



AUGUST 2026

ILLUMINATED STACKS

The Stoneham Public Library's monthly newsletter

Stoneham Public Library

431 Main Street
Stoneham, MA 02180

Adult Services

(781) 438-1324

Mon, Thu: 10 am - 9 pm
Tues., Wed, Fri: 9 am - 5 pm

Children's Services

(781) 438-1325

Mon., Thu.: 10 am - 7 pm
Tues., Wed., Fri.: 9 am - 5 pm

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THE MONTH AT A GLANCE

Saturday, August 8 @ 9:15 am

The [Friends of the Stoneham Library \(FOSL\)](#) will hold their monthly meeting in the library's Stoneham Room. All members of the public are welcome to attend to comment and listen to the proceedings. If you are unable to make it in person, a virtual option is available, by which you can join by [clicking here](#)! Or, you can dial in (audio only):
(US) +1 347-384-7785 / PIN: 357 135 204#



Monday, August 10 @ 7 pm

The Board of Library Trustees will meet in the library's Stoneham Room. All members of the public are welcome to attend to comment or listen to the proceedings. If you wish to attend but are unable to make it in person, [click here for the virtual option \(Zoom\)](#). You can also call in at: +1 (646) 931-3860, then type in the following: Meeting ID: **876 9866 6972** / Passcode: **823496**



ADULT SERVICES

Programs by Staff

Tech Support | Mon./Wed./Fri. @ 10 am | The Stoneham Room

Designed as a judgment-free space, library staff are here to assist with any questions you may have about your devices—laptops, tablets, smartphones, and more. We're also happy to help with general tech topics like email, filling out online forms or applications, and anything else you might be curious about. If you have questions about a specific device, please bring it with you if you're able. Questions? Email Anna at apowers@noblenet.org



Chess Club Drop-in

Every Thursday @ 7 pm | [Location varies](#)

Chess players of all ages and skill levels are welcome to attend this drop-in program. Chess boards will be available for those who do not have their own. Clocks are also available upon request. If you have questions, email Matt at msowyrda@noblenet.org.



Casual Coloring: A Drop-in Program

Every Friday @ 2:30 pm | Stoneham Room

Need to relieve stress and anxiety? Maybe you want to develop your creative side! Drop by the Stoneham Room for this artful drop-in program. While it's geared primarily towards adults, parents are welcome to bring their kids. We provide supplies, as well as staff-designed coloring pages, bookmarks, and supplies. Think of it as a quiet, stress-free, judgement-free space where you can relax, unwind, and forget about the worries and cares of modern life. If you're an artist who has a project in progress, bring it in and work on it here!



Documentary Wow! - *The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill* (2003)

[Screening: Friday, August 7 @ 1 pm \(Marcy Room\)*](#)

[Discussion: Wednesday, August 12 @ 6:30 pm \(Zoom\).](#)



*All film screenings are free and open to the public. Registration not required.

ADULT SERVICES

Programs by Staff (continued)

Film Club - *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956)

[Movie Matinee: Friday, August 21 @ 1 pm \(Marcy Room\)*](#)

[Discussion: Wednesday, August 26 @ 6:30 pm \(Zoom\).](#)



*All film screenings are free and open to the public. Registration not required.

The Enchanted Pages Society

Thursday, August 27 @ 7 pm | Stoneham Room

Join our most magical book club, The Enchanted Pages Society, where fantasy lovers unite to explore magical worlds and unforgettable adventures. Dive into spellbinding books, discuss captivating plots, and connect with fellow readers! We meet on the last Thursday of the month! Pick up a copy of this month's title, [A Vow in Vengeance by Jaclyn Rodriguez](#), at the main circulation desk. [Registration is encouraged](#), but not required. People ages 16 and up are welcome. Questions? Contact Anna: apowers@noblenet.org.



Special Programs

Art with Erica (Adults 18+)

Monday, August 3 @ 7 pm | The Teen Zone

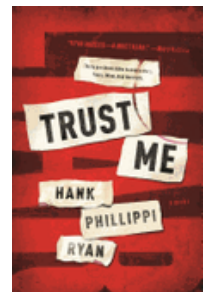
Join Erica as she leads a class on how to make lemon coasters! All supplies are provided. Space is limited, so [registration is required](#).



Mysteries Around the World Book Group

Thursday, August 6 @ 7 pm | The Stoneham Room

Join us as we discuss this month's selection, *Trust Me* by Hank Phillippi Ryan. [Click here](#) to learn more about this title. If you are interested in joining the book group, contact Maureen Saltzman at saltzman@noblenet.org. We look forward to welcoming you to the conversation.



