

PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGO:

The following press release is embargoed until Saturday, August 24, 2014 at 6:00 am— eastern.

CONTACTS:

Jill Tewsley (231) 577-6971 or jtewsley@nwstc.org

Susan Wilcox Olson (231) 590-5930 susan@nwstc.org

NATIONAL WRITERS SERIES ANNOUNCES 2014 FALL LINE-UP

A rare appearance by a classic novelist, an international #1 bestselling author from the U.K., one of America's favorite book club authors, Ford Motor Company, and three veterans headline the new season

Traverse City, Mich. – August 19, 2014

In its five years of hosting funny, poignant and sometimes outrageous conversation onstage, NWS has become one of America's must-stops for authors on national book tours. The tradition of great stories and great conversation continues with our fifth anniversary season.

Since it began in 2009, the National Writers Series has presented more than sixty events, evenings in conversation, featuring some of the world's most celebrated and bestselling authors, including eight Pulitzer Prize winners; six National Book Award winners; winners of Emmys and Oscars; two of Time Magazine's 100 most influential people in the world; and bestselling authors who are also recipients of the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and Navy Cross.

This season, we'll hear new stories about second chances, redemption and homecoming, among many laughs and a few quiet moments of reflection.

An equally impressive list of guest hosts for these events include bestselling authors, regional and national journalists, and publishing professionals. The Fall 2014 National Writers Series season features another impressive line-up of guests and guest hosts.

Two blockbuster bestselling authors, whom seldom do events, are part of the line-up. International bestselling author Sophie Kinsella makes her first trip to the U.S. in more than four years, with appearances in California, New York and Traverse City, Michigan. Rita Mae Brown, author of the classic novel *The Rubyfruit Jungle*, rarely leaves her farm in Virginia. She will appear on the NWS stage in November.

Two events in the new season will pair multiple authors on the NWS stage at the same time. On Monday, September 15, Bryce Hoffman and A.J. Baime, who both penned books about Ford Motor Company, will appear with guest host Jean Jennings. Jennings is the grand dame of automotive journalism. Hoffman's *American Icon* is about Alan Mullaly and the fight to save Ford from bankruptcy. Baime's *Arsenal of Democracy* details the epic quest of Ford to arm a nation during WWII. And, on Wednesday, November 19, three veterans of the war in the Middle East —Brian Castner, Brian Turner, and Benjamin Busch— all acclaimed authors, come together on the NWS stage to talk about life, war, and coming home.

In October, the National Writers Series teams up with TC Reads to present Nancy Horan, author of *Under the Wide and Starry Sky*, the 2014 One Book, One City read for Traverse City. Horan is also the author of the mega bestselling *Loving Frank*.

Tickets for all NWS events go on sale to Friends of NWS at 10 AM on Tuesday, August 26, 2014 (box office only). Friends' memberships are available for purchase at the City Opera House box office or online at www.nationalwritersseries.org. Tickets go on sale to the general public at 10 AM on Tuesday, September 2, 2014.

Tickets can be purchased at the City Opera House box office, by phone at 231-941-8082 and online at www.cityoperahouse.org.

All events offer the choice of a seating-only ticket (premium reserved, reserved or general admission) or a "Whatta Book Deal!" package. "Whatta Book Deal!" pricing varies by event and includes a ticket, and a pre-signed copy of the author's book (the entire package is value priced to reflect a savings of 45% or more).

Educators receive a \$5 discount on all ticket types with valid ID.

Students receive a \$10 discount on all ticket types with valid ID.

All events take place at the historic Traverse City Opera House located at 106 E. Front Street in downtown Traverse City. Events begin at 7PM. Doors open at 6PM.

All NWS events this season will feature live musical performances from 6 – 7PM during which time attendees can enjoy a complimentary dessert from Morsels and a cash bar reception, as well as purchase books and NWS merchandise. The evenings will also include an audience Q&A and most events will include a post-event book signing.

