

WHAT WRITERS ARE READING

by Margriet Ruurs

Margriet highly recommends the following titles for your summer reading pleasure:

- **THREE CUPS OF TEA: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace . . . One School at a Time** by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

Some failures lead to phenomenal successes, and this American nurse's unsuccessful attempt to climb K2, the world's second tallest mountain, is one of them. Mortenson was sheltered for weeks by the small Pakistani village of Korphe; in return, he promised to build the impoverished town's first school, a plan which has since grown to more than 50 schools across rural Pakistan and Afghanistan. Through education the authors believe that we can fight Islamic extremism through collaborative efforts to alleviate poverty and improve access to education, especially for girls. Captivating and suspenseful, with engrossing accounts of both hostilities and unlikely friendships, this book will win many readers' hearts.

- **REASON FOR HOPE: A Spiritual Journey** by Jane Goodall and Phillip Berman

Goodall reveals with clarity, great passion and purpose her inner journey. How invigorating it is to read the memoir of a scientist who proclaims frankly, and in language often infused with power and grace, an abiding faith in the sacredness of all life.

- **BANKER TO THE POOR: Micro-Lending and the Battle Against World Poverty**, Muhammad Yunus

An inspiring memoir of the birth of microcredit, written in a conversational tone that makes it both moving and enjoyable to read. Started with small loans to help the poorest of the poor in Bangladesh, the Grameen Bank is now a \$2.5 billion banking enterprise. Ever optimistic, Nobel price winner Yunus travels the globe spreading the belief that poverty can be eliminated. Dr. Yunus's efforts prove that hope is a global currency.

- **THIRD CULTURE KIDS**, David C. Pollock and Ruth E. Van Reken

Third Culture Kids speaks to the challenges and rewards of a multicultural childhood; the joy of discovery and heartbreaking loss, its effect on maturing and personal identity, and the difficulty in transitioning home.

- **THE MEANING OF EVERYTHING, The Story of the Oxford Dictionary**, Simon Winchester

With his winning blend of scholarship and accessible, skillfully paced narrative, Winchester tells the eventful, personality-filled history of the definitive English dictionary.

- **THE SHADOW OF KILIMANJARO, On Foot Across East Africa**, Rick Ridgeway

This book is as much a search for answers to an adventurer's most soul-searching questions as an account of a thrilling journey.

- **LIFE AND TIMES OF THE THUNDERBOLT KID, A Memoir**, Bill Bryson

From one of the most beloved and bestselling authors in the English language, a vivid, nostalgic, and utterly hilarious memoir of growing up in the 1950's.

- **GUTS (YA)**, Gary Paulsen

What do you do when you're being charged by a red-eyed furious wall of brown fur that is an insane moose? How do you make a weapon with your bare hands? How do you sneak up on a grouse or a rabbit, kill it with a well-aimed arrow, and cook it over a fire--without a pot? All this and lots more is essential learning for Brian Robeson, the young wilderness survivor in Gary Paulsen's classic novel Hatchet. In writing that book, Paulsen was determined that everything that happened to Brian--the survival techniques and the physical and emotional traumas--would be drawn closely from reality and his own experiences. In Guts he reveals the stories behind Hatchet, as he lived them.

- **FAIREST (YA)**, Gail Carson Lavine

The telling of this story, in Aza's voice, is sophisticated. Once connections become clear, they'll sink into the fairy-tale romance, the remarkable characters, and the wild, magical adventures of Snow White.

My long-time favorites for total relaxation, summer reading are:

- **GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING** by Tracy Chevalier
- **GIRL IN HYACINTH BLUE** by Susan Vreeland and
- The Mitford Series by Jan Karon

Here is what authors across the country are reading and highly recommend as (adult) summer reading:

* **Jane Yolen**, author of *Owl Moon* and *Mix Berlin Walks*, recommends

- THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES, Joyce Carol Oates, a collection of short stories;
- THE MAN WHO PLANTED TREES by Jean Giono
- PORTABLE CHILDHOODS by Ellen Klages, also short stories and
- FLESH & BLOOD, a mystery by John Harvey.

