

a downtown book festival



NATIONAL WRITERS SERIES

Writers Series of Traverse City™

and DOUG STANTON present

2012 Winter ~ Spring Season



GREAT STORIES
GREAT
CONVERSATIONS

**In support of the National Writers Series Scholarship Program
& the Front Street Writers Program**

Welcome to the 2012 Season!

You're holding in your hand a list of great writers and amazing stories not to be found anywhere else for a thousand miles — or at least from here to New York.

This coming season, there is something for everyone at this book festival. We are especially proud that a majority of our guest writers are women, such as literary stars Jodi Picoult, Anna Quindlen, and Geraldine Brooks. If you're a fan of intelligent, award-winning television, check out Vince Gilligan, creator of *Breaking Bad*. And don't miss Michael Sandel, Harvard's most popular professor who will deliver a fascinating class lecture on ethics and decision-making. Where else can you get into Harvard for \$15?

At the National Writers Series, we host monthly, up-close-and-personal conversations with America's best writers. Recently, Livability.com named Traverse City #6 on its list of Top 10 Cities for Book Lovers, and Publishers Weekly ran a full-page feature entitled "Traverse City is For Book Lovers."

"Some observers believe that Traverse City's growing reputation as a city of book lovers can also be attributed to the National Writers Series, founded in 2009," said Publishers Weekly. We are proud to be known nationwide as an event — and a city — that celebrates reading and writing.

But the National Writers Series is more than a one-of-a-kind way to meet your favorite authors. We are also a nonprofit, supported by volunteers, business people, families, students, teachers, and book lovers. Each year, thanks to our generous donors, the **NWS Scholarship Program** provides support to high school students who love to write. This year we are going further.

Come September, 2012, we are kicking off our **Front Street Writers Program**, an exciting partnership with Traverse City Area Public Schools. This new creative writing program will bring together high school students with talented writing teachers (MFA graduates from America's best writing programs) in a first-class workshop

setting. Our renowned NWS guest authors will also visit the classroom to lead the students in master class discussions. We believe that learning how to write creatively and powerfully is the number one skill we can teach students, and that this shouldn't be expensive, and now— here in Traverse City— it isn't.

As we look back, we have a lot to be proud of. Authors tell us that being at NWS was the best stop on their national book tours. In fact, some were so impressed that they are returning in 2012 as guest interviewers in another new NWS program called **Guest Host Spotlight**. Be sure to check out New York Times best-selling authors Paula McLain (*The Paris Wife*) and Susan Casey (*The Wave*; editor-in-chief at O Magazine) as they sit down with Jodi Picoult and Anna Quindlen, respectively. As well, we've also created **NWS Introduces**, wherein a debut writer takes the stage with a literary star. These are sure to be exciting nights. Two authors for the price of one!

In three short years, we've brought thousands of people to downtown, drawing audiences from Detroit and Chicago— and even fans from overseas -- people who shop our local merchants. In season four, we expect that NWS's economic and cultural impact will be even bigger.

All this is a testament to you. We're thrilled that you're here. Welcome to the festival!

Doug Stanton
Founder
National Writers Series



Megan Raphael
Director
National Writers Series

Co-founders:

Anne Stanton and Grant Parsons



This program is fantastic.

What you're supporting here is the future of our children, and it's important work."

~ Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie*

A Special Gift to the Community

It is with great pleasure that the city welcomes all the guests, sponsors and supporters to another season of the National Writers Series. We're encouraged that the City Opera House will again be filled with a delightful mix of writers bringing Traverse City yet another dose of sophisticated entertainment. Occasional wit, humor and laughter come with at no additional cost!

For four years, those who have gathered at the Opera House have been treated to an endless list of writing talent. We've enjoyed *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* as presented by Mitch Albom, met *The Greatest Generation* with Tom Brokaw and been inspired by Gretchen Witt raising funds and awareness for pediatric research.

The Writers Series has assisted in placing

Traverse City on the national radar and provided an on-going event delighting those who gather for these greatly entertaining experiences. Make it an evening or an afternoon in Traverse City, visiting with a nationally acclaimed author at the historic Opera House, then delighting in one of our outstanding city restaurants.

