

# Best Books 2025

This eclectic selection of titles focuses primarily on books of interests for adult readers published in 2023. The list is compiled from patron and West Linn staff recommendations, as well as those from over a dozen critics' best book of the year lists, including *The New York Times*, *Book Riot*, and *Kirkus Reviews*. *Goodreads* ratings also assisted in compiling the list.

Please ask staff or review our online catalog for a book's availability and current location.

The sections are organized by the author's last name.

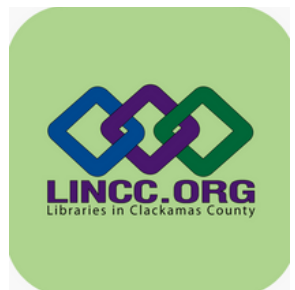
Book covers with a  icon on the image have been identified as spectacular audiobooks.

## Top Checkouts 2024



***The Women*** by Kristin Hannah  
***The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store*** by James McBride  
***Funny Story*** by Emily Henry  
***First Lie Wins*** by Ashley Elston  
***The God of the Woods*** by Liz Moore  
***Remarkably Bright Creatures*** by Shelby Van Pelt  
***Fourth Wing*** by Rebecca Yarros  
***Table For Two*** by Amor Towles  
***The Covenant Of Water*** by Abraham Verghese  
***Iron Flame*** by Rebecca Yarros  
***The Frozen River*** by Ariel Lawhon  
***Swan Song*** by Elin Hilderbrand  
***Eruption*** by Michael Crichton  
***James*** by Percival Everett

## GET THEM ON



# Hit List Highlights!

These books were published in 2024 and topped our *most checkouts during 2024* list. Here are the highlights from this hit list!

***James*** by Percival Everett (Fiction)  
When the enslaved Jim overhears that he is about to be sold to a man in New Orleans, separated from his wife and daughter forever, he decides to hide on nearby Jackson Island until he can formulate a plan. Meanwhile, Huck Finn has faked his own death to escape his violent father, recently returned to town. As all readers of American literature know, thus begins the dangerous and transcendent journey by raft down the Mississippi River toward the elusive and too-often-unreliable promise of the Free States and beyond. While many narrative set pieces of Twain's original novel remain in place, Jim's agency, intelligence and compassion are shown in a radically new light.

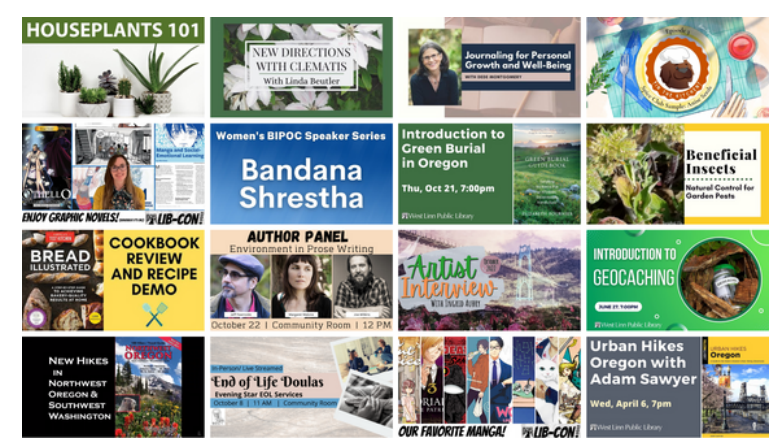
***The Women*** by Kristin Hannah (Fiction)  
In 1965, nursing student Frankie McGrath, after hearing the words "Women can be heroes, too," impulsively joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows her brother to Vietnam where she is overwhelmed by the destruction of war, as well as the unexpected trauma of coming home to a changed and politically divided America.

***Funny Story*** by Emily Henry (Romance)  
After being dumped for her boyfriend's lifelong best friend, Petra, Daphne agrees to room with Petra's freshly heartbroken ex until she can figure things out, in the new novel from the New York Times best-selling author of Happy Place.

