



Bottom Shelf Bookstore News

Dear Volunteer,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all the hard work you are putting in the bookstore. Hopefully, this summer our library will start having programs again—and that will be good use of the funds we raise.

I'd like to remind you that adult customers are allowed only one of the new bookmarks as they are rather expensive. I do understand when a mother comes up with three kids that you don't want to give a bookmark to just one child so in that case, please do allow each child to select one bookmark.

The new pricing sheets will be coming out in March. I think we actually got our first book published in '22 the other day.

Good news! We should be opening up soon on Saturdays. As you know, this has traditionally been our best day of the week.

We still have quite a few vacancies on our master calendar, so if you're interested in picking up another shift, please get in touch with Katherine Patterson. If you can't manage an extra shift, you can help by signing up as a sub.

I hope you all have a great March highlighted by St. Patrick's day and a Happy Easter in April.

Thanks for all you do for the Bottom Shelf.
-Sue



Upcoming Book Store Closures 2022

All dates are subject to change, depending on County policies.

- Cesar Chavez Day, Thursday, March 31st**
- Memorial Day, Monday May 30th**
- Independence Day, Monday, July 4th**
- Labor Day, Monday, September 5th**
- Veteran's Day, Friday, November 11th**
- Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 24th**
- Holiday Boutique Set Up, Friday, November 25th**
- Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24th**
- Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25th**
- Day after Christmas, Monday, December 26th**

Bottom Shelf Day Managers

- Monday/Friday: Lynne Barker**
- Tuesday: Sue Billing**
- Wednesday/Saturday: Debbie Schubarth**
- Thursday: Violet Hulit**

Community Read Candid



A full house enjoyed the light lunch, T. J. Parkers talk and book signing. For many, it was the first time in a public gathering after our long quarantine!



T. J. Parker speaks about writing *A Thousand Steps* while in quarantine.

View a great video of the event created by Eva Marie Vargo:

<https://youtu.be/cqWQf1LGbcQ>



Groovy table decor by Nancy Javier.



Barnes and Noble did a fine job selling books.



Some of the CR planning committee members: Back row: Helen McHargue, Mary Jo Back, Nancy Javier, Eva Marie Vargo. Front: Nancy Kreile, T. J. Parker.

Jonathan Swift

In a former St. Patrick's Day issue, James Joyce was honored as one of the most important Irish authors. This year, Jonathan Swift has that honor.

What do we know of this famous author? Sure, we know about *Gulliver's Travels*. Swift was regarded as the foremost prose satirist and he sure wrote a masterpiece of satire when he conjured up Gulliver.



But more interesting was his essay *A Modest Proposal*. In this shocking treatise, Swift proposes to “fatten up undernourished children and feed them to Ireland’s rich land owners.”

He writes that “children of the poor could be sold into a meat market at the age of one, thus commuting overpopulation and unemployment. Families would be spared the expense of child-bearing while providing them with a little extra income.”

Swift wrote this essay to vent his aggravation at the ineptitude of Ireland's politicians and the hypocrisy of the wealthy and the squalor and degradation in which he saw so many Irish people living.

Swift was born in 1667 in Dublin. His father died of syphilis before Jonathan was born. Was it satire that his father said he got the disease from dirty sheets when out of town?

Swift studied philosophy at Trinity College, but also became a dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin.

Besides being involved in politics, switching often from Whigs to Tories, he also switched between his two favorite women, Stella and Vanessa. Neither of these women were amused. But Stella won the contest as Swift asked to be buried next to her upon his death. They are buried side-by-side in his St. Patrick's cathedral.

You can usually find copies of Swift's work in our Classics section.
—Nancy Javier



On the island of Lilliput: a color print from an 1860's edition of *Gulliver's Travels*. From *The Guardian*. Photography: Alamy

A little Travel Story



Jet-lagged and tipsy, my husband and I didn't know what to do with ourselves. Unwisely, right after arrival, we'd visited the pub next to our hotel in Dublin and eaten a huge meal accompanied by a liter of Guinness. The ale went straight to our brains and we were giddy and exhausted. We knew if we went back to our room, we'd conk out and be entirely messed up time-wise for the rest of our two-week vacation in Ireland. We decided to walk to St. Patrick's Cathedral and as luck would have it, we'd be in time for Evensong. The walk was helpful to clear our heads and it was a good thing we went because we were the only people in the cathedral! *Wow*, we thought. *Catholicism is in big trouble in Ireland*. Later, we learned the music had been cancelled that day and as most of the attendees come to hear the beautiful choir, they'd stayed away. After a brilliant recorded concert, we walked around the magnificent interior and hunted for Jonathan Swift's famous grave.

