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Readers' choices shrink to five

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The five authors shortlisted for the first Alberta Readers' Choice Award have been chosen. Soon it will be up to the public to pick a winner.

The process began last May with a partnership between the **Edmonton Public Library** and the Book Publishers Association of Alberta to promote the work of Alberta authors and publishers.

With a prize of \$10,000, the award is the biggest in the province, rivalling those of other major national book awards.

The award committee began by reviewing more than 200 submissions, winnowing them down to a list of 20 before handing it over to Alberta libraries for a vote. Librarians further reduced the list to 10, then gave it back to five guest jurors, who each chose their preferred title based on a range of criteria, from readability and literary merit, to potential consumer appeal.

In the end, though, it will be up to the public to pick the winner.

Log onto albertareaderschoice.ca. Online voting begins March 15 and runs through to April 30.

Here are the nominees:

- - The Frog Lake Reader by Myrna Kostash: published by NeWest Press; championed by Tommy Banks, senator, musician and longtime broadcaster.
- - The Forgotten Explorer: Samuel Prescott Fay's 1914 Expedition to the Northern Rockies by Samuel Fay: published by Rocky Mountain Books; championed by Red Deer Mayor Morris Flewwelling.
- - Fishing for Bacon by Michael Davie; published by NeWest Press; championed by bookstore owner Laurie Greenwood.
- - Bomb Canada and Other Unkind Remarks in the American Media by Chantal Allan: published by AU Press; championed by Fil Fraser, former broadcaster and author.
- - Buying Cigarettes for the Dog by Stuart Ross: published by Freehand Books, championed by Calgary-based independent bookseller Simone Lee.

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