

NWS

NATIONAL WRITERS SERIES

• *A year-round book festival* •



**Timothy
Snyder**
On Freedom

**Shelby
Van Pelt**
*Remarkably Bright
Creatures*



**Paula
Hawkins**
The Blue Hour

**Aphrodite
Jones**
True Crime



Ethan Kross
Chatter

**Kimberly
Brubaker Bradley**
Fighting Words

Bill Morris
*The Lions Finally
Roar*

WHERE GREAT CONVERSATIONS BEGIN!
NWS 2024 FALL SEASON

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~ DAVID MAMET

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The National Writers
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the reading and writing
skills of youth.



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THE NWS TEAM

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NationalWritersSeries.org

TICKET INFORMATION

City Opera House Box Office
106 E. Front Street
Traverse City, MI 49684
(231) 941-8082, ext. 201
CityOperaHouse.org

Program guide note: Author photos & book descriptions are generally provided by the authors' publishers.

WELCOME BOOK LOVERS!

Autumn is a season of change and one of the best times to settle somewhere with a new book. It's a season of "mists and mellow fruitfulness," as John Keats wrote in his poem, "To Autumn."

In that spirit, we selected an amazing, curious troupe of storytellers writing self-help, stay-up-all-night fiction, and true crime that inspire reflection and transformation. We'll finish the season with a young adult novel with a vital message for the young and old alike.

The season kicks off on Friday, September 20, with Timothy Snyder, a brilliant Yale University historian who is famous for his #1 *New York Times* bestselling book, *On Tyranny*. His new book, *On Freedom*, takes us on a spirited intellectual journey. He writes that freedom is often defined as freedom "from" state control and regulations.

But he urges a more expansive mindset—one that moves toward the values of abundance, generosity and grace. I loved this quote: "Freedom is not just an absence of evil, but the presence of good."

Next up is Shelby Van Pelt, who wrote *Remarkably Bright Creatures*, a *New York Times* bestseller, starring a curmudgeonly, brilliant octopus with a penchant for escaping his cage. Van Pelt, a young author, must have been shocked when sales flew by the 1.5 million mark, landed on the front page of the *New York Times*, and was optioned for a feature-length film.

Paula Hawkins is our next author. She's famous for *Girl on the Train*, which sold 20 million copies worldwide. She'll talk about *The Blue Hour*, which Lee Child

called, "The best Paula Hawkins yet—by a tense and haunting mile." It revolves around a now-dead famous artist who lived on a remote Scottish island. Her unfaithful husband mysteriously disappeared 20 years ago. All was forgotten until a human bone was found in a sculpture, raising hard questions about her husband's disappearance.

We follow this thread of intrigue with Aphrodite Jones, a bestselling author and TV celebrity, famous for "True Crime with Aphrodite Jones" that aired on Investigation Discovery. She'll share stories of her investigations of the most malevolent of our species—and why we read these chilling tales. She'll also talk about why she became a victim's activist.

Following Jones is Ethan Kross, who wrote *Chatter*, a book about the power of our inner "chatterbox." He explains how to transform that voice from a Negative Nellie into a positive force. Kross is a leading expert on controlling the conscious mind and a University of Michigan professor. He is also director of U-M's Emotion and Self Control Laboratory. It's the first event in NWS's new "health and wellness" series!

Our last event was inspired when the Traverse Bay Children's Advocacy Center asked us to host Kimberly Brubaker Bradley, a two-time Newbery Honoree. She wrote *Fighting Words*, a tale of two young girls who have stood by each other but struggle when the older girl reveals a secret about her mom's boyfriend. The Traverse Bay Children's Advocacy Center studied focus groups to determine if reading *Fighting Words* can change hearts and minds. They were

happy to report that it did. Important stories can change lives.

Finally, I wish to extend my gratitude to the donors, grantors, volunteers, board members, and our small but mighty staff who have all joined us on this magical journey.

Anne Starob

**NWS Executive
Director &
Co-founder**



IN GRATITUDE

When Doug and I visited Bob Branski on July 24, 2024, at the home he shared with his wife, Marcy Branski, we had no idea it would be his last day of a long life of 80 years. He was in hospice and a recent surgery had left him deaf. But we didn't think the end would come so quickly. Neither did Bob. He promised he'd be back to the City Opera House to volunteer at the Box Office, happily and reliably taking tickets. Because he couldn't hear, we typed notes on our phone, which he read. We thanked him for all he had done for the National Writers Series. He answered with a smile and a raspy voice, "Of course."

Bob and Marcy Branski were two of NWS's earliest volunteers. Bob, a retired controller in the auto industry, stepped up to become our Board treasurer in 2010 and Marcy, a published poet, became our first scholarship coordinator. We didn't have a dime to spare, but we had big dreams. Bob always had a positive outlook, thank goodness, and we held tight to each other as the dreams grew and became a new reality.

In 2015, we hired our first office manager, and Bob stepped down as treasurer. The organization found its footing and Bob was always delighted to hear the latest good news. He continued working with



Bob Branski and his wife Marcy.

us as a Box Office volunteer, showing up for each author event, even when it became necessary for him to breathe on oxygen. After everyone had been given their tickets, he'd make his way into the auditorium and sit in the back row, always in the same seat, beside Colleen Zanotti, our graphic designer, who is also one of our founding colleagues, and who designed the very page you're reading now.

We will never forget the good energies of Bob Branski, and Marcy, too. We believe that we're strongest when we learn how to join our stories, of all kinds, in some common purpose. NWS is stronger because Bob Branski shared his life, talent, goodwill and humor with us, and because of him and so many other good-hearted people, our story has continued.



HITTING IT OUT OF THE BALLPARK

It is an absolute honor to introduce myself as the new education director for the National Writers Series of Traverse City. I've been a fan of NWS for years before working for this wonderful nonprofit, and I'm grateful for the opportunity.

Already, my time with NWS has been filled with good work and excitement. This past August, we were given the opportunity to showcase the work of a brilliant young writer, Marin Henry. Marin wrote a touching short story under the tutelage of Kelly Almer, who piloted our first, entirely virtual class. The Pit Spitters generously invited Marin, who just started seventh grade, to read her story in the pre-game show. I looked it up, and this is possibly the first time a short story has been read before a Pit Spitters baseball game—ever!

