

Read Around The Calendar by Laura Stoll

Throughout the month of August, the Kirkland Town Library will be holding its third annual reading marathon. For the past two years, we have hosted all-night 24-hour events when brave volunteers take turns reading aloud in our front yard. With the health and safety regulations we all face in 2020, we decided to get creative and take the event online.

This year, we're still having volunteers read aloud but instead of gathering in person, we are asking them to make a video of themselves reading the first chapter of a book. They can record themselves at home, outside somewhere, or in a favorite location. Each day in August we will add one of the videos to our YouTube channel, creating a month-long event. Thus, Read Around the Clock has become Read Around the Calendar.

Readers can choose from a list of forty books chosen by KTL librarians. We have titles for all ages in a variety of genres and there is sure to be a one of one of your favorites. We are still looking for readers to make a video and we have several tools to help: tips and tricks, cameras to borrow, and more. Then, in August, tune into our YouTube channel to watch and listen. You can also borrow a copy of the book from the library and read the whole thing.

Here are some of the books chosen for the event:

"Little Women" by Louisa May Alcott is a perennial classic and the 2019 movie brought a new generation of fans. The story of the four March sisters is both heartwarming and melancholy as they fall in love, find their passions, and learn about life. The opening chapter is a colorful scene that finds the four unique personalities reflecting on how they will celebrate the upcoming Christmas holiday during hard times.

Before "War of the Worlds" was a famous radio drama it was a popular book by H.G. Wells. Published in 1898, the book is an early example of science fiction about a Martian invasion. With a record number of spacecraft headed to Mars this summer, the story still evokes the mystery and majesty of outer space.

In "Up From Slavery," Booker T. Washington recalls his birth in a Virginia slave hut and how his education led to his many accomplishments. Washington wrote, "I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed." The book is a sobering reminder of America's history.

Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island" is a joy on the printed page but the story and characters come alive when read aloud. The first chapter alone features a grizzly pirate who threatens to cut a doctor's neck, a terrifying tale of a dead man's chest, and the familiar refrain of "yo ho ho and a bottle of rum."

"The Prophet" by Kahlil Gibran is a series of short essays on a wide range of topics from love to work to crime and punishment. Our event will feature just ten minutes of this amazing book so be sure to check out the whole volume to read them all.

If you choose to watch our videos before bedtime, you might want to tune in to hear a fairy tale by The Brothers Grimm. The German duo wrote more than two hundred stories so if you choose to borrow a copy of their "Complete Fairy Tales" from the library, you have your pick. Choose a familiar story like Cinderella or Hansel and Gretel or, try one of their lesser known tales like The Goose-Girl at the Well or The Maiden Without Hands.

If this sounds like fun, head over to www.kirklandtownlibrary.org and sign up to be a teaser. Then, in August, be sure to check out all of the videos on the Kirkland Town Library's YouTube channel (just search for us on YouTube or follow the links on our website). Hopefully we will be back to a live event in 2021 but, for now, stay home, stay safe, and help us Read Around The Calendar!