



## NATIONAL WRITERS SERIES

*A year-round book festival*

### FALL SEASON 2025



KATE BAER



LANCE RICHARDSON



ANGELA FLOURNOY



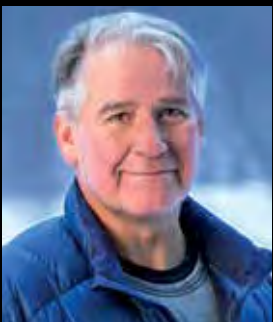
JOE HILL



MARY ROACH



TODD GODDARD



BRYAN GRULEY



MITCH ALBOM



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### CONNECT WITH US

#### NWS OFFICE

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PO Box 5833, Traverse City, MI 49696  
(231) 486-6868 • office@nwstc.org  
NationalWritersSeries.org

### THE NWS TEAM

ANNE STANTON*	Executive Director
PAM DARLING	Sponsorship Coordinator
AUDREY IRONTREE	Education Manager
KENDALL KOTCHER	Marketing Manager
HANNA LEE-KLEB	Events & Operations Manager
COLLEEN ZANOTTI	Creative Designer

### BOARD MEMBERS

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DOUG STANTON*	* NWS Co-founders
RYAN SULLIVAN	

### SOCIAL MEDIA



### 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 and book descriptions are generally provided by the authors' publishers.

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# WELCOME BOOK LOVERS

Welcome to the National Writers Series and our 15-year celebration of bringing you the very best in storytelling, entertaining ideas, and surprising conversations with people from around the world.

I find it hard to remember that this all began as a talk around our kitchen table among friends, Grant Parsons, Anne Stanton, and me. Everyone, and we mean everyone, deserves a huge thank you for making that small moment into something this big, impacting so many people.

Authors and publishers think of NWS as a premiere book event, one of the very best in the US, for anyone on a national tour. That's because of you and your attention to the author and their art as a new story comes to life up there in the lights, onstage.

We discover maybe we aren't so different after all, or maybe we are. We're grateful to sit side by side as the night unfolds, as discoveries appear. Maybe these conversations are like one you might have on a train at night traveling through new country, the car rocking, the lights of houses beyond the cold window, blinking. Sometimes you can hear a pin drop; sometimes all you hear is your neighbor's laugh. That's our hope, that we catch **THAT** train, that we arrive in places we had not imagined. Storytelling is travel, it's departure and arrival. It's magic made from scratch.



**Doug Stanton, age 14, explaining his poem to the poet and novelist Jim Harrison, who couldn't have been more gracious. Interlochen Arts Academy, creative writing program—aspiring writer, full-time nerd.**

NWS is successful because Traverse City, my hometown, where I roamed as a nerd at 14 (I have the class picture, yes) up and down Front Street, wondering how in the world someone became a writer, is an accepting and encouraging place. It was then and still is. People move here from around the country with new ideas, changing the dynamic. The change we wanted is this: bring the world to our main street, into our lives. Let's put a book in every hand, a story in every ear.

The mission of the National Writers Series is twofold. The first is to bring the best writers we can find in the country to meet those, in an up-close way, who love to read, think, and be entertained.

The second mission is raising a new generation of readers.

We offer the amazing Battle of the Books, creative writing courses, college application tutoring, and poetry workshops in area elementary schools. We also bring mainstage authors to area classrooms so that the students can meet that famous author I was looking for at age 14.

And we do all this at no cost to students.

Raising Writers is delivering a huge gift to our entire community. Writing gives students a voice, and it hones their communication skills. There is no other professional skill more necessary than reading and writing.

This coming year, expect to see writing classes for adults!

“Storytelling is TRAVEL, it's DEPARTURE and ARRIVAL. It's MAGIC made from scratch.”

In the end, all of this is really about the transformative power of storytelling. Connecting with others who are figuring out their own story and what it all means. And it's amazing. Thank you for being part of it!

With warmest regards and gratitude,

**DOUG STANTON,**  
Co-founder and #1  
*New York Times*  
bestselling author, *In Harm's Way*, *Horse Soldiers*, *The Odyssey of Echo Company*



# OUR MISSION

The National Writers Series of Traverse City is a nonprofit organization dedicated to holding great conversations with today's best authors and building the reading and writing skills of youth.