Marin wrote her story *Found* from the perspective of an alley dog who has no intention of getting attached to the other end of a leash. But one day, he meets a human whose patient love persuades him to take the risk of trusting again. Marin read her story to hundreds and hundreds of people attending the game. The crowd went wild with applause after she finished. and then, Marin threw the first pitch. In all my years as a reader and writer myself, I've never seen a rowdier, better attended reading! And, in all my years as an educator, I've never seen a prouder student.

FULL CIRCLE

I'm excited to continue making this kind of impact. As someone who grew up as a book-loving kid in Leelanau County, the life-changing nature of exposing local students to a love of reading and writing is dear to my heart. I still have the dictionary I won in a little creative writing competition when I was a sixth grader. I know firsthand that seemingly small exposures and encouragements can ignite a lifetime of devotion to the literary arts. It feels like coming full circle to be able to return to this beautiful region after studying, writing and teaching on the East Coast and in Chicago, and facilitate these kinds of learning experiences for this next generation of kids in Northern Michigan.

AMAZING FALL CLASSES

To that end, NWS is thrilled to offer more amazing classes to students this fall, including playwriting and improv classes for high schoolers. We're hosting a journalism class at Cordia, where middle schoolers will interview members, ages 55 and up, about their lives and write profile pieces. Students will build not only their reporting skills but also empathy and connection across generations.

We will also offer a memoir and fiction writing course for middle schoolers remotely, an Antrim County language lab, and an after-school poetry club for Manistee County middle schoolers. And, of course, we're already planning

our annual Battle of the Books reading competition, which engages 370 young readers from all around northwest Michigan. NWS, in partnership with the Traverse Area District Library, is already planning the incredible books our 4th and 5th graders will read this year. You can be sure they will be carefully selected by our fantastic team of librarians and teachers!

I'll also be teaching our college essay course, which has already helped dozens achieve their collegiate dreams. It's my hope that these college-bound students will grow in new and dynamic ways, while remembering their Northern Michigan roots. Maybe, after their grand adventures, they'll return home to share everything they've learned and experienced, enriching our culture and raising the next generation of leaders, thinkers, artists, readers and writers. and maybe someday, one special writer will return to the City Opera House to talk about their own bestselling book and how their love of writing began here in Northern Michigan.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Raising Writers is supported by our world-class teachers and our incredible volunteers. I would like to especially thank our donors and grantors, whose gifts enable us to offer every single creative writing class completely free of charge. This is critically important in an area like ours, where we see such economic disparity. We're able to educate, inspire, and grow the creative minds of all students, due to the generosity of our community members who take pride in supporting these amazing opportunities.

If you are interested in volunteering or financially supporting young writers, contact me at education@nwstc.org. To register for a class, visit our website



A FIRST - Marin Henry reading her story at Turtle Creek Stadium.

and click "Raising Writers." Or find me at a mainstage author event (how amazing is our fall lineup?). Ask me about our programming, how to get involved, or tell me what classes a student in your life would most love to take. I can't wait to meet you, and to be of service to the National Writers Series, our Raising Writers Program, and to all the young writers who are given the chance to shine.

With gratitude,

Audrey Fierberg
NWS Education Director



NWS 2024 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNERS



NWS 2024 Scholarship winners are recognized at author Kevin Kwan's event on June 4, 2024. The winners are (from left to right) Eliana Hermel, Kailyn Groves, Emma Newman-Bale, Kaitlyn Andrews, Lucas McSwain, Lola Russle.

Congratulations to this year's outstanding scholarship winners! We are so proud to see the fantastic talent of our area youth and to be able to recognize their accomplishments. This year the National Writers Series in partnership with the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation doubled the number of scholarships to high school students from four to eight. For scholarship details, visit nationalwritersseries.org under Raising Writers.

Leslie Lee Nonfiction Scholarship

1st place (\$1,500):

TESSA FELKER, Senior/Elk Rapids
A Personal Journey from Writing to Medicine

2nd place (\$500):

LUCAS MCSWAIN, Senior/Career
Tech Center Writers Studio
My Truth of Tuna Casserole

Robert & Marcy Branski Poetry Scholarship

1st place (\$1,500):

LOLA RUSSELL, Junior/Career Tech
Center Writers Studio
Apologies to Each Eraser

2nd place (\$500):

KENDRA COUTURIER, Senior/
Lake Leelanau St. Mary
Sirens at Moonrise

William Montgomery Fiction Scholarship

1st place (\$1,500):

KAITLYN ANDREWS, Senior/Traverse
City St. Francis
Over the Edge

2nd place (\$500):

EMMA NEWMAN-BALE, Senior/
Traverse City Central
The Secret Store on Fern Street

Judith Lang Journalism Scholarship

1st place (\$1,500):

KAILYN GROVES, Junior/Traverse
City Central
The Digital Divide

2nd place (\$500):

ELIANA HERMEL, Junior/Traverse
City Central
The Struggle for Sobriety



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From creative writing classes to Battle of the Books to a classroom visit by *New York Times* bestselling author Barbara McQuade, we've brought the joy of reading, writing and learning to hundreds of area students this year!



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“Freedom is not just
an absence of evil.
Freedom is the
presence of good.”

TIMOTHY SNYDER

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KUDOS TO NWS!

Doug did an amazing job moderating a very complex topic and keeping the conversation moving.

I have listened to Dr. Snyder on multiple podcasts, and last night was a truly memorable event.

Kudos on everyone's efforts!

~ Michael London, M.D., in
an email of praise for the
Timothy Snyder event.

TIMOTHY SNYDER

Supported by the Robert & Nancy Giles 'Truth Matters' Author Conversations

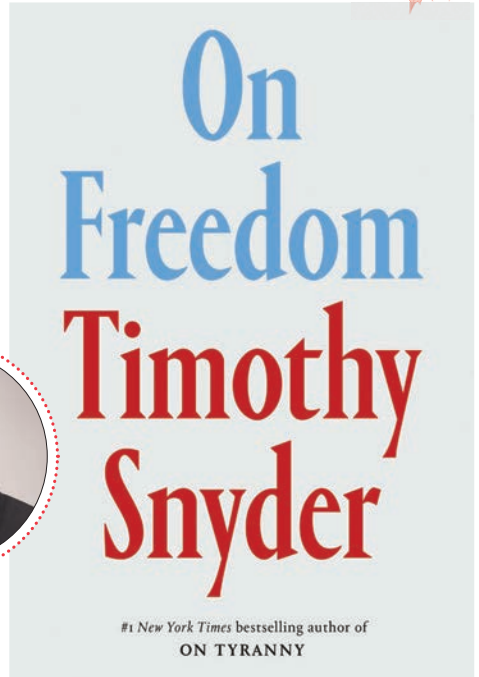
A brilliant exploration of freedom—why it's our only chance for survival

NWS is excited to host bestselling author Timothy Snyder in conversation with NWS co-founder, Doug Stanton. His new book, *On Freedom*, is Snyder's most ambitious and personal book yet.



