

# LIBRARYREADS ANNUAL REPORT

JUNE 2019-JUNE 2020



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

**A few highlights from this year: in the fall of 2019, we refreshed our website; and in 2020 we began working on new online events, beginning with changing our long-standing and popular in-person author events to recorded interviews.**

I'm pleased to bring you the 2019-20 Annual Report for LibraryReads, covering our activities from July 2019 through June 30, 2020.

Like most organizations (and the whole world, really!) our work was affected this year by the COVID-19 crisis. However, we are in the fortunate position that it did not affect what we offer—support for books, authors, and readers' advisory—just the ways that we are able to offer it.

As an organization without a physical location and with Board members across the country, not too much else had to change drastically for us, thank goodness. In order to maintain some consistency in such inconsistent times, our board did not turn over in the spring of 2020 as we would have expected.

We are very grateful that we continue to be able to rely on the support we receive from our publisher partners. LibraryReads would not exist without their backing, and we are always thrilled to be able to work with them and promote all of the exciting remote offerings they have pivoted to this year.

If you have any questions about the information in this report (or about LibraryReads in general!), please don't hesitate to contact me at [rebecca@libraryreads.org](mailto:rebecca@libraryreads.org).

Best,



Allison Escoto, Administrative Assistant, NYC



Rebecca Vnuk, Executive Director, Chicago

## ABOUT LIBRARYREADS

LibraryReads creates the monthly nationwide library staff picks list for adult fiction and non-fiction. Our goal is to help connect librarians' favorite books to as many readers as possible, while drawing upon the incredible power that public library staff has in helping to build word-of-mouth for new books, and the important role that libraries play in creating audiences for all kinds of authors.

LibraryReads is unique in that the list is not trying to pick "the best" of anything, and there are no judges or juries. The monthly list is the collective favorites of the library staff who have voted — the books we loved reading and cannot wait to share! Participation is open to everyone who works in a public library, both senior staff and new arrivals, no matter which area of the library they work in. The more the merrier—LibraryReads is designed to be inclusive, representing a broad range of reading tastes and showcasing a variety of new titles, including buzzed-about debuts, genre favorites, bestselling authors, and midlist titles that public library staff are raving about.

Each month, LibraryReads is announced via e-mail, social media, and on our website. Our list is also featured in a range of media outlets such as *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, Shelf Awareness, and the NovelList database.

## MISSION

*LibraryReads puts in list form what library staff do with patrons every day at the desk, in the community, and online: connecting readers with books, suggesting titles that will generate lively conversation among readers, and encouraging staff and readers to share further within their own reading network. LibraryReads is dedicated to celebrating reading and encouraging a sense of delight and discovery for readers of adult books.*





*L-R: Special Guest, Prince Harry; Cruz; Mortensen; Kenn; Anderson, Currie; Sposato; Tangri; Vnuk; Winsor; Santangelo. Not pictured: Lobash*

## LIBRARYREADS 2019-20 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair, Stephanie Anderson, BookOps

Andrienne Cruz, Azusa City Library

Kelly Currie, Delphi Public Library

Polli Kenn, Lawrence Public Library

Vice Chair, Lynn Lobash, New York Public Library

Annabelle Mortensen, Skokie Public Library

Michael Santangelo, BookOps

Stephen Sposato, Chicago Public Library

Shayera Tangri, Los Angeles Public Library

Secretary/Treasurer, Gregg Winsor, Johnson County Library

### Advisory Council

Recognizing the deep commitment Board members have made and respecting the wealth of information and assistance they represent, former members of the LibraryReads Steering Committee (2013-2018) have been invited to join us as Advisory Council members.