For tickets visit [NationalWritersSeries.org](http://NationalWritersSeries.org)

## WE ARE RAISING WRITERS!

Given my position as education director, it should be no surprise that fall is my favorite season. The chill in the morning air brings with it all the promise and possibility of the back-to-school season, and the memory of excitedly counting down the days to the start of each school year. What new friends might be made? What new things would be learned?

I felt that familiar excitement as I planned the National Writers Series Raising Writers fall classes this year. Students will have more opportunities than ever before to create lasting friendships through a shared love of writing. Our classes include a sequel to our twice-waitlisted (it was just that popular!) **screenwriting course** for middle schoolers, **Antrim County Language Lab** where students will conduct linguistic experiments and mad-science wordplay, a **collaborative storytelling class** for elementary school students, a **TTRPG character creation class** (think writing for games like Dungeons and Dragons,) and a **Once Upon A Boat Class**, where students will craft creative nonfiction essays about a sailing day they'll experience together (the most adventurous

of Raising Writers class yet!) We're also hosting a session of our life-changing **College Essay Class**, which gives high-school juniors and seniors the opportunity to get one-on-one coaching on how to write a competitive admissions essay.

But, that back-to-school buzz isn't the only fall feeling that makes this season wonderful. Halloween, with its explosion of creative costumes, happy haunts, and tantalizing treats is on the way, and Raising Writers is celebrating in style.

We're hosting a **Mystery Writing Class** and a **Spooky Super Short Story Class**, where young writers can learn the craft of frightening flash-fiction. And if you're the kind of adult who has already had their own Halloween costume planned for months (guilty,) don't feel left out. Join me for a **Horror Writing for Adults Class**, in collaboration with Tank Space, where we'll write our best scary stories and share them at an after-class community reading and Halloween party. Need an extra reason to dust off those fake teeth or monster claws? The winner of the costume contest will get a free



Lola Russell won the National Writers Series Robert and Marcy Branski Poetry Award in both her junior and senior years of high school. She is a recent graduate from the Greenspire High School and Career Tech Writers Studio and will be attending the University of Vermont in the fall of 2025 to pursue a major in film and television. In addition to her passion for stories and poetry, Lola enjoys going on small adventures outdoors wherever she can find them. The National Writers Series wishes Lola all the best as she begins her collegiate journey! You can read Lola's winning entry at [nationalwritersseries.org/anti-ode-to-starbucks-drive-thrus/](https://nationalwritersseries.org/anti-ode-to-starbucks-drive-thrus/)

## WE ARE RAISING WRITERS!

ticket to see Joe Hill at our mainstage author event!

If Halloween isn't your scene but you still want to write with us this season, we'll be hosting a **Holiday Picture Book Class** for adults as well. Join us in December to write your own "'Twas the Night Before Christmas," to share with any little loves in your life. All funds generated by our adult classes are donated back to the Raising Writers program, so you're not just having fun writing and meeting new people, you're doing something good.

Raising Writers classes are **FREE**, always, for young writers to participate. We're able to offer these free classes to our community thanks to the generous

support of our grantors and donors, and to the adults who join us for our creative writing classes. Thank you. You are helping us to keep the fall a season of learning and excitement for kids across Northern Michigan.

For more information on classes, to make a donation or to get involved, contact me, Audrey Irontree, at [education@nwstc.org](mailto:education@nwstc.org).

With gratitude,

Audrey

Audrey Irontree

NWS Education Director



## 2025 RAISING WRITERS HIGHLIGHTS



(clockwise from top left) Last fall's Sketch to Scene class gets zany. Gracie Gregory reads at the Lit Journal Launch Party. Marketing manager Kendall Kotcher and Limerick Jam winner Elena Edwardson at the Pit Spitters. The team "The Natural 20s" celebrate a correct answer at NWS Battle of the Books. Julius Baker reads his published poem at Traverse Heights. Grammar Grannies discuss their answer.