Snyder has been called “the leading interpreter of our dark times.” As a historian, he has given us startling reinterpretations of political collapse and mass killing. His book *On Tyranny* has inspired millions around the world to fight for freedom. Now, in this tour de force of political philosophy, he helps us see exactly what we're fighting for.

On Freedom challenges us to inhabit a world between the personal and the political by asking what it is we truly value, how we want to live, and what we truly want both as individuals and as citizens. With clear-eyed scrutiny, Snyder asks us to envision a better future for ourselves and for those who will come



after. As we head into the consequential election of 2024, Snyder shows us the difference that getting freedom will make for us and for generations to come.

Timothy Snyder is the Richard C. Levin Professor of History and Global Affairs at Yale University and a permanent fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna. His work has inspired poster campaigns and exhibitions, sculptures, a punk rock song, a rap song, a play, and an opera, and he has appeared in over fifty films and documentaries. He lives in New Haven, Connecticut.



Guest Host Doug Stanton is the #1 *New York Times* best-selling author of *In Harm's Way* and *12 Strong*, made into a major motion picture by Jerry Bruckheimer, and *The Odyssey of Echo Company*. His writing has appeared in numerous major publications. He attended Interlochen Arts Academy, Hampshire College, and the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, where he received an MFA. He created the National Writers Series in 2009 with his wife, Anne, and attorney Grant Parsons. He & Anne have three children & live in Traverse City.

“Being friends with an octopus
has shown me that our world...
is aflame with shades of
brilliance we cannot fathom.”

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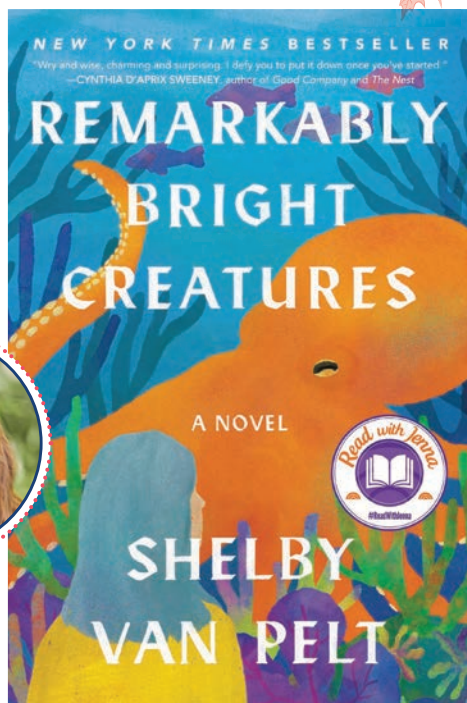
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SHELBY VAN PELT

Supported by the Clark
& Karen Bunting 'Natural
Wonders' Author Conversations

Charming & original, a story of
friendship, reckoning, & hope

NWS welcomes Shelby Van Pelt to Traverse City to discuss her hit novel, *Remarkably Bright Creatures*. Her debut novel is a gentle reminder that sometimes taking a hard look at the past can help uncover a future that once felt impossible.



After Tova Sullivan's husband died, she began working the night shift at the Sowell Bay Aquarium, mopping floors and tidying up. Keeping busy has always helped her cope, which she's been doing since her eighteen-year-old son, Erik, mysteriously vanished on a boat in Puget Sound over thirty years ago.

Tova becomes acquainted with curmudgeonly Marcellus, a giant Pacific octopus living at the aquarium. Marcellus knows more than anyone can imagine but wouldn't dream of lifting one of his eight arms for his human captors—until he forms a remarkable friendship with Tova.

Ever the detective, Marcellus deduces

what happened the night Tova's son disappeared. and now Marcellus must use every trick his old invertebrate body can muster to reveal the truth.

Remarkably Bright Creatures was an Instant *New York Times* Bestseller and a Read With Jenna Today Show book club pick. In 2023, Shelby was awarded the Heartland Prize for Fiction and the McLaughlin-Esstman-Stearns First Novel Prize from The Writer's Center. *Remarkably Bright Creatures* has sold over a million copies. Shelby lives in the Chicago area with her family.



GUEST HOST BETH MILLIGAN is a journalist and head writer for the Traverse City Ticker. She currently serves on the marketing and outreach committee for the Leelanau Conservancy and on the advisory board for Northwestern Michigan College's Extended Education Services. Beth lives on a small farm called Stone Hill Farm on Old Mission Peninsula with her partner, Joe Beyer.



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PAULA HAWKINS

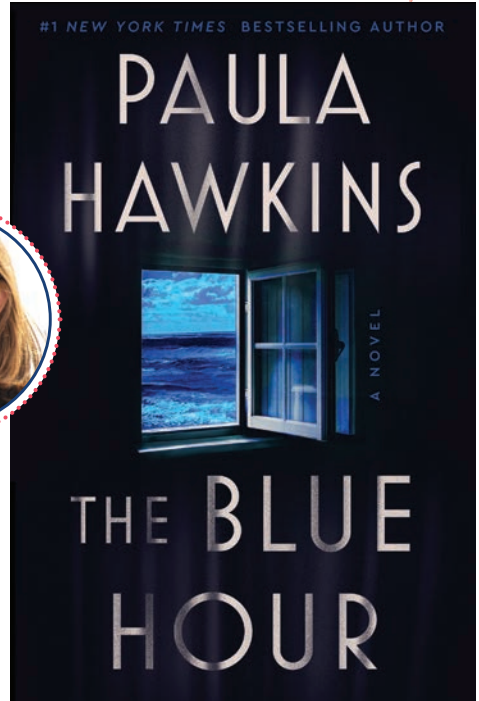
An immersive new novel of ambition, legacy, and betrayal

Meet #1 *New York Times* best-selling author Paula Hawkins, author of *Girl on the Train*, which sold more than 23 million copies worldwide and was made into a major motion picture, starring Emily Blunt.



Hawkins will take the City Opera House stage to talk with NWS co-founder Doug Stanton about her propulsive and powerful new novel, *The Blue Hour*, praised by Lee Child as, "The best Paula Hawkins yet—by a tense & haunting mile."