### Current Advisory Council members:

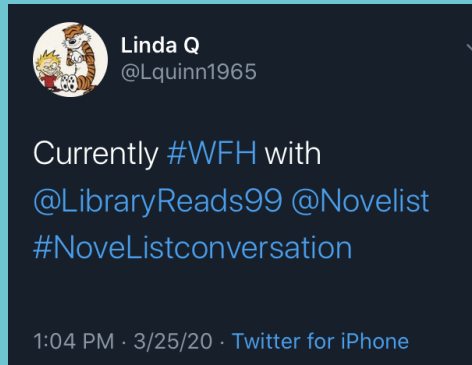
Alene Moroni, Forbes Library, Northampton MA | Robin Nesbitt (retired) | Kaite Stover, Kansas City Public, Kansas City, MO | David Wright, Seattle Public | Christopher Platt, Mono County Free Library, Mammoth Lakes: CA | Robin Bradford, Pierce County Library System, Tacoma, WA | Nora Rawlinson, EarlyWord, New York, NY | Stephanie Chase, Library Consultant, Portland, OR | Miriam Tuliao, PRH, New York, NY

# OUR REACH

LibraryReads picks are seen by thousands of library workers and library patrons each month via our outreach efforts and social media channels.

When the list is published on our website each month, it is picked up and publicized by a number of media outlets and hundreds of public libraries.

Purchasing lists are immediately made available to librarians via OverDrive, Ingram, Baker & Taylor, Bibliotheca and Midwest Tape.

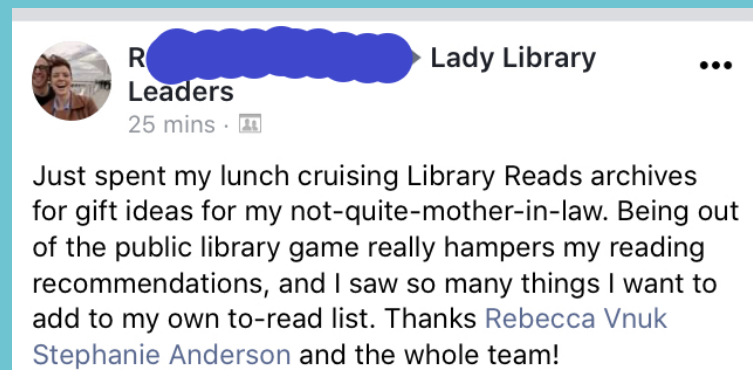


<<^^ We regularly see interaction online with general readers, in addition to library staffers.

## Communication Summary: 07/01/19 - 06/30/20

Newsletters	15 Issues Sent	▲
Unique Opens	54,941	
Open Rate	46.86%	
Clicks	14,503	
Emails Sent	117,677	

Our users are engaged and listening: the LibraryReads email newsletter currently has over 9,000 subscribers; and our open rate averages a robust 47%.



# USERS

We conducted an online user survey in January 2020. Highlights from 400 respondents:

They are majority white (which reflects the profession) and highest number of respondents were from "East N Central (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin)", but not a large percentage (27%). The fewest respondents were "East S Central (Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi)" with only 3%.

They use the list for personal reading choices as well as selection. 83% indicated they would be interested in LibraryReads as a resource for continuing readers' advisory education and training opportunities.

## If you have not voted in the past year, why not?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Edelweiss is too complicated	6.32%
Netgalley is too complicated	3.16%
LibraryReads' nominating process is too complicated	6.32%
I read in print and don't know how to nominate	28.42%
I don't like writing annotations	12.63%
I do not work in a public library and am not eligible to vote	3.16%
Other (please specify)	49.47%

Several responses indicated they were new to LibraryReads or didn't know they were eligible/how to vote.