Monday, September 15 at 7 PM

Sponsored by North Peak Brewing Company

A.J. Baime and Bryce Hoffman

With guest host **Jean Jennings**, founder and one-time editor in chief of Automobile Magazine

How Detroit Helped Save a World at War, and How in Turn an Iconic Company Saved Itself

On September 15, the National Writers Series will kick off their new season when **A.J. Baime** and **Bryce Hoffman** meet on stage to discuss their new books *Arsenal of Democracy* and *American Icon* with the grand dame of automobile journalism Jean Jennings.

After meeting author Bryce Hoffman in Florida this past winter, Traverse City entrepreneur Wayne Lobdell emailed National Writers Series co-founder Doug Stanton and NWS executive director Jill Tewsley in early February to say he had chatted with a writer that he thought would be a good fit for NWS. Hoffman had just finished writing a book about Alan Mullaly and the fight to save Ford Motor Company.

Just days earlier on February 6, Doug Stanton received an email from A.J. Baime. In his email to Stanton, Baime wrote, “Your name came up recently as I was having dinner with McKeel Hagerty. I have a new book coming out that I promise is awesome.” Baime was writing to see if Stanton would be interested in writing a blurb for his new book on FDR, Detroit and the quest to arm America at war.

By February 11, Stanton and Tewsley realized they wanted to pair Hoffman and Baime on stage together. That same day they began to discuss the idea of inviting Jean Jennings to serve as the guest host for the event. By spring all parties settled on a date and the event was confirmed.

Wayne Lobdell and North Peak Brewing Company is the main event sponsor for this event.

Hagerty is the hospitality sponsor for the event, helping to fund travel-related expenses for the authors and guest host.

Bryce Hoffman is a bestselling author, speaker and consultant. An award-winning journalist, he spent two decades covering major companies in the automotive, technology and biotechnology industries.

At the end of 2008 Ford Motor Company was in the fight of its life but when Congress threw it a taxpayer lifeline, Ford ignored it.

Instead, the iconic company under the leadership of Alan Mulally pulled off one of the biggest comebacks in business history. It would become one of the great management narratives of our time. While the rest of Detroit collapsed, Ford went from the brink of bankruptcy to being the most profitable automaker in the world.

From his front row seat as the Ford beat reporter for the *Detroit News*, Hoffman conducted hundreds of interviews and gleaned top-secret documents, memos and archives to craft compelling narrative nonfiction that reads like a high stakes drama. ***American Icon: Alan Mulally and the Fight to Save Ford Motor Company*** has become a manual for CEOs and a guide for organizations that want to transform their cultures and build winning teams.

A.J. Baime is a regular contributor to the Wall Street Journal and an editor-at-large at Playboy. In his latest book ***Arsenal of Democracy: FDR, Detroit, and an Epic Quest to Arm an America at War***, the Ford Motor Company and its production of the B-24 Liberator heavy bomber take center stage. He focuses on Ford's B-24 bomber plant outside Detroit in Willow Run, where for the first time engineers attempted to mass-produce airplanes the way they did cars. It's an engrossing story that Baime described as an opportunity to “tell a rich story about the most important collective achievement of any city in the nation's history, and that's Detroit during World War II.”

Baime's first book *Go Like Hell: Ford, Ferrari, and their Battle for Speed and Glory at Le Mans*, is currently in development for a major motion picture by 20th Century Fox, starring Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt.

Jean Jennings has been writing about the car business for 30 years. She's also been a cab owner/operator, a test driver, welder, and mechanic. She was a writer at *Car and Driver* and established *Automobile Magazine* with David E. Davis, Jr. Jennings was the magazine's first Executive Editor, became Editor in Chief in 2000, and added the title of President of Automobile Magazine in 2006.

Jennings has made appearances on *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno and Oprah. She's a regular on-air contributor to Fox Business Network; CNBC's Closing Bell, Squawk Box, Behind the Wheel, and Power Lunch; MSNBC; CBS This Morning and Evening News; and CNN's American Morning and Headline News. Jennings has won awards for feature writing, car reviews, and my monthly Automobile Magazine column, "Vile Gossip," including the 2007 Ken Purdy Award for Excellence in Automotive Journalism.