ADULT SERVICES

Special Programs (continued)

Embroidery with YuChin

Thursday, August 13 @ 7 pm | The Teen Zone

Beginner and new members are encouraged to join this monthly embroidery workshop, with hours for new members from 7:45 pm - 8:30 pm. Age limit: 15 years and older. Note: Capacity is limited to six seats and [registration is required](#). Materials will be provided in class by the instructor.



Yoga Flow | July 27 @ 6:30 p.m. | The Marcy Room

This 60-minute class is ideal for beginners. It opens with some breath work and a gentle warm up followed by flowing poses for strengthening, stability and flexibility. Breathing and functional movement are focused on throughout the class. Because yoga is an individualized practice, participants are encouraged to focus on their own bodies and needs - to always do what feels good for them! It is always advised that participants consult with their medical provider prior to starting any new exercise regime. Please bring your own yoga mat. Registration is not required.



Virtual Author Talks

Virtual Author Talk with Paula J. Johnson

Tuesday, August 4 @ 2 pm (Zoom)

Join us for a conversation that's sure to warm your heart (and make your stomach rumble), as we delve into the legacy of cooking icon Julia Child with Smithsonian curator and public historian Paula J. Johnson, author of [*Julia Child's Kitchen: The Design, Tools, Stories, and Legacy of an Iconic Space*](#). The book includes interviews with chefs who knew Julia well, commentary on her favorite culinary tools and kitchen gadgets, and a stunning array of photos. [Register now to enter the discussion and learn more about how Julia Child continues to influence food today!](#)



 Smithsonian

ADULT SERVICES

Virtual Author Talks (continued)

Virtual Author Talk with Beronda Montgomery

Tuesday, August 25 @ 2 pm | Zoom

Join us for a riveting conversation with award-winning biologist Beronda Montgomery as we discuss her book, [*When Trees Testify: Science, Wisdom, History, and America's Black Botanical Legacy*](#). [Register today](#) for this insightful discussion about Black history and botanical mastery.



Virtual Author Talk with Lucy Foley

Thursday, August 27 @ 2 pm | Zoom

Join us for a thrilling conversation with acclaimed author Lucy Foley as we delve into her brand-new Miss Marple mystery, [*Murder at the Grand Alpine Hotel*](#). High in the Swiss Alps, accessible only by a single, winding railway, stands the luxurious Grand Alpine Hotel. With glorious mountain views and exclusive access to powdery slopes, it draws guests from far and wide. Register and submit author questions [here!](#)



YOUTH SERVICES

Regular Programming

Bubble Babies

Tuesdays @ 9:30 | Library Lawn

Who doesn't love bubbles? Bring your baby, whether they're walking or just learning to open their eyes, to our lawn. We have tons of bubble sets for you to use and for the little ones to see some new faces! This is a drop-in program to encourage child and caregiver socialization, there is no staff instruction. If it rains, we cancel! Generously sponsored by the Friends of Stoneham Library! Learn more about them and their mission [here](#).



Little Sprouts

Wednesdays @ 10 a.m. | Library Lawn

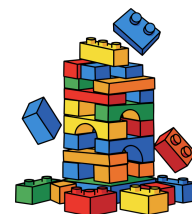
Join Melissa on the library lawn for some stories, songs, and fun! Feel free to bring lawn chairs or a blanket to sit on. Don't forget your sunscreen and water (though the lawn is mostly shaded!) If there's rain, we'll move inside! No registration required.



Lego Club

Wednesdays @ 3 p.m. | Junior Reading Room

Are you a master Lego builder? Or maybe just someone who likes to create? Spend the afternoon making your creations in the library! No registration required.



Farmer's Market Storytime

[Select Thursdays @ 4 pm | Town Common](#)

We'll be visiting the Stoneham Farmer's Market on the Town Common! Join us for some storytime fun in the sun! If it rains, we cancel! No registration required.



Junk Journal

[Select Thursdays @ 6 pm | Teen Zone](#)

Have plans for the summer? Start a junk journal with us! We have fun paper, stickers, and supplies for you to use. Registration requested, but last minute drop-ins are welcome! Generously sponsored by the Friends of Stoneham Library! Learn more about them and their mission [here](#).



YOUTH SERVICES

Weekly Programming (continued)

Toddler Turnout

Fridays @ 10 am | Library Lawn

It's the end of the week and your toddlers still have energy! Bring them to our library lawn for a drop-in playtime. We'll have chalk, games, bubbles, and more for them to explore with new friends! Drop-in playgroup with no direct instruction. If it rains, we cancel! Generously sponsored by the Friends of Stoneham Library! Learn more about them and their mission [here](#).