"I read too slowly and can never finish a new book in time to do a review"

"I read print arcs more often. "

"I'm behind in my reading and don't always get to pre pub titles"

## Where do you get ARCs/Galleys?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Netgalley	48.50%
Edelweiss	44.64%
I receive print copies in the mail/ at my library/ at a conference	66.09%
I do not read pre-publication	18.45%

## How do you use LibraryReads?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
As a selection tool	63.95%
To create library displays	40.34%
To create shelftalkers/sticker books	9.01%
Programming/use with book clubs	19.74%
Share with patrons through print material (newsletters, bookmarks)	39.91%
Share with patrons through email/on website	12.45%
Share on library's social media	18.88%
Direct reading suggestions to individual patrons	53.65%
Personal reading choices	71.24%

Comments:

Share on Friends of the Library Facebook

We have a shelf in the new fiction area dedicated to LibraryReads titles. We purchase every title on the list.

To know where there is interest

to help me keep an eye on upcoming releases, especially those outside genres I personally prefer but that are of high interest to patrons

To keep up to date on new titles

to supplement my ordering, be sure I have not missed anything new

# NUMBERS

46,081

TOTAL VOTES,  
JULY 2019-  
JUNE 2020

Highest Month: June 2020, with 5791  
votes

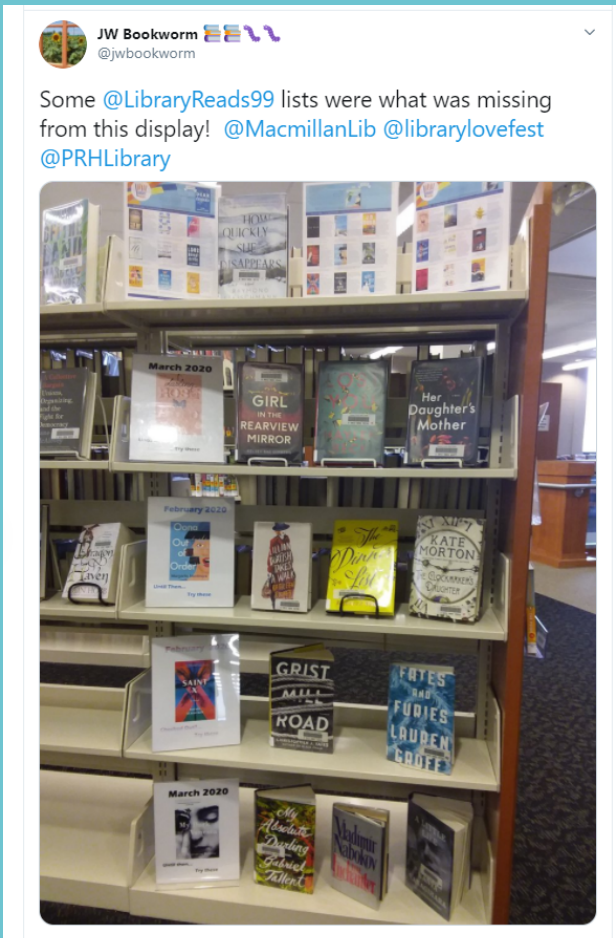
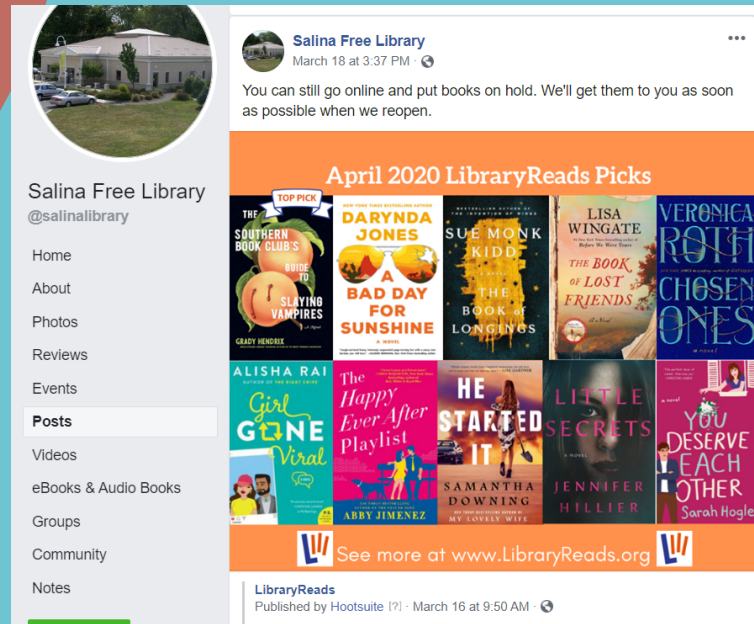
20,235