* **J. Patrick Lewis**, author of the forthcoming *The Brothers' War: Civil War Voices in Verse* and *Please Bury Me in the Library*, has recently read, and loved,

- THE ROAD by Cormac Macarthy. (Many of the other authors also recommended this book!) Also:
- Alice Munro, RUNAWAY (short stories)
- Charles Causley, SECRET DESTINATIONS (poetry)
- Jeffrey Meyer, ROBERT FROST: A BIOGRAPHY
- Garrison Keillor, MORE GOOD POEMS
- Neil Kagan/Stephen G. Hyslop, EYEWITNESS TO THE CIVIL WAR
- Robin Skelton, THE SHAPES OF OUR SINGING (poetry)
- Lee Child, THE ENEMY
- Michael Connelly, THE LINCOLN LAWYER
- Michael Connelly, ECHO PARK

* **Marilyn Singer**, author of *Cats to the Rescue*, and *Quiet Night* recommends

- Susanna Clarke's JONATHAN STRANGE AND MR. NORRELL and
- THE BARTIMAEUS TRILOGY by Jonathan Stroud

* **Richard Michelson** author of *Oh No, Not Ghosts!* recommends,(as many of the other authors did) reading

- THE BOOK THIEF by Markus Zusak. He is also reading:
- THE GOLEM by Barbara Rogasky and Trina Schart Hyman
- ON BEAUTY by Zadie Smith
- MORAL GRANDEUR, essays by Abraham Joshua Heschel
- BOY IN STRIPED PAJAMAS, John Boyne
- MAGIC FOR BEGINNERS, Kelly Link
- WICKED: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West by Gregory Maguire
- BEL CANTO, Ann Patchett

* **Bobbi Katz**, author of *Trailblazers: Poems of Exploration*, loved reading

- AMERICAN PASTORAL by Philip Roth

* **Kenn Nesbitt**, author of *Revenge of the Lunch Ladies*, is currently reading

- SUMMERLAND by Michael Chabon

* **Eileen Spinelli**, author of *Sophie's Masterpiece*, (and wife of Jerry Spinelli) says, "I just finished

- LEAVING CHURCH by Barbara Brown Taylor, which I loved". Her other recent favorites include
- WHITE WHALE by Robert Siegel,
- THE HURRICANE SISTERS (poetry) by Ginger Andrews and she is re-reading
- THE YEARLING (YA).

* **Jane Kurtz**, author of *Rain Romp* and *Waterhole Waiting*, is reading

- WOMEN TRAVELLERS edited by Mary Morris, short selections of travel journals written by women out on explorations. The first of which was penned in 1689! "Since I'm such a traveler, it's delicious to read of other women who were thrilled by seeing the wide and wonderful world even with all its discomforts and weirdness."

* **Roland Smith**, whose new novel *Peak* is out in bookstores now, recommends:

- HIGHEST TIDE, an adult coming of age novel by Jim Lynch which takes place in Olympia on Puget Sound.

* **Pat Mora**, author of *¡Marimba! Animales from A to Z* and *Tomas and the Library Lady*, recommends

- A SHORT HISTORY OF MYTH by Karen Armstrong;
- THE SHADOW OF THE WIND by the Spanish writer Carlos Ruiz Zafón, and
- THIRST, a poetry collection by one of her favorite poets, Mary Oliver. She says “I also am usually reading something connected to a writing project, and for that I'm enjoying
- A KICK IN THE HEAD: AN EVERYDAY GUIDE TO POETIC FORMS selected by Paul Janeczko.”

* **Joyce Sidman**, author of *Song of the Water Boatman and Other Pond Poems* highly recommends:

- FRUIT OF THE LEMON by Andrea Levy: Set in England and Jamaica, it's the story of a young English woman journeying back to Jamaica to find out more about her parents and herself. I could hear the voices as I read.
- THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND by Giles Foden, a riveting tale of the excesses of power in Uganda.

* **Peter Reynolds**, author of *The North Star*, *The Dot*, and *Ish*, just read

- THE MEMOIRS OF CLEOPATRA by Margaret George – “I felt I was there”.
- BEING THERE by Jerzy Kosinski
- THE CHOCOLATE WAR by Robert Cormier(YA). Peter says “On my night table is
- THE GREAT STINK, by Clare Clarke. I love experiencing other worlds and times.... In this one I am in London in 1955 experiencing oppressive heat and sewage overflow. Ugh but fascinating!”

* **Patricia Hubbell**, author of *Earthmates* and *Black All Around!* says “A book I have recently read and highly recommend is

- THE KNOWN WORLD by Edward P. Jones. This book, for which the author received the Pulitzer Prize, is a complex, and fascinating novel. It's not the easiest read in the world, but is absolutely unforgettable.”

* **Liz Rosenberg**, author of *Monster Mama* and *The Carousel*, recommends Leonard Woolf's biographies:

- BEGINNING AGAIN; GROWING; SOWING. “He's a wonderful writer. It's fascinating and soothing at the same time. I'm also reading a complex book on Kabbalah by Gershom Scholem:
- ON THE MYSTICAL SHAPE OF THE GODHEAD.”

* **Ben Mikaelson**, author of *Touching Spirit Bear* and *The Rescue Josh Mcguire*, recommends

- A MUTANT MESSAGE DOWN UNDER by Marlo Morgan and
- WINONA'S WEB by Priscilla Cogan.

