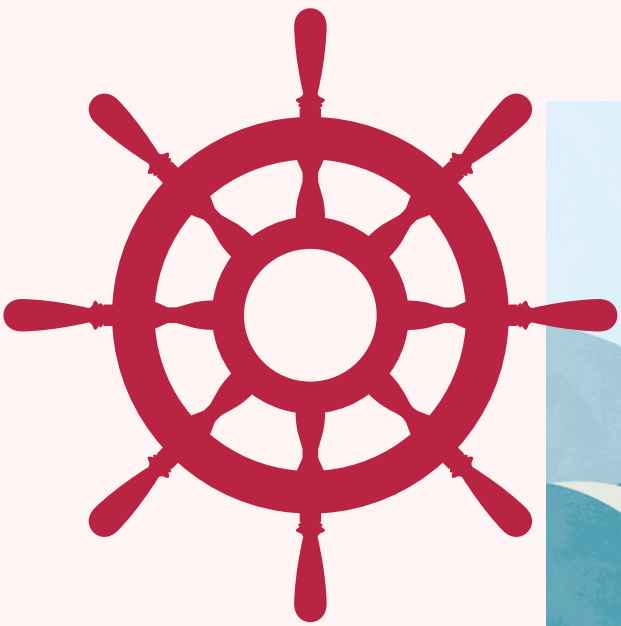


BOOK CLUB KIT





Meet the Author

Hello Readers!

My name is Shannon Sue Dunlap and I write books with a dose of laughter and a spoonful of love, God's love, that is. A merry heart does good like a medicine, and I hope every person who reads my stories will feel a shot of joy coursing through their arteries when they finish. One of the greatest compliments you can give me is saying my book made you laugh-out-loud. I love traveling around the world, singing tunes from classic musicals, and drinking Dr. Pepper. I'm a die-hard fan of happy endings and believe God has created one for each of us.

My ideas come from everywhere. You know the disclaimer at the beginning of books and movies about any resemblance to real persons being a coincidence? Ignore it. Writers are always soaking in the people around them. Not to sound creepy, but I once followed a stranger through the airport because I thought she talked like one of the characters in my Love Overboard series (Althea, if you care to know), and I wanted to hear what she would say next. One of my goals is for readers to recognize themselves in my characters. We're all such a fabulous mix of flaws and greatness, and everyone is the hero or heroine in their own life story.

Thank you for setting sail with the Shippers. Bon voyage and may your life be jam-packed with joy!

Shannon Sue Dunlap



Author Website



Instagram



Facebook



Goodreads

The author is happy to donate her time to meet with your book club on a zoom call. Please contact her at shannonsuedunlap@gmail.com.



Q & A

What inspired you to write the Love Overboard series?

One day, I was in my living room when a news feature came on TV about an elderly woman who lived on a cruise ship. Watching her smile and dance with the cruise director and live her best life made me wonder what it would be like if there weren't just one, but a whole group of senior citizens--cruising and matchmaking. From that, the Shippers were born.

Are you a big fan of cruising?

Oooh. Confession time. I've been on one European river cruise and also one cruise on the giant-style ship. Although I enjoyed myself, it's not my favorite form of travel.

The heroine of *Hearts Aweigh*, Abigail O'Brien, is like bottled sunshine. Do you share anything in common with her?

Personality-wise, we're very different. Abby is crazy, open, and extroverted. I'm more reserved, like a prim character from a Jane Austen novel, but I relate to Abby in one way. I've spent years working with children as a music teacher in Houston, Texas. My darling, mischievous little students have provided me with plenty of fodder for stories.

Are there any scenes in *Hearts Aweigh* that were inspired by real life?

Abby's arranged date in the fancy restaurant mirrored one of my own past dates. The man held out his hand when it was time to pray for the food, and the situation stumped me for a few seconds. It was a first date and we were already holding hands. LOL.

Forgiveness is a common thread that runs through the Love Overboard series. Did you plan it that way?

Not consciously. I'm not one of those writers who maps out every detail of her story before I start. Even though I'm not a planner, God is. Perhaps He wanted that particular message in both books. In *Love Overboard*, my heroine struggled to forgive her undependable father. In *Hearts Aweigh*, my hero had to forgive his mother for years of neglect, and Daisy had to forgive herself for past mistakes she'd committed decades earlier. Whether it's forgiving someone close to us, or forgiving ourselves, I think this is an issue every human being faces at some point. When we let go of the bitterness, it's not only for the other person's sake but also our own.

