



NEWS RELEASE
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Great Lakes, Great Read Shared-Reading Initiative Announces Book Selections

As part of today’s Earth Day commemorations, the Wisconsin Water Library at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Wisconsin Library Association announced the books selected for a basin-wide shared-reading experience, Great Lakes, Great Read.

“The Water Walker” by Joanne Robertson is the children’s selection and the adult selection is “The Best Part of Us” by Sally Cole-Misch.

“The Water Walker” is the story of a determined Ojibwe grandmother, a “nokomis,” named Josephine Mandamin who walks to raise awareness of the need to protect “nibi” (water). Robertson wrote and illustrated the book, which was published in 2017.

Published in 2020, “The Best Part of Us” explores a family’s ties to an island in the Canadian waters of an inland lake just north of Lake Huron —how those ties are tested both through natural processes and family dynamics.

“The Great Lakes have shaped Wisconsin as we know it. These inland seas provide drinking water and fuel our agriculture, shipping, manufacturing and recreation,” said WWL Senior Special Librarian Anne Moser. “These two books will bring the lakes alive in new and evocative ways. We hope readers will reflect on the lakes and be inspired, become passionate and feel more connected to them.”

WLA Executive Director Laura Sauser said, “All Wisconsinites are encouraged to read these titles, and we also hope to be a catalyst for libraries throughout the upper Midwestern states and Canadian provinces to engage patrons through a range of activities.”

Both selected authors will be featured in a free webinar series happening on Sept. 25 and Oct. 2 and 9. All events will start at 6 p.m., CT, and will be open to the public.

In November, the authors will be visiting Wisconsin for a variety of events. Please check the Wisconsin Great Lakes, Great Read webpage, <https://go.wisc.edu/85b96h> later this summer to learn more.

The Great Lakes, Great Read website, <https://www.greatlakesgreatread.org>, offers further details on the authors, their books, book discussion questions, an email list signup option and other resources.

This initiative is made possible by an Ideas to Action grant from WiLS. Wisconsin Sea Grant and the University of Wisconsin Water Resources Institute support the Wisconsin Water Library.

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Established in 1964 by the University of Wisconsin Water Resources Institute (WRI), the Wisconsin Water Library (formerly known as the Water Resources Library) is unique among UW-Madison's many libraries for its collection of 30,000 volumes about the waters of Wisconsin and the Great Lakes. The library's mission is to collect, preserve and provide science-based resources in support of [WRI](#) and the [Sea Grant College Program](#).

The Wisconsin Library Association is a professional organization representing all types of libraries – school, public, academic and special. Its membership comprises more than 1,300 librarians and support staff, library trustees, friends of libraries and business vendors who advocate and work for the improvement of library services for all Wisconsin citizens. www.wisconsinlibraries.org.



Wisconsin Water Library
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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