These days you can read what Jean is up to at her website JeanKnowsCars.com

Premium Reserved Seating: \$35 (ticket only)

Premium Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$59 (ticket + *American Icon & The Arsenal of Democracy*)*

Reserved Seating: \$25 (ticket only)

Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$49 (ticket + *American Icon & The Arsenal of Democracy*)*

General Admission: \$15 (ticket only)

General Admission Whatta Book Deal: \$39

(ticket + *American Icon & The Arsenal of Democracy*)*

Educator Discount: \$5 off ticket price with valid ID

Student Discount: \$10 off ticket price with valid ID

**Arsenal of Democracy* (hardcover), *American Icon* (paper)

Wednesday, October 8 at 7 pm

In Partnership with TC Reads

Nancy Horan

With guest host **Jenie Altruda**, Vice President of Communications and Engagement for Interlochen Center for the Arts

ONE BOOK, ONE CITY: *NWS and TC Reads partner to present a blockbuster night with one of America's favorite book club authors*

The National Writers Series event with bestselling author Nancy Horan kicks off a partnership with Traverse City READS, a "One Book, One Community" literacy initiative. The two organizations have joined forces to present the thirteenth annual community book read. "Since its founding in 2009, the National Writers Series has hosted the world's best writers and storytellers onstage in downtown Traverse City – some 120 authors editors, publishers book reviewers, featuring authors who sold literally millions of books. The National Writers Series has been a must stop for bestselling authors on the way from New York to Los Angeles," commented National Writers Series co-founder Doug Stanton. "Our new partnership with TC Reads only makes both of us stronger, as TC reads has long lead the way in community-wide discussion about great books."

Nancy Horan is the author of the blockbuster 2007 bestseller and book club favorite *Loving Frank*, which chronicles a little-known chapter in the life of legendary American architect Frank Lloyd Wright, and his client, Mamah Borthwick Cheney. Translated into sixteen languages, *Loving Frank* won the 2009 James Fenimore Cooper Prize for Best Historical Fiction, awarded by the Society of American Historians.

In her much-anticipated second novel *Under the Wide and Starry Sky*, Horan beautifully depicts the improbable love story of Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson and his tempestuous American wife, Fanny.

At the age of thirty-five, Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne has left her philandering husband in San Francisco to set sail for Belgium—with her three children and nanny in tow—to study art. Not long after her arrival, however, tragedy strikes, and Fanny and her children repair to a quiet artists' colony in France where she can recuperate. Emerging from a deep sorrow, she meets a lively Scot, Robert Louis Stevenson, ten years her junior, who falls instantly in love with the earthy, independent, and opinionated “belle Americaine.” As she did in her best-selling first novel, *Loving Frank*, Horan once more mines the true story of a famous man and equally remarkable, woman of history.

Horan was a teacher and journalist before turning to fiction writing. She lived for 25 years in Oak Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, where she raised her two sons. She now lives with her husband on an island in Puget Sound.

TC Reads has designated June through October as reading months. The TC READS events will culminate with a National Writers Series appearance by Nancy Horan on October 8.

Jenie Altruda is the Vice President of Communications and Engagement for the world-renowned Interlochen Center for the Arts. She is also co-founder of Speech Craft, a consulting company that provides public presentation and communications training for corporate executives.

A lifelong champion of the arts, Jenie has served on the boards of directors for the University of Michigan Museum of Art in Ann Arbor, Michigan and North Coast Repertory Theatre, in Solana Beach, California.

Altruda lives in Traverse City, with her husband and their two young boys

Premium Reserved Seating: \$35 (ticket only)

Premium Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$44 (ticket + *Under the Wide and Starry Sky*)*

Reserved Seating: \$25 (ticket only)

Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$34 (ticket + *Under the Wide and Starry Sky*)*

General Admission: \$15 (ticket only)

General Admission Whatta Book Deal: \$24 (ticket + *Under the Wide and Starry Sky*)*

Educator Discount: \$5 off ticket price with valid ID

Student Discount: \$10 off ticket price with valid ID

**Under the Wide and Starry Sky* (paper)

Wednesday, October 22 at 7 pm

NWS and Traverse City Retailer Relish team up to give away a shopping spree.