Special Programs

Teen Paint Night

Monday, August 3 @ 5 pm | Marcy Room

Looking for a chill evening activity to do after a hot August day? Join us for a paint night! [Sign up required](#); tweens welcome! Generously sponsored by the Friends of Stoneham Library.



Young Artists' Studio*

[Elementary: Monday, August 3 @ 5:30 pm | Library Lawn](#)

[Middle Grade: Monday, August 3 @ 6:30 pm | Library Lawn](#)

*Sponsored by [the Stoneham Business Community Educational Foundation](#).



Fashion Forward | Wednesday, August 5 / August 12 @ 3:30 pm

Marcy Room

Join us to curate, construct, and showcase your own design! This is a series program; sign up once to attend all of the dates (7/29, 8/5/, 8/12). For t(w)eens. Generously sponsored by the Friends of Stoneham Library!



YOUTH SERVICES

Special Programs (continued)

DIY Tie-Dye for Teens

Thursday, August 6 @ 3 pm | Library Lawn

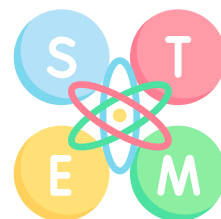
Get ready to be creative and messy! We're having a tie dye party! Bring something you'd like to dye, a t-shirt, socks, pants! White or light colors work best! Supplies are limited, [registration required](#)! Tweens (ages 12 and up) welcome. Generously sponsored by the Friends of Stoneham Library!



STEM Club

[Friday, August 7 @ 3 pm | Marcy Room](#)

Unleash your inner scientist! Wear clothes that can get messy from glue or goo! Supplies are limited, so sign ups are required! For kiddos 8+!



Craft Quest

[Monday, August 10 @ 3:30 pm | Marcy Room](#)

Are you ready to enter on a quest to creativity? Be ready to brave the chaos of glue and paint! For ages 7+. Supplies limited, sign up required! Generously sponsored by the Friends of Stoneham Library.



Petit Artiste | Tuesday, August 11 @ 4 pm | Marcy Room

Bring in your little artist to create something new! Kiddos ages 1-4 can come in to make a simple craft. Staff will be there to lead your and your kiddo through a toddler-friendly art project. Supplies are limited, [sign up is required](#)! Wear clothes that can get paint or glue on them!



Sunset Concert with Matt Heaton | Thursday, August 13 @ 5 pm Library Lawn

Close out the summer with us on the library lawn! Matt Heaton will be providing us with some sweet tunes! We'll have lawn games to play! No registration required. This program is generously sponsored by the Friends of Stoneham Library.





STAFF REVIEWS

[The Man Who Knew Too Much \(1956\)](#)

The Man Who Knew Too Much (1956) came in the middle of Alfred Hitchcock's most successful decade. Not only did he direct a string of hit films that have become classics; he even starred in his own TV series, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. At one point, he owed Paramount a movie but had no ideas, so he decided to remake [his own hit of the same name from 1934](#).



Hitch wouldn't allow the screenwriter of the new film, John Michael Hayes, to see the old one. He told Hayes the basic story and let him take it from there: a couple and their young child, vacationing in a foreign country, are befriended by a man who turns out to be an agent on the trail of a spy ring plotting to kill a world leader. What happens after that, you'll have to see the film to find out.

While a lot of this happens in Switzerland in the 1934 version, the remake starts out in Morocco, with James Stewart and Doris Day perfectly cast in the leading roles. The supporting cast is first rate, too, including Brenda De Banzie, Bernard Miles and Hillary Brooke, with the film shifting to London for the second part, and a nail-biting concert sequence at the Royal Albert Hall.

One critic even dubbed the film, "Alfred Hitchcock: The Musical," because of this extended sequence featuring Arthur Benjamin's Storm Cloud Cantata, as well as a pop song written for the film that became closely associated with Doris Day: the classic, "Que Sera, Sera". The song, by Jay Livingston and Ray Evans, won the Academy Award, making this the only Hitchcock movie to win an Oscar for Best Song.