Have a wonderful and entertaining 2012 and enjoy yourself as you hear the personal stories behind our great books!

Michael Estes, Mayor
Traverse City



NWS MISSION

To spark students' writing excellence and to connect communities with nationally-renowned writers to encourage appreciation of the written word.

There is no greater measure of a culture's worth than the articulate voices of its writers. Books offer our best and worst thoughts, embed our collective memory, and create worlds that dazzle gods and monsters. The Grand Traverse Region is blessed with an abundance of successful authors. They have come together to form the National Writers Series with the goal of giving each of us an intimate view of the author's perspective. This conversation is not a small gift to our community; it is creating a legacy through scholarship and mentorship that will resonate through generations.

With this in mind, the Traverse City Area Public Schools and the National Writers Series are partnering to offer a unique opportunity to our students. Beginning in the fall of 2012 the **Front Street Writer's Program** will immerse

TCAPS high school students in creative writing through the mentorship of National Writers Series members and professional writers in residence from the University of Michigan. Our hope is that we will inspire the next generation of writers and nurture an art form that so often is the very measure of what good we have left behind.

I urge you to support the National Writers Series by becoming a Friend of NWS, attending the NWS events, or by making a donation.

Stephen E. Cousins,
Superintendent
Traverse City Area Public Schools



My few days in Traverse City and the National Writers Series were among the **most stimulating and fun days** I've spent in my life. The National Writers Series is the American equivalent of the 19th century intellectual salons of Paris—with national media coverage and outreach."

~ Karl Marlantes, *Matterhorn*



An evening with **VINCE GILLIGAN**

February 4, 2012 • 7 PM
CITY OPERA HOUSE

Who would've thought that a show about a desperate chemistry teacher, an RV, and a town named Albuquerque would be a recipe for one of television's most critically acclaimed hits?

Breaking Bad is must-see television, garnering consecutive Emmy nominations in 2009 and 2010. Now entering its fifth and final season, the provocative series follows a chemistry teacher, who "breaks bad" after being diagnosed with terminal cancer. To secure his family's financial future before he dies, he leaves his teaching job and begins a surreal criminal career. Entertainment Weekly, NPR and Paste magazine all named the show #1 on their lists of 2011 Best TV Shows, with Stephen King naming the program #1 on his list of 2011 Pop Culture Favorites, hailing it as "an American classic."

Creator of
the country's
most popular
TV drama!

Creator of AMC's Hit TV Show "Breaking Bad" and Writer/Executive Producer of "The X-Files"

If you admire Raymond Carver's short stories, or John Updike's *Rabbit Run* novels, or the seat-of-your-pants adventure found in the best mysteries, you'll love this evening. Vince is no stranger to northern Michigan, having attended Interlochen Arts Academy as a freshman. NWS founder Doug Stanton will interview Vince in an exclusive behind-the-scenes discussion about the show's memorable scenes and how they move from the writer's room to the screen. Vince will also discuss his diverse career, including a long-running stint as writer and executive producer of *The X-Files*, co-creator of *The Lone Gunmen*, and screenwriter of such popular films as *Hancock* and *Home Fries*. **Don't miss this rare opportunity to ask questions of one of TV's hottest writers.**



“ Traverse is French for 'cross.' Not as in, 'I think I can cross the National Writers Series off my list,' but rather, **'I'd cross the US on my knees for another fine day at the National Writers Series.'**”

~ David Sedaris, New York Times Best Selling Author

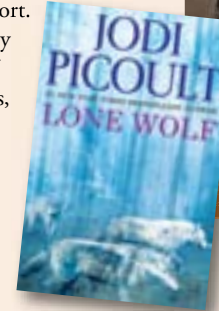


An evening with **JODI PICOULT**

March 12, 2012 • 7 PM
CITY OPERA HOUSE

A child takes revenge for years of school bullying. An autistic boy is accused of murder. Siblings debate whether to remove their father from life support. Portraits of heart-wrenching family drama that fill the pages of one of America's most successful novelists, Jodi Picoult.