Sophie Kinsella

With guest host TBA

READING, WRITING & SHOPPING: *A gift for comic writing and flare for everything fashionable, the international bestselling author makes her first trip to the U.S. in more than four years*

Sophie Kinsella is the #1 internationally bestselling author of the *Shopaholic* series as well as the novels *Can You Keep a Secret?*, *The Undomestic Goddess*, *Remember Me?*, *Twenties Girl*, *I've Got Your Number* and *Wedding Night*.

It has been several years since Kinsella published a book in the *Shopaholic* series. This October, U.S. fans will get to meet Kinsella in person for the first time in more than four years when she travels to the States (including Traverse City, Michigan) to promote the book launch of *Shopaholic to the Stars*, another fabulous installment to the beloved series and it will leave you—and your credit cards—wanting to visit Rodeo Drive.

Local retailer Relish and NWS have teamed up to offer a Shopaholic Giveaway in conjunction with this event. Open just over two years, Relish is located in the warehouse district. They carry the best brands of clothing, in all sizes...at affordable prices! Cool, hip, and inspired, Relish has something for everyone. And...they are well known for their mascot Simon (a 1-year-old black pug).

Individuals can enter to win the Shopaholic giveaway by completing an entry form available at Relish between September 2, 2015 and October 15, 2015. Limit one entry per person. Winners will be drawn at random on October 15, 2015. Winners will be notified immediately. Prizes will be awarded at the October 22 event with Sophie Kinsella.

Grand Prize:

\$500 gift certificate to Relish
2 tickets to NWS event with Sophie Kinsella
Library of Kinsella's *Shopaholic* series.

Second Prize:

Shopaholic Gift Bag from Relish
2 tickets to NWS event with Sophie Kinsella
A copy of Kinsella's most recent book *Shopaholic to the Stars*

Third Prize:

\$25 Gift card to Relish
2 tickets to NWS event with Kinsella

Sophie Kinsella wrote her first novel under her real name, **Madeleine Wickham**, at the tender age of 24, while she was working as a financial journalist. *The Tennis Party* was immediately hailed as a success by critics and the public alike and became a top ten bestseller. She went on to publish six more novels as Madeleine Wickham: *A Desirable Residence*, *Swimming Pool Sunday*, *The Gatecrasher*, *The Wedding Girl*, *Cocktails for Three* and *Sleeping Arrangements*.

She submitted her first ‘Sophie Kinsella’ novel anonymously to her existing publishers and it was snapped up without her editors knowing that she was already one of their authors. It wasn’t until the appropriately titled *Can You Keep a Secret?* was published that Sophie revealed her true identity for the first time.

Premium Reserved Seating: \$35 (ticket only)

Premium Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$50 (ticket + *Shopaholic to the Stars*)*

Reserved Seating: \$25 (ticket only)

Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$40 (ticket + *Shopaholic to the Stars*)*

General Admission: \$20 (ticket only)

General Admission Whatta Book Deal: \$35 (ticket + *Shopaholic to the Stars*)*

Educator Discount: \$5 off ticket price with valid ID

Student Discount: \$10 off ticket price with valid ID

**Shopaholic to the Stars* (hardcover)

Thursday, November 6 at 7 pm

NWS partners with AC Paw to Benefit Animals in Need

Rita Mae Brown

With guest host TBA

CLASSIC NOVELIST, ANIMAL LOVER & ACTIVIST: *Always funny. Always Outrageous.*
***The New York Times* bestselling author and literary icon makes a rare appearance in Traverse City.**

Rita Mae Brown is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the *Mrs. Murphy* mystery series (which she writes with her tiger cat, Sneaky Pie), the *Sister Jane* foxhunting mysteries, and the acclaimed classic and mega-bestselling *Rubyfruit Jungle*. She is an Emmy-nominated screenwriter and a poet who has published countless novels, essays, screenplays, poetry, cookbooks, a memoir, and most famously, mysteries.

