Brooklyn by Colm Toibin: An engaging novel about Eilis Lacey, a young Irish woman, whose family convinces her to immigrate to Brooklyn, New York and find work during the difficult post-World War II years. Toibin captures the trepidation and loneliness of embarking upon a new country, as well as the satisfaction of self-reliance when achieving success and independence in a new life.  Davonne’s pick

Forty Rules of Love: a novel of Rumi by Elif Shafak: This is a fascinating story told through the communication between a Muslim author and a Jewish woman editing his book about the Turkish poet Rumi, who lived in the 13th century. The novel shifts back and forth in time, and it makes for an interesting dip into different cultures.  Julia’s pick

Interview with the Vampire by Anne Rice: A book bash selection, this archetypal tale was a delight. Anne Rice has a wonderful ability to create authentic characters who keep the reader engaged. Lestat is the ultimate vampire who is filled with hedonism. Louie, who is being interviewed, is the antithesis, so doesn’t stand a chance against him.  Julia’s pick

The Man in the High Castle by Philip K. Dick: Before watching the Amazon series, I decided to read the book that it was based on. Set in a world where the United States lost World War II, the United States is split into three sections – the Nazis occupy the Eastern states, the Japanese formed the Pacific States of America out of the Western states, and the Rocky Mountain states form a neutral buffer zone between them. The plot revolves around the lives of the people living in these areas and the powers that oppress them. I found the world to be extremely intriguing and constantly wanted to know more about the lives of the people who live there. The book ended up being much different than the Amazon show but both were good in their own right. This book won the 1963 Hugo Award for Best Novel so is eligible for the award winning book category in the Book Bash.  Talia’s pick

Marriage of Opposites by Alice Hoffman: In this historical novel, lyrical prose portrays the lives of Rachel Pizzarro, and her son the painter, Camille Pissarro, as well the family unit. Passionate and colorful descriptions capture the beautiful setting of St. Thomas in the Caribbean, and the character portrayals are somewhat reminiscent of Gabriel Garcia Marquez.  Davonne’s pick

My Name is Lucy Barton by Elizabeth Strout: This deceptively slim book written in precise and spare language, implies a simple story. Yet it illuminates a complicated and somewhat uncomfortable relationship between a mother and daughter that reveals itself through a mother’s visit to her adult daughter during an extended hospital stay.  Davonne’s pick

Snow White Must Die by Nele Neuhaus: Mystery lovers—here is another author to try. Neuhaus is an international bestseller from Germany. Tobias Sartorius has just been released from prison where he spent ten years for killing two teenage girls in his rural hometown. However, their bodies were never recovered, and the evidence was all circumstantial. Detectives Pia Kirchhoff and Oliver von Bodenstein start investigating the old case when they go to the village to report an attack on Tobias’s mother. Then a body is discovered in a nearby abandoned airfield fuel tank, and the townspeople start a hate campaign. I was enticed by a review of her newest mystery released in January 2016, I Am Your Judge, so I thought I’d try an older book, first, and I found it well worth the time. This book qualifies for a translated book or one with a color in the title for the Book Bash.  Judith’s pick

Winter by Marissa Meyer: I have been reading fairy tales since I can remember. Winter is the conclusion of Meyer’s Lunar Chronicles. It is a fabulous mix of Snow White, Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood and Rapunzel with a huge twist. I was fortunate to hear the author speak at McLean and Eakin and she has been a fan of the original Grimm Fairy Tales since she was five. Her characters are so different from the original tales, that your brain immediately perks up and wants to see what journey Meyer has planned. Winter is Snow White’s tale set on Luna in a world reminiscent of The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins. The Lunar Chronicles are a must read!  Laura’s pick
Non-Fiction:

**The Art of Grace: On Moving Well Through Life by Sarah L. Kaufman:** A detailed treatise on the essential, but oft overlooked character trait of grace. Our current culture of public coarseness could use an infusion of grace. Kaufman sprinkles references to the history of human manners—going all the way back to the Egyptians of 4000 years ago—throughout her discourse. None of her suggestions are difficult, or new for that matter: be kind, tolerant; think of others before yourself; strive to make people comfortable in social situations they may find uncomfortable; and do things joyfully. *Judith’s pick*

**Atmosphere of Hope: Searching for Solutions to the Climate Crisis by Tim Flannery:** Australian Scientist, Tim Flannery outlines the basic science behind climate change issues and the sixth extinction in clear and concise language. He acknowledges the loss of countless species and the impending demise of the Great Barrier Reef, as well as other changes in the earth’s ecosystem. Despite huge challenges and obstacles, Flannery is cautiously optimistic about the potential of technological innovations that work with the earth’s system, and the positive impact of renewable energy options being pursued by many countries that could slow the warming of our planet. *Davonne’s pick*

**Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates:** This fascinating book is written in the form of letters to Coates’ fifteen-year-old son. Straightforward and sensitive, his assertions provide important insights into the world of a black man living in the United States. *Davonne’s pick*

**The Boys in the Trees by Carly Simon:** If you grew up with Carly and James, you will like this book. Not only are the tales based in reality very interesting, but she is a good writer as well. Her childhood and young adult years were turbulent and out of the ordinary. She has a very opinionated view of her life with James Taylor, compelling you to read on as well as hope James writes a memoir too. *Audrey’s pick*

**Dark Money by Jane Mayer:** A patron recommended this book, and several staff members who have read it concur that it is a must read for all. Our political system is being hijacked by multibillionaires, led by the Koch brothers, and Jane Mayer, investigative journalist, has done an in-depth analysis of how that came about. The findings support the immediate need for campaign finance reform which should also include a time limit for campaigns, as well as contribution restrictions. Is it possible that the free speech for the 1% now controls the free speech for the rest of us? Read the book to draw your own conclusions. *Judith and Davonne’s pick*

**In the Heart of the Sea by Nathaniel Philbrick:** I love Nathaniel Philbrick’s writing and have since reading *Mayflower* a couple years ago. I read this in anticipation of the film and it left me constantly on the edge of my seat. This book follows the path of the *Essex*, a whaling ship out of Nantucket, as it journeys around the southern tip of South America and into the Pacific where it encounters an aggressive whale that consequently shipwrecks them. *Moby Dick* was based on this story. Philbrick does an excellent job of summarizing the culture of Nantucket and whaling at the time while writing a novel about adventure and adversity. The book was recently made into a movie and qualifies for the book that became a movie category in the Book Bash. *Talia’s pick*

**Skin Cleanse: The Simple, All-Natural Program for Clear, Calm, Happy Skin by Adina Grigore:** Founder of S.W. Basics, a website and blog that carries the products described in her book, Grigore here explains her relatively simple concept that healthy skin comes from the inside out. So, once again, “you are what you eat”, which means that healthy diet and exercise choices lead to healthy skin. The book is a well-organized, straightforward piece – a quick, easy and interesting read. *Judith’s pick*