Editors’ Picks for February —
Large Print Titles Your Readers Won’t Want to Miss!!

THE LAUGHING MONSTERS
by Denis Johnson (9781410476562). National Book Award winner Johnson’s novel is a stunner: the story of Roland Nair, a rogue intelligence agent looking to make a big score in Sierra Leone amid the detritus and chaos of the post–war on terrorism world. Named a New York Times Notable book of 2014, an NPR Best Book of 2014, a Time Magazine Top 10 Fiction Book of 2014, and an Indie Next Pick — Laughing Monsters is a spy thriller that’s impossible to put down. In their starred review, Library Journal said: “In a work that’s part spy novel and part buddy tale, Johnson aptly locates his portrayal of a shadowy world of complicated relationships and ever-shifting alliances in one of the more broken places on the planet.” Fans of Jack Higgins and Charles Cumming will find a book they love with this one! (Thriller — 2/18/2015)

A PLACE CALLED HOPE by Phillip Gulley (9781410475459). When Quaker Pastor Sam Gardner is asked by the ill Unitarian minister to oversee a wedding in his place, Sam naturally agrees. It’s not until the couple stands before him that he realizes they’re two women. In the tempest of strong opinions and misunderstandings that follows the incident, Sam faces potential unemployment. Sam is contemplating a future selling used cars when he receives a call from a woman in the suburban town of Hope, Indiana. It seems Hope Friends Meeting is in desperate need of a pastor. But can he really leave his beloved hometown of Harmony? Publishers Weekly said “fans will eagerly turn pages.” For fans of Jan Karon’s Mitford series. (Christian Fiction — 2/4/2015)
Editors’ Picks for February (continued)

**THE VILLA**
by Rosanna Ley
(9781410477019). When Tess Angel receives a letter informing her she has inherited the Villa Sirena, perched on a clifftop in Sicily — she is stunned. Her only link to the small beautiful island is through her mother, Flavia, who left Sicily during World War II and has not spoken to her family, or of her life there, since. Initially resistant to Tess traveling to her home country, Flavia begins to recount her youth, told in flashbacks as she writes in a journal to Tess of her journey to independence, as well as leaving her legacy of cherished family recipes and secrets. Secrets including a lost treasure rumored to be hidden in the very Villa Tess is staying at. This is an epic journey of love lost, family secrets, the road to self-discovery and the meaning of home and family. *Library Journal* said: “Evocative descriptions of Sicily, strong women characters, romance, and a sunny tone will delight readers . . . a solid escape for those who want that relaxing-at-the-beach read.” For fans of contemporary women’s fiction. (*Women’s Fiction — 2/18/2015*)

**MIRACLE IN A DRY SEASON**
by Sarah Loudin Thomas
(9781410474506). It’s 1954 and Perla Long’s arrival in the sleepy town of Wise, West Virginia, was supposed to go unnoticed. She just wants a quiet, safe place for her and her daughter, Sadie, where the mistakes of her past can stay hidden. But then drought comes to Wise, and Perla is pulled into the turmoil of a town desperately in need of a miracle. Casewell Phillips has resigned himself to life as a bachelor . . . until he meets Perla. She’s everything he’s sought in a woman, but he can’t get past the sense that she’s hiding something. As the drought worsens, Perla’s unique gift divides the town in two, bringing both gratitude and condemnation, and placing the pair in the middle of a storm of anger and forgiveness, fear and faith. In their starred review *Library Journal* said: “Fans of feel-good stories of heartfelt lessons will love Thomas’s debut. . . . Once in a while a new author comes along with a work that makes you sit up and take notice. Thomas has crafted a tale of this proportion.” For fans of Karen Kingsbury. (*Christian Fiction — 2/4/2015*)
Mystery Writers of America announced the nominees for the 2015 Edgar Allan Poe Awards, honoring the best in mystery fiction and nonfiction published in 2014.