SOCIAL MEDIA  
FOLLOWERS

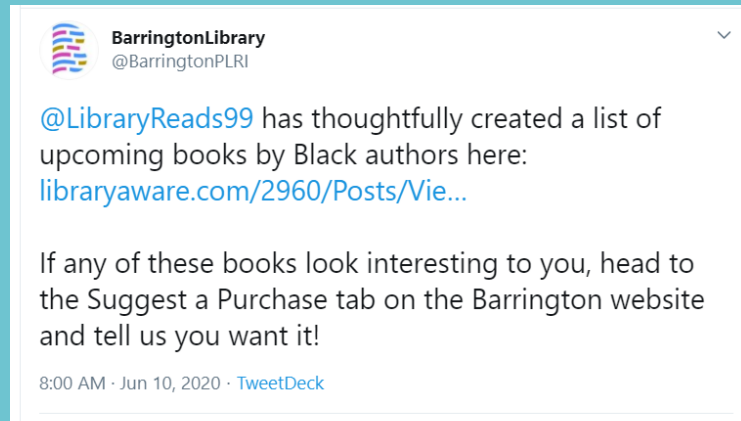
Facebook: 9995 followers  
Twitter: 7135 followers  
Instagram: 3105 followers

# SOCIAL MEDIA

We continue to see great reach via our social media channels.



Many libraries post our list for their patrons and followers throughout the month.



<< We love seeing authors get traction from sharing our posts!





# SOCIAL MEDIA

**Maria Schroeter**  
@maria\_schroeter

@ALA\_Booklist webinars are so good! Just finished Library Love at LibraryReads and my "to order list" is long! @LibraryReads99 @PRHLibrary @HarperCollins @WWNortonLibrary @BloomsburyPub

2:10 PM · Apr 21, 2020 from New Hampshire, USA · Twitter for Android

**Erin Downey Howerton**  
@hybridlib

I really enjoy participating in @LibraryReads99 b/c it helps me to organize my crazy reading life :D You still have some time to vote for July 20 titles! This month I'm hyping I Hold a Wolf by the Ears by Van den berg cause you know I love some freaky short stories /1

7:10 PM · Jun 1, 2020 · Twitter Web App

## Sample Facebook Post Metrics

**LibraryReads**  
Published by Hootsuite [?] · May 15 ·

Here's the June 2020 Library Reads list!

See more at [www.LibraryReads.org](http://www.LibraryReads.org)

Get More Likes, Comments and Shares  
When you boost this post, you'll show it to more people.

10,398	789	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
People Reached	Engagements	

**Performance for Your Post**

10,398 People Reached

416 Reactions, Comments & Shares

258	44	214
Like	On Post	On Shares
30	5	25
Love	On Post	On Shares
4	0	4
Wow	On Post	On Shares
57	0	57
Comments	On Post	On Shares
67	66	1
Shares	On Post	On Shares
373		
Post Clicks		
143	3	227
Photo Views	Link Clicks	Other Clicks

**NEGATIVE FEEDBACK**

3	0
Hide Post	Hide All Posts
0	0
Report as Spam	Unlike Page

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

**Sourcebooks Library**  
@SBKSLibrary

There's only a little over two weeks to vote for @LibraryReads! If you loved 18 TINY DEATHS by Bruce Goldfarb and ME AND WHITE SUPREMACY by Layla Saad, we'd love if you would show your support! @Sourcebooks

8:00 AM · Dec 17, 2019 · Hootsuite Inc.