***The God of the Woods*** by Liz Moore (Fiction)  
Early morning, August 1975: a camp counselor discovers an empty bunk. Its occupant, Barbara Van Laar, has gone missing. Barbara isn't just any thirteen-year-old: she's the daughter of the family that owns the summer camp and employs most of the region's residents. And this isn't the first time a Van Laar child has disappeared. Barbara's older brother similarly vanished fourteen years ago, never to be found.



# Programs



**Upcoming events for all ages:**  
[bit.ly/wlpl-online-events-programs](https://bit.ly/wlpl-online-events-programs)

**Archived Facebook Live programs:**  
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**Recorded programs on YouTube:**  
[bit.ly/wlpl-youtube-playlists](https://bit.ly/wlpl-youtube-playlists)

## More Recommendations

**Access Other Booklists for Adults:**  
[westlinnoregon.gov/library/booklists-adults](https://westlinnoregon.gov/library/booklists-adults)

**Get Book Recommendations:**  
**Adult-** [bit.ly/3704Hn1](https://bit.ly/3704Hn1)  
**Youth-** [bit.ly/3aSxxoj](https://bit.ly/3aSxxoj)

## Library Locker

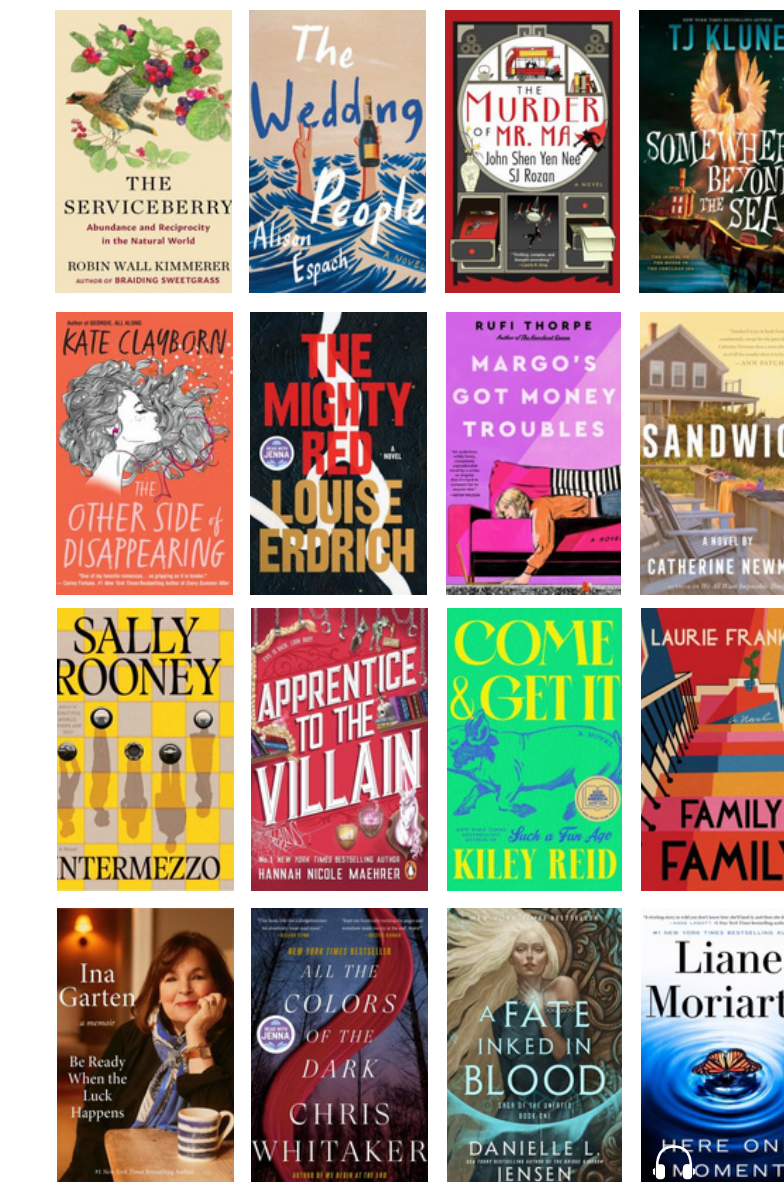
**Can't visit the library while we're open? Not yet comfortable coming into the building? The library has a self-service locker for no-contact holds pickup.**