## 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 Michigan. Our Raising Writers program supporting young writers provides **FREE** creative writing classes, poetry workshops, and NWS Battle of the Books, a fun reading incentive program. Since 2010, we have awarded \$84,000 in college scholarships to 62 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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**HOME FOR THE  
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12**

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15**

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**Side by Side**  
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**Tina & Kevin**  
April 25/26

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# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Congratulations to the  
National Writers Series  
on its 15-Year Anniversary.

Thank you for bringing  
inspiring authors to  
Traverse City and beyond!



**NANCY DAVY**  
NATIONAL WRITERS SERIES  
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A disgraced hockey star  
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A defense attorney and a  
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**uncover the truth.**

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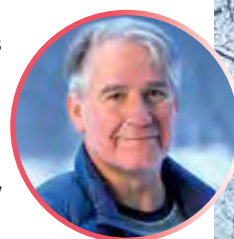
Author Bryan Gruley  
Photo by Don Rutt



SEPTEMBER 5, 7PM • THE ALLUVION +LIVESTREAMED

## BRYAN GRULEY

National Writers Series  
is kicking off its fall  
season with Traverse  
City's own Pulitzer Prize-  
winning author **Bryan  
Gruley** and his brand-new  
crime thriller: **Bitterfrost**.

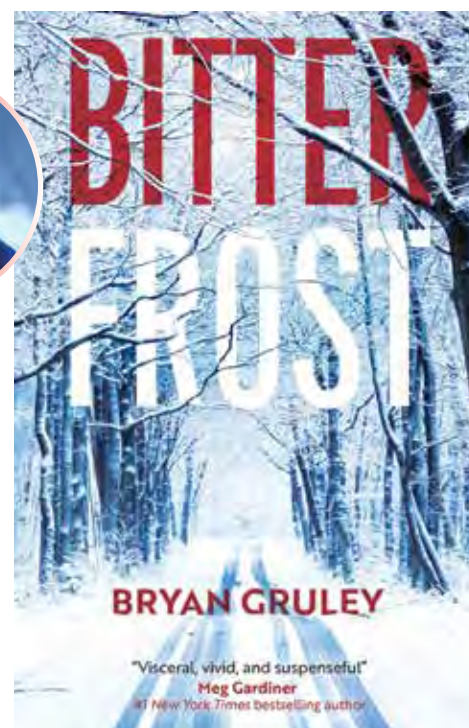


Thirteen years ago, former ice hockey  
star Jimmy Baker quit the game after  
almost killing an opponent. Now, as the  
Zamboni driver for the amateur team in  
his hometown of Bitterfrost, Michigan, he's  
living his penance. Until the morning when  
he awakens to the smell of blood...

Jimmy soon finds himself arrested for a  
brutal double murder. The kicker? He has  
no memory of the night in question. And as  
the evidence racks up against him, Jimmy's  
case is skating on thin ice. Could he have  
committed such a gruesome crime?

As his defense attorney, Devyn Payne, and  
the prosecuting detective, Garth Klimmek,  
race to uncover the truth, time is running  
out for Jimmy. Because all he can really be  
sure of is that he is capable of taking a life.  
The question is, in his blacked-out state,  
did he take two?

Bryan Gruley is the Edgar-nominated  
author of six novels - *Purgatory Bay*, *Bleak  
Harbor*, *The Starvation Lake Trilogy*, and his  
most recent, *Bitterfrost* - and one award-  
winning work of nonfiction. A lifelong  
journalist, he shared in *The Wall Street  
Journal's* Pulitzer Prize for coverage of the  
September 11 terrorist attacks. He lives in



Traverse City with his wife, Pamela, where  
he can be found playing hockey, singing  
in his band, or spending time with his  
children and grandchildren.

### GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY

Sportsmanship Underwriters:

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Editorial Sponsor: **Severn House**

Livestream Underwriter: **Nancy Davy**

**"As biting and relentless as an Arctic wind,  
this is the best 'Northern Noir' I've read in  
many years"**

~ Steve Hamilton, *New York Times* bestseller



**GUEST HOST JOHN U. BACON** has worked nearly three decades as a  
writer, a public speaker, and a college instructