



<http://www.skowhegan.lib.me.us>  
 skowlib@skowhegan.lib.me.us, (207) 474-9072  
 Library Hours: Mon.–Thurs., 10-6, Friday 10-3

# The Library Lookout

**December 2020**



Call the Friends of the Library Shop and ask for Karen Lewia at 614-1011 for clarification or with any questions. Sales people will be library volunteers - contact Karen if you would like to help in this way. Opportunity for crafters or vendors to “booth rent” are also planned. Again, please contact Karen for more information.

All proceeds from sales, after paying expenses, will go to the Friends of the Library who will then use the funds to support the library’s needs.

*Come and shop conveniently in downtown Skowhegan while supporting your wonderful public library!*

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## DECEMBER NEW BOOKS

### Fiction

- Archer, Jeffrey/ *Hidden in Plain Sight*
- Beaton, M.C./ *Hot to Trot*
- Clancy, Tom/ *Shadow of the Dragon*
- Clark, Mary Higgins/ *Piece of My Heart*
- Cline, Ernest/ *Ready Player Two*
- Cornwell, Bernard/ *War Lord*
- Gray, Shelley Shepard/ *Amish Christmas Twins*
- Hill, Donna/ *Confessions in B-Flat*
- Huang, S.L./ *Burning Roses*
- Hyde, Catherine Ryan/ *My Name is Anton*
- Jewell, Lisa/ *Invisible Girl*
- Johnstone, William W./ *A Maccallister Christmas*
- Kingsbury, Karen/ *Truly, Madly, Deeply*
- Macallister, Greer/ *The Arctic Fury*
- Smith, Alexander McCall/ *How to Raise an Elephant*
- Palmer, Diana/ *Wyoming True*
- Patterson, James/ *Deadly Cross*
- Perry, Anne/ *A Christmas Resolution*
- Schwab, V.E./ *The Invisible Life of Addie Larue*
- Steel, Danielle/ *All That Glitters*
- Thayne, RaeAnne/ *Christmas at Holiday House*
- Wilde, Lori/ *The Christmas Backup Plan*
- Zimmerman, Vicky/ *Miss Cecily’s Recipes for Exceptional Ladies*

### Nonfiction

- Heughan, Sam/ *Clanlands*
- Payne, Les/ *The Dead Are Arising*

## NEW FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY SHOP

A group of Library Friends have joined together to open a new and different place to shop in downtown Skowhegan. Located at 61 Water Street, between Northern Mattress and The Paper Clip, the FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY SHOP will be open on Wednesdays through Fridays from 10 to 5 and on Saturdays from 10 to 3 beginning on December 2nd.

Items for sale, all donated by library friends, will include clean and lightly used items such as household goods, furniture, accessories, and books. (Items not acceptable are electronics, toys, or clothing.)

***For the December Library Lookout, the staff at the Skowhegan Library have decided to do something a little different. We have decided to share our top reads of 2020. Quite often we get asked to recommend books to our patrons, so we decided to tell you about some of our favorites – these books would make great holiday gifts as well!***



### **Bree's top picks for 2020**

- **One Last Lie** by Paul Doiron
- **The Guest List** by Lucy Foley
- **Ghosts of Harvard** by Francesca Serritella
- **Swashby and the Sea** by Beth Ferry; illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal

I will read anything with Paul Doiron's name on it. After eleven books and a handful of short stories, I am completely hooked. Mike Bowditch is such a complex character, you can count on being immersed into his world and finding yourself holding your breath, not knowing what'll happen next. **One Last Lie** is, without a doubt, my top pick for 2020. This mystery takes place in Maine, so that's a huge bonus for me, but it's also engaging, a "sit on the edge of your seat and ignore what's going on around you because you just need to know how it ends" type of book. This book has it all; rugged wilderness, complex storylines, a touch of romance, and one mystery that inevitably leads to another. This would make a fantastic gift. If you haven't, you need to read this book; and the ten that came before it.

**The Guest List** takes place on a small, isolated island off the coast of Ireland so I knew it would be phenomenal. It is comprised of many different points of view, which I know can be irritating to readers, but trust me, it makes this story even better. The slow burning tension between the characters makes for an explosive ending. It's a psychological thriller with all the best elements forming together to create a one of a kind reading experience. The secluded setting combined with the many different personalities, and secrets, of the wedding party and guests create a huge network of interwoven lies that threaten to overtake the whole island.

Ghost stories are probably my favorite genre. There's just something about reading a spooky book when you're alone in your house and it's raining and you stop to listen because you think you heard something in the other room. **Ghosts of Harvard** is something a bit different from the typical haunted house though. It's filled with twists and turns, mental illness, the pressures of Harvard, loss, history, the paranormal, and the list just goes on and on. I'd suggest this to anyone who likes a book with a lot of depth and thought-provoking themes. The plot points all weave together beautifully in the end and I promise you, you won't see it coming. It's a chilling story you won't soon forget.

**Swashby and the Sea** pulled at my heartstrings and was such a beautiful children's story. There's an old sea captain, who loves the sea and peace and quiet, a charming, fun-loving little girl who unknowingly softens the old man's bristly exterior and the little girl's happy, bohemian-eques grandmother. From writing little messages in the sand to wishing on starfish, this story will engage little readers. The illustrations have a way of sweeping you into the story and you may even find yourself writing messages to the sea during your next visit to the beach.