Jodi is the best-selling author of eighteen novels: her last five all debuted at number one on the New York Times Best Sellers List. Her books have sold more than 14 million copies worldwide and have been translated into 34 languages. Entertainment Weekly called Picoult the "rare



An American Favorite, author of 18 blockbuster novels

writer who delivers book after book, a winning combination of the literary and the commercial." In 2009, her novel, *My Sister's Keeper*, was adapted into a hit film starring Cameron Diaz and Alec Baldwin.

Two of America's most popular novelists talk about life, love and family.



Special
Guest
Host

Paula McLain NYT Best-Selling
Author of "The Paris Wife"

On March 12, Jodi will take the stage with special guest host Paula McLain, a previous NWS guest and New York Times best-selling author of critically acclaimed *The Paris Wife*. The two writers will discuss their individual lives and works, the world of writing and the stories behind Jodi's popular novels, including her latest book, *The Lone Wolf* (published February 28), about the impossible struggle between siblings over whether to remove their father from life support. **Be ready for a super-charged evening that stirs your heart and challenges your convictions about the right thing to do.**



An evening with
ALAN CHEUSE

April 5, 2012 • 7 PM
CITY OPERA HOUSE



One of America's most influential book reviewers

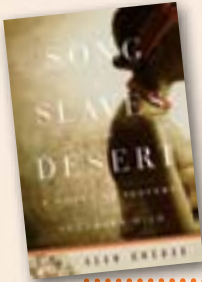
National Public Radio's longtime "Voice of Books"

National Public Radio's acclaimed "Voice of Books" Alan Cheuse is a master of words, both his own and others. As a book critic, Alan appears regularly on NPR's *All Things Considered* and has served as a fiction judge for the National Book Award. As an author, Alan has published four novels, three collections of short fiction, and the memoir *Fall Out of Heaven*. His short fiction has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Ploughshares* and

The Antioch Review, among other prestigious publications. Alan's latest novel, *Song of Slaves in the Desert*, traces the thread of slavery from 1500s Timbuktu up to the Civil War, exploring one man's struggle with the legacy of slavery and the loyalty of family.

Alan will be joined on stage by friend and fellow author Geraldine Brooks for an entertaining discussion of their lives and work. Brooks, an Australian journalist and author, has written several international best sellers including *Nine Parts of Desire*, *Year of Wonders* and *People of the Book*. She won the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for *March*, a riveting parallel novel to Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* told from the point of view of the March family's absent father. **Two smart literary novelists, one captivating discussion about life and letters.**

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Special Guest Host

Geraldine Brooks Pulitzer Prize winning author of "March"

BREAKING NEWS!

Traverse City, Michigan just named to Livability.com's list of
TOP 10 CITIES FOR BOOK LOVERS

An evening with
MICHAEL SANDEL

May 2, 2012 • 7 PM
CITY OPERA HOUSE



Acclaimed Harvard University Professor and Author of "What Money Can't Buy"

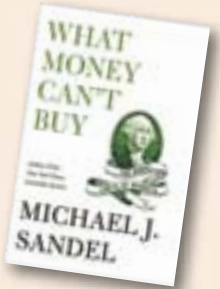
Here's a question: Would you hire mercenaries to fight our wars?... Or kill one person to save five?... Or auction off admissions to elite universities? Would you correct a shopkeeper who gave you too much change?

One night only... Get into Harvard for \$15!

Michael Sandel, Harvard's wildly popular professor and internationally renowned lecturer and author, confronts today's looming political and ethical questions. His latest book, *What Money Can't Buy* (published April 24), asks, perhaps, the most pressing ethical question of our time: Is there something wrong with a society in which everything is for sale?