The tale is set on Eris Island unreachable from the Scottish mainland for twelve hours each day where only one inhabitant lives in the island's sole house. It was once home to Vanessa, a famous artist and sculptor, who lost her fight to cancer, leaving behind the unsolved disappearance of her notoriously unfaithful husband twenty years ago. Now the island is home to her confidante, Grace, a solitary creature of the tides, content in her own isolation. But when a shocking discovery is made in an art gallery—human bones found in one of Vanessa's art pieces— a visitor comes calling. And



the secrets of Eris threaten to unravel.

Paula Hawkins was a journalist for fifteen years before writing her first novel. Born in Zimbabwe, she moved to London in 1989. Her first thriller, *The Girl on the Train*, was published in over fifty languages, and it has been a #1 bestseller around the world. Paula's thrillers, *Into the Water* and *A Slow Fire Burning*, were also instant #1 bestsellers.

EVENT SPONSORS: White Dog * Black Tie only at The Painted Bird



GUEST HOST DOUG STANTON is the #1 *New York Times* best-selling author of *In Harm's Way* and *12 Strong*, made into a major motion picture by Jerry Bruckheimer, and *The Odyssey of Echo Company*. He attended Interlochen Arts Academy, Hampshire College, and the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, where he received an MFA. He created the National Writers Series in 2009 with his wife, Anne, and attorney Grant Parsons. He and Anne have three children and live in Traverse City.

KUDOS TO NWS!

“I had a wonderful time in Traverse City with the National Writers Series. The audience was warm and receptive—with a great sense of humor. And Doug and Anne Stanton make marvelous, obliging hosts. Can’t recommend it enough.”

ERIK LARSON

Bestselling author
of *The Demon
of Unrest*



A Heartfelt Thanks to Golden-Fowler Furniture

Kudos to Michael Mahn and Amanda Eshelman for generously furnishing our author events at Lars Hockstad Auditorium. The beautiful carpet, tables, chairs and flowers make for a warm and homey setting on stage!

THANK YOU!

“

Books are a uniquely
portable magic.

~ Stephen King

”

LITERARY UNDERWRITER

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APHRODITE JONES

Stories of the country's most notorious criminals

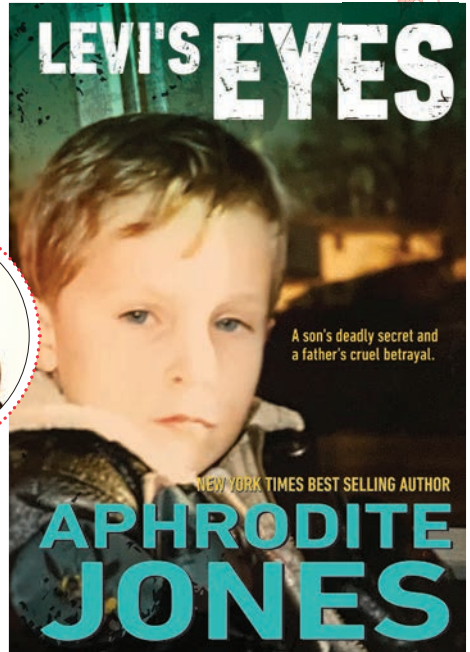
Join us for an evening of shocking reveals and “this can’t be true” mysteries with *New York Times* bestselling author Aphrodite Jones. As producer and TV host of Investigation Discovery’s *True Crime with Aphrodite Jones*, she has traveled to places we fear to tread and returned with bone-chilling secrets.



Aphrodite is one of the reigning queens of the true crime genre. She will give us a glimpse into her motivation of reporting on the most cunning and malevolent criminals—and why we read these cautionary tales.

In her 30-plus year career, Aphrodite has reported on numerous high profile cases. In her latest book, *Levi’s Eyes*, Aphrodite explores two killings—first a mother, then her son—murdered 17 years apart, by a husband and father whose unspeakable betrayal unraveled the thread that fatally linked them together.

The evening will also explore what it’s meant to Aphrodite personally to devote a lifetime investigating true crime and



where she’s drawn her strength. She’ll also explain why she became an activist for victim’s rights.

Aphrodite takes the stage with Clark Bunting, who headed up Investigation Discovery and gave the green light for Aphrodite’s show, which ran for six seasons. It can now be watched on Discovery+.

Jones is an activist for victims' rights, a best-selling true crime author whose expertise in the courtroom, as a public speaker, on radio and in television, is world-renowned.



GUEST HOST CLARK BUNTING spent 30 years working in media and television production. He served as President and General Manager of Discovery Channel, founding President and General Manager of Animal Planet, and President of Discovery Studios. His programming portfolio received numerous Emmy Awards, Peabody and Dupont Awards, and an Oscar. He received an MA in Communications and a BA in Advertising and also holds an honorary doctorate from Michigan State University. He proudly serves as the chairperson of the board of the National Writers Series.

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease...”

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

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and the Ethan Kross author event

Herm Triezenberg & Elizabeth Mostrom
'Health & Wellness' Author Conversations



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ETHAN KROSS

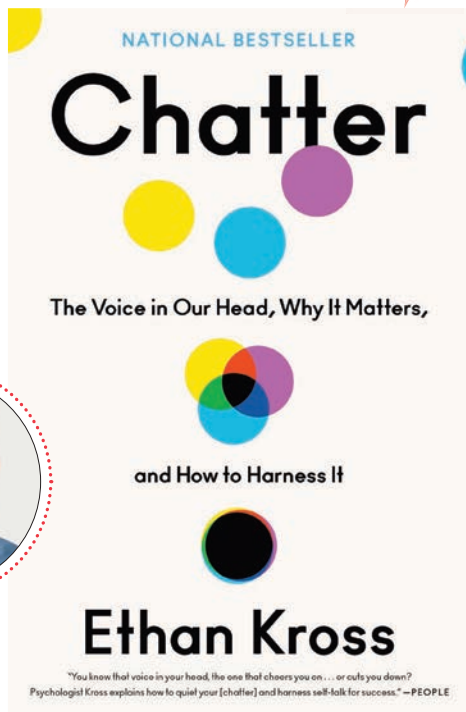
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Author Conversations

How to harness the hidden
power of our inner voices

Meet bestselling author Ethan Kross, who reveals how to harness the positive power of your constant inner voice in his national bestselling book, *Chatter*. He will talk about how to use that inner voice to combat anxiety, improve physical and mental health, and deepen your relationships with others. He'll also talk about his upcoming book, *Shift*, that focuses on how to manage your emotions.