**Visit:** [bit.ly/wlpl-locker](https://bit.ly/wlpl-locker)

**1595 Burns Street  
West Linn, OR 97068  
503-656-7853  
[www.westlinnlibrary.org](https://www.westlinnlibrary.org)  
Online Catalog | [LINCC.org](https://lincc.org)**



# BEST BOOKS 2024





# FICTION

## STAFF PICKS HIGHLIGHTS

***The Mighty Red*** by Louise Erdrich (Mystery)  
In Argus, North Dakota, a wedding intertwines the lives of Gary, Kismet, Hugo, and Crystal. Amidst personal struggles and love triangles, they face broader themes of time, climate change, and economic turmoil. The novel explores the complexities of ordinary people in a prairie community, highlighting their dreams, struggles, and resilience.

***The Wedding People*** by Alison Espach (Fiction)  
Severely depressed Phoebe Stone arrives at Newport’s Cornwall Inn alone after her husband’s betrayal with one dark plan. When she is mistaken as a wedding guest, she unexpectedly bonds with the bride, their unlikely connection offers both humor and heart, revealing how life’s detours and chance encounters can change us in profound ways.

***Family Family*** by Laurie Frankel (Fiction)  
An actress who makes a film about adoption starts a media storm after admitting to a journalist that it's a bad movie and that she gave up a baby for adoption during her senior year.

***Just for the Summer*** by Abby Jimenez (Romance)  
Justin’s curse causes every woman he dates to find their soul mate immediately after breaking up with him, and when Emma, a woman with the same curse, reaches out, they hatch a plan to date and break up to cancel each other’s curse. But with unexpected challenges, they're suddenly navigating a lot more than they expected--including catching real feelings for each other.


***Somewhere Beyond the Sea*** by TJ Klune (Fantasy)  
Arthur Parnassus lives a good life, built on the ashes of a bad one. He’s the headmaster of a strange orphanage on a distant and peculiar island, and he hopes to soon be the adoptive father to the six magical and so-called dangerous children who live there.

***Intermezzo*** by Sally Rooney (Fiction)  
In the wake of their father's death, two brothers--successful Dublin lawyer Peter and his younger brother Ivan, a competitive chess player--find different ways to deal with their grief, which affects not only their lives, but the lives of those they hold dear.

## GENERAL

***Martyr!*** by Kaveh Akbar  
***The Wedding People*** by Alison Espach  
***Family Family*** by Laurie Frankel  
***All Fours*** by Miranda July  
***You Like It Darker (Horror)*** by Stephen King  
***Sandwich*** by Catherine Newman  
***Come and Get It*** by Kiley Reid  
***Intermezzo*** by Sally Rooney  
***Margo's Got Money Troubles*** by Rufi Thorpe  
***The Coin*** by Yasmin Zaher

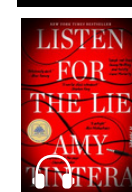
## Fantasy/ \*Sci-Fi

***\*The Ministry of Time*** by Kaliane Bradley  
***The Book of Doors*** by Gareth Brown  
***\*The Mercy of Gods*** by James S.A. Corey  
***Emily Wilde's Map of the Otherlands (#2)*** by Heather Fawcett  
***A Fate Inked in Blood*** by Danielle L. Jensen  
***Somewhere Beyond the Sea (#2)*** by TJ Klune  
***Apprentice to the Villain (#2)*** by Hannah Nicole Maehrler

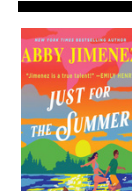
## Historical

***Long Island Compromise*** by Taffy Brodesser-Akner  
***You Dreamed of Empires*** by Alvaro Enrigue  
***James*** by Percival Everett  
***The Women*** by Kristin Hannah  
***Wandering Stars*** by Tommy Orange  
***There Are Rivers in the Sky*** by Elif Shafak

## Mystery

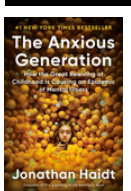
***The Mighty Red*** by Louise Erdrich  
***The God of the Woods*** by Liz Moore  
***Here One Moment*** by Liane Moriarty  
***We Solve Murders*** by Richard Osman  
***The Murder of Mr. Ma*** by John Shen Yen Nee  
***Listen for the Lie*** by Amy Tintera  
***All the Colors of the Dark*** by Chris Whitaker

