



March 2023

Happy Spring, Library Champion,

It's official – LA County loves to read!

Yes, I know...you're a reader and maybe you're not surprised. But in a time when student reading scores are plummeting and too many books are viewed with trepidation, it's something to cheer about.

In short: **more than 5,000 children, teens, and adults logged more than 1.5 million minutes of reading** in the Library's 2023 Winter Reading Challenge!

Could be that the lure of your Library – welcoming, warm, a place of connection, with a digital library available 24/7 – and the pleasures of reading, whether for escape, comfort, enlightenment or entertainment, was the perfect antidote to these long wet dark days.

Let's hear it for readers. Let's hear it for you, Library Champion!

With the Foundation, you're encouraging and supporting readers and learners of all ages. You're helping build collections, including with ebooks and audiobooks. You're fueling science and arts programs.

Importantly, you're helping build literacy. And with that, you're building hope. You're strengthening individuals and communities through your Library – today and into the future.

As labor leader Cesar Chavez said about empowering people, “You can’t un-educate the person who has learned to read.”

Reading, and lifelong learning, makes an impact. Thank you for your belief and your generous support.

This month’s *My Library Story* is all about reading – specifically, about what you and your fellow Library Champions are reading. A sampling of responses I received when I asked in last month’s enews, “What are you reading?”

Read on, because you’re bound to find at least one read that piques your interest.

Fittingly, in [Women’s History Month](#), many of your suggestions are by or about or for women -- from memoirs to poetry to detective tales, and more.

You definitely don't want to miss the picks from each of the Resource Center librarians. They're each highlighting one remarkable woman, and offer a reading list, film, and other information. Keep reading to find out a bit more about their choices.

While April may bring more showers, there will also be plenty of brightness as we celebrate national Library Appreciation Month!

Thank you for your love and generous support for your Library. You're powering your Library and your community!

With best wishes,

Andrea

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P.S. National Library Giving Day, Tuesday, April 4, is right around the corner. Starting today, [your gift to support your Library will have double the impact](#) – every gift will be matched, up to a total of \$10,000, by the Foundation's directors. **Thank you!**

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## My Library Story: What you're reading

Last month I asked you, "What are you reading? Who's your favorite author?" I was thrilled with the responses, and together your picks make an intriguing list!

Read on for a smattering of favorite authors and reads. You'll surely find a title or author to explore.

If you're feeling the weight of these times, you might appreciate Karen C's recommendation, Michelle Obama's newest book ***The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times***. "If you loved Michelle's wit and wisdom in *Becoming*, you'll love this one even more. Definitely uplifting and powerful."

Judy D offered two books - both about friendship, and both very different. In ***Dinners with Ruth***, Nina Totenberg chronicles her 50 year friendship with former Supreme Court Judge Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

It's a story about deep friendships, between Nina and Ruth, and with a cast of other incredible characters. It's also the story of the two friends' personal and career journeys - ironically both to the Court, in very different roles - through decades of hurdles they faced as women.

Judy's other read is ***Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*** by Gabrielle Zevin. This *New York Times* Best Seller novel follows the trajectories of two college friends who develop a wildly popular video game and with it, "success

[that] brings them fame, joy, tragedy, duplicity, and, ultimately, a kind of immortality.”

Mark C gives a thumbs up to yet another story of friendship, this time between an octopus and an aquarium employee.

“I’m heading to the Philippines in a couple days. Just in time, I finished **Remarkably Bright Creatures** by Shelby Van Pelt. So, I’m returning it to the library today, for the next person on the list of 159. It was fun, tho' highly improbable.”

I’m intrigued enough to add my name to that hold list!

Naomi K wrote, "WAPO ran an article about Kenzaburo Oe, lyrical novelist and Nobel Laureate, who died. Because of the vast resources the library makes available to us, as expected, I found Oe’s novels in the library system."

That intrigued me, too, and after reading the Washington Post article, I added Oe to my list. His worlds aren't easy - revolving around ideas about parenting his son, born with severe mental disabilities, and the bombing of Hiroshima.

Naomi had me smiling with a follow-up note: “Admission. Reading is progressing more slowly with Nobel Laureate than with my usual detective novels like the Vera series by Ann Cleeves.”