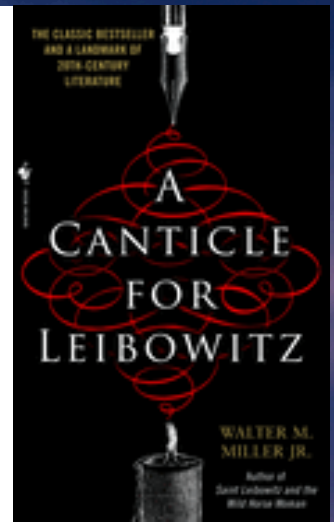
As for the suspense, there's plenty of it--though it's more of a slow-burn thing that creeps up on you with a sense of dread and foreboding. There's a feeling that the Americans--an Indianapolis surgeon, his ex-stage-star wife and their young son--are fish out of water, struggling to make sense of the whirlpool of intrigue that sucks them in without warning. The movie takes its time, making you sweat out the plot points until the spectacular finale.

Hitchcock said he considered the original film the effort of a talented amateur, while the remake is the work of a professional. It takes you on a journey like no other. With its richly-drawn characters and superb production values, *The Man Who Knew Too Much* is a classic that keeps you hooked from beginning to end.

– Dave Huygens

[A Canticle for Leibowitz by Walter Miller, Jr.](#)

In the distant future, a young monk named Francis Gerard is wandering in the desert between Utah and New Mexico when he stumbles upon a fallout shelter--a holy symbol from an unholy age. Inside, he uncovers relics belonging to a venerated scientist who died approximately 600 years ago, including a human skull and diagrams that explain how to construct electronic devices. After revealing these objects to his religious brethren and superiors, Brother Francis unwittingly sets into motion this three-part saga that captures the quest for life's meaning, the brilliance and darkness of the human mind, and humanity's tendency to succumb to its own errors and evils, over and over again.



In *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, Walter Miller, Jr. introduces us to a sparsely populated world that is trying to rebuild itself in the centuries following a wave of nuclear bombs that nearly decimated the planet, and then through a subsequent uprising waged by illiterate mobs that tried to eliminate scientists, philosophers, and other educated people who were responsible for developing such technology, only to thrust the world into an intellectual dark age. In consequence, the vast store of human achievements was lost to time, and all the significant figures, discoveries, and inventions that were once taken for granted have become little more than wisps of antiquity--Einstein, the English language, the heliocentric theory, space travel. But thanks to repentant scientist and Catholic convert, Isaac Leibowitz, fragments of history were retained in his Memorabilia, a written record intended to serve as humankind's collective memory, a lesson and a warning for generations to come. However, as the story of civilization "progresses", pride, folly, skeptical attitudes towards history, and the desire to figuratively (and literally) reinvent the wheel frequently contribute to society's detriment, undoing what has already been done, and tearing apart what had been put together.

While I do not typically read or enjoy science fiction, *A Canticle for Leibowitz* proved to be an exception. I had difficulty maintaining interest in a slow and nebulous first chapter, but I kept with it, and was repaid with an intelligent, well-crafted story. It reminded me of [Foundation by Isaac Asimov](#), which also treats of scientific advancement along an expansive narrative. An impressive aspect of this novel is that the action takes place exclusively at a cloistered abbey in the American southwest; we learn about the state of the world--its changes, its conflicts, its rising and falling empires--only when the central characters receive news about current events via telegrams, letters, radio bulletins, and visitors, as well as when the world's violent ways finally encroach upon life at the monastery. There is some humor, but, unlike a light-hearted dystopian novel such as [Love in the Ruins by Walker Percy](#), we are given a sobering illustration of the danger of taking our reasoning and creative powers to the extreme.

A Canticle for Leibowitz is an epic, satirical, cautionary tale about our refusal to respect the past, and to learn from yesterday's mistakes. Wise King Solomon observed that there is nothing new under the sun; George Santayana remarked that those who are ignorant of history are doomed to repeat it; and someone else (maybe Einstein himself) defined insanity as doing the same thing repeatedly, getting it wrong, and expecting different results. These aphorisms are implicitly reflected in this book, which carries relevance not only for today, but also for tomorrow (and tomorrow, and tomorrow), making it a sustainable, crucial read.

-- Matthew Sowyrda

The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill (2007)



The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill (2007) tells the story of Mark Bittner, who moved to San Francisco from his native Seattle as a young man to pursue a career as a musician. When things didn't work out as planned, he found himself unemployed and drifting. As the film opens, Mark is living rent-free in a small cabin owned by friends on Telegraph Hill, overlooking the bay. He begins to notice he's sharing the area with a flock of parrots, either escaped or released from captivity and living wild in the city. As he interacts with the flock, Mark starts to notice individual personality traits and mannerisms. He gives the birds names and grows closer to them, becoming the first person in the area to study their behavior.