Publishers do a wonderful job utilizing social media to promote LibraryReads and to help engage their followers by featuring their eligible titles.

## Sample Twitter Metrics

May 2020 · 31 days

**Tweet Highlights**

**Top Tweet** earned 8,176 impressions

June 2020 #LibraryReads #TopPick #TopTitle #MexicanGothic @silviang @DelReyBooks Reviewed by Lorena N. @evanstonpl [pic.twitter.com/lvgmf6Vrlu](https://pic.twitter.com/lvgmf6Vrlu)

**Top Follower** followed by 75.4K people

**Top mention** earned 212 engagements

**Tor Books** @torbooks · May 27

Have you checked out this year's virtual @BookExpoAmerica? This year, @LibraryReads99 is hosting some incredible author interviews online, including one with @veschwab! Check her out as she discusses #TheInvisibleLifeofAddieLaRue here 🌟

[youtube.com/watch?v=Bm2H5T...](https://youtube.com/watch?v=Bm2H5T...)

**Top media Tweet** earned 7,205 impressions

June 2020 #LibraryReads #MexicanGothic #TheBoyfriendProject #Devolution #TheEmpireOfGold #TheGirlFromWidowHills #TheGuestList #TheLastFlight #TheLiesThatBind

**MAY 2020 SUMMARY**

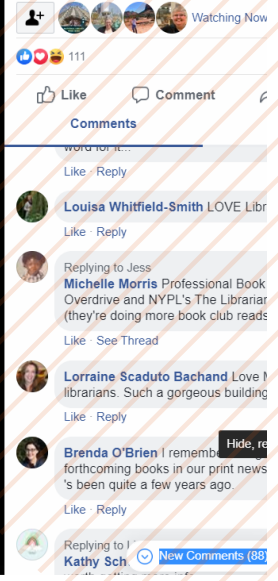
Tweets	60	Tweet impressions	130K
Profile visits	788	Mentions	122
New followers	70		

**HMH Books & Media**  
@HMHbooks

Veronica Roth's adult debut, CHOSEN ONES, is on the April @LibraryReads99 list—and we're officially less than two weeks away until it's on sale! We can't wait for you all to read this one. To learn more, visit: [bit.ly/35U6GG2](https://bit.ly/35U6GG2)

THANK YOU, LIBRARIANS!

11:41 AM · Mar 26, 2020 · Hootsuite Inc.



Fall 2019:

Adult Reading Roundtable ARRTCon 2019, Naperville, IL; Rebecca Vnuk presented the keynote, "Librarians As Influencers"; Board members Steven Sposato and Annabelle Mortensen presented "LibraryReads 101/Writing Annotations"

Winter 2020:

"We Love Book Clubs" Live Event for the Glen Ellyn (IL) Public Library: Live event for 75 book group leaders, showcasing past LibraryReads titles.

ALA Midwinter, Philadelphia: "2020 Debut Author Panel" and "2020 Author Breakfast"

PLA Conference, Nashville: "Your Evening is Booked" Author Panel

Spring 2020: THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC PIVOT

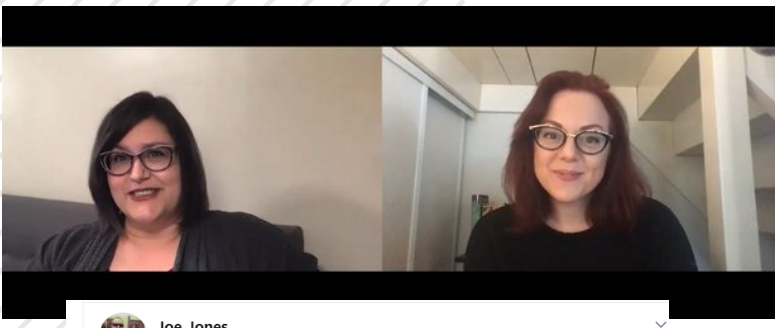
With the cancellation of in-person conferences, LibraryReads still found ways to engage users and promote readers' advisory and authors. Several Board members, along with Rebecca, participated in a virtual program for BookExpo America: "A Novel Re-Opening: Readers' Advisory After Coronavirus" (photo, top). We also changed our usual in-person meal events into two hour-long videos featuring nine author interviews. These can be viewed at any time on our new YouTube channel, [youtube.com/c/libraryreads](https://youtube.com/c/libraryreads).