Meet the Shippers

**TOP
SECRET**

LOVE OVERBOARD SECURITY FILES: THE MATCHMAKER DOSSIERS

To: The MS Buckingham Security Team

From: Adrian Everson, Chief Security Officer

It has come to my attention that four female senior citizens have taken up permanent residence on the MS Buckingham. While living on a cruise ship is not unheard of, this particular group warrants investigation. They wander into off-limit areas of the ship, and their constant meddling in the personal lives of staff members has caused some conflict. These self-proclaimed "Shippers" fancy themselves matchmakers. Please study the dossiers on each individual and be prepared to take action if they step over the line.



EMILY WINDSOR

CAREER MILITARY WIFE/WIDOW

Age: 78

Physical Description: 5'5"; approx. 135 lbs.; short, frizzy, white hair; tends to wear garish paisley and floral prints

Personality: Spitfire

COUNTERMEASURE

Mrs. Windsor appears to be the group's leader. She is warm and welcoming at first glance but possesses a stubborn streak. When meeting resistance, she is likely to barrel over any opposition, especially in regard to matchmaking. Approach with caution.



DAISY RANDOLPH-MASTERSON

SOCIALITE

Age: 72

Physical Description: 5'3"; approx. 105 lbs.; chin-length silver hair; appears younger than her age (has probably had work done)

Personality: Gracious, Well-mannered, Unlikely to cause trouble

COUNTERMEASURE

Mrs. Randolph-Masterson comes from a wealthy, influential family in New Orleans, Louisiana and values a harmonious environment. When not with her cohorts, she's most likely to be found at the ship's spa or art gallery. Her nosy friends seem to be the instigators, and it may be possible to talk sense into her.



ALTHEA JONES

EXPERT BINGO PLAYER

Age: 72

Physical Description: 5'6"; approx. 260 lbs.; close-cropped silver hair; likely to be smiling; wears a rhinestone fanny pack

Personality: Friendly, VERY friendly (entirely too fond of hugs)

COUNTERMEASURE

Mrs. Jones also originates from New Orleans and is a close friend of Mrs. Randolph-Masterson. The only thing this widow likes better than arranging matches is looking for a new husband for herself. (He would be spouse number four.) Mrs. Jones's favorite areas of the ship are the buffet and the BINGO room. Stay out of hugging distance when trying to engage.



GERALDINE "GERRY" PAROO

RETIRED LIBRARIAN

Age: 70

Physical Description: 5'10"; approx. 140 lbs.; salt-and-pepper gray hair, always worn in a bun

Personality: Difficult to pinpoint, her face is often hidden behind the book she's reading

COUNTERMEASURE

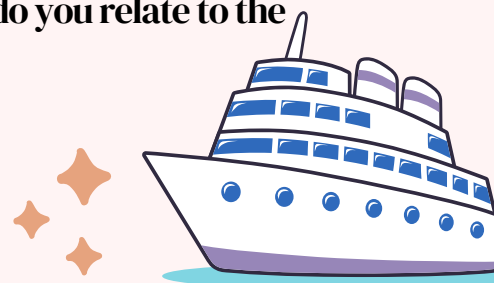
Ms. Paroo worked over fifty years as a librarian. Although she's introverted and doesn't say much, it should not be mistaken as timidity. There's a confident, intelligent air about her which might prove difficult to manage if she chooses to disregard conventions. (The new Irish magician for the evening shows appears to be smitten with her. Perhaps this will distract Ms. Paroo from causing any more upheaval with matchmaking attempts.)



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. The Shippers consider matchmaking their mission in life. Do you have an unusual calling or hobby that gives you purpose?
2. How does the setting of the cruise ship influence the action? How might character's decisions have changed if the story took place on land?
3. Emily witnesses her friend's distress when Daisy receives the ominous black envelope. Do you feel Emily was justified in investigating, or did she overstep the bounds of friendship?
4. Madeline has learned at a young age to be a people pleaser, afraid to say or do the wrong thing and upset her father. Have you ever felt the weight of other people's expectations holding you back from enjoying life?
5. Abby's fancy dinner with the minister doesn't go as smoothly as she'd hoped. What was the most awkward date you ever went on?
6. Gerry realizes Seamus has a crush on her but is too intimidated by their height difference to give him a chance. What are some ways Seamus might win her over and convince her to ignore her old insecurities?
7. Daisy refuses to carry a cell phone for much of the book. What would your life be like if you no longer had your phone and people couldn't get ahold of you?
8. One of the reason's Daisy is against a match between Spencer and Abby is because they come from two different worlds. She fears Abby will suffer in the suffocating social environment Spencer grew up in. How do you think Abby adjusts to this once she moves to New Orleans?
9. Daisy finds it difficult to let go of the guilt from her past mistake even though she's repented. As Althea says, it's under the blood. Do you ever find yourself tortured by unwise decisions from the past?
10. Each of the Shippers has their own distinct personality. Who do you relate to the most and why?