Michael's "Justice" class is one of the highest attended in Harvard history. He's also the star of his own PBS series, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* He has contributed to *The New York Times* and *The Atlantic Monthly*, and appeared

on *The Colbert Report*, PBS, BBC and more. At this exclusive northern Michigan event, Michael will bring his popular Socratic lecture style to the stage for a thought-provoking discussion on the role of money and markets. **This moral philosopher may very well make you look at life in new and surprising ways.**



The National Writers Series at the Traverse City Opera House was the **best venue I've ever spoken at**, and its subsequent lodging was the finest insane asylum I've ever slept inside of."
~ Chuck Klosterman, *Sex, Drugs and Cocoa Puffs*

NWS is a one-of-a-kind literary event, and an innovative, fun way for writers to meet their readers. I'd come back anytime."

~ Mary Karr, *Liar's Club*

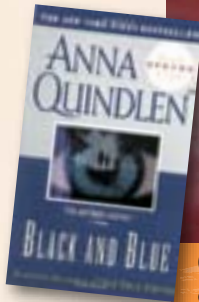


An evening with
ANNA QUINDLEN

May 14, 2012 • 7 PM
CITY OPERA HOUSE

Her dog, Beau, taught her how to live life. And her mother's death influenced many of her novels and books. Anna Quindlen, beloved by readers for her portrayals of families and life lessons, is a journalist, award-winning columnist, and best-selling author of *Good Dog*, *Stay, Object Lessons*, *Rise and Shine, Blessings*, and *One True Thing*, which was adapted into an Oscar-nominated film starring Meryl Streep and Renée Zellweger.

Anna was the third woman to ever serve as a New York Times' Op-Ed columnist; she won the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary in 1992 for her column "Private and Public." She also penned the popular "Last Word" column for Newsweek from 2000 to 2009. In addition to her journalistic



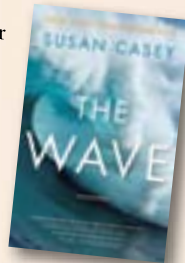
One of America's Favorite Journalists & Best-Selling Novelist

success, her electrifying novel, *Black and Blue*, about a woman's escape from her abusive husband, was selected as an official Oprah Book Club pick in 1998. Now her memoir *Lots of Candles, Plenty of Cake* (published May 1) offers a humorous and heartfelt look at her life and the lives of women, from girlfriends to marriage to parenting and more.



Special Guest Host

On May 14, Anna will appear on stage for a revealing discussion about her life and work with special guest host Susan Casey, O Magazine's editor-in-chief. Casey is the New York Times best-selling author of the critically acclaimed books *The Devil's Teeth* and *The Wave*. She has been a featured guest on programs including The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, The Oprah Winfrey Show, Charlie Rose and Conan. **These women have spent their careers courageously exploring and exceeding boundaries. Their conversation will be sure to chart new territory.**



Being in the National Writers Series is one of the **best experiences** I've ever had as an author."

~ Elmore Leonard, *Road Dogs*



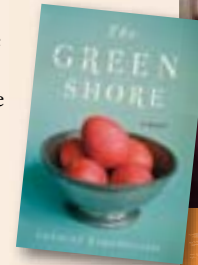
SUSAN CASEY NYT Best-Selling Author of "The Wave" and Editor-in-Chief of O Magazine

An evening with
NATALIE BAKOPOULOS

June 21, 2012 • 7 PM
CITY OPERA HOUSE

"This is why I write: To make sense of the world, to create characters who say and do things I can't, or won't, and to live the life for which I was too scared or too poor or too in love or too fortunate or simply too different." – Natalie Bakopoulos, on winning a 2010 PEN/O. Henry Award.

Natalie Bakopoulos's debut novel, *The Green Shore*, portrays a rich family drama set during the 1960s Greek military dictatorship as each person wrestles with the legacy of the government and life's meaning. An early draft of this work won the Avery and Julie Hopwood Award and the Platsis Prize for Work



NEW! NWS INTRODUCES

Award-Winning Author of "The Green Shore," a Debut Novel

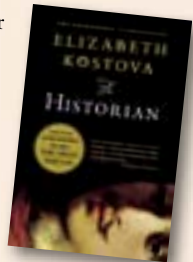
on the Greek Legacy. Natalie is a professor at her alma mater, the University of Michigan, and a contributing editor to the prestigious Fiction Writers Review. She won the 2010 PEN/O. Henry Prize, and her work has appeared in Tin House, Ninth Letter and Granta Online.