Congratulations to our Mystery editor, Mark Feeley, for picking 5 out of the 6 Best First Novels!! The titles we’re publishing in large print are:

**BEST NOVEL**

**WOLF** by Mo Hayder (9781410471048). When a vagrant — the Walking Man — finds a dog wandering alone with a scrap of paper with the words “HELP US” attached to its collar, he’s sure it’s a desperate plea from someone in trouble and calls on Detective Inspector Jack Caffery to investigate. Caffery is reluctant to get involved — until the Walking Man promises in exchange new information regarding the childhood disappearance of Caffery’s brother. Caffery has no idea who or what he is searching for, but one thing he is sure of: it’s a race against time. In their starred review, *Library Journal* said “Dark and twisty, this gripping crime novel is an outstanding read.” For fans of John Connolly or Robert Crais. *(Peer Picks — 8/20/2014)*

**MR. MERCEDES** by Stephen King (9781410469007). As hundreds of desperate unemployed folks are lined up at a job fair, a lone driver plows through the crowd in a stolen Mercedes. Eight people are killed; fifteen are wounded. The killer escapes. Months later, retired cop named Bill Hodges is still haunted by the unsolved crime. When he gets a crazed letter from someone claiming to be the killer, Hodges wakes up from his depressed and vacant retirement, hell-bent on preventing another tragedy — one that could be much more deadly. *Booklist* said “this baby will rocket itself out of libraries with a loud squeal of the tires.” For fans of suspenseful crime thrillers. *(Basic — 6/4/2014)*

**SAINTS OF THE SHADOW BIBLE** by Ian Rankin (9781410466839). Inspector Rebus is investigating a car accident when news arrives that a case from 30 years ago is being reopened. Rebus’s team from those days is suspected of helping a murderer escape justice to further their own ends. Malcolm Fox, an internal affairs cop, is tasked with finding out the truth. Past and present are about to collide in shocking and murderous fashion. Of this *New York Times* bestseller, *Library Journal* said: “a must-read for Rankin fans” and “the author makes his latest title and his enigmatic protagonist accessible to new readers.” For fans of British crime novels. *(Mystery — 2/5/2014)*
2015 Edgar® Award Nominees (continued)

BEST FIRST NOVEL BY AN AMERICAN AUTHOR

DRY BONES IN THE VALLEY by Tom Bouman (9781410473189). In Wild Thyme, Pennsylvania, secrets and feuds go back generations. The lone policeman in a small town on the sparse northern border, Henry Farrell expected to spend his mornings hunting and fishing, his evenings playing old-time music. Instead, he has watched the steady encroachment of gas drilling bring new wealth and erode neighborly trust. The drug trade is pushing heroin into the territory. There are outlaws cooking meth in the woods, guys Henry grew up with. When a stranger turns up dead, Henry’s search for the killer will open old wounds, dredge up ancient crimes, and exact a deadly price.

Received two starred reviews; Publishers Weekly called it “[An] outstanding debut . . . Henry’s growth from a grief-stricken widower to a lawman with an inner resolve fuels the brisk plot, as does an evocative look at a changing landscape.” This nominee was an Indie Next Pick and LibraryReads Selection.

For readers who like rural crime stories and fans of Craig Johnson and Wiley Cash. (Reviewer’s Choice — 11/5/2014)

INVISIBLE CITY by Julia Dahl (9781410471130). Just months after Rebekah Roberts was born, her mother, an Hasidic Jew from Brooklyn, abandoned her Christian boyfriend and newborn baby to return to her religion. Neither Rebekah nor her father have heard from her since. Now Rebekah has moved to New York City to follow her dream of becoming a big-city reporter. She’s also drawn to the idea of being closer to her mother, who might still be living in the Hasidic community in Brooklyn. Called to cover the story of a murdered Hasidic woman, Rebekah’s shocked to learn that, because of the NYPD’s habit of kowtowing to the powerful ultra-Orthodox community, not only will the woman be buried without an autopsy, her killer may get away with murder. Publishers Weekly called it “a real page-turner” in their starred review.

For mystery readers who like character-driven mystery novels. (Crime Scene — 8/6/2014)
BAD COUNTRY by CB McKenzie (9781410477439). Rodeo Grace Garnet lives with his old dog in a remote corner of Arizona known to locals as El Hoyo. A body found near his home has drawn police attention to his front door. The victim is not one of the many undocumented immigrants who risk their lives to cross the border in Rodeo’s harsh and deadly “backyard,” but a member of a major Southwestern Indian tribe, whose death is part of a mysterious rompecabeza — a classic crime puzzler — that includes multiple murders, cold-blooded betrayals, and low-down scheming, with Rodeo caught in the middle. Library Journal said of this Tony Hillerman Prize–winner: “This edgy noir offers a master class on how to create a vivid sense of mood and place.” For readers who like Western crime fiction and fans of Tony Hillerman and Craig Johnson. (Crime Scene — 4/1/2015)

SHOVEL READY by Adam Sternbergh (9781410468949). Spademan used to be a garbage man. That was before the dirty bomb hit Times Square, before his wife was killed, and before the city became a bombed-out shell of its former self. Now he’s a hitman. His latest client hires him to kill the daughter of a powerful evangelist. Finding her is easy, but the job quickly gets complicated: his mark has a shocking secret and his client has an agenda far beyond a simple kill. Library Journal’s starred review called this Indie Next Pick “a gripping genre mash-up and a stunning debut.” For fans of dystopian science fiction, thrillers, and urban noir. (Thriller — 5/21/2014)

MURDER AT THE BRIGHTWELL by Ashley Weaver (9781410472700). Amory Ames is a wealthy young woman who regrets her marriage to her notoriously charming playboy husband, Milo. Looking for a change, she accepts a request for help from her former fiancé, Gil Trent, not knowing that she’ll soon become embroiled in a murder investigation that will test not only her friendship with Gil, but will upset the status quo with her husband. Library Journal called this LibraryReads Selection by librarian Ashley Weaver “charming.” For fans of historical mysteries and fans of Jacqueline Winspear. (Mystery 5 — 1/7/2015)
A TOUCH OF STARDUST by Kate Alcott (9781410476654). When Julie Crawford leaves Fort Wayne, Indiana, for Hollywood, she never imagines she’ll cross paths with Carole Lombard, the dazzling actress from Julie’s provincial Midwestern hometown. Julie’s access to real-life magic comes when Carole Lombard hires her as an assistant and invites her into the glamorous world Carole shares with Clark Gable, who is about to move into movie history as the dashing Rhett Butler. Julie is given a front-row seat to not one but two of the greatest love affairs of all time: the undeniable on-screen chemistry between Scarlett and Rhett, and off screen, the deepening love between Carole and Clark. Vivid, romantic, and filled with Old Hollywood details, this story will charm, surprise, and delight. In their starred review, Booklist said: “Alcott should entrance large audiences with her stellar historical novel . . . The briskly paced narrative captivates as it lets readers view the creation of silver-screen magic.” For historical fiction readers and fans of Gone With the Wind. (Basic — 3/4/2015)

MY SUNSHINE AWAY by M. O. Walsh (9781410478238). 1989 in a Baton Rouge neighborhood best known for cookouts on sweltering summer afternoons, cauldrons of spicy crawfish, and passionate football fandom. That summer, when fifteen-year-old Lindy Simpson — free spirit, track star, and belle of the block — experiences a horrible crime late one evening near her home, it becomes apparent that this idyllic stretch of Southern suburbia has a dark side, too. In My Sunshine Away, M. O. Walsh brilliantly juxtaposes the enchantment of a charmed childhood with the gripping story of a violent crime, unraveling families, and consuming adolescent love. Booklist’s starred review called it “Suspenseful, compassionate, and absorbing.” In their review, Library Journal said: “Rarely does a new author display the skill to develop a page-turner with such a literary tone.” There’s been lots of buzz on this book in EarlyWord’s GalleyChat, and Walsh was recently named one of Entertainment Weekly’s 25 People to Watch in 2015. For fans of popular and literary fiction. (Wheeler Hardcover 4 — 4/1/2015)

NOTE: This title is also an Indie Next Pick for February.
A MURDER OF MAGPIES
by Judith Flanders (9781410479136).
It’s just another day at the office for book editor Samantha Clair, checking jacket copy and lunching with gossipy author Kit Lowell, whose new book will deliciously dish the dirt on the fashion industry. Then police Inspector Field turns up asking questions about an undelivered package that was addressed to Sam. The messenger sent to deliver the package was murdered. Then Kit goes missing. Suddenly, Sam’s nine-to-five life is turned upside down and she is propelled into a criminal investigation. Someone doesn’t want Kit’s scandalous manuscript published and unless Sam can put the pieces together in time, they’ll do anything to stop it. Publishers Weekly called it “an amusing mystery [with] an array of delightful and believable characters.”
For fans of Ellis Peter.
(Historical Fiction — 5/20/2015)

THE SIEGE WINTER by Samantha Norman and Ariana Franklin (9781410478610).
1141. England is engulfed in war as King Stephen and his cousin, the Empress Matilda, vie for the crown. In this dangerous world, not even Emma, an eleven-year-old peasant, is safe. A depraved monk obsessed with redheads kidnaps the ginger-haired girl from her village and leaves her for dead. When an archer for hire named Gwyl finds her, she has no memory of her previous life. Unable to abandon her, Gwyl takes the girl with him, dressing her as a boy, giving her a new name — Penda — and teaching her to use a bow. But Gwyl knows that the man who hurt Penda roams free, and that a scrap of evidence she possesses could be very valuable. Library Journal’s starred review called it a “richly researched, female-driven historical mystery.”
For readers who like a little humor with their murder! (Peer Picks — 5/20/2015)

DREAMING SPIES by Laurie R. King (9781410475756). Russell and Holmes return home to find a stone that once occupied the Imperial gardens in Kyoto in their garden. It reminds them of 1924, when, on their way back from India, Russell and Holmes agreed to perform a small but exceedingly dangerous job for the emperor of Japan. At the time, Russell encountered a young Japanese woman on board their ship who tutored them about her country and guided them into a secret meeting with the Prince Regent himself. When Russell heads for Oxford to resume her long-delayed studies, she comes face-to-face with that very same young Japanese woman — and quickly realizes Miss Sato Haruki is not all that she seems. Library Journal said: “The twists and turns of this mystery will keep readers satisfied.” For fans of historical mysteries. (Mystery — 3/4/2015)
Indie Next Picks

ETTA AND OTTO AND RUSSELL AND JAMES by Emma Hooper (9781410477071). Eighty-two-year-old Etta has never seen the ocean. So early one morning she takes a rifle, some chocolate, and her best boots, and begins walking the 3,232 kilometers from rural Canada eastward to the coast. Her husband Otto has seen the ocean before in a far-away war. Her absence brings memories back and he struggles to keep them at bay. Russell leaves his farm and determinedly tracks the woman he has loved from afar. As Etta walks toward the ocean, accompanied by a coyote named James, the lines among memory, illusion, and reality blur. This is a story about rediscovery and care of the soul, and the idea it’s never too late for a great adventure. This People Magazine Book of the Week received four starred reviews. For fans of literary fiction. (Basic 7 — 4/1/2015)

SWEETLAND by Michael Crummey (9781410478092). The scarcely populated town of Sweetland rests on the shore of a remote Canadian island. Its slow decline finally reaches a head when the mainland government offers each islander a generous resettlement package — the sole stipulation being that everyone must leave. Moses Sweetland, whose ancestors founded the village, is the only one to refuse. As he watches his neighbors abandon the island, he recalls the town’s rugged history and its eccentric cast of characters. This is a spectacular portrait of one man’s battle to survive as his environment vanishes around him. Booklist called it “a familiar story, but it is told precisely and heartwarmingly, realistically and without sentimentality.” For fans of Annie Proulx and Kent Haruf. (Reviewer’s Choice — 4/1/2015)

LEAVING BEFORE THE RAINS COME by Alexandra Fuller (9781410478597). Looking to rebuild after a painful divorce, Alexandra Fuller turns to her African past for clues to living a life fully and without fear. Leaving Before the Rains Come showcases Fuller at the peak of her abilities, threading panoramic vistas with her deepest revelations as a fully grown woman and mother. Fuller reveals how, after spending a lifetime fearfully waiting for someone to show up and save her, she discovered that, in the end, we all simply have to save ourselves. In their starred review, Booklist said: “Powerful, raw, and painful, Fuller’s writing is so immediate, so vivid that whether she’s describing the beauty of Zambia or the harrowing hours following a devastating accident, she leaves the reader breathless.” For readers of memoirs and Fuller’s previous works. (Biography and Memoir — 5/6/2015)

MY SUNSHINE AWAY by M. O. Walsh (9781410478238). See page 6 for details.
This month’s Read-alikes include:

*If your readers like Louise Penny, M. C. Beaton, and Agatha Christie, they might like:*

**A DEMON SUMMER**
by G. M. Malliet
(9781410474384). Agatha Award-winning author Malliet will charm mystery lovers and cozy fans alike with this title set in an English countryside village.