Dr. Kross is an award-winning psychologist and the director of University of Michigan's Emotion and Self Control Laboratory. In his book *Chatter*, Ethan talks about the constant, silent conversations we all have with ourselves. Interweaving groundbreaking behavioral and brain research with real-world case studies—from a pitcher who forgets how to pitch, to a Harvard undergrad negotiating her double life as a spy—Kross explains how these conversations shape our lives, work, and relationships. He warns that giving in to



negative and disorienting self-talk—what he calls “chatter”—can tank our health, sink our moods, strain our social connections, and cause us to fold under pressure.

But the good news, he says, is that we’re already equipped with the tools we need to make our inner voice work in our favor.

Brilliantly argued, expertly researched, and filled with compelling stories, *Chatter* gives us the power to change the most important conversation we have each day: the one we have with ourselves.



GUEST HOST DANA BLACK is an executive public speaking coach, moderator, storyteller, emcee, podcast host and creator of *I Swear on My Mother's Grave*, and a SAG-AFTRA TV/film/voiceover actor for over 15 years. For the last 3 years, Dana has been a speaker delivery coach for TEDxChicago, and coaches local business leaders and entrepreneurs right here in Traverse City. Dana moved to Traverse City 2 years ago after living in Chicago for over 20 years.

“The true character of
a society is revealed in
how it treats its children.”

NELSON MANDELA

Proud to support the National Writers Series
and the Kimberly Brubaker Bradley event
Lola Jackson & Dilys Tosteson García
‘Community Building’ Author Conversations

KUDOS TO NWS!

“Surreal. Traverse City is an alternative universe that honors the writer. A giant poster at the airport announced my book event to fellow travelers. A small box in my hotel room contained sweets named after me, compliments of the local bakery. The City Opera House was packed. The conversation partner hand-picked by organizers threw me off my script and made me dig deep. How refreshing. Easily one of the best tour stops in America.”

**AARTI
SHAHANI**
author of
Here We Are



*Celebrating
great writing and
inspired authors.*

The Begonia Charitable Foundation has funded the purchase of 300 copies of **Fighting Words** with the hope that readers will be instilled with a sense of the humanity and hurt of young sexual abuse victims. The books will be available for free at the event for attendees.



KIMBERLY BRUBAKER BRADLEY

In partnership with the Traverse Bay Children's Advocacy Center
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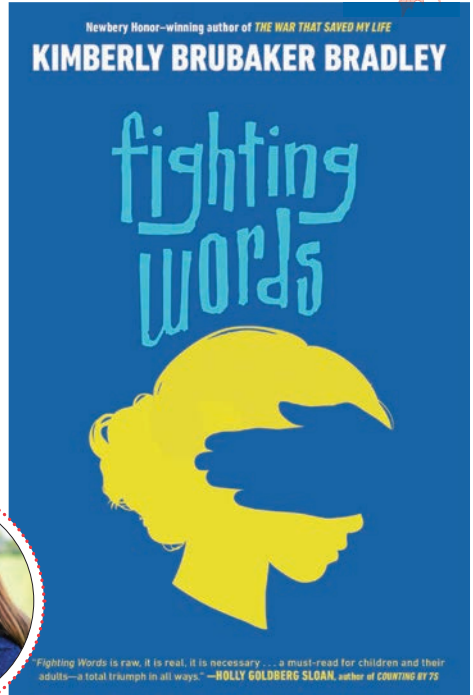
A candid middle grade novel about sisterhood & sexual abuse

In this powerful novel that explodes the stigma around child sexual abuse and leavens an intense tale with compassion and humor, Kimberly Brubaker Bradley tells a story about two sisters, linked by love and trauma, who must find their own voices before they can find their way back to each other.



The story revolves around Suki, who has always had the back of her little sister, Della—when her mom's boyfriend took them in after she'd gone to prison and when that same boyfriend did something so awful to Della they had to run fast. But who has been protecting Suki? Who has been speaking up for her?

When Suki tries to kill herself after years of hiding a long-held secret, Della wonders if it's her time to start speaking the truth.



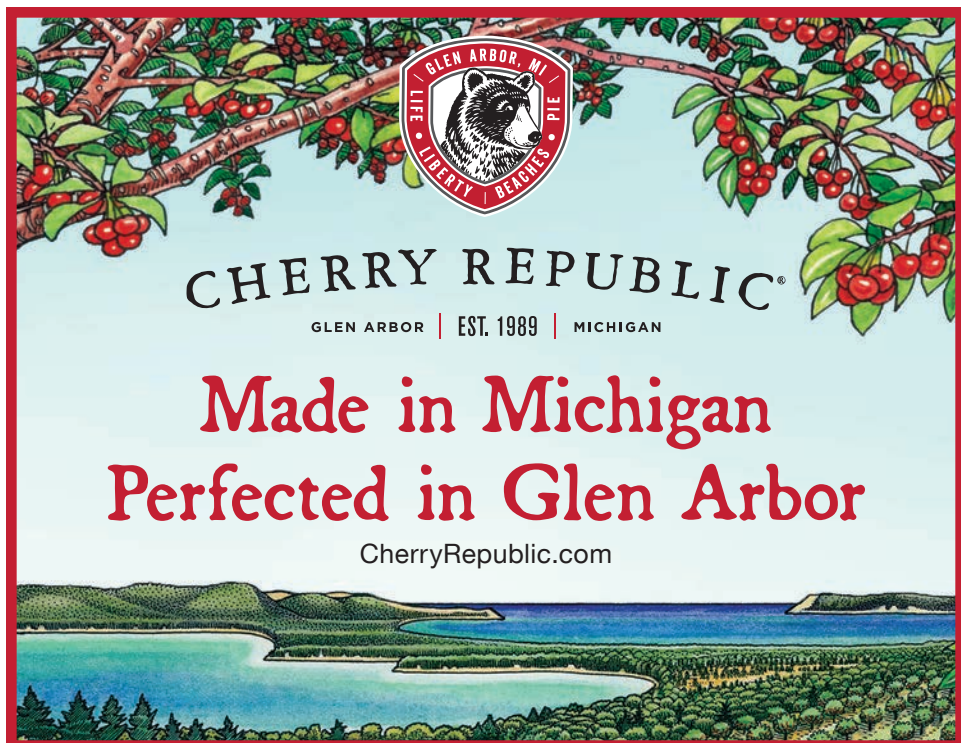
Kimberly Brubaker Bradley is the two-time Newbery Honor winning and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of several acclaimed middle grade novels, including *The War That Saved My Life* and *Jefferson's Sons*. On this special evening—a partnership of the National Writers Series & the Traverse Bay Children's Advocacy Center—we will focus on Kimberly's middle school, mega-award winning novel, ***Fighting Words***.

