

## **Eileen**

*The Puzzler: One Man's Quest to Solve the Most Baffling Puzzles Ever, from Crosswords to Jigsaws to the Meaning of Life* by AJ Jacobs

AJ Jacobs is well-known for getting personally involved in his stories: reading the entire Encyclopedia Britannica in a year and thanking EVERYONE involved in his morning coffee are just two of his topics. In this book, he asks what makes puzzles so fascinating and investigates how people play these games every day. I picked up Jacobs's daily podcast after reading this book.

Platforms: book, Libby (audio)

## **Erica**

*A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith

"A poignant and moving tale filled with compassion and cruelty, laughter and heartache, crowded with life and people. The story of young, sensitive, and idealistic Francie Nolan and her bittersweet formative years in the slums of Williamsburg has enchanted and inspired millions of readers for more than sixty years." –Goodreads

Here is a classic that is also a must read. I rarely read books more than once but I read this when I was a teen and again as an adult. It is a book that sparks empathy and joy.

Platforms: book, Libby (ebook/audio), hoopla (ebook/audio)

## **Kelly**

*The Nourishing Homestead: One Back-to-the-Land Family's Plan for Cultivating Soil, Skills, and Spirit* by Ben Hewitt

It's springtime and my heart and mind both go straight to just getting outside and gardening along with anything else that gets me out into fresh air and sunshine after our long winters here in NH. The Nourishing Homestead is a story of a family carving out a homestead in the great northern woods of Vermont before "homesteading" was a "thing" like it is today. It's easy to find homesteaders espousing the attributes of living this lifestyle on social media and Youtube which are fantastic resources for the curious, but having this book in your hands to read (along with great photos) is a much better resource manual. The author, Ben Hewitt takes us along for the ride decades ago when it was just he and his wife Penny literally living in a tent in the woods the first year as they constructed their first home on their newly purchased land. They were and still are true modern pioneers. Over the years the Hewitts added a barn and outbuildings and gathered animals to help feed their now growing family. They eventually had two little boys, Rye and Finlay.

The stories of family time together learning how to homestead together are great but, more importantly, this book is full of how-tos and recipes that I found very valuable.

When I first discovered this book years ago I loved it so much that I purchased my own copy and continue to use it as a valuable resource. Ben Hewitt's writing style is wonderful and to this day I also enjoy reading his monthly column in Yankee magazine which also available at our library! One more high five for Penny Hewitt's absolutely wonderful photography in this book. Even if you're just thinking of gathering half a dozen laying hens and planting a small vegetable garden, this book is a fantastic read.

Platforms: book

## **Linda**

### *Cook's Illustrated* May & June 2024

Spring is a time of renewal: Spring Cleaning; preparing garden beds old and new; and other endeavors undertaken to freshen-up one's home and outlook. Refresh your palate by trying an easy, new recipe.

This issue of *Cook's Illustrated* has a selection of recipes that can be prepared with minimal effort and time. Here is my Top Pick from this issue:

Liang Mian (Chilled Sesame Noodles)

1 pound fresh Chinese wheat noodles

2 tsp toasted sesame oil, divided

¼ cup Chinese sesame paste

1 TBL mayonnaise

1 TBL chili oil, divided

3 TBL soy sauce

5 tsp Chinese black vinegar

4 tsp water

4 tsp sugar

1 ½ tsp minced garlic, divided

1 tsp grated fresh ginger

1 Persian cucumber, cut into 3" long matchsticks

1 scallion, sliced thin

Toasted sesame seeds, optional

Please turn to page 12 for an introduction to this classic dish and note the "Key Ingredient" information for Majiang -- Sesame Paste. "New Rules for Noodles" on page 13 ensures that the noodles will be firm and lightly chewy.

If this recipe doesn't tickle your taste buds, the Index on the inside back cover includes a variety of recipes for Main Dishes; Soup and Stock; Side Dishes; Breakfast; Bread; Accompaniments; and Desserts.

The library offers an additional selection of magazines devoted to the art of cooking and, with more than 50 cookbooks to choose from there is a cuisine and diet that will inspire cooks of all persuasions. Explore and Have Fun!

Platforms: print, Libby

## **Rebecca**

*We were Liars* by E. Lockhart

“Welcome to the beautiful Sinclair Family. No one is criminal. No one is an addict. No one is a failure...”

This story of the Sinclair family is full of mystery, suspense and most of all LOVE. Cadence, the eldest grandchild, tells the story of her LIARS as she sees/remembers them after a traumatic injury. Her story is one of perseverance as she struggles to remember what happened to her.

The ending I did not see coming but was beautifully written by E. Lockhart! This was my first book from this author and she did not disappoint!

Rating: 4.5/5 stars.

Platforms: book, Libby (ebook/audio)

## **Samantha**

*The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak

Set in Nazi Germany during World War II, *The Book Thief* tells the story of a young girl whose foster parents are hiding a Jewish man.

Platforms: book, Libby (ebook/audio)