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NORTH AMERICAN CLIPPING BUREAU  
North American Precis Syndicate, Inc

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INDUSTRIAL NEWS

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08/29/2007

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CIRC: 2500

## The joy of shared reading

(NAPS)—The only thing better than reading a good book may be enjoying that book together with a reading group.

Reading groups are a great way to learn about new authors, to share favorite books and to meet other readers.

These are just a few of the reasons why the Women's National Book Association (WNBA) wants to encourage readers to take part in a group.

"Reading groups inspire, transform and educate," said Laurie Beckelman, WNBA president. "They foster community and instill an appreciation for the written word."

To celebrate the 90th anniversary of its founding, the organization has designated October as National Reading Group Month (NRGM). The mission of National Reading Group Month is fourfold:

- To bring about public awareness of the joy of shared reading;
- To provide a time for existing groups to celebrate their accomplishments and make plans for the future;
- To encourage libraries, bookstores and various organizations to host special events for reading groups;
- To provide opportunities for individuals to get involved in an existing reading group or start one of their own.

WNBA has chapters in Boston, Dallas, Detroit, Los Angeles, Nashville, New York City, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.

Its advisory board includes Carol Fitzgerald, founder and president of The Book Report Network including Readinggroupguides.com, and Nancy Pearl, a nationally noted librarian and author of "Book Lust" (2003), "More Book Lust" (2005) and "Book Crush: For Kids and Teens"

### Best New Favorites for 2006

*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne

*Eye Contact* by Cammie McGovern

*For One More Day* by Mitch Albom

*The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls

*The History of Love* by Nicole Krauss

*Home to Big Stone Gap* by Adriana Trigiani

*Love and Other Impossible Pursuits* by Ayelet Waldman

*March* by Geraldine Brooks

*The Memory Keeper's Daughter* by Kim Edwards

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**Read this: Any month can be a great month to start a reading group and share your favorite books.**

(2007), all published by Sasquatch Books.

A chief organizer is April Judge of the New Jersey American Library Association and West Caldwell Public Library. NRGM is originally the idea of Martha Burns and Alice Dillon, authors of "Reading Group Journal: Notes in the Margin" published by Abbeville Press (1999).

Further information is available at <http://wnba-books.org>. Check the Web site for details on WNBA National Reading Group Month events to take place in October. Sponsors include HarperCollins Publishers and Susannah Greenberg Public Relations. The Women's National Book Association was established before women in America even had the right to vote. It is a broad-based, nonprofit organization with members across the country, three distinguished national awards and a history of lively events in its eight chapter cities and elsewhere.