GRANTOR: Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation

BOOK CHAMPION: The Begonia Family Foundation



GUEST HOST BETH MILLIGAN is a journalist and head writer for the *Traverse City Ticker*. She currently serves on the marketing and outreach committee for the Leelanau Conservancy and on the advisory board for Northwestern Michigan College's Extended Education Services. Beth lives on a small farm called Stone Hill Farm on Old Mission Peninsula with her partner, Joe Bayer.



KUDOS TO NWS!

“In a few short years, the National Writers Series has put itself on the map as one of America’s preeminent literary ‘must-do’ events.’ And for good reason: its organizers smartly and seemingly effortlessly choreograph everything. From start to finish, they give writers the royal treatment. And Traverse City is a lakeside gem, packed with fun, engaging, and sometimes quirky people who are deeply interested in the written word. This is one literary pilgrimage every serious writer will want to make.”



~ HAMPTON SIDES, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Ghost Soldiers* and *The Wide Wide Sea*.

BILL MORRIS

FORD FAMILY FOOTBALL OVER SIX DECADES

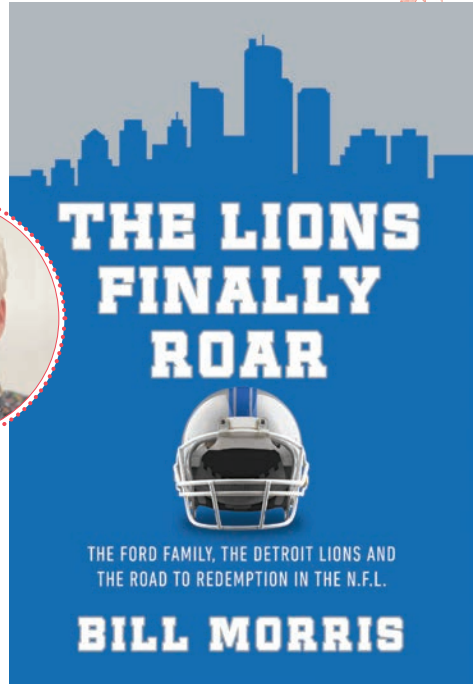
Here, finally, is the epic and tumultuous story of the Lions, the Ford family, the city of Detroit—and how all three have come together on the cusp of a new era.



On Nov. 22, 1963, William Clay Ford, the youngest grandson of auto pioneer Henry Ford, made a successful bid to buy the Detroit Lions for the unheard-of sum of \$6 million. As Ford and his entourage settled down to a celebratory luncheon, their waitress delivered the news that President John F. Kennedy had been shot dead in Dallas.

"Born under a bad sign" is how Bill Ford's ownership of the Lions began. Ford led the team on a half-century slog of mediocrity and undying loyalty to the wrong people. *The Lions Finally Roar* is bursting with the colorful ruffians who have made the team one of America's most beloved sports franchises.

The Lions Finally Roar culminates with the team's recent turnaround and playoff run under the stewardship of Bill Ford's daughter, Sheila Ford Hamp.



Bill Morris is the author of the novels *Motor City* and *Motor City Burning*, along with the family memoir *The Age of Astonishment*. Currently a staff writer with the online literary magazine *the Millions*, his writing has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post Magazine*, and numerous other publications and magazines. Bill grew up in Detroit and now lives in New York City.

Event Sponsors: **Cherry Republic;**
Cherry Capital Airport

Entertainment Sponsor: **The Little Fleet**



GUEST HOST KEITH GAVE is no stranger to the NFL and the Detroit Lions. During his 15-year stint at the *Detroit Free Press*, he covered numerous Lions games at the Pontiac Silverdome. He still remembers the Lions last championship season and firmly believes that, in its heart of hearts, Detroit is a football town. A former Russian linguist with the National Security Agency during the Cold War, Gave covered the National Hockey League for nearly 30 years. He now lives in Roscommon, Michigan with his wife, Jo Ann.

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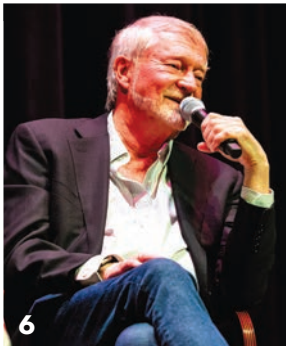
SENSORY-FRIENDLY ROOM

The City Opera House and the National Writers Series have joined forces to create a sensory-friendly space for guests who require a soothing and comfortable environment during our author events.

Please see a National Writers Series volunteer for assistance.

NWS works with The International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards as a designated Certified Autism Center™ (CAC).

2024 SUMMER AUTHOR EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



- 1) Peter Heller's adventurous stories grip the NWS audience.
- 2) Kevin Kwan reveals how he really feels about million dollar weddings with guest host Chad Lindsey.
- 3) Jane Smiley takes us through 70s rock and roll.
- 4) The memoir of Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer is candid, honest and funny.
- 5) Amy Tan touches readers with her illustrations and stories.
- 6) Erik Larson takes us back in time with his Civil War nonfiction.
- 7) Jodi Picoult wows the crowd with her honesty, humbleness and intelligence.

Traverse City Philharmonic

2024-25 Season at a Glance

Kevin Rhodes, Artistic Director & Principal Conductor



TICKETS AND MORE INFO: [TCPHIL.ORG](https://tphil.org)

Trumpets Thru Time
TC Jazz with Anthony Stanco, Band Leader
POPS | SEPT 15

Kevin Rhodes, Conductor
Rossini + Mozart Overtures
SYMPHONIC | SEPT 29

Kevin Rhodes piano
MAESTRO | OCT 12/13

Lyricism Made Manifest
Judith Ingolfsson, Violin
Kevin Rhodes, Conductor
SYMPHONIC | OCT 20

MSU Faculty All-Stars
Yvonne Lam, Violin
Ralph Votapek, Piano
Suren Bagratuni, Cello
MAESTRO | NOV 9/10

Home for the Holidays
NMC Combined Choir
Children's Choir
Dr. Jason Altieri, Guest Conductor
POPS | DEC 21/22

Jazz, Tango, Swing with the TC Jazz!
Violin Virtuosity with Jeremy Cohen
POPS | JAN 19

Swan Lake Ballet
TC Phil with IAA Dancers
SYMPHONIC | FEB 16

Three Amigos Visit Spain
Dr. Dorothy Vogel, Piano
Gary Gatzke Jr, Double Bass
Dr. Matthew Cochran, Guitar
SYMPHONIC | MAR 16

Rhodes + Stagnitta
Nancy Stagnitta, Flute
Kevin Rhodes, Piano
MAESTRO | MAR 29/30

For the Love of Nature
Kevin Rhodes, Conductor
SYMPHONIC | APR 13

Jazz Cantatas
TC Jazz with 3 NMC Choirs
POPS | MAY 11

Get your tickets today! [TPhil.org](https://tphil.org), Box Office 231.947.7120

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT* Northguard Technology

“Everyone can find something good they can do, whether it’s just spending five minutes chatting with a kid. I think everyone just wants to be seen and heard, and how you choose to do that and spend your time is really important.”

