

Prairie Book Club, July – November 2010

The Prairie Book Club meets monthly, after the Sunday Service at Prairie, about 11:45 a.m. except for September when it meets at the Prairie Retreat at Pine Lake Camp (near Westfield, WI). Bring potluck food to share at the Sunday club meetings. This is an open book club. You may come whether or not you have read the book. For more information, contact Mary Mullen, 608.298.0843 or mmullen@chorus.net.

Sunday, July 18 - Roads to Quoz, An American Mosey by William Least Heat-Moon is about a series of short trips – total of 16,000 miles - rather than one long trip as Heat-Moon's other books were. In this book he covers the Ouachita River in AR and LA, the Florida Panhandle, portions of the Southwest, a swath from Missouri to Maine, portions of the Great Plains, and the East Coast. "Wherever he is, Heat-Moon's thought is often tethered to questions of sustainability and equitability...deep ecology." 608 pages. Feel free to select whatever trips appeal to you. Of the parts read by Mary Mullen, she especially suggests the chapters starting on pp. 15, 71 with 78, 86, 188 with 194, and particularly 306 with 317. Recommended by Al Nettleton.

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Sunday, August 15 - The Help, "a wildly popular New York Times bestseller and reading group favorite" by Kathryn Stockett, is a novel from the point of view of a young white woman aspiring to be a writer and 2 black women employed as domestics in Jackson, Mississippi in the early 1960s. The California Literary Review notes that the story is full of plot twists and sly humor and is a "page-turner." Still, the reviewer wonders "how black women of 1962 would respond to this 21st century version of themselves." Read the full review at <http://calitreview.com/2526> The New York Times printed an equally questioning review: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/19/books/19masl.html> The author was born and raised in Jackson, MS. 528 pages Recommended by Molly Plunkett.

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Saturday, September 18 - Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa, by Peter Godwin, is a memoir of a man who grew up in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. His family was white, professional and middle class, but also liberal. As a result, he had black friends and learned the local language and got to know the bush. Yet he was caught up in the war for independence and required to serve in the Rhodesian armed forces. After the war he became a journalist, eventually fleeing the country when his investigative reporting led to threats to his safety. For reviews, see <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/philip-spires-reviews-mukiwa-by-peter-godwin.html> and <http://www.amazon.com/Mukiwa-White-Africa-Peter-Godwin/dp/product-description/0802141927> Published in 1996. 418 pages. Recommended by Rose Smith.

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Sunday, October 17 – Now and at the Hour, a novel by our own former Prairie member Marty Drapkin, is the story of three isolated people in Ward B: a young aide, a 12-year-old boy with a brain injury suffered in a football game, and a 54-year-old man with cerebral palsy. The three "struggle to connect with others and to find some meaning, and maybe even salvation, in their lives." One reviewer remarks that "the novel is more than just a memorable character study of compromised individuals; it deals with such difficult issues as the nature of identity, the responsibility of state and society, the existence of God, and, above all, the Jobean question of why the good person suffers in what appears to be an untenably indifferent or incomprehensibly hostile world." 224 pages. Recommended by Erin Bosch. Contact her to get a \$6 copy from the author: 238-6285 or hillfarms2002@yahoo.com We hope Marty will be able to attend our discussion!