Special Guest Host

ELIZABETH KOSTOVA Holds an MFA from the University of Michigan

Natalie will appear on stage with her friend, international best-selling author Elizabeth Kostova for a discussion moderated by NWS founder Doug Stanton. Elizabeth's worldwide blockbuster, *The Historian* is a tale of three generations of historians on the track of the original Dracula. After a bidding war for the publishing rights, Elizabeth accepted a \$2 million contract, and the book went on to become the fastest-selling hardcover debut novel in American publishing history and the first debut novel to ever premiere at number one on the New York Times Best Seller List.



The Historian has sold over three million copies worldwide in 40 languages, and SONY/Columbia Pictures is currently producing a film adaptation. Elizabeth's second novel, *The Swan Thieves*, was another international best seller. **Expect moments of magic between this literary star and a wonderful debut novelist launching her own career.**

Traverse City's growing reputation as a **city of book lovers** can also be attributed to the National Writers Series." ~ Publishers Weekly

Front Street Writers Program



We don't think art should be expensive. That's why, this fall, 2012, we're kicking off a first of its kind program, our Front Street Writers Program, which is an exciting partnership with Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS).

This program will provide more opportunities for students to engage with NWS and hone their writing craft under the tutelage of some of the most talented writers in the country, our NWS guests.

"Having such an experience when I was a teenager," says Doug Stanton, "literally changed my life. I've never forgotten how fortunate I was to be taken seriously by practicing writers at such a young age. What we do on the City Opera House stage in Traverse City, Michigan a couple of times every month feels like the Oscars and NPR rolled into one- rapt audiences listening to writers talk personally about great stories. The Front Street Writers program will be a legacy program that we hope shapes the creative economy and our students' futures."

This first-class creative writing residency program will be available for free to area TCAPS high school students. Writing creatively, imaginatively, and powerfully is the number one skill we can teach students, who will tell the stories of the 21st century.

It's our hope that one of these students will be our guest at NWS in another ten years, when they come back to the Opera House stage as a published author!

Between the incredible charm of Traverse City, the great hospitality of Doug Stanton and the enthusiasm of the community, **the experience as a guest of the National Writers Series was the highlight of my book tour.** I would go back there in a heartbeat if they came calling." - Sebastian Junger, *War*



2009 & 2010 AUTHORS

Tom Brokaw, Mario Batali, Mary Karr, Peter Matthiessen, Elmore Leonard, Peter Leonard, Rhoda Janzen, Audrey Niffenegger, Walter Kirn, Thomas Lynch, James Bradley, Karl Marlantes, Phil Caputo, Jerry Dennis, Bryan Gruley and Amy Alkon.

2011 AUTHORS

Mitch Albom, David Sedaris, Elmore Leonard, Jeffrey Eugenides, Paula McLain, Janet Leahy and Lisa Albert (producers and TV writers for *Mad Men*), Roy Blount, Richard Ford, Sebastian Junger, Sarah Brokaw, Daniel Silva, Tom Perrotta, Chuck Klosterman, and Wayne State University's award-winning 'Made in Michigan' writers, including Bonnie Jo Campbell, Jack Driscoll, Michael Delp and Michael Zadoorian.



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There's no place like Northern Michigan, and **there's no other book event like the National Writers Series.** It's fun – and it puts great authors in front of huge audiences, who love and buy books, in one of the most beautiful places in the world." ~ Mario Batali, *Molto Gusto*



NWS Fun Facts

1

NWS has attracted thousands of people to downtown Traverse City through NWS events, where they shop, dine out, meet neighbors, make new friends, and read. We have sold thousands of books through bookstores during NWS events to date. Support your local bookstores! They are big business for any downtown, and are usually one of its anchors.

