

From: Oxford Newcomers and Friends newcomers@oxfordms.com  
Subject: December 2020 ONC&F Newsletter  
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To: rosie@oxfordms.com



# OXFORD NEWCOMERS and Friends



Welcome to December 2020 - the finale to a very unexpected year. Here's wishing every ONC&F member the happiest of holiday seasons, whether you celebrate a merry Christmas, happy Hanukkah, joyous Kwanzaa, wonderful winter Solstice, or simply enjoy each day for what it brings. We've missed seeing all of you during our months of staying home and staying safe.

And just a reminder - your dues for 2020 have covered your membership for 2021, when we hope the new vaccines allow us to once again mix and mingle!! As a friend says, "Stay positive, and test negative!!"

**A NOTE FROM JUDY:** Each year ONC&F has a lovely holiday dinner at the country club, and we collect food for The Pantry. Sadly, we cannot gather to celebrate the holidays but there is something we can do. The holidays are always a difficult time for some families in our community, but a reverse Advent Calendar - see below - is a wonderful opportunity to involve our families in the true spirit of Christmas. ~ *Judy Owen, ONC&F President*

Starting off each month on a positive note, ONC&F encourages members to embrace **Five on the Five**. Saturday, December 5th, why not reach out and call five people to say hello and see that they are well and doing okay? The

can five people to say hello and see that they are well and doing okay: The December recommendation is *five people who make your life sweeter!* If you participate in social media, you can post a selfie with five fingers widespread when you've completed your calls and use #5onthe5 to promote the endeavor. To read more about this monthly personal connection challenge, visit the website [www.5onthe5.com](http://www.5onthe5.com) Who adds something positive to your life?

**BETTER READ THAN DEAD** will meet via Zoom on Thursday, December 3rd at 2:00 pm. The book for discussion will be *Where'd You Go, Bernadette?* by Maria Semple. This novel is ingenious and unabashedly entertaining, about a family coming to terms with who they are and the power of a daughter's love for her mother. Zoom coordinator Cathy Williamson will send out the link prior to the meeting. All are welcome! If you would like to join in, just email chair Nancy Muller at [maytarie@att.net](mailto:maytarie@att.net), and she will be sure you get the link. Since we will not have our Christmas party this year, you are asked to bring food and books for the Pantry. You can drop off directly at The Pantry, or Nancy's home at 214 Olde Castle Loop (you can leave by the front door).

**BOOK CHAT** is the alternative to the traditional book club. Here, participants chat once a month to share *whatever* they have recently read, or would like to suggest for others, be it fiction, non-fiction, poetry, or drama. All book lovers are invited! Discuss recent and favorite books or just listen in. Please join us on Tuesday, December 29th (our customary last Tuesday of the month) and share a favorite read! Click [here](#) to join the Zoom meeting or by going to the Zoom website (<https://Zoom.us>) and entering the meeting ID: 680 808 8404. Questions? Contact Debra Guyton at [debraguyton@bellsouth.net](mailto:debraguyton@bellsouth.net)

**BOOK CLUB ONE:** December's book selection is Julie Otsuka's *The Buddha in the Attic*. A National Book Award Finalist, the novel tells the story of a group of young women brought from Japan to San Francisco as "picture brides" nearly a century ago. Book Club One will meet on Zoom on Thursday, December 17th (our customary third Thursday of the month) at 2:00 p.m. Click [here](#) to join us on Zoom, or connect by going to the Zoom website (<https://Zoom.us>) and entering the meeting ID: 899 4568 1171. All Newcomers and friends are welcome! Chair: Debra Guyton, (251) 490-6690 or [debraguyton@bellsouth.net](mailto:debraguyton@bellsouth.net)

**BOOKS WORTH A LOOK!** Each month, Debra Guyton gathers people for BOOK CHAT (see details above). The discussions are free-ranging, thought-provoking, and loads of fun! Here, Debra shares some titles recommended during the recent chat, starting with fictional works: *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman - an uplifting story of an out-of-the-ordinary heroine whose weirdness and wit make for an irresistible journey as she realizes the only way to survive is to open your heart. *A Long Petal of the Sea* by Isabel Allende - an epic novel spanning the decades and crossing continents follows two young people as they flee the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War in search of a place to call home. *An American Marriage* by Taviari

Jones - a moving portrayal of the effects of a wrongful conviction on African-American newlyweds. And for mystery buffs, the Vera Stanhope murder mysteries by Ann Cleeves, beginning with *The Crow Trap*, are intricately plotted and highly recommended. Nonfiction works enjoyed include: *The Wolves at the Door: The True Story of America's Greatest Female Spy* by Judith Pearson - the true story of Virginia Hall, architect of the Resistance movement in central France who was considered the most dangerous woman to undermine the Nazis. *Meeting the Shadow: The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature* edited by Connie Zweig and Jeremiah Abrams - a provocative Jungian collection of articles exploring the part of the unconscious self that a conscious mind sees as undesirable and tries to define as "the other." Intrigued? Join the Chat on December 29th!

