and greets with two artists that have created illustrations for Stafford’s works, a sold-out celebration at the Newmark Theatre, a presentation by Stafford’s son Kim (including a dessert hosted by the Lake Oswego Women’s Club), and several wonderful poetry readings and discussions, including one with Louisiana Poet Laureate Ava Leavell Haymon. People also had the opportunity to visit the Library and view a beautiful collection of handmade quilts inspired by Stafford’s poems, as well as a selection of some of Stafford’s own photographs.

2015-All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr

A tale of an orphan boy in Nazi Germany who has a gift with radio; a blind girl who is part of the resistance in occupied France; an old man who is haunted by the ghosts of his past; and a gem that curses whoever owns it with health and long life was the book for the 2015 Lake Oswego Reads.

Thirty-two events were held throughout February as part of the reading of this novel with over 16,000 people in attendance. Events included a discussion with a panel of veterans of World War II; French and German wine tasting; French music; an art show of artwork based on the book from 19 artists; book discussions; talks from

experts in blindness, gemology, World War II, and radio; History professor discussions on Nazism, Hitler Youth, and Childhood in Nazi Germany; World War II displays; and a presentation by Anthony Doerr about “The 10-year Journey of Writing *All the Light We Cannot See*.” This book was named the Pulitzer Prize winner for best fiction two months after Lake Oswego read it.

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