2

Throughout their careers, our guest authors have sold millions of books and include #1 New York Times best sellers, National Book Award winners, Pulitzer Prize winners, PEN/Faulkner Award winners, Golden Globe winners, Emmy winners, Peabody Award winners, and Oscar nominees. We take them to area restaurants and shops and they go home to New York, LA, Chicago, and tell people what an amazing place this is. All of them say they plan to return.

3

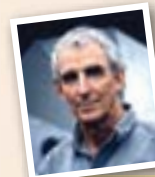
NWS has hosted public workshops and community master classes with visiting authors to help writers of all ages improve their craft. This season, we will have awarded over \$17,500 in scholarships for area high school students to study writing in college. The Scholarship Program was partly inspired by NWS founder Doug Stanton having received a gift of \$1000 from a gracious local benefactor, Helen Osterlin, when he was a high school student wishing to study writing, and he has never forgotten this act of generosity.

4

Since its inception, NWS has hosted over 40 authors, ranging from Tom Brokaw, Mary Karr, Jeffrey Eugenides and Mario Batali, to planning with our friends at Wayne State University Press. In just the first half of this 2012 season we will host a blockbuster list of 10 authors.

5

Doug Stanton dreamed up the idea of a book festival in his hometown of Traverse City over a decade ago, after having visited 100s of bookstores and attending 100s of readings as a student, author, and journalist. He wondered: Why can't we have here what people get to experience in New York? He had first thought this years earlier, while driving his Dad's AMC Pacer up and down main street listening to "The Wreck Of The Edmund Fitzgerald" and the Bee Gees, wondering how in the world anyone might become a writer. He's still wondering...



You seemed to have turned **the whole community back toward reading and books.** It's quite an accomplishment. Congratulations!"

~ PETER MATTHIESSEN, *Shadow Country*

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Traverse City Eye

Ross & Brenda Biederman
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Paul & Amanda Danielson
Louise Hagerty
Janet Leahy
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NWS Scholarship Program

The Traverse City National Writers Series supports Grand Traverse area high school students in the five-county region interested in writing by bringing on stage America's best authors. Net proceeds from the Series are donated to a dedicated scholarship fund, which awards scholarships to high school students planning to study writing in college. The Series also provides mentorship workshops and master classes for students with visiting Series authors.

New York Times bestselling author James Bradley presented the first National Writers Scholarships in September 2010 to three students

for non-fiction, fiction and poetry. This past April 2011, Abby Woughter, Kelly Clare and Leah Jodoin each received a \$2,000 college scholarship and had the opportunity to read their work on stage at the City Opera House.

The next scholarships will be awarded May 14, 2012, and submissions will be accepted in early 2012.

For more information on the National Writers Series Scholarship Program, including application dates and instructions, and how to donate, visit www.nationalwritersseries.org.



Leah Jodoin



Kelly Clare



Abby Woughter



The National Writers Series Scholarship Program is provided in partnership with the Community Foundation.



The really great thing about the National Writers Series is that it's not a tour stop, **it's an experience with an entire community.** For that reason, it reminds me of literature's high aspirations, and of why I got into this business in the first place."

~ Richard Ford, *The Sportswriter*



Tickets to NWS Events

1) Friends of National Writers Series - For just \$50 a year (\$100 for a family), individuals can become a Friend of NWS. Friends are able to purchase tickets to each season and special events one week before the general public, receive first priority for tickets to private author receptions, and have their name included on the annual donor program. To become a Friend of NWS, visit the City Opera House box office, or call 231-941-8082.

2) Subscribers - Patrons who purchase tickets to three or four

events in a NWS season receive a 10% discount on tickets. Patrons who purchase tickets to five events receive a 20% discount on tickets. To purchase subscriber tickets, complete and mail the form below, visit the City Opera House box office or call 231-941-8082.

3) Individual Events - Tickets to individual events, can be purchased at the City Opera House box office, online at www.cityoperahouse.org or www.nationalwritersseries.org or by phone at 231-941-8082.

4) Book Club Discounts - Groups of 5 or more purchasing tickets at the same time get a 10% discount.

5) Student & educator discounts available.



For more information, visit www.nationalwritersseries.org