

## National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame Summer Reading List blog outline

### *Blog Intro:*

The National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame has established a new Summer Reading Guide for both children and adults. Each book has been curated for this list because it focuses on an aspect of our Museum, whether that be a person we honor, western culture or just a cowgirl in general. This blog post features all of the books included in the list, along with a summary for each book. We will be sharing recommendations weekly on our social media platforms.

### **Adult books (no particular order):**

#### 1) Black Women of the Old West by William Loren Katz

This nonfiction biography tells the stories of the vast contributions African American women made in shaping the West – an important part of history that's often overlooked. Katz's honest depiction of the struggles these women faced will open the reader's eyes. The author brings the voices of these stories to life throughout the book.

#### 2) Cowgirls of the Rodeo; Pioneer Professional Athletes by Mary Lou LeCompte

Written by 2011 Cowgirl Honoree Mary Lou LeCompte, this sport and society-related biography acknowledges some of the first achievements women made the rodeo. The book provides facts for the history behind awards, achievements and specific athletes. These said accomplishments made by the women in this story have helped shape rodeos today.

#### 3) Thinking in Pictures; My Life with Autism by Temple Grandin

Following the amazing story of animal scientist, 2010 Cowgirl Honoree Temple Grandin, this book details the difficulties that she faced with autism and heartfelt stories behind Grandin's life's work. It shares her journey to creating new farming equipment that revolutionized the farming world. This story will open your eyes to the amazing possibilities that are available to anyone no matter their ability.

#### 4) O Pioneers by Willa Cather

This is the only fiction book included in the reading list for adults, written by 1986 Cowgirl Honoree Willa Cather. This fantasy story follows the life of Alexandra Bergson, who unexpectedly had to care for her family's struggling farm. Cather details the way that both the land and the characters feel that puts the reader at the edge of their seat. The book includes events that happened in American history, while also telling an engaging fictional story of a young girl growing up.

#### 5) Lazy B by Sandra Day O'Connor and H. Alan Day

In this autobiography, 2002 Cowgirl Honoree retired Justice Sandra Day O'Connor details what it was like growing up on a farm in Arizona. She tells exciting stories and life lessons from her childhood with the help of her brother Alan Day O'Connor attributing much of her life being raised on a ranch to her ability to lead as Justice.

#### 6) Sergeant Reckless, America's War Horse by Robin Hutton

Not many people know the rags-to-riches story of Sergeant Reckless, however, Robin Hutton shares her story throughout this book with such detail that after you read it you won't be able to forget her. Reckless worked her way up from racing horse, to combat Marine and eventually to Sergeant, before retiring. The Museum honors Reckless with a statue of her in the park outside the Museum, as well as creating the Sergeant Reckless award, whose first recipient was Hutton.

#### 7) A mine of Her Own; Women Prospectors in the American West, 1850-1950 by Sally Zanjani

This book tells the thrilling stories of multiple women pioneers who helped shape what we know as the pioneer experience. Many of the women detailed in this book are Cowgirl Honorees, including Nellie

Cashman. The book outlines the stories in history from the year 1850 during the gold rush to the year 1950 mid-way through the twentieth century.

8) *Riding Pretty; Rodeo Royalty in the American West* by Renée M. Laegreid  
“Riding pretty” is an interesting look at the way that women were perceived and how the idea of the rodeo girl changed over time, through secondhand stories of actual events throughout rodeo history from 1910 to 1956. This book mentions events and women that are honored by the Cowgirl Museum, how they have shaped history over time in a way that is often not recognized.

9) *The Lucas Sisters: Their Courage to Chase a Dream, it takes a Good Horse; true-life memories* by Shirley Lucas Jauregui  
This book is an exciting and heartfelt story of two sisters trying to make it in the world. In this autobiography, Shirley Lucas Jauregui, a 2014 Cowgirl Museum Honoree, shares her life and all of the ways that her sister and she worked their way through the cowgirl industry. Jauregui details major events in her life including trick riding, falling in love and starting a serious career.

10) *Wild Horse Annie and the Last of the Mustangs*  
Velma Johnston a 2008 Cowgirl Museum Honoree almost single-handedly saved an entire breed of horses from extinction and this book shares that story. This biography details the unique story of Johnston surviving polio, as well as just how much she means to the animal world through her efforts in passing the 1971 Wild Horse and Burro Act.

#### **Children’s books (no particular order):**

1) *Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder  
Laura Ingalls Wilder is a 1984 Cowgirl Museum Honoree. “Little House in the Big Woods” is Wilder’s delightful adaptation of what it was like growing up in a log cabin in the middle of the woods in Wisconsin with her family. The book is easy to comprehend and is great for ages five through nine.

2) *My Name is Georgia* by Jeanette Winter  
Georgia O’Keeffe is a famous painter and a 1991 Cowgirl Museum Honoree. In this book, Winter shows the story of O’Keeffe from when she was born; to the way that she believed she would always be an artist; to eventually in her adult years roaming the New Mexico desert painting what she found appealing. The pictures that depict the story are meaning full and bright with color, the story is great for ages three to eight.

3) *Black Beauty Early in the Meadows* by Anna Sewell  
This spinoff book from the classic story “Black Beauty” shows the protagonist’s early years with his mother playing in the meadow and learning the ropes. There is an overall lesson of kindness and growing up that makes the sweet book an easy, educational read, perfect for ages four through seven.

4) *Wild Horse Annie Friend of the Mustangs* by Tracy Fern  
The story of Wild Horse Annie has been told many times; however, Fern’s depiction of the story covers the adult concepts of abuse in a way that children would understand. Annie was a woman who had loved horses all her life and when she found out that people were abusing the mustangs, she knew she had to stop what was happening and save them, is perfect for ages four through seven.

5) *The girl who thought in Pictures, the Story of Dr. Temple Grandin* by Julia Finley Mosca  
Grandin has autism but did not let that stop her from becoming one of the most world-renowned animal scientists. Along with an inspiring story, the book also has a letter from the real Grandin at the end. As

well as facts from the author's chat with Grandin and a timeline of her life at the end of the book is wonderful for ages four through nine.

6) *Sergeant Reckless; the True Story of the little Horse who became a hero* by Patricia McCormick  
Sergeant Reckless is a racehorse who turned into a war hero. McCormick shows the ways that Reckless was taken in by the U.S. Army, while they were stationed in Korea during the war. It shares how Reckless worked her way into the hearts of soldiers and became a hero known and loved, which is perfect for readers six through 10.

7) *Willa: The Story of Willa Cather, an American Writer* by Amy Ehrlich  
This depiction of Willa Cather's life can best be described as unique. This success story shows how hard Cather worked to be recognized as a beloved writer. Each chapter in the book details important moments in time that correlate with Cather's life. The book also has a complete timeline in the back of all of Cather's accomplishments, which is best suited for ages seven through ten.

8) *Aunt Clara Brown, Official Pioneer* by Linda Lowery  
Lowery shares the heartbreaking and hopeful story of Clara Brown, a 1997 Cowgirl Museum Honoree. Brown was a slave who freed herself and dreamed of one day reuniting with her daughter. Brown works hard to prove herself, help other freed slaves find a place to stay in Colorado as she did. Lowery does a wonderful job describing the events that Brown went through in a factual way that is easy for children ages seven through 10 to read.

9) *The Original Cowgirl, the Wild Adventures of Lucille Mulhall* by Heather Lang  
Lucille Mulhall is a 1977 Cowgirl Museum Honoree. This book shares her story full of proving people wrong and making the most out of life. Mulhall showed the world one of the first definitions of what a cowgirl should be. This feminist piece is great for ages four to eight and shows that girls can do work just as well as boys if not better at times.

10) *Shooting for the Moon; the Amazing life and times of Annie Oakley* by Stephen Krensky  
Krensky's story goes into great detail about the life of Annie Oakley, a 1984 Cowgirl Museum Honoree, one of the most famous gunmen in America. The book starts with a look into Oakley's past and the hardships she endured while being poor, moves on to her becoming a world-renowned name and inspiration to many. This story shows Oakley's kindness and determination are wonderful for ages five through eight.