

# The Open Door Newsletter

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The Open Door

Bookstore and Gift Gallery

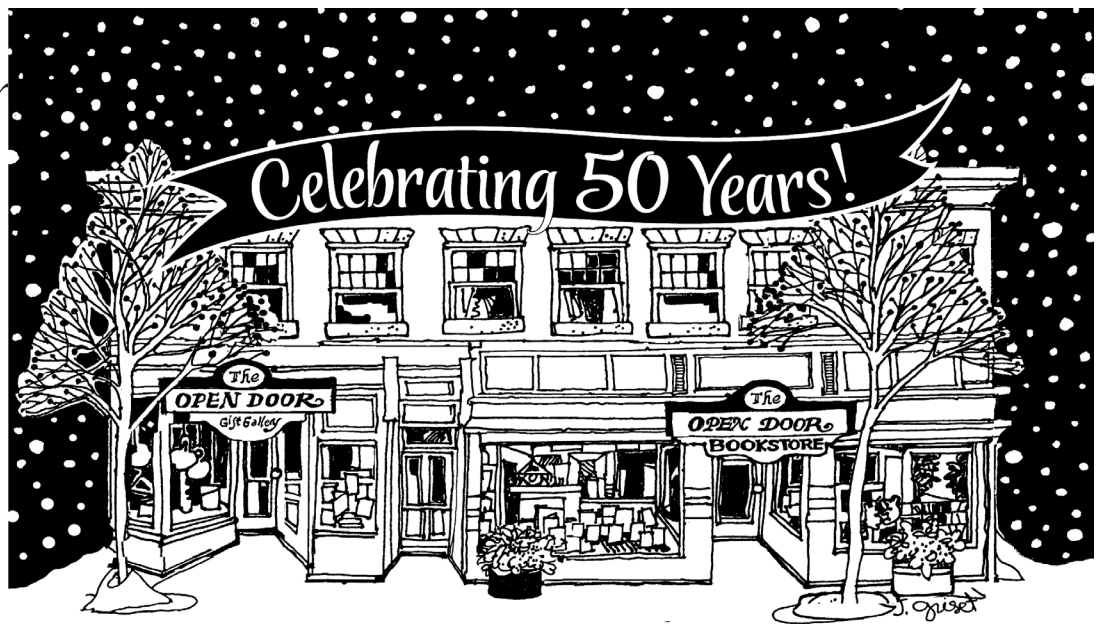
128 Jay Street

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Editor: Lynn Blankman



## Congratulations!

Thanks to all the children who designed book jackets for their favorite books in our annual Children's Art Contest. Their beautiful artwork decorated our shop windows in November.

Congratulations to first prize winners Jasmine Mishra, Celeste Joo-Schwaber, Ava Fredericks, Rosemary Ottati, Elaine Zang, and Katherine McGiver.

# The Open Door

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# Books for a winter night

Winter is a terrific time to snuggle into a comfy chair with a hot drink and a great book. Here are a few new titles we think you'll love, and we have lots more on our shelves!

\* An epic, stunning novel about one family's search for the true meaning of home in the wake of disaster, **The Book of Fire** by Christy Lefteri (*The Beekeeper of Aleppo*), is a masterful work about the search for meaning in the aftermath of tragedy, as well as the universal ties that bind people to each other and to the land they call home. Musician Irini lives peacefully in an ancient Greek forest with her artist husband Tasso and their daughter, until a land speculator starts a small fire to clear a plot that accidentally sets the whole forest ablaze. Their home gone and Tasso's hands so badly burned that he can't paint, a distraught Irini stumbles across the speculator's body—what killed him is unclear—and makes a life-changing decision. \$29.99

\* In her extraordinary debut work of historical fiction, **Wild and Distant Seas**, Tara Karr Roberts draws on Melville's *Moby-Dick* for a story of women with magical powers. Evangeline Hussey has a gift for reshaping the recent memories of those around her, which comes in handy when her husband is lost at sea and she's left managing a Nantucket inn. Then a restless sailor named Ishmael shows up, with whom she has an affair before he heads off to hunt for an infamous white whale. From there, the narrative unfolds from Nantucket to Boston, Brazil, Florence, and Idaho to visit four women touched by Evangeline's story. A must-read that can take its place alongside its inspiration. \$27.99