Brown’s new book, *Let Sleeping Dogs Lie*, will release on November 2 –just two days prior to her National Writers Series event. *Let Sleeping Dogs Lie* is a gripping new mystery, featuring the irrepressible “Sister” Jane Arnold and the wily antics of her four-legged friends.

Brown is in enormous demand as a speaker and guest artist, but she makes few appearances. According to a 2010 Wall Street Journal article, “...she rarely leaves her farm, preferring to socialize...on her back patio, drink Coca-Cola and watch the sun set behind the Blue Ridge Mountains.” Her NWS visit is a rare chance to meet a literary icon.

Critically acclaimed when first published in 1973, Brown’s *Rubyfruit Jungle* has only grown in reputation as it has reached new generations of readers. The novel is the first milestone in an extraordinary career, which has firmly established Brown as one of the country’s most distinctive writers.

In the late 1960s, Brown turned her attention to politics. She became active in many key causes, including civil rights, the Vietnam War, Gay Liberation and feminism. An early worker in the National Organization for Women, Brown is said to have angrily resigned in January 1970 because of its homophobia. In an interview with TIME in 2008, Brown said she didn't resign, "They threw me out." She fought back protesting the exclusion of lesbians from the women's movement. She also helped establish the Furies Collective, a lesbian feminist newspaper group.

Brown has published nearly a book a year since the 1970s and has generated a daunting body of work. Her murder mysteries have topped the bestseller lists, and her ideas and scripts have been made into films and television shows. She worked with Norman Lear on several TV shows, winning an Emmy. She even became a tabloid star during her three-year relationship with tennis superstar Martina Navratilova.

Brown holds doctorate degrees in literature and political science. She lives in Afton, Virginia, with cats, hounds and horses.

NWS is partnering with AC PAW, a nonprofit animal rescue serving Northern Michigan. Event patrons are invited to bring gifts to benefit AC PAW. A wish list of items can be found on the AC PAW Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/ACPAW/info?ref=page_internal

Premium Reserved Seating: \$35 (ticket only)

Premium Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$50 (ticket + *Let Sleeping Dogs Lie*)*

Reserved Seating: \$25 (ticket only)

Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$40 (ticket + *Let Sleeping Dogs Lie*)*

General Admission: \$20 (ticket only)

General Admission Whatta Book Deal: \$35 (ticket + *Let Sleeping Dogs Lie*)*

Educator Discount: \$5 off ticket price with valid ID

Student Discount: \$10 off ticket price with valid ID

**Let Sleeping Dogs Lie* (hardcover)

Wednesday, November 19 at 7 PM

Brian Castner and Brian Turner

With guest host **Benjamin Busch**, author of *Dust to Dust* and former U.S. Marine Corps officer who served two combat tours in Iraq

THE STORY OF WAR, THE LANGUAGE OF BEING HUMAN: *Three veterans of the war in the Middle East, all acclaimed authors, come together on the NWS stage to tell their stories as literature and as a record of an epochal event*

In an article he penned for the *New Yorker* entitled "Home Fires," previous NWS guest George Packer wrote, "Soldiers who set out to write the story of their war have to navigate a minefield of clichés: all of them more or less true but open to qualification; many sowed long before the soldiers were ever deployed, because every war is like every other war. War begins in illusion and ends in blood and

tears. Soldiers go to war for their country's cause and wind up fighting for one another...No one returns from war the same person who went."