* **Deborah S. Layne**, author of *P is for Princess*, *A Royal Alphabet*, and who happens to be married to Steven Layne, is currently reading

- GRACE by R. Lacey.

* **Toni Buzzeo**, author of *Our Librarian Won't Tell Us ANYTHING!* is reading

- THE MINER'S DAUGHTER by Gretchen Moran Laskas and
- ALABAMA MOON by Watt Key.

* **Robert Young**, author of The “How It Was” series, and *Game Day* says, “ I continue to read the works of Richard Ford. His latest,

- THE LAY OF THE LAND stretches my love for brevity, but the writing is compelling and insightful.

As for professional reading,

- BOY WRITERS by Ralph Fletcher has been an interesting read, and encouragement to explore ways to address the significant gender differences in writing.

* **Keith Baker**, author of *The Magic Fan* and the *Mr. and Mrs. Green* series states:

- “THE KNOWN WORLD would be high on my list, as well as
- BEL CANTO or any of her other books or
- anything by Ian McEwan; all his books are terrific.” (One title is SATURDAY.)

Young adult and children's books recommended by many of the same authors as listed above:

* **Steven L. Layne**, author of *Love the Baby* recommends:

- **I'D TELL YOU I LOVE YOU BUT THEN I'D HAVE TO KILL YOU**, a new YA novel by Ally Carter and
- **JUMPING THE SCRATCH** by Sarah Weeks

Peter Reynolds (listed above) calls this book "A great read and inspiring to see kids rising to face challenges". (first of a series)

- **TOMORROW WHEN THE WAR BEGAN**, by Australian author John Marsden.

Young Adult and Picture Books that were recommended by several of the authors who also recommended adult titles:

Young Adult titles:

- **THE INVENTION OF HUGO CABRET**, by Brian Selznick
- **FAIREST**, by Gail Carson Lavine
- **DRAGON RIDER**, by Cornelia Funke.
- **THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH**, by Norman Juster
- **GREGOR** series by Suzanne Collins
- **ATTOLIA** by Megan Whalen Turner
- **REACHING FOR SUN**, by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer
- **COLLECTED POEMS FOR CHILDREN** by Ted Hughes
- **DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: A Novel in Cartoons**, by Jeff Kinney
- **ESPERANZA RISING**, by Pam Muñoz Ryan
- **STAR OF KAZAN**, by Eva Ibbotson
- **THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS**, by Ann Brashares (first of a series)
- **THE OWL SERVICE**, by James Garner
- **COLD FEET** by Gen LeRoy (1981 - Out of print)
- **SABRIEL** by Garth Nix (First of a trilogy)
- **OUT OF THE DUST**, Karen Hesse
- **THE EAR, THE EYE AND THE ARM**, Nancy Farmer
- **A LITTLE PIECE OF GROUND**, Elizabeth Laird and Sonia Nimr

- **TO ALL MY FANS, WITH LOVE FROM SYLVIE** by Ellen Conford (1982) holds up after all these years. It's an interesting study of a girl's fantasy of becoming famous as response to her very painful life. (Out of print)
- **DANGEROUS ANGELS** by Francesca Lia Block is set in the ethereally lovely and scary Shangri-L.A. (Los Angeles) and centers around a band of teens who form a magical rock group and come of age. (A compilation of five novellas previously published separately.)
- **THE SECRET UNDER MY SKIN** by Janet Mc Naughton
- **A LONG WAY FROM VERONA**, by Jane Gardam (1988 - Out of print)
- **HOWL'S MOVING CASTLE**, by Diana Wynne Jones
- **THEORIES OF RELATIVITY**, by Barbara Haworth-Attard
- **PRIVATE PEACEFUL**, Michael Morpurgo
- **THE THOUGHT OF HIGH WINDOWS**, by Lynne Kositsky
- **MONSTER**, by Walter Dean Myers
- **ANGELINE**, by Karleen Bradford
- **ON THE WINGS OF HEROES**, by Richard Peck
- **WIZARD OF EARTHSEA** by Ursula LeGuin
- **THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS**, Ursula LeGuin
- **I AM THE MESSENGER**, by Markus Zusack
- **SILVERWING**, by Ken Opper

Picture Books:

- **A SEED IS SLEEPY**, Dianna Hutts Aston, a follow-up to her luscious picture book, **AN EGG IS QUIET**; this one's about the wondrous ways of seeds.
- Robert Young states, "My favorite kids book of late is **WOLVES**, by Emily Gravett. This is a cleverly done mix of fiction and nonfiction, with unique illustrations and design."

To find other titles recommended by authors and celebrities, visit: WHO READS WHAT at <http://www.gpl.lib.me.us/wrw.htm>