- Bill Unger, Northguard Technology Group

Many years ago, when Bill Unger graduated from college, he worked for a multi-national company. He’d grown up in a small town, so as he traveled around the world meeting clients, he closely watched his manager for cues on how to behave. He observed that his boss treated every one of them like a friend, seeming to know everything about them.

“It was more than a business call to him, and it really struck me. He had developed real relationships,” Unger said.

Unger adopted that same mindset for the rest of his career. And after founding his first company, Northguard Technology, a few years ago, he had the freedom to nurture even closer relationships with the clients he served.

So, what does Northguard Technology actually do? Unger said that every client is different, but it essentially serves smaller companies and non-profits that need IT services, such as computer security or a new systems platform.

Unger also appreciates that with his own company came greater freedom to give back to the community. He decided to focus his donations to smaller organizations that often get overlooked.

“You hear a lot about some of the bigger non-profits,” he said. “I’m not negating their level of need, but the bigger ones walk away with \$20,000 donations. Meanwhile, others like the Men’s Shed, which do a lot of good, don’t get a whole lot of money.”

He also helps “anything to do with children.” He supports the National Writers Series to bolster its



Raising Writers program, which offers free writing classes, including college admission essay writing, and Battle of the Books, a reading competition co-hosted with the Traverse Area District Library.

“Really, the driving thing for me is kids. It just breaks my heart that kids don’t have the things that we take for granted. Basic essentials like food. Some of these kids wake up on a couch. On the other end is the encouraging side, what you guys do to provide free writing classes. At a time when nothing is free, yup, the writing classes are all free. And that’s so encouraging. I’ll do anything I can to support that.”

Unger said that the value of giving to those in need was instilled by his mom when he was growing up.

“It’s basically being a good human. With all the rhetoric and B.S., especially this year, my goal is just to be a good human.”

“Any way you decide to give is valid, but I think companies could do a better job of it, in general. Everyone can find something good they can do, whether it’s just spending five minutes chatting with a kid. I think everyone just wants to be seen and heard, and how you choose to do that and spend your time is really important.”

**We hope you enjoyed this sponsor showcase. Our goal is to go beyond the company logo and give you an inside look at the people who run the business.*

BECOME A FRIEND OF NWS

The National Writers Series is best known for bringing great authors to the City Opera House, which has helped make Traverse City a cultural hotspot of the North. Our Raising Writers program supporting young writers provides **FREE** creative writing classes, poetry workshops, and Battle of the Books, a fun reading incentive program. In addition we award \$8,000 a year in scholarships to college-bound students. We invite you to become a Friend of NWS and help support all these endeavors. **THANK YOU!**

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP - \$50/year

- Purchase up to two (2) tickets/per event during advance purchase weeks

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP - \$100/year

- Purchase up to four (4) tickets/per event during advance purchase weeks

To become a friend, please go to **NationalWritersSeries.org**, call 231-486-6868, or mail a check made out to the **Writers Series of Traverse City at 3301 Veterans Drive, Suite 214, Traverse City, MI 49684**

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LOOK WHO'S BEEN HERE!

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Elmore Leonard
Peter Leonard
Doug Stanton

2010

Amy Alkon
Rhoda Janzen
Tom Brokaw
Thomas Lynch
Mary Karr
Audrey Niffenegger
Mario Batali
James Bradley
Peter Matthiessen
Karl Marlantes

2011

Janet Leahy /
Lisa Albert
Sara Brokaw
Mitch Albom
Paula McLain
Bonnie Jo
Campbell/
Jack Driscoll/
Michael Zadoorian
Roy Blount, Jr.
Sebastian Junger
Richard Ford
Elmore Leonard
Daniel Silva
Gretchen Holt Witt
Tom Perrotta

Jeffrey Eugenides
David Sedaris
Chuck Klosterman

2012

Vince Gilligan
Jodi Picoult
Geraldine Brooks
Michael Sandel
Anna Quindlen
Natalie Bakopoulos
Janet Evanovich
Lee Child
Maggie Stiefvater
Ayaan Hirsi Ali
Benjamin Busch
Michael Connelly

2013

Chip Johannessen
Buzz Bissinger
Blaine Harden
Gillian Flynn
Nathaniel Philbrick
Jason Matthews
Colum McCann
Temple Grandin
Mitch Albom
Benjamin Percy
Michael Paterniti
Jamie Ford
David Finkel
Nikki Giovanni
Sara Paretsky

2014

Kelly Corrigan
George Packer
Steve Luxenberg
Anchee Min
Emily Giffin
Daniel James
Brown
Karin Slaughter
Greg Holmes/
Katherine Roth
Diana Gabaldon
A.J. Baime/
Bryce Hoffman
Nancy Horan
Sophie Kinsella
Rita Mae Brown
Brian Castner/
Brian Turner

2015

Tess Gerritsen
Garth Stein
Debbie Macomber
Jeff Shaara
Harlan Coben
Hampton Sides
Mardi Link
Vanessa
Diffenbaugh
Ben Sidran
Bonnie Jo Campbell
Paula McLain
Sarah Chayes

Susan Casey
John U. Bacon

2016

James Rollins
James Tobin
Tui Sutherland
Laurie R. King
Brian Castner
David Ebershoff
Lucy Kalanithi
Jim & Lynn Kouf
Paola Gianturco
David Maraniss
Margaret Atwood
Ann Patchett
Jodi Picoult
Kyle Mills
Daniel Bergner