PARTY IDEAS

Adding a few costumes, decorations, and games can turn your book club meeting into a cruise-worthy celebration.

Party Themes

Cruise/Vacation - Celebrate indoors or outside by a pool.

- Costumes
 - Dress like it's sailing day. Hawaiian shirts, leis, grass skirts, floppy sunhats, captain's uniform, etc.
- Decor
 - Travel posters on the wall
 - A beach background
 - Picnic umbrellas
 - Pool Chairs
 - Coconuts and cups with the tiny umbrellas
- Games/Activities
 - Cruise Ship Bingo (provided in this kit)
 - Limbo
 - Hearts Aweigh Word Search



Kids Kingdom - Release your inner child and act like a kid again.

- Costumes
 - Pigtails, cartoon t-shirts, kids attire
- Decor
 - Stuffed animals, hula hoops, pinatas
- Games/Activities
 - Karaoke
 - Charades (act out your favorite books and characters)
 - Hearts Aweigh Word Search
 - Bingo



GAMES

Hearts Aweigh Bingo



There are two versions available. In the first version, players will find people who fit the different scenarios and have them sign the blocks. (Depending on how many people play, you can limit the number of times the same person can sign on multiple blocks.)

The second version is played like traditional bingo. Use an online random number generator to call the numbers from 1-50.

Hearts Aweigh Word Search

Have fun searching for story-related words like waterfall, wedding, and walkie talkie. Play at your leisure or challenge your club to see who can finish the word search first.



SIMPLE SHIPPER RECIPES



Turn your book club meeting into a cruise-worthy party with these super-simple recipes.



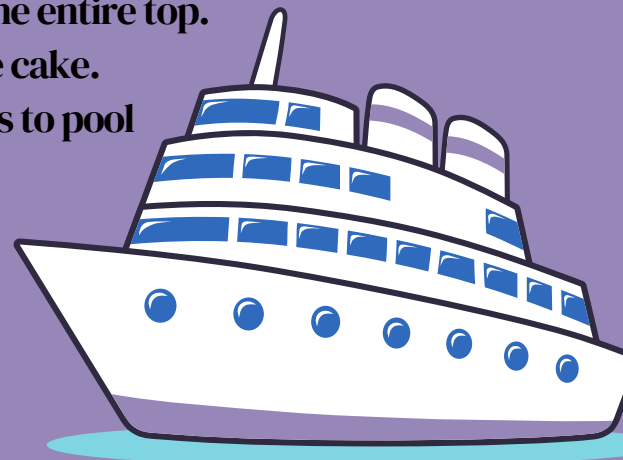
Althea's Coco Loco Cake

Ingredients

- 1 box of white or yellow cake mix (and whatever ingredients it calls for)
- 1 can of crushed pineapple
- 1 container of Cool Whip
- 1 can of coconut milk
- 1 package of frozen shredded coconut

Directions

1. Prepare the white cake mix according to the instructions on the box in a 9 x 13 cake pan.
2. Allow the cake to cool for 20-30 minutes. Also, let the frozen coconut thaw.
3. Once the cake is cool, take a fork and poke holes over the entire top.
4. Pour coconut milk over the holes and let it soak into the cake.
(It may not take the entire can. Stop pouring if liquid starts to pool in the bottom of the pan.)
5. Spread the crushed pineapple on top of the cake.
6. Frost the cake with cool whip.
7. Sprinkle shredded coconut over everything.
8. Store in the fridge when finished.





Emily's Stormy Fruit Punch

Ingredients

- 1 bottle of ginger ale (2 liter)
- 1 bottle of pomegranate juice
- 1 can of pineapple juice
- 1 orange
- 1 lime

Directions

1. In a large punch bowl, combine the ginger ale, pomegranate juice, and pineapple juice.
2. Slice the orange and lime into thin, round pieces.
3. Add the fruit slices to the punch for decoration.
4. Don't spill it on yourself. There isn't a handsome cruise director around with a spare sweatshirt.

Dear Book Club,
THANK YOU!



“I’ll follow Shannon Sue Dunlap and her fun, faith-filled matchmakers of a certain age anywhere.”

-Bethany Turner, bestselling author of *Cole and Laila are Just Friends*