The top ten books that librarians across the country loved recommending in 2016.

COMMONWEALTH
by Ann Patchett
(Harper)
"The Cousins and the Keatings are two California families forever intertwined and permanently shattered by infidelity. Bert Cousins leaves his wife for Beverly Keating, leaving her to raise four children on her own. Beverly, with two children of her own, leaves her husband for Bert. The six children involved are forced to forge a childhood bond based on the combined disappointment in their parents. As adults, they find their families' stories revealed in a way they couldn't possibly expect. Patchett has written a family drama that perfectly captures both the absurdity and the heartbreak of domestic life."
—Michael Colford, Boston Public Library, Boston, MA

THE WOMAN IN CABIN 10
by Ruth Ware
(Gallery/Scout Press)
"An intruder in the middle of the night leaves Lo Blacklock feeling vulnerable. Trying to shake off her fears, she hopes her big break of covering the maiden voyage of the luxury cruise ship, the Aurora, will help. The first night of the voyage changes everything. What did she really see in the water and who was the woman in the cabin next door? The claustrophobic feeling of being on a ship and the twists and turns of who, and what, to believe keep you on the edge of your seat."
—Joseph Jones, Cuyahoga County Public Library, OH

THE NEST
by Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney
(Random House)
"If you think your family is dysfunctional, move over, because here come the Plumbs. Suddenly faced with the dismantling of the nest egg they've counted on to solve their financial woes, the four Plumb siblings have to grow up, fast. But though they all do some terrible things in the name of ambition, there's something lovable about the Plumbs. You can't fail to be moved by the beating heart of this novel, which seems to say that family, for good or ill, unites us all."
—Mary Kinser, Whatcom County Library System, Bellingham, WA

A GREAT RECKONING
by Louise Penny
(Minotaur Books)
"Amand Gamache is back, and it was worth the wait. As the new leader of the Surete academy, Gamache is working to stop corruption at its source and ensure the best start for the cadets. When a copy of an old map is found near the body of a dead professor, Gamache and Beauvoir race against the clock to find the killer before another person dies. A terrific novel that blends Penny's amazing lyrical prose with characters that resonate long after the book ends. Highly recommended."
—David Singleton, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, Charlotte, NC

LILAC GIRLS
by Martha Hall Kelly
(Ballantine Books)
"This is story of the Ravensbruck Rabbits: seventy-four women prisoners in the Ravensbruck concentration camp. Using alternating first-person narratives, the characters relate their experiences from 1939 through 1959. Drawing upon a decade of research, Hall reconstructs what life was like in Ravensbruck. More than a war story, this is a tale of how the strength of women's bonds can carry them through even the most difficult situations. Liliac Girls is a solid, compelling historical read."
—Andrea Larson, Cook Memorial Public Library, Libertyville, IL

A HARD SUMMER
by Helen Simonson
(Roundhouse)
"Fans of Simonson's Major Pettigrew's Last Stand have reason to rejoice. She has created another engaging novel full of winsome characters, this time set during the summer before the outbreak of World War I. Follow the story of headstrong, independent Beatrice Nash and kind but stuffy surgeon-in-training Hugh Grange along with his formidable Aunt Agatha. Make a cup of tea and prepare to savor every page!"
—Paulette Brooks, Elm Grove Public Library, Elm Grove, WI

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THE SUMMER BEFORE THE WAR
by Katarina Bivald
(Sourcebooks Landmark)
"If ever a town needed a bookstore, it is Broken Wheel. It is broken Wheel; the healing power of books and reading is made evident by this heartwarming book."
—Barbara Clark-Greene, Groton Public Library, Groton, CT

THE REASONS OF BROKEN WHEEL RECOMMEND
by Katarina Bivald
(Sourcebooks Landmark)
"Sara arrives in the small town of Broken Wheel to visit her pen pal Amy, only to discover Amy has just died. The tale of how she brings the love of books and reading that she shared with Amy to the residents of Broken Wheel is just a lovely read. Any book lover will enjoy Sara's story and that of the friends she makes in Broken Wheel."
—Jennifer Asimakopoulous, Indian Prairie Public Library, Darien, IL

SALT TO THE SEA
by Ruta Sepetys
(Flattor Books)
"Titanic. Lusitania. Wilhelm Gustloff. All major maritime disasters, yet the last is virtually unknown. Sepetys changes that in her gripping historical novel. Told in short snippets, Salt to the Sea rotates between four narrators attempting to escape various tragedies in 1945 Europe. Powerful and haunting, heart-breaking and hopeful—a must read."
—Jennifer Asimakopoulous, Indian Prairie Public Library, Darien, IL

TRULY MADLY GUILTY
by Liane Moriarty
(Flatiron Books)
"A typical afternoon barbecue among friends becomes something much bigger when one pivotal moment of inattention leads to repercussions for all in attendance. In trademark Moriarty style, the story flashes back and forth between the day of the barbecue and two months later, slowly revealing the events of the day and its consequences, creating a delicious momentum for the reader as the tension builds and the pieces fall into place. Moriarty has another sure-fire winner with this look at the complexities of friendship, marriage, and familial relationships."
—Halle Eisenman, Beaufort County Library, Hilton Head, SC

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