## Romance

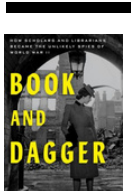
***The Other Side of Disappearing*** by Kate Clayborn  
***Late Bloomer*** by Mazey Eddings  
***Funny Story*** by Emily Henry  
***Just for the Summer*** by Abby Jimenez

# NON-FICTION

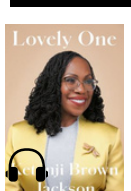
## GENERAL

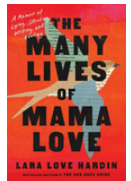
***Everyone Who is Gone is Here*** by Jonathan Blitzer  
***Revenge of the Tipping Point: Overstories, Superspreaders, and the Rise of Social Engineering*** by Malcolm Gladwell  
***Unfinished Love Story*** by Doris Kearns Goodwin  
***The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*** by Jonathan Haidt  
***Magic Pill: The Extraordinary Benefits and Disturbing Risks of the New Weight-Loss Drugs*** by Johann Hari  
***The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*** by Robin Wall Kimmerer  
***How to Winter: Harness Your Mindset to Thrive on Cold, Dark, or Difficult Days*** by Kari Leibowitz  
***I Heard Her Call My Name*** by Lucy Sante  
***The Backyard Bird Chronicles*** by Amy Tan

## History

***Book and Dagger: How Scholars and Librarians Became the Unlikely Spies of World War II*** by Elyse Graham  
***The Demon of Unrest: A Saga of Hubris, Heartbreak, and Heroism at the Dawn of the Civil War*** by Erik Larson  
***The Wide Wide Sea: Imperial Ambition, First Contact and the Fateful Final Voyage of Captain James Cook*** by Hampton Sides

## Biography/ Memoir

***Reagan*** by Max Boot  
***Be Ready When the Luck Happens*** by Ina Garten  
***Lovely One*** by Ketanji Brown Jackson  
***The Many Lives of Mama Love: A Memoir of Lying, Stealing, Writing, and Healing*** by Lara Love Hardin  
***The Small and the Mighty: Twelve Unsung Americans Who Changed the Course of History, from the Founding to the Civil Rights Movement*** by Sharon McMahon



## STAFF PICKS HIGHLIGHTS

***Book and Dagger*** by Elyse Graham (940.5486 GRA 2024)  
This untold story of the academics who became OSS spies and invented modern spycraft tells how they were able to change the course of World War II and help defeat the Nazis.

***The Serviceberry*** by Robin Wall Kimmerer (581.63 KIM 2024)  
Potawatomi environmentalist Kimmerer (*Braiding Sweetgrass*) explains how to orient our lives around gratitude, reciprocity and community, based on the lessons of the natural world.

***The Demon of Unrest*** by Erik Larson (973.711 LAR 2024)  
Drawing on diaries, secret communiques, slave ledgers and plantation ledgers, Larson offers a gripping account of the months between Lincoln's election and the start of the Civil War, which tore a deeply divided nation in two.

***How to Winter*** by Kari Leibowitz (616.8527 LEI 2024)  
Psychologist and winter expert Kari Leibowitz uses mindset science to help readers embrace winter as a season to be enjoyed, not endured--and in turn, learn powerful lessons that can impact our mental wellbeing throughout the year.

***The Wide Wide Sea*** by Hampton Sides (910.92 SID 2024)  
Part high-seas adventure, part examination of the Age of Exploration, this account of Captain James Cook's last voyage in 1776 charts how his overt and covert missions came to a head on the island of Hawaii and left behind a complex and controversial legacy still debated to this day.

***The Backyard Bird Chronicles*** by Amy Tan (813.54 TAN 2024)  
Mapping the passage of time through daily entries, thoughtful questions and beautiful original sketches, the best-selling author of *The Joy Luck Club* shares her search for solace which turned into an opportunity to connect with nature in a meaningful way and imagine the intricate lives of the birds she admired.