\* **Lovers in Auschwitz** by Keren Blankfeld is the incredible true story of two Holocaust survivors who fell in love in Auschwitz, only to be separated upon

liberation and lead remarkable lives apart following the war—and then find each other again more than 70 years later. Zippi Spitzer and David Wisnia sustained their passionate relationship throughout their horrific stay in the death camp, but lost track of each other in the years that followed. Finally reunited with David after many decades, Zippi reveals a secret that had assured David's survival at the camp. An unbelievable tale of romance, sacrifice, loss, and resilience. \$30

\* **The Thefts of the Mona Lisa: The Complete Story of the World's Most Famous Artwork** by historian Noah Charney tracks the eventful life of the Mona Lisa in a rollicking account that's both a thrilling tale of true crime and a rigorous work of art history. As Charney explores the fascinating history of the thefts of da Vinci's iconic painting, his meticulous research and engaging storytelling bring to life the audacious individuals who sought to possess the masterpiece for various motivations. He sheds light on the art world's underbelly and the mysterious allure of the Mona Lisa, making it a fascinating read for both art enthusiasts and those interested in true crime. \$32

\* Bestselling novelist Alex Michaelides (*The Silent Patient*, *The Maidens*) returns with a new thriller, **The Fury**, in which a spontaneous trip to a private Greek island by a reclusive ex-movie star and her famous friends is marred by murder. Highly original, this utterly riveting story is told by an unreliable (to say the least!) narrator, a wonderfully drawn cast of characters with a motive to kill for, in a location to die for, and with enough twists and turns to keep you guessing until the shocking ending. \$28.99

Lily Bartels  
Book buyer

# Open Door staff favorites

✱ ***The Secret Book of Flora Lea***, Patti Callahan Henry. Fourteen year-old Hazel and her sister, five year-old Flora, are evacuated from London to a safer location in Oxfordshire during WWII. There they find refuge in the woods and landscape and in telling stories about a beautiful imaginary world. But then that world is shattered when Flora disappears. Many years later, when Hazel encounters a book full of stories about that same magical world, she seeks to find answers. Who wrote those stories and is Flora still alive? This will keep you guessing to the very last page! Janet \$27

✱ ***The Tainted Cup***, Robert Jackson Bennett. A Sherlock Holmes-inspired fantasy with a twisted murder mystery, plenty of political intrigue, and a beautifully written cast of neurodiverse characters. If you love any of those things—plus titanic-sized monsters, a sweet budding romance, and dangerous plants—*The Tainted Cup* is the perfect book for you. Al \$28.99 Available February

✱ ***The Justice of Kings***, Richard Swan. A kingdom where the law applies to all...theoretically. Order is kept in the sprawling Empire of the Wolf by Justices with dark and mysterious powers. Powers young Helena is apprenticed to learn from the upstanding Sir Konrad Vonvault as they travel the kingdom solving crime and bringing justice to criminals. But an empire forged on blood and law is more fragile than it might first appear...Anna \$19.99

✱ ***What You Are Looking for Is in the Library***, Michiko Aoyama. An enigmatic Tokyo librarian with a special gift asks, "What are you looking for?" Her recommendations always include one unexpected book that proves to be transformative. We follow a variety of library visitors who each find a way to achieve their lifelong dreams. I loved this librarian who is wise and whose suggested titles are full of serendipity! Janet \$24.99

✱ ***Counting Lost Stars***, Kim van Alkemade. A must-read for fans of WWII and/or

dual-timeline historical fiction! High stakes, emotional storytelling set in lush, gorgeous prose that snaps all the threads together for every unforgettable character. Tara \$19.99 *Don't miss Kim van Alkemade's booksigning January 11! See Calendar next page.*

✱ ***A Darker Shade of Magic***, V. E. Schwab. If you loved *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue*, pick up this first book in the *Shades of Magic* trilogy. Kell is one of the last magicians with the ability to travel between Red London, Grey London, and White London. When he's duped into smuggling an artifact from the fallen city of Black London, he puts every world at risk and must rely on a young thief from non-magical Grey London for help. Tara \$17.99

✱ ***The Last Flight***, Julie Clark. Two women both trying to escape dangerous relationships meet in an airport and make a last-minute decision to switch tickets. Where their different journeys take them will keep you guessing. Vicki \$16.99

## Dear friends,

As we welcome a new year at The Open Door, we want to thank you for every visit you've made to the store during the past year. We appreciate your loyalty and your efforts to shop local and support small businesses in our community.

You've helped us give the gift of reading to deserving children in Schenectady County through your donations to our Giving Tree program for Northern Rivers (formerly Northeast Parent and Child Society).

Take a look at our store bestsellers list and you will see an interesting assortment of titles that reflect our community. There are many titles from the *New York Times* bestseller list but you'll also see how customers have loved titles from our "Staff Favorites" section.

We look forward to seeing you again in 2024 and wish you all a wonderful New Year!

**Janet Hutchison**  
Owner



## You make a big difference

Where you choose to shop does make a difference! By supporting The Open Door, you have also contributed to the following local organizations, to name a few:

Ameri-Corps Vista  
Animal Protection Foundation  
Bethesda House  
Capital District Women of ERC  
Capital Roots  
City Mission  
CREATE  
DSIC  
ESYO  
Foundation for MVLA  
Friends of the Greenhouse  
Kids Arts Festival  
Music Company  
Octavos  
Operation at Ease  
Proctors  
Read & Raise Book Club

Ring of Hope  
Saratoga Voices  
Schenectady Business & Professional Women  
Schenectady Civic Players  
Schenectady Foundation  
Schenectady PBA  
SJCC  
SLOC  
Sorooptimists  
SSSO  
Stockade Assn  
Thursday Musical Club  
Whiskers  
Young Parents United  
*And many area schools and faith-based groups*

# Snowy day books for boys and girls



✱ ***The Fire Fox***, Alexandra Page, Stef Murphy. Freya and her mum go to stay at a little cabin after Freya's dad passes away and the light seems to have gone from their lives. Then Freya follows a magical fox into the snowy forest... and on to a thrilling adventure. A heartwarming bedtime story inspired by the Finnish Saami myth of the fox fires—the sparks that fly from the fur of a mystical fox to become the Northern Lights. 3-6 \$18.99

✱ ***Buffalo Fluffalo***, Bess Kalb, Erin Kraan. Buffalo Fluffalo arrives on the scene, stomping around and raising billows of dust to show his superiority to the other creatures—who just want to be his friend. Then the rains come, and suddenly all of his “fluffalo” is a soggy mess. He's a drenched pip-squeak! A laugh-out-loud story that shows it's okay to be yourself. 4-8 \$18.99

✱ ***I Am a Masterpiece! An Empowering Story about Inclusivity and Growing Up with Down Syndrome***, Mia Armstrong, Alexandra Thompson. In this sparkling picture book, tween actress Mia Armstrong offers a glimpse into the life of a child with Down Syndrome, helping some readers see themselves in a book and helping others understand those family members, friends, and classmates who are neurodivergent. 4-8 \$19.99

✱ ***Dungeons & Dragons: Dungeon Club: Roll Call***, Molly Knox Ostertag, Xanthe Bouma. Best friends Olivia and Jess have always loved making up stories, most recently with Dungeons & Dragons. But when Olivia wants to add a new player to their club, Jess struggles to share the game—and her friend. The first title in a new graphic novel series. 8-12 \$16.99

✱ ***Courtesy of Cupid***, Nashae Jones. At first, Erin Johnson's thirteenth birthday unfolds

like any other, but then she discovers she's been given the gift of magical powers. Her mysterious father is actually the love god Cupid, and she has inherited his knack for romance. Can she make her nemesis, Trevor, fall in love with her so that she can sabotage his rivalry with her? But wait. Is that what she really wants? A middle-grade rom-com with a dash of magic. 10+ \$17.99

✱ ***Sky's End***, Marc J. Gregson. Sixteen-year-old Conrad refuses to become heir to his murderous uncle and is exiled to live as a Low. But Meritocracy is a harsh and unforgiving rule on the floating island of Holmstead, and when Conrad's mother is killed, he cuts a deal to save the only family he has left: his sister. To rescue her, he must enter the Selection of the Twelve Trades. The first book in a thrilling new YA fantasy trilogy. 14+ \$18.99

## Writing contest for girls and boys

Calling all writers in grades one through eight! The Open Door is accepting submissions for our annual children's writing contest.

All entries are due before March 1. Winners will receive store gift certificates at a celebration party in the spring. Call the store (518/346-2719) or go to [www.opendoor-bookstore.com](http://www.opendoor-bookstore.com) for more info.

## Calendar

**Thursday, Jan. 11, 6 pm:** Kim van Alkemade will speak and sign her new book ***Counting Lost Stars***. *Note: this event takes place in the McChesney room at the Schenectady County Public Library.*

## The Open Door 2023 bestsellers

Our bestselling books may not be the same as those you see on national best-seller lists, because they reflect the unique tastes of The Open Door's customers.

### Adult fiction

***Lessons in Chemistry***, Gramus  
***The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo***, Reid  
***The Lost Apothecary***, Penner  
***Demon Copperhead***, Kingsolver  
***The Silent Patient***, Michaelides  
***The Dictionary of Lost Words***, Williams  
***We Begin at the End***, Whitaker  
***The Invisible Library***, Cogman  
***Legends & Lattes***, Baldree  
***The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store***, McBride

### Adult nonfiction

***Killers of the Flower Moon***, Grann  
***Spare***, Prince Harry  
***Braiding Sweetgrass***, Kimmerer  
***The Wager***, Grann  
***Metrofix***, Patrick  
***Democracy Awakening***, Richardson  
***Talking to Strangers***, Gladwell  
***The Four Agreements***, Ruiz  
***Poverty by America***, Desmond  
***The Creative Art***, Rubin

### Older readers/young adult

***The Princess and the Grilled Cheese Sandwich***, Muniz  
***The Moth Keeper***, O'Neil  
***The One and Only Ruby***, Applegate  
***Nimona***, Stevenson  
***Witchlings***, Ortega  
***The Mermaid, the Witch and the Sea***, Tokuda-Hall  
***The Chalice of the Gods***, Riordan  
***Lore***, Bracken  
***Rabbit & Bear: Attack of the Snack***, Gough  
***A Good Girl's Guide to Murder***, Jackson

### Children's picture books

***100 Mighty Dragons All Named Broccoli***, LaRocelle  
***Just the Way You Are***, Dodd  
***Diggosaw's Mission Mars***, Whaite  
***Night Owl Night***, Richmond  
***Pizza and Taco – Who's the Best***, Shaskan  
***Salamander Sky***, Farber  
***Super Scary Narwhalloween***, Clanton  
***The Hug (Mini Edition)***, McLaughlin  
***My Dad is Awesome by Bluey and Bingo***



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## Ways to save at The Open Door

We offer many ways to save on purchases at The Open Door—and many special services, including fast book orders (usually 2-3 days) and website book ordering ([www.opendoor-bookstore.com](http://www.opendoor-bookstore.com)). Here are some of the many ways you can save:

- \* Sign up for our Rewards Program and earn a Rewards Certificate to use on any store merchandise!
- \* Reading groups, save 15%.
- \* Teachers, save 20%.
- \* Seniors, save 15% on Tuesdays.
- \* Save 20% with our newsletter coupon.
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Complete details available in the store.



## Remember your Valentine!

Shop The Open Door to find a unique, lovely selection of gifts and cards for your special someone.