Through his relationship with the wild birds, Mark starts to find a purpose in life, and even becomes something of a local celebrity. Eventually, though, the property where he's living has to undergo major renovations, leaving his future in doubt and his relationship with the parrots in jeopardy. Especially worrisome are several birds who haven't been able to assimilate into the group that Mark has been caring for in his home.

This nature documentary, directed by Judy Irving, has a more personal touch than usual. We hear from Mark Bittner, but also from neighbors and other San Francisco residents who share their theories of how the parrots came to inhabit the area. We see how the city government becomes involved in the fate of the flock. There's even a surprise ending you won't see coming. *The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill* is a captivating and involving movie whose charms can't be described, only experienced. I think you'll really enjoy it.

-- Dave Huygens

As Good as Dead by Holly Jackson

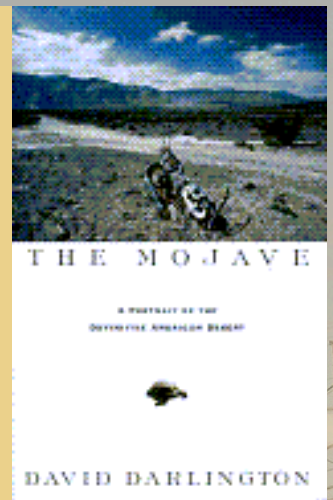
As Good As Dead continues [Pip's story](#), but the tone becomes darker and more intense as she faces stalking, fear, and a final mystery that pulls everything in the series together. This book feels more suspenseful and emotionally heavy, which raises the stakes and gives the series a dramatic ending. Some readers find the shift in tone surprising, but it does make the finale feel more serious and urgent. The short chapters, twists, and investigation-style storytelling makes the book hard to put down.



-- Maisie, Teen Reviewer

The Mojave by David Darlington

To the outsider, the Mojave Desert may seem barren and desolate. But it's actually home to a large variety of plants and animals, as well as a surprising amount of people. In *The Mojave: A Portrait of the Definitive American Desert*, writer David Darlington takes the reader on a quirky and enlightening journey through this large, somewhat misunderstood expanse of arid land. Located between Los Angeles and Las Vegas, The Mojave is home to Death Valley, Edwards Air Force Base, and 29 Palms, the largest Marine Corps base in the world. It also contains parts of Antelope Valley and Joshua Tree National Park, as well as a long stretch of the fabled Route 66.



"I still recall how bleak Interstate 10 seemed east of Palm Springs," Darlington writes of his first encounter with the Mojave, "how alienating the dehydrated landscape, how unnatural the absence of noise. The monumental emptiness of the place seemed a frightening weight to bear. The desert struck me as an enormous vacuum--a void, like outer space." Darlington's first impression is characteristic of what he calls the "Old View" of the desert. A place on the outskirts of civilization, designated for unwanted things like nuclear tests and hazardous waste.

The "New View" of the desert, by contrast, is a place to cleanse the palate of the pressures of everyday life—a complex ecosystem that offers peace in its vastness, and stark beauty to refresh the soul. Darlington notes that driving from LA to the Mojave, "you feel cut loose from the urban milieu as surely as astronauts are released from gravity's restraint." Due to its vastness, "the desert kindles a kind of epiphany as a matter of course—an almost physical sense of liberation, a sudden, sensual delight of being that is like nothing else."



In each chapter of this uniquely entertaining book, Darlington introduces us to a particular area of the desert and its inhabitants. We meet dirt-bikers, '60s drop-outs, miners, scientists, and UFO researchers. There's the tobacco-chewing rancher whose 2,000 head of cattle graze on a million acres of land, damaging the delicate ecosystem. There's a wildly patriotic General George S. Patton impersonator in Indio, a lonely waitress in Newberry Springs, and an ex-Marine who travels the rough Mojave Road in his four-wheel-drive truck, talking about his love for the desert and his hatred of the Feds.

In each of these portraits, as well as in his chapters about the landscape and the creatures that inhabit it, Darlington's approach is fresh and vivid. Based in the San Francisco Bay area, he's published such diverse books as *In Condor Country*, *Angels' Visits: An Inquiry into the Mystery of Zinfandel*, and [*Area 51: The Dreamland Chronicles*](#) (which I've also read). An Easterner by birth, he writes about the West with insight and wit. I've never visited the Mojave Desert, but this book almost makes me want to hop on a plane and hang out in this unique place for a while—or just hang out with the author. Either way, I think I'd have a good time.

-- Dave Huygens