Tracy Babiasz  
@tracymine

SOME GO HOME is [#odiellindsey](#)'s new story of the south that we try to pretend doesn't exist. So glad I could hear about it, thanks to [@LibraryReads99](#) and [@WWNortonLibrary](#) #PLA2020



Joe Jones  
@Joe\_Jones

Have you checked out [@LibraryReads99](#) virtual BEA author interviews yet? I particularly liked the one with V.E. Schwab!

BookExpo America 2020  
LibraryReads Virtual Book Expo 2020  
Author Interviews. Normally, our Executive Director, Rebecca Vnuk, an...  
[youtube.com](#)

- Jean King  
I enjoyed the Crash Courses.  
7h Love Reply 3
- Top Fan  
Pam Erickson Gardow  
Great advice, Rebecca! Thanks much to Libraryreads!!  
7h Love Reply 3
- Toni Rodriguez  
Those Crash Course webinars are fantastic!  
7h Love Reply 7
- Kelly Moore  
The monthly galley chat is also good for RA and collection development  
7h Like Reply 9
- Marci Alouan Byers  
Crash course webinars are great.  
7h Love Reply 5

# 2019 UNCONFERENCE

In October 2018, 50 library staffers from Southern California joined our board for a day of readers' advisory training. The morning consisted of "RA 101" taught by Board members, and the afternoon was a lively discussion of current readers' advisory topics.

At the fall 2019 Board Retreat, it was decided that the UnConference model, while a wonderful in-person opportunity, is not fiscally sound. We will shift our training focus to piggybacking on existing opportunities, from offering LibraryReads programs to library systems, state libraries, and consortia; doing programs at state/local conferences, and sponsoring pre-conference programs.

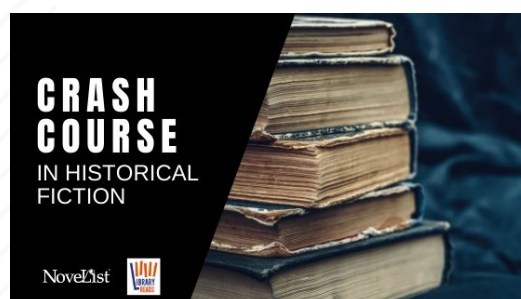


## NoveList WEBINARS

We continued our very successful webinar partnership with NoveList this year, offering a crash course in popular genres, designed to give librarians a sense of why readers are drawn to the genre; some tips for talking with fans; key books in the genre to know; sub-genres and crossover titles to keep in mind; and more. These 1-hour sessions are offered at **no cost** to attendees, and consist of a full hour of training.

Over 7,600 people registered for the three webinars we held in this period--Horror, Graphic Novels, and Historical Fiction, and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive

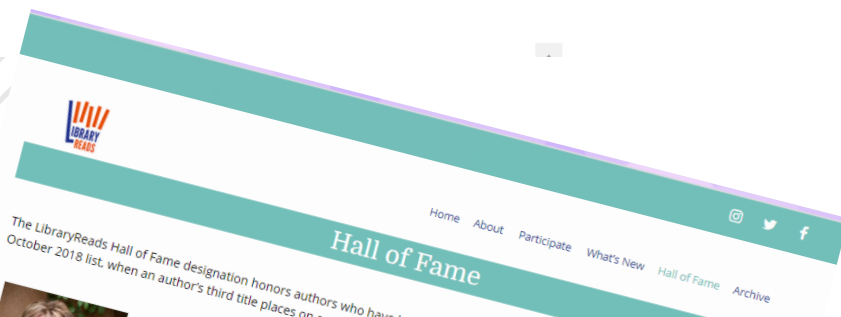
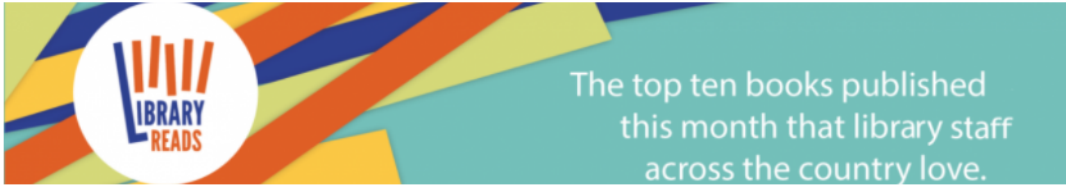
It has been a delight to work with the staff at NoveList and the response has been tremendous. Each session brings together some of LibraryReads' top readers' advisors currently working in public libraries with the book specialists at NoveList—a winning combination.



In the fall of 2019, we completed an overhaul of our website, adding additional pages for Events and FAQ; making it easier to see what is new; linking to a sortable master list; and giving the Hall of Fame a more polished look and navigation.



Home About Participate What's New Hall of Fame Archive



LibraryReads proudly presents "Readers Advisory 101". This 75-minute training is available at library staff wanting an introduction (or a refresher!) on some of the primary skills/tasks. More information on our YouTube channel!

The recording of our first "LibraryReads in Conversation" live discussion event is now available on our YouTube channel.

Find our June 2020 "What We're Reading" list, focused on upcoming books by Black authors, [here](#).

**We've added a new page of Resources aimed specifically for readers' advisory and collection development topics! We'll be adding content on a regular basis.**

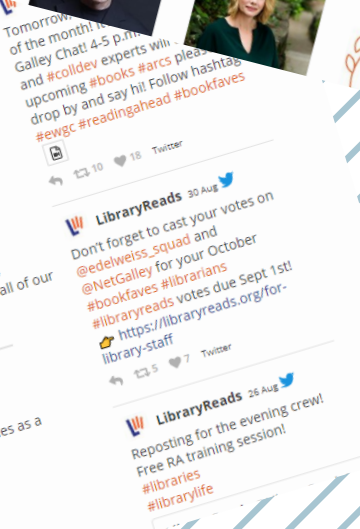
**Our first instructional video is up!** Spend 10 minutes finding out how to use Edelweiss and NetGalley to place LibraryReads votes!

**2020 Events**

Please check out our "Events" page for details on our Virtual BEA Author Interview videos, launching in honor of BookExpo's Librarian's day. Subscribe to our YouTube channel for all of our video content.

**Free Genre Webinars**

and NovelList have partnered on a series of genre webinars. The series as a whole will focus on the more popular genres designed to help you connect to the genre:



# NEW FOR 2020: TRAVEL GRANT

To broaden public library staff participation in continuing education events, particularly those with a readers' advisory element, LibraryReads has developed a travel grant program to help defray costs and encourage attendance for those who might not otherwise be able to attend such events. Eligible applicants must be employed, in any job title, at a public library in the US, have an interest in readers' advisory for adults, and must have actively participated in LibraryReads voting in the 3 month period prior to application.