Max Tudor, vicar of Nether Monkslip and former MI5 agent, is drawn into the investigation of attempts to poison the 15th Earl of Lislelivet, Ralph Percevel. No one is really surprised since Lord Lislelivet enrages everyone, including his wife. But this poison was baked into a fruitcake made by the Handmaids of St. Lucy of Monkton Abbey. Marilyn Stasio of the *New York Times* said: “There are certain things you want in a village mystery: a pretty setting, a tasteful murder, an appealing sleuth . . . Malliet delivers all of that.”

The ending with a traditional gathering of the suspects will please Golden Age fans! *(Mystery 5 — 2/4/2015)*

*If your readers like Garth Stein and Carolyn Parkhurst, they might like:*

**THE MOUNTAINTOP SCHOOL FOR DOGS AND OTHER SECOND CHANCES**
by Ellen Cooney
(9781410476210). The Sanctuary. High up on the mountain, the Sanctuary is a place of refuge. It is a place where humans save dogs, who, in turn, save the humans. It is a place where the past does not exist, where hopelessness is chased away, where the future hasn’t been written, where orphans and strays can begin to imagine a new meaning for “family.” Evie has lied to gain entry to the Sanctuary. She has pretended to know more than she does about dogs, but she is learning fast. Like the racing greyhound who refuses to move and the Rottweiler who’s a hopeless candidate for search-and-rescue, Evie comes from a troubled past. But as they all learn, no one should stay prisoner to a life she didn’t choose. *Library Journal* called this Indie Next Pick “a joyful romp and a thoughtful meditation.” *For fans of feel-good stories and lovers of dogs. (Core 7 — 2/4/2015)*
Our top *New York Times* bestsellers in February follow.

**A DANGEROUS MAN** by William W. Johnstone with J. A. Johnstone (9781410476579) *Wheeler Western*

**BREAKING CREED** by Alex Kava (9781410474988) *Basic 6*

**COLD COLD HEART** by Tami Hoag (9781410467706) *Wheeler Hardcover*

**CRASH AND BURN** by Lisa Gardner (9781410475022) *Core*

**DEAR COMMITTEE MEMBERS** by Julie Shumacher (9781410476241) *Wheeler Hardcover 6*

**ECHO LAKE** by Carla Neggers (9781410476661) *Basic 6*

**LYING IN WAIT** by Ann Rule (9781410476111) *Mystery*

**NIGHT OF THE WHITE BUFFALO** by Margaret Coel (9781410476197) *Core 6*

**NORA WEBSTER** by Colm Tóibín (9781410476272) *Core 6*

**OBSESSION IN DEATH** by J. D. Robb (9781410475145) *Wheeler Hardcover*

**RUTH’S JOURNEY** by Donald McCaig (9781410476203) *Core*

**STONE MATTRESS** by Margaret Atwood (9781410476258) *Wheeler Hardcover 5*

**THE BODY SNATCHERS AFFAIR** by Marcia Muller and Bill Pronzini (9781410476746) *Mystery*

**THE FAMILY BUSINESS 3** by Carl Weber with Treasure Hernandez (9781410475565) *African-American*

**THE MAIDEN OF IRELAND** by Susan Wiggs (9781410473622) *Romance*

**THE MARRIAGE GAME** by Alison Weir (9781410475121) *Perspectives*

**THE MIME ORDER** by Samantha Shannon (9781410475985) *Basic 7*

**THE PERIPHERAL** by William Gibson (9781410476791) *Wheeler Hardcover 4*

**THERE WAS A LITTLE GIRL** by Brooke Shields (9781410476647) *Nonfiction*

**TWELVE DAYS** by Alex Berenson (9781410475060) *Wheeler Hardcover*

**VIPER GAME** by Christine Feehan (9781410477538) *Romance*

**WILD ROSES** by Hannah Howell (9781410473707) *Romance 4*