

**From the Stacks**  
**By Julie Orf**  
**Dunklin County Library**

Reading is a year-round pleasure. I find immense comfort in cozying up with a book during the colder months, and there is no better way to relax in the summer than reading outdoors. Ideally, relaxing in a comfortable chair with a fruity lemonade and a thrilling book is pure bliss. Reading before bed apparently prepares one for sleep and unplugging from the cell phone an hour prior significantly improves the sleep cycle, too! What books should I carry outdoors?

Bestselling author, Christina Dodd's latest romantic thriller, *Girl Anonymous*, is a twisty, dark family feud. As a child, Maarja Daire witnessed her mother sacrifice herself to kill mob boss Benoit Arundel and save Maarja's life. Ever since, Maarja has fled intimacy and consequences. Now a fine arts mover, she meets Dante, the ruthless Arundel family boss, at the very mansion where the blast occurred. He watches her with dark intent, seeking revenge for his father. A twist of fate earns Maarja his trust, and their intense connection ignites, forcing her to abandon her guarded life. When Dante vows to end their families' ancient feud, his hidden enemies strike, threatening to destroy him and the woman he protects. Bound by passion and destiny, Maarja and Dante must navigate betrayal to forge a new beginning before the vendetta consumes them.

When their mother dies, Haidie Richards and her brother, Boots, are forced into an orphanage. Convinced their long absent, gold-seeking father will send for them, Haidie's impatience leads them to escape. Disguised as a boy, Haidie navigates the perilous Western territory, learning to survive and rely on an unconventional community including a card shark, independent sisters, and a loyal dog. Once in Colorado, discovering the truth about her father's fate, Haidie enlists her new allies for a clever revenge plan. With Sandra Dallas' trademark quirky characters and detailed research, *Tough Luck* is an adventurous tale with humor and grit.

In the wake of a catastrophic storm, Cora sets off with her nine-year-old daughter, Maia, to register her son's birth. Her husband, Gordon, a local doctor, respected in the community but a terrifying and controlling presence at home, intends for her to name the infant after him. When the registrar asks what she would like to call the child, Cora hesitates. Spanning thirty-five years, what follows are three alternate versions of Cora's and her young son's lives, shaped by her choice of name. *The Names*, by Florence Knapp, explores the painful ripple effects of domestic abuse, the messy ties of family, and the possibilities of autonomy and healing.

With family crises and survival strategies, Anna Snoekstra has written an emotional family story, *The Ones We Love*. Something is terribly wrong in the Jansen family.

Since a party she cannot remember left her bruised, Liv's bedroom door is padlocked, her parents are acting strangely, and her friend is not responding. Her father, Janus, a horror author, is plagued by guilt and finding it hard to write. Her mother, Kay, will do anything to protect her children, even if it means sacrificing her marriage. The youngest child, Casper, who was away that weekend, senses the tension and Liv's sleepwalking. He is determined to uncover the secrets behind the padlocked door and what really happened that weekend.