2017

John Donvan
Beth Macy
Gordon Korman
Greg Iles
Eric Fair
Elizabeth Strout
Andrea Petersen
Mary Roach
Julia Glass
W. Bruce Cameron
Sarah Shoemaker
Doug Stanton
Alice Waters

Terry McDonell
Dan Gerber
Murray Howe
Sebastian Junger/
Phil Caputo

2018

Doug Stanton
Peter Heller
Nikki Giovanni
Peter Brown
Anna Quindlen
Drew Philp
Eileen McNamara
Samantha Irby
David Grann
Richard Russo
Adriana Trigiani
Annie Spence
Beth Macy
Mona Hanna-
Attisha
Joe Hill
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Tayari Jones
Alice Walker
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2019

Jen Sincero
Tommy Tomlinos
Keith Gave
Grace Lin

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Elizabeth Letts/
Lynne Olson
Marie Benedict
Daniel Pink
Bryan Gruley
Steve Hamilton
Douglas Brinkley
Tanya Anne Crosby
Karl Marlantes
David Maraniss
Aarti Shahani
Randall Sullivan
Susan Orlean
Mitch Albom
Nelson & Alex
Demille

2020

Nicholas Kristof/
Sheryl Wudunn
Steve Luxenberg
Peter Heller
Terry McMillan
Bob Giles
Scott Turow
Elaine Weiss
William Kent
Krueger
David Blight
Miles Harvey
Brad Thor
Karen Dionne
Molly Wizenberg
Susan Goldberg
Chasten Buttigieg
Ruth Ware
Yaa Gyasi
Kate Walbert
Christopher Haugh
& Jordan Blashek
Alice Hoffman
Larissa Fasthorse
Albert Woodfox

2021

Dwight Garner
Alan Lightman
Martha Teichner
Diane Rehm
Shelley Pearsall
Imbolo Mbue

Chris Bohjalian
Karla Cornejo
Villavicencio
Rochelle Riley
Mary Doria Russell
Robin Wall
Kimmerer
Emily Henry
Megan Miranda
Dax-Devlon Ross
Susie Yang
John U. Bacon
Pam Houston
Afghanistan Today
International Panel
Mary Roach
Anthony Doerr
Alex Michaelides
Joshua Prager
Jason Reynolds
Omar El Akkad
Angeline Boulley

2022

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Michael Schur
Honorée Fanon
Jeffers
Vanessa Riley
Wanda M. Morris
Jack Cheng
Ellen Airgood
Brad Meltzer
Joy Harjo
George Saunders
Paul Holes
Daniel Bergner
Angie Morgan
Jerry Dennis /
Dave Dempsey
Benjamin Gilmer
Fredrik Backman
Margo Price
David Sedaris
Alice Wong /
Stephanie Foo
Pete Souza
Anna Quindlen

2023

Keith Gave/
Tim Rappleye
Nina Totenberg

Alvin Hall
Dan Egan
Ross Gay
Jasmine Warga
Jeannette Walls
Bonnie Garmus
Chasten Buttigieg
Geraldine Brooks
Ruth Ware
Nedra Glover
Tawwab
Ann Patchett
Jack Driscoll
Ed Yong
Cameron
McWhirter/
Zusha Elinson
Ken Follett
V.E. Schwab
Heather Cox
Richardson
Erin French
Nita Prose
Mitch Albom

2024

Bonnie Jo
Campbell
Kaveh Akbar
Twin Flames
Burned!
Barbara McQuade
Don Winslow
Chris Grabenstein
Hampton Sides
Amy Tan
Kevin Kwan
Jane Smiley
Erik Larson
Peter Heller
Gretchen Whitmer
Jodi Picoult

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WE ARE SO GRATEFUL!

The incredible support from our community is both amazing and humbling. We are able to continue these amazing conversations with world-renowned authors, provide creative writing and poetry classes to area youth, award four annual college scholarships, in partnership with the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation, and engage hundreds of students every year in Battle of the Books because of you!

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RAISING THE LITERARY BAR SINCE 2009



- NWS proudly broadcasts select author events on IPR and YouTube, and makes them available to public radio stations around the country.
- We are honored to have awarded \$72,000 in scholarships to 54 college-bound students.
- We've hosted 280 author events for onstage conversations over the past 14 years.
- Our Raising Writers program, draws students from a six-county area who love to learn about writing.
- Every year over 75 teams are engaged in a creative and fun Battle of the Books. NWS has 370 fourth-and fifth-graders reading and being quizzed on eight books.
- Each spring, we host poetry workshops at Traverse Heights and Blair elementary schools. This past academic year we added Courtade and Cherry Knoll elementary plus Manistee county.
- NWS staff are all certified in autism training, and Traverse City is now a Certified Autism Destination by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards.
- We annually publish a *Literary Journal* of student writing from our Raising Writers programs, including poetry workshops, creative writing classes, and more. You can find it at Horizon Books and on the NWS website.
- Co-founder Doug Stanton is the 2020 Stephen E. Ambrose Oral History Award winner and past Michiganian of the Year.
- Traverse City has been a "Book City" since 2015.



NWS Virtual Audience Goes National... and Global!

When the National Writers Series launched its new livestream studio over a year and a half ago, we knew we would significantly increase virtual ticket sales to guests across the United States.

What we didn't know was how many people we'd reach across the globe. To date, we've sold virtual tickets to people in Switzerland, Portugal, Austria, Australia, Norway, Panama City, and all across Canada.

So why are people around the world starting to notice NWS and its virtual author events? We have one word for you—quality.

In 2023, NWS graciously received a \$30,000 grant from the WEGE Foundation that allowed us to purchase three high-quality cameras (we used only one camera before), a top-of-the-line livestream computer, and wireless transmitters that connect the cameras to the computer. These products greatly increased the caliber of our virtual show, with three different angles on the author and guest host with clean, crisp video shots. Because of this, we're now becoming the industry leader for virtual author events.



NWS has an amazing tech team. Top photo: Photographer Shawn Roach, livestream director Josh Paul, livestream producer Noelle Riley, and cameraman Michael Toms pose for a photo. Bottom left: Cameraman Shawn Riley enjoys capturing a show. Bottom right: An NWS video camera captures author Erik Larson.

CHEERS FOR OUR NWS VOLUNTEERS!

Thank you for all you do!

- 1) Jean Serasin and patron
- 2) Trish Brauning & Pam Fordyce
- 3) Photo op with author Kevin Kwan
- 4) Ann Post





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PUTIN'S PROVOCATION: THREATS TO GLOBAL SECURITY



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