It was an eerie experience to be all alone in that enormous space and gaze at the pipe organ, all 3000 or 4000 pipes (depending on which guide book you consult). As we read about the building, we learned that the Guinness family has underwritten much of the repairs and improvements of the cathedral for over a century. One of the Guinness daughters, Ann, is immortalized in a stained glass window under which is the biblical quote, "I was thirsty and Ye gave me drink." How appropriate.



Swift's gravestone inscribed in Latin, was composed by Swift himself. He left instructions for his words to be gilded and placed above his grave. It reads:

Here is laid the body of
Jonathan Swift, Doctor of Divinity,
Dean of this cathedral Church,
Where fierce indignation can longer
Rend his heart. Go, traveller, and imitate if you can This
earnest and dedicated
Champion of Liberty

Fierce indignation is a powerful emotion and it seems to fit so well for the tomb of one of the greatest satirists in history.

Sobered up and refreshed by the cathedral visit, we had a fleeting thought about staying awake even later and visiting one of the many pubs in the neighborhood. It was a warmish night for Dublin, at least not raining, and the pubs were filled to capacity and overflowing into the streets. It would have been fun if we were only twenty years younger.

We walked slowly along the streets, even slower when Irish music was wafting out of the pubs to add even more to our Dublin experience. You couldn't be further away, culturally, from Fallbrook where our streets are empty so early. And, after resisting the call of Guinness for a day or so, we raised a pint again and toasted Jonathan Swift, and the beer and all it's done for Dublin.

—Helen McHargue

The Midnight Library by Matt Haig

Have you ever had regrets in your life? Do you wish you had made different choices? Do you wonder why you didn't take the road less traveled?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you'll be interested in reading *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig.

Haig's main character is Nora Seed, a troubled young woman. Nothing is going right in her life—fired from her job, not many friends, mother died, cat died. She's miserable and decides to commit suicide, but she doesn't die. Instead she ends up in the Midnight Library where she meets her high school librarian, Mrs. Elm.

The library is a sort of purgatory, halfway between life and death. It's filled with books on moving shelves. Mrs. Elm presents Nora the Book of Regrets and she must make the decision of choosing a different life. Through the science of multiple universes, she is able to see herself in various times where she might have been happier.

Page after page, we see Nora go through a series of lives. Which one will she choose—the olympic swimmer, the famous rock star, the glaciologist studying climate change in the Arctic, or wife, mother and professor?



Don't be frustrated if you can't follow Haig's explanations of the physics of multiple universes. Frankly I got bogged down in the science. But I kept reading wondering what path Nora will take. There's a lot of philosophy in these pages and so much you can relate to. It will make you think about your own life, about frustrations, sadness versus happiness.

You'll be more than hopeful and satisfied with the ending.
—Nancy Javier



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Booktok

Are you familiar with Tiktok? Tiktok, the app exploded in popularity during the days of the pandemic. It started out attracting teens and early twenty-somethings but soon expanded to include niches for people of all ages and interests. The short video format (1-2 minutes) seemed to be perfect for our ever-shortening attention spans.

During the pandemic, traditional venues where readers might gather, like book festivals, book signings, communal reading events at libraries were all cancelled. Enter Booktok—an interesting sub-community of Tiktok, focused on books and literature where people post short videos about what they are reading and book reviews. Scroll through Booktok and you'll find countless videos of reader discussions, joking around and casual presentations. Publishers say it has become a major force, especially in the market for young adults and contemporary romance novels. Be forewarned, almost all the reviews are accompanied by annoying music—annoying to me, at least.



The books range in genre, but many creators (those who create the material) tend to focus on young adult fiction, young adult fantasy, and romance novels. Fans are mostly young women and they are avid readers. Many are passionate and emotional in their videos as only young women can be.



Word of mouth has always had a big effect on what books people read, but BookTok has turbocharged that process. Below are a few of the books that have enjoyed huge increases in readership and even pushed some of them onto best seller lists because of viral or near viral exposure on the app.

Cain's Jawbone by Edward Powys Mathers. This murder mystery puzzle book, almost 100 years old, was deliberately published with its pages in the wrong order.

Thanks to a few very viral TikTok videos, featuring readers rearranging its pages into their correct order and thus solving the puzzle (once called the hardest word puzzle ever published), this nearly ninety-year-old book recently sold out everywhere.

Girl in Pieces by Kathleen Glasgow. Released in 2016, but found a new life on Booktok. Story about a homeless teen who must find her own way in the world.

They Both Die at the End by Adam Silvera. Two boys fall in love after they learn they will both die by the end of the day.

We were Liars by E. Lockhart. A 2014 book, revived on Booktok. A story of incredible wealth and privilege. The tale comes with a jaw-dropping twist readers enjoy. A sequel is now being planned.

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen. A classic, romantic masterpiece—a joy for teens who are open to the pleasures of 19th century prose and manner. The book is worth re-visiting at any age.

Here's a link to a youtube article about Booktok and its influence on young readers.
<https://youtu.be/uo8KjswlWNI>