She wasn't the only one turning to detective stories these days. Former investigator Susan B introduced me to a series by Janet Evanovitch that features "a totally ridiculous, and always successful, woman who's a bounty hunter."

She calls the Stephanie Plum series "outrageously silly," a get-away from unsettling times and news reports. Just what the doctor ordered.

On a more general note, Alice S. told me she’s loving having discovered audiobooks:

“As older people, our eyes get tired, and listening to a book is so relaxing. It’s rare I watch TV anymore...just the Detroit Tigers and maybe something from Hulu. Otherwise, I turn to an audiobook.”

I was delighted to hear that. That's because, Library Champion, with your support, the Foundation continues to help the Library add ebooks and audio books and other digital resources to its collection.

Thank you for helping meet that exponentially growing need!

**And from your four Resource Center Librarians** -- a showcase, with suggested reads and movies, of four women whose positive impact is still felt today. [Check the full list out here](#), and keep reading for a quick overview of each of these remarkable changemakers.



Images: LA County Library

*Inspirational leaders (clockwise from top left) Wilma Pearl Mankiller, Grace Lee Boggs, Claudette Colvin, and Selena.*

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The American Indian Resource Center celebrates **Wilma Pearl Mankiller**, Cherokee Nation Chief known for her leadership and commitment to bringing indigenous solutions to social and cultural challenges. Her likeness appears on the 2022 quarter. Consider reading [\*Mankiller: A Chief and Her People\*](#).

**Grace Lee Boggs**, grassroots activist, philosopher, and author, is highlighted by the Asian Pacific Resource Center. She cleared multiple hurdles as a Chinese American woman in the early 20th century, becoming widely known, with her African American husband, for tackling issues related to labor and civil rights, feminism, African Americans, Asian Americans, and the environment. She shares her beliefs about critical thinking and making change in [Living for Change: An Autobiography](#).

In 1955, high schooler **Claudette Colvin** refused to give up her seat on a crowded, segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. This was nine months before Rosa Parks famously refused to give up her seat. Claudette, 15 years old, was sent to adult jail. She was a plaintiff in the first federal court case that challenged the bus segregation law in Montgomery, a case that led to the Supreme Court and a ruling that ended bus segregation in Alabama. The Black Resource Center suggests [Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice](#) by Phillip Hoose to learn more about this less well-known story.

**Selena**, deemed the Queen of Tejano Music, and named the third greatest Latino artist of all time by Billboard magazine, is recognized by the Chicano Resource Center. Perhaps most importantly, Selena, who died tragically young, brought diverse cultures together through her music as she made a name in the male-dominated Tejano music genre. Listen to [Dreaming of You](#) and some of her other titles on Hoopla (search = Selena).

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## **P.S. Couple of things you might not know about...**

This next suggestion I got for a great read, and this book isn't in the Library catalog, reminded me that anyone can recommend a title for the Library's collection.

N James wrote, "My favorite author currently is Felicia Taylor E. and her debut collection of raw, riveting, humorous and entertaining poetry and stories in ***Southern Spiced: A Brown Girl's Tale***.

She speaks of her recognition of racism as a child, acceptance of identity, and death. And shares deeply moving times with her grandmother, as well as a harrowing encounter with a hate group."

It's not a given your Library can or will acquire it (budgetary constraints mean the Library can't purchase everything it would like -- thanks Library Champion for stepping in with the Foundation to help with additional funding!), but it's wonderful you have this opportunity.

[Here's the link](#) to *Recommend a Title for our Collections*.

And drumroll please...one of my favorite Library goodies - the incredible service of a librarian **creating a booklist just for you!**

It's easy. Fill out a short form. List what you like to read (or what you don't!) - whether it's authors, genres, short stories or novels, fiction or fact.

You'll get an email reply within 7 days - with a list of books a librarian has selected especially for you.

[Check it out, and enjoy!](#)

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## **What's your Library Story?**

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**Thank you, Library Champion!**  
**Your support powers your Library.**



## Give Today for 2x the Impact

All gifts will be matched for a total of \$10,000.



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