### **Francoise's top picks of 2020**

- **Tattooist of Auschwitz** by Heather Morris
- **Cilka's Journey** by Heather Morris

I'm not fond of love stories, but I like non-fiction novels or historical fiction novels based on real people. I recently read the **Tattooist of Auschwitz** by Heather Morris and the sequel of that book **Cilka's Journey**. It made me realize what people have to endure to survive and also made me feel guilty for complaining about something as silly as wearing a mask. I recommend these books to you all.

### Miss Angie's top picks for 2020

- **Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You** by Jason Reynolds
- **Faith Taking Flight** by Julie Murphy
- **Here in the Real World** by Pennypacker, Sara.
- **A Polar Bear in the Snow** by Mac Barnett and Shawn Harris

Without a doubt my very top choice for 2020 is **Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You**. This is in an incredibly powerful book about dealing with the how and why our country has issues with systemic racism. At times it was painful to listen to, but overwhelmingly eye-opening. If you are interested in a fast-paced history lesson about racism and want to have some moments of self-examination, this book is for you. If you're a middle school and/or high school student and you want to know more about why the Black Lives Matter movement or the issues of racism is important, then this book is for you. This is a book that makes you look both outward at the world around you and inward at your own prejudices, privileges, thoughts and actions.

The next book on my list is **Faith Taking Flight** by Julie Murphy. Faith is a superhero...of sorts. She has the ability to fly and rubs elbows with other superheroes and their super powers, but underneath that, and more importantly than that, she is a regular, over-weight high school girl who volunteers at an animal shelter and has a crush on a classmate; BUT, this isn't really about that either. It is a story that talks about loss and identity. It is a story about learning about when to fit in and when to stand out, and mixes both contemporary realistic fiction and the highly fanciful world of superheroes. It is a great book for those of us who consider ourselves nerds (and maybe romantics!)

Third on my list is **Here in the Real World** by Sara Pennypacker. I picked this book up and the real world melted away. I was caught up in the story of Ware and Jolene almost instantly. Ware is an 11-year-old boy who is shipped off to the Rec Center everyday all summer, much to his dismay. But because he is extremely introverted, and a bit of a misfit, he slinks away one day and lands upon an old torn down church and another misfit, Jolene. The two form an odd friendship and the church becomes their kingdom where they are allowed to be and act the way they want. This book was slightly reminiscent of *Bridge to Terabithia* for me--which is another personal favorite of mine. Overall, a great read for both middle grade readers (4-8) and also a great choice for a family read aloud.

The two picture books I choose for my top 2020 picks are *Swashby at Sea* (same as *Miss Bree*) and **A Polar Bear in the Snow**. *A Polar Bear in the Snow*, is a fun book. It has unique illustrations made by tearing paper and is a very simple story that the little ones will really appreciate. If you are looking for some picture books to buy the little ones in your life, these two are my top choices for 2020.

### Josie's top picks of 2020

- **Home Before Dark** by Riley Sager
- **Follow Me to Ground** by Sue Rainsford
- **Every Night is Pizza Night** by J. Kenji Lopez-Alt

**Home Before Dark** by Riley Sager was a great spooky read about a supposedly haunted mansion that kept me guessing right up until the very end - and even though it's not autumn or Halloween anymore, this would be a great book to gift to any ghost story lover on your Christmas list! (Plus, the cover glows in the dark, who doesn't love that?)

Another favorite of mine this year, if you're looking for something a little different (it's got that "original, surreal Grimm's fairy tale" kind of vibe going) is **Follow Me to Ground** by Sue Rainsford. A story of otherworldly magic - that of a father and daughter who can heal any illness - and a tale of dangerous love and betrayal, it's sure to keep you wondering as to how its characters are going to end up.

If you've got a kiddo in your life that's needing a good storybook to read this holiday season, I'd definitely recommend **Every Night is Pizza Night** by J. Kenji Lopez-Alt. It's a fun read about a girl named Pipo and her quest to prove that pizza is *the best* food out there, by cooking and trying new meals with her friends and neighbors! It's a story about open-mindedness, community, and family - and it's got a fun pizza recipe right in the back, so you can try cooking Pipo's own best pizza recipe with your own children!



## The Library Lookout

9 Elm Street

Skowhegan, ME 04976

### Library Staff

Head Librarian and

Youth Services: Angie Herrick

Technology Librarian: Josie Pease

Adult Circulation: Breanna Bussell

Interlibrary Loan Librarian: Francoise LaBonte,

### Your Library Trustees:

Patrick Dore, Karen Lewia,

Hannah Luce, Lynn Perry,

Lynda Quinn, Warren Shay

Ex Officio: FOL President

### Friends officers:

Pres. Bonnie Chamberlain

Vice Pres. Maureen Davis

Tracey Brown, sec.

Jeanne Shay, treas.

### BECOME A FRIEND OF YOUR LIBRARY TODAY!

The Friends of the Skowhegan Free Public Library is a not-for-profit organization that helps promote and improve the Library's resources and facilities. Your membership in the Friends provides critical support to our Library. Suggested dues are \$24 for individuals and \$36 for families. Many give even more. Please consider the role that our Library plays in our community, and choose a level of support that's right for you. Whatever you decide, you can be sure that any amount is gratefully received and much needed.

Please complete this form and mail to: Skowhegan Free Public Library, 9 Elm Street, Skowhegan, Maine 04976

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. # \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check the activities you are willing to help with.**

- Refreshments for library activities.
- Making phone calls.
- Helping with fundraising activities



*Check out some of the top picks of 2020 selected by your Skowhegan Free Public Library librarians!*