Three \$1,000 grants were awarded in 2020:

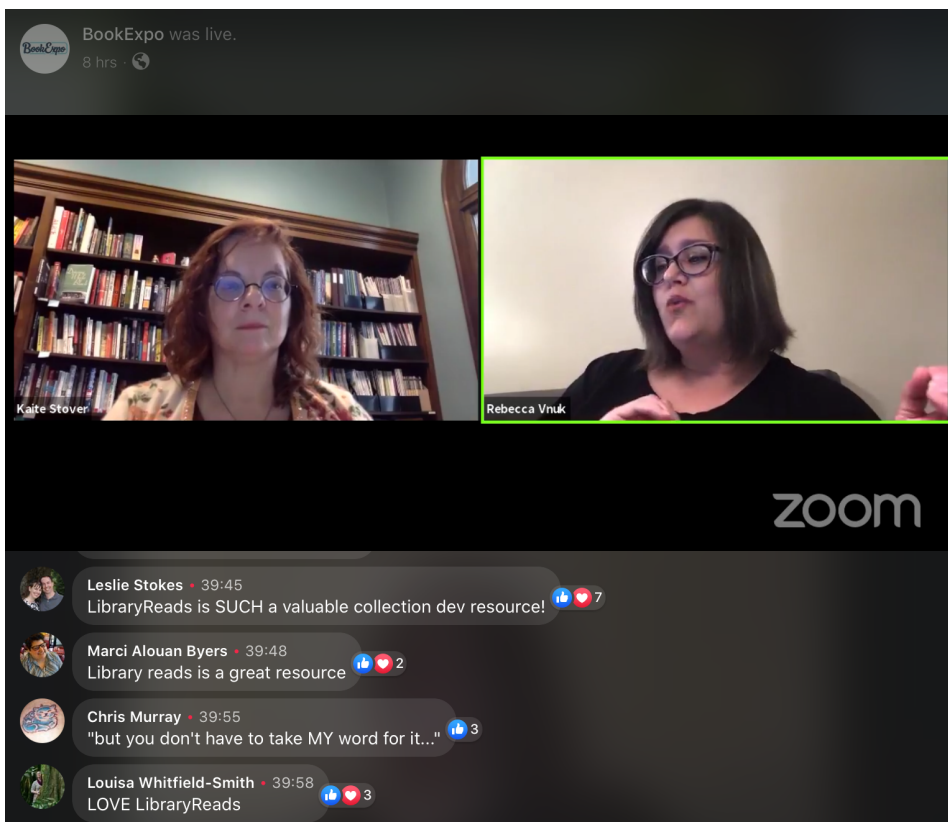
Midwinter: Jessica C. Williams, Information Services Librarian, Tiffin-Seneca Public Library, OH

PLA: Vickie Bartz, County Librarian, Big Stone County, MN and Marianne Ramirez, Sayville Library, Long Island, NY

We plan to offer additional grants when in-person conferences resume, and will also consider giving grants for eligible online conferences.

## WHAT'S AHEAD: 2020-2021

While the COVID-19 pandemic certainly changed some of our plans this year, LibraryReads is committed to furthering our reach in the readers' advisory continuing education space, planning more webinars, online conversations, and author panels. We look forward to working with our publisher and vendor partners to accomplish this in the year ahead!



# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

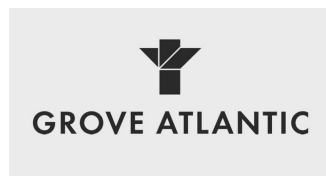
LibraryReads benefits from strong partnerships and collaborative relationships with a wide variety of organizations and companies.

Special thanks goes to those who help promote LibraryReads: our voting partners, Edelweiss and NetGalley; media outlets including *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *BookPage*, *BookReporter*, *EarlyWord*, and *RA For All*; and vendors such as Ingram, Baker & Taylor, Midwest Tape, NoveList, and OverDrive.

**Finally, we must thank the many staff members from public libraries across the country who read, vote, and share the list with their patrons.**

Our list would not be possible without the support of the publishers featured in our monthly lists, as well as the support of NoveList, Edelweiss, NetGalley, and the Adult Library Marketing Association.

The following publishers provided support to LibraryReads in this reporting period.



Our founding publisher partners:

- Hachette Book Group • HarperCollins • Macmillan • Other Press • Penguin Group (USA) • Quercus Publishing
- Random House, Inc. • Simon & Schuster • Workman Publishing • W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.



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