

Recent Book Club Reads
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Book clubs have been around for literally hundreds of years. After the invention of the modern printing press, books and reading became more readily accessible to a greater portion of the population. Book clubs grew out of a desire to socialize – in other words, they're a great excuse to talk to other people. The New Ulm Public Library has three monthly book clubs. It is regularly remarked that whether you loved a book, loathed it, or didn't even get to finish it, the discussion makes the effort feel more worthwhile. Here are some books from the past few months that were discussed by our book clubs.

The Lit Wits Book Club read James Baldwin's classic novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain* in February. Following several generations of men and women in an African American family and spanning from the South to Harlem, this novel addresses powerful religious themes, the legacy of abuse, and the power of community. People that came to the discussion remarked on the trauma of generational abuse, the impacts of narcissism, the novel's descriptions of Pentecostal worship, and whether the author's shifting of narrators helped or hindered our understanding of events as they unfolded. If you're interested in an intense look at family drama in a religious context in Black America, you'll find this book illuminating!

The History Book Club read *The Mysterious Case of Rudolf Diesel* by Douglas Brunt in January. The inventor of the diesel engine led a fascinating life and really did mysteriously disappear from off of a ship leaving Germany before World War I. People that came to the discussion appreciated the explanation of the difference between a gasoline and a diesel engine, but everyone remarked on how we weren't introduced to this amazing inventor in our high school history courses. The impact Rudolf Diesel has had on modern engines and transportation can't be overstated, but after his disappearance, his story seems to have faded away as well. If you enjoy real historical mysteries and learning about influential inventors, give this book a try!

The Mystery Book Club read Marcie Rendon's *Murder on the Red River* in December. The first book in the Cash Blackbear murder mystery series introduces you to Cash, her 1970s rural community, and a complex mystery. People at the discussion enjoyed the character development, setting, and descriptions in the book. If you're looking to start a new mystery series with a female, Native, or young protagonist, grab yourself a copy!

As you can hopefully see, our book clubs offer something for everyone. Everyone is welcome and you don't have to sign up or come every time. You can come even if you didn't read the book – after all, book clubs are made for socializing. The Lit Wits Book Club usually meets on the first Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the library's Fred Johnson room. The History Book Club usually meets on the third Tuesday of the month at noon and are currently meeting at the City Center Apartments at 115 S Minnesota St. for the winter months. The Mystery Book Club usually meets on the last Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the library's Fred Johnson room. Copies of each month's book are

available at the library's front desk. You don't need to worry about trying to find yourself a copy! We hope you'll stop in and join one of our book clubs – make new friends, see some old ones, and find a book you enjoy or one you despise!

The library is located at 17 N. Broadway and is open to the public Monday-Thursday from 9:30 a.m.-8 p.m. and Friday-Saturday from 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.