Misery don’t call ahead. That’s why you have to stay awake – otherwise it just walks on in your door.

— Toni Morrison, *Home*

by Erin Quinn


This uncharacteristic 145-page work of fiction by the Nobel Prize winner found its way to the top of the list by the 12+ One Book committee members. The layered narrative focuses on a young African-American man, Frank Money, who has returned from the Korean War in the 1950s. He is a victim of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), despite the fact that the disorder so well captured by Morrison’s prose did not find official diagnosis until the late 1970s.

A Korean War veteran who also suffered traumatic experiences during his childhood in the segregated South, Money is reluctant to return to his hometown of Lotus, Georgia until his sister requires his aid. Like most Morrison books, this narrative points a sharp eye at racial tensions, the black experience and the concept of home and community when challenged by suffering, catastrophe and trauma. What does it mean to come home? What is home? Her latest book ponders those questions in a fast, moving, thought-provoking read.

After delving through hundreds of suggestions, the One Book/One New Paltz Committee — which is made up of representatives from SUNY-New Paltz, the Elting Memorial Library, the New Paltz Central School District, the Jewish Community Center, the Sojourner Truth Library and a wide variety of readers throughout the community — narrowed its list.

“IT was a tight race to choose the One Book,” said...
Maryann Fallek of the One Book committee. She noted that the committee puts out surveys throughout the town and village of New Paltz to see what readers are interested in. There are typically no fewer than 100 books suggested to the committee, whose members then work to apply their criteria towards the selection. These criteria includes a “read” that will appeal to a vast audience, is available in paperback for accessibility, is well-written and touches on multiple topics, as well as a book that gets readers talking.

When the One Book/One New Paltz began in 2005, it had a huge success with Mark Haddon’s *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. “That book struck a chord with our readers and our entire community. We were fortunate. And every year our program has grown. Last year we chose *The Submission* and were fortunate enough to have the author come and speak. This year, Toni Morrison’s publisher donated 20 books; they’re so supportive of our program, as is the New Paltz Community Foundation and our public school system. We have two AP (Advanced Placement) classes that are reading the book, and have a visit from West Point professors who made *Home* a required reading for all incoming freshmen.”

In the spirit of One Book/One New Paltz, there are the signature book discussions, as well as a panel discussion by a diverse group of SUNY-New Paltz faculty, West Point visitors and a performance at Union Arts and Learning Center of a play focused on PTSD by Larry Winters.

“We’re so proud of this program,” said Fallek. “Each year it just inspires and encourages more readers. Our aim is to promote reading and to strengthen community, which is what we have done. *Home* is an excellent choice because we all question what it is to come ‘home’ again.”

For a full slate of listings, events, plays and discussion groups, go to [https://sites.google.com/site/one-bookonenewpaltz](https://sites.google.com/site/one-bookonenewpaltz). ++

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**Thanksgiving**

- Pumpkin Pie
- Apple Pie
- Pecan Pie
- Cherry Pie
- Gluten Free Pies
- Pumpkin Tarts
- Pumpkin Cheesecake
- Apple Dumplings
- Butter Cookies
- Pumpkin Nut Bread
- Butternut Squash Bisque
- Wild Rice Salad with Cherries, Walnuts & Almonds
- Oven Roasted Brussel Sprouts
- Wild Mushroom Stuffing
- Buttermilk Mashed Potatoes
- Roasted Sweet Potatoes
- Cranberry-Orange Sauce
- Homemade Turkey Gravy

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