Brian Castner served three tours of duty in the Middle East, two of them as the commander of an Explosive Ordnance Disposal unit in Iraq. Days and nights he and his team would venture forth in heavily armed convoys from their Forward Operating Base to engage in the nerve-racking yet strangely exhilarating work of either disarming the deadly improvised explosive devices that had been discovered, or picking up the pieces when the alert came too late. They relied on an army of remote-controlled cameras and robots, but if that technology failed, a technician would have to don the eighty-pound Kevlar suit, take the long walk up to the bomb, and disarm it by hand. This lethal game of cat and mouse was, and continues to be, the real war within America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But *The Long Walk* is not just about battle itself. It is also an unflinching portrayal of the toll war exacts on the men and women who are fighting it. When Castner returned home to his wife and family, he began a struggle with a no less insidious foe, an unshakable feeling of fear and confusion and survivor's guilt that he terms *The Crazy*. His thrilling, heartbreaking, stunningly honest book immerses the reader in two harrowing and simultaneous realities: the terror and excitement and camaraderie of combat, and the lonely battle against the enemy within—the haunting memories that will not fade, the survival instincts that will not switch off.

Brian Turner is an award-winning American poet, essayist, professor, and soldier.

In 2003, Turner crossed the line of departure with a convoy of soldiers headed into the Iraqi desert.

Now he lies awake each night beside his sleeping wife, imagining himself as a drone aircraft, hovering over the terrains of Bosnia and Vietnam, Iraq and Northern Ireland, the killing fields of Cambodia and the death camps of Europe.

In his breathtaking memoir, *My Life as a Foreign Country*, Turner retraces his war experience—pre-deployment to combat zone, homecoming to aftermath. Free of self-indulgence or self-glorification, his account combines recollection with the imagination's efforts to make reality comprehensible. Across time, he seeks parallels in the histories of others who have gone to war, especially his taciturn grandfather (World War II), father (Cold War), and uncle (Vietnam). Turner also offers something that is truly rare in a memoir of violent conflict—he sees through the eyes of the enemy, imagining his way into the experience of the "other." Through it all, he paints a devastating portrait of what it means to be a soldier and a human being.

Guest host **Benjamin Busch** is the author of the award-winning memoir, *Dust to Dust*. A former U.S. Marine Corps officer who served two combat tours in Iraq, Ben Busch returned to the U.S. to play a Marine in HBO's *Generation Kill*, where he pretended to invade towns he had actually invaded in the line of duty.

Ben lives in Reed City, Michigan, with his wife, historian Tracy Busch, and two young daughters.

Premium Reserved Seating: \$35 (ticket only)

Premium Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$59 (ticket + *American Icon & The Arsenal of Democracy*)*

Reserved Seating: \$25 (ticket only)

Reserved Whatta Book Deal: \$49 (ticket + *American Icon & The Arsenal of Democracy*)*

General Admission: \$15 (ticket only)
General Admission Whatta Book Deal: \$39
(ticket + *American Icon* & *The Arsenal of Democracy*)*

Educator Discount: \$5 off ticket price with valid ID
Student Discount: \$10 off ticket price with valid ID

**The Long Walk* (paper), *American Icon* (paper)

ABOUT THE NATIONAL WRITERS SERIES

The National Writers Series, founded in 2009, is a year-round book festival bringing award-winning authors, journalists and storytellers together with thousands of fans in downtown Traverse City. The National Writers Series was founded by *New York Times* bestselling author Doug Stanton, Traverse City attorney Grant Parsons and award-winning journalist, editor, and ghostwriter Anne Stanton.

Net proceeds from NWS events support the Writers Series of Traverse City scholarship fund, which benefits college-bound students attending Grand Traverse regional high schools. NWS, in partnership with Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS), also directs the Front Street Writers Program, a one-of-a-kind creative writing workshop for high school students. Proceeds from NWS events also support the Front Street Writers program.

The National Writers Series is, in part, made possible by our sponsors, including our sustaining sponsors FIM Group and by major sponsors Smith Haughey Rice Roegge and Cherry Capital Airport. Additional sponsors include: Traverse City Eye, Horizon Books, Leelanau Peninsula Vintners Association (LPVA), Amical, Morsels, Copy Queenz, Cherry Capital Subaru, Oryana, and the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation.

For more information on the National Writers Series, visit www.nationalwritersseries.org, contact NWS executive director Jill Tewsley at jtewsley@nwstc.org, or call the National Writers Series at (231) 577-6971.

#