**GARDENING TIPS FOR DECEMBER:** Ho, Ho, Ho! Only one more month to go in 2020, and since you can't really go anywhere, there's no excuse not to have your lawn and landscaping in tiptop form! December is a good time to plant bare rooted trees such as fruit, nut and citrus and also dormant shrubs such as Azalea, Camellia, Hydrangea, Nandina, Indian Hawthorne, Wax Ligustrum, Flowering Quince, and Spirea. Toward the end of the month, plant Tulips and Hyacinths that have been refrigerated for 6 weeks. This is also a good time to prune fruit and shade trees to remove damaged wood and cut back the brown fronds on ferns (they will grow back from the ground in Spring). With leaves gone, it's a good time to cut Mistletoe out of trees -- use it in your holiday décor! (Just remember to follow Covid restrictions and only smooch the people living in your household!) When using greenery to decorate your house, remember that some are poisonous to humans and pets. Keep Boxwood, Holly and Mistletoe up and out of reach. If you decorate a live tree, use the following recipe to make a solution to keep your tree in top condition. In a 2 liter bottle, mix: 8 oz non-diet soda, 2 oz vinegar, and 1 oz mouthwash, then fill the remainder of the bottle with water. Keep the base of the tree in this solution throughout the holidays. After Christmas, remember to recycle your tree! The city of Oxford will pick them up curbside on special days for recycling through a partnership with the Corps of Engineers. Check their website for dates. The Corps uses them to successfully restore habitat for fish in area lakes. For those living in the county, you can leave your trees at any boat launch, and the Corps will pick them up. *Happy Holidays and Happy Gardening! Karen Travillo, Master Gardener, Lafayette County*

**ONC&F HEALTHY RECIPE SWAP:** What's cookin'? Traditionally, we'd be planning our Christmas gathering, but COVID-19 nixed that. Since we can't share a table, how about a favorite *healthy* recipe instead? Michelle Harvey ([mmautheharvey@gmail.com](mailto:mmautheharvey@gmail.com)) will collect the recipes and, based on response, figure out how best to get everyone some new menu ideas for staying fit in 2021. Anything goes, from healthy appetizers to main dishes and sides (even healthy desserts), from breakfast and brunch to lunch, dinner, and supper!

**READING FAULKNER** will meet on Monday, December 14th, at 4:00 pm via Zoom to conclude our discussion of *Go Down, Moses*. Our focus this month will be on the last sections: "The Bear," "Delta Autumn," and "Go Down, Moses." For those who want to get a head start on our next book, it will be *Absalom, Absalom!*. Details on the reading / discussion plan for that novel will be provided at the December meeting. To access the Zoom meeting, click [here](#) or connect by going to the Zoom website (<https://Zoom.us>) and entering the meeting ID: 852 6325 1800. For additional information about this group, please contact Dianne Fergusson at [sdsferg@bellsouth.net](mailto:sdsferg@bellsouth.net) or (662) 236-4088.

**WOMEN'S COFFEE** meets virtually twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Fridays. Join us via Zoom at 9:00 am on Friday, December 4th, when the topic starter will be holiday traditions, and again on the 18th (topic TBD) for conversation and community. It's so nice to sit and visit without having to leave the comfort of your kitchen or couch! Contact Jonell McGivern, [jonell52@att.net](mailto:jonell52@att.net) or (205) 937-2888, and she'll make sure you get the Zoom details before each gathering. Chair: Nellanne Davis, [nellanned@aol.com](mailto:nellanned@aol.com)

**WINES OF THE SEASON** When holiday celebrations come to mind, the wine of choice is very often a Champagne or other sparkling wine. The designation "Champagne" is limited to wines produced in the Champagne region of France; any effervescent wine produced elsewhere is a sparkling wine. In Champagne, the most frequently used grapes are Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier; however, there are four additional grapes that may be grown and used in Champagne production. Because of its higher price, Champagne is often replaced for gatherings by a sparkling wine made in the US or other wine producing country. Many cost-conscious planners often substitute a Cava from Spain, Prosecco from Italy, or a French Cremant. Some French Champagne houses have partnered with US vintners to produce American sparkling wines, including Mumm's, Louis Roederer, Gruet, and Chandon. Personal US favorites include Gloria Ferrer Blanc de Blanc, Roederer Estate Brut NV, and New Mexico faves Gruet Brut NV and Gruet Sauvage NV. (Note: NV means non-vintage, a strong tradition in Champagne and sparkling wines, where a percentage of reserve, i.e., older, wine is added to ensure the desired house style, taste consistency, and complexity.) *Until next month, à votre santé ~ Don Harvey*

## **ONC&F DECEMBER CALENDAR**

Thursday, Dec 3, **Better Read Than Dead** 2:00 pm

Friday, Dec 4, **Women's Coffee** 9:00 am

Saturday, Dec 5, **Five on the Five**

**Thursday, Dec 10, Hanukkah begins**

Monday, Dec 14, **Reading Faulkner** 4:00 pm

Thursday, Dec 17, **Book Club One** 2:00 pm

Thursday, Dec 17, **BOOK CLUB ONE** 2:00 pm

Friday, Dec 18, **Hanukkah ends**

Friday, Dec 18, **Women's Coffee** 9:00 am

Monday, Dec 21, **Winter Solstice**

Friday Dec 25, **Merry Christmas**

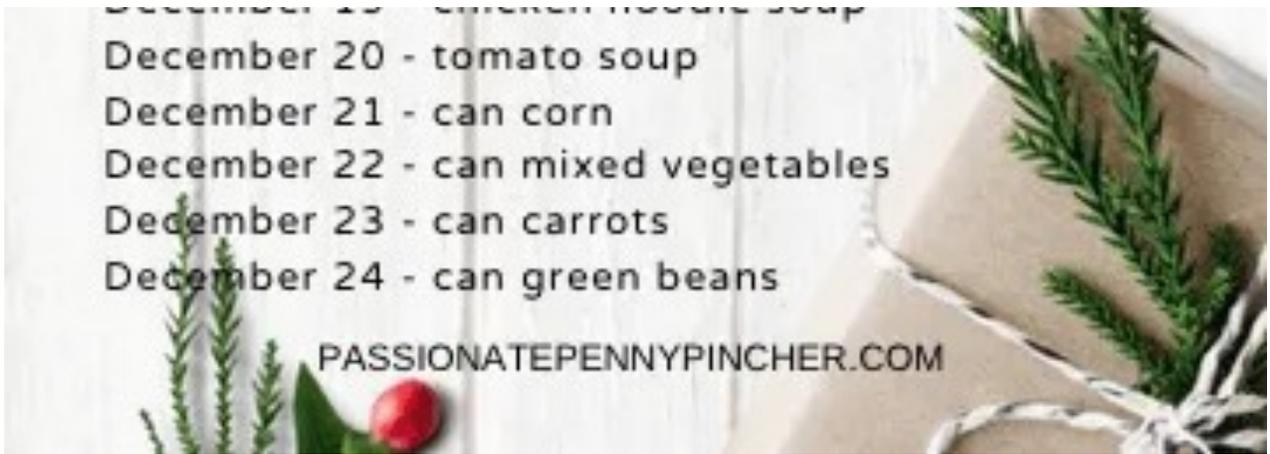
Tuesday, Dec 29, **Book Chat** 10:00 am

Thursday, Dec 31, **New Year's Eve**

# REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX.  
ON CHRISTMAS EVE DONATE THE CONTENTS TO A  
FOOD BANK.

- December 1 - box of cereal
- December 2 - peanut butter
- December 3 - stuffing mix
- December 4 - boxed potatoes
- December 5 - macaroni and cheese
- December 6 - canned fruit
- December 7 - canned tomatoes
- December 8 - canned tuna
- December 9 - dessert mix
- December 10 - jar of applesauce
- December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
- December 12 - cranberry sauce
- December 13 - canned beans
- December 14 - box of crackers
- December 15 - package of rice
- December 16 - package of oatmeal
- December 17 - package pasta
- December 18 - spaghetti sauce
- December 19 - chicken noodle soup



### **Oxford Newcomers and Friends Executive Committee 2020-21**

President: Judy Owen, [Sophieandme920@gmail.com](mailto:Sophieandme920@gmail.com)  
Vice President: Jonell McGivern, [jonell52@att.net](mailto:jonell52@att.net)  
Communications: Michelle Harvey, [mmautheharvey@att.net](mailto:mmautheharvey@att.net)  
Educational Programs: Don Mason, [dmason222@gmail.com](mailto:dmason222@gmail.com)  
Immediate Past President: Anita Kimery, [kimery47@yahoo.com](mailto:kimery47@yahoo.com)  
Membership: Nellanne Davis, [nellanned@aol.com](mailto:nellanned@aol.com)  
Social Director: Bonnie Siebert, [bonnie1017@aol.com](mailto:bonnie1017@aol.com)  
Treasurer: Richard Muller, [frotscher60@att.net](mailto:frotscher60@att.net)



# Serving Oxford Hotline

If you are symptom free but are over 60 years old; have asthma; heart disease; or diabetes; or are otherwise at risk, experts recommend following the most conservative response of self quarantine. The City of Oxford and Lafayette County are committed to making this easier for our community. Partnered with churches throughout Oxford and Lafayette County, we have set up a hotline that you can call to request assistance with grocery or prescription delivery, and to direct you to more information regarding COVID-19.

We are stronger together.

# 662-238-2793

Updates to share? Send to ONC&F Communications Chair  
Michelle Harvey, [mmautheharvey@att.net](mailto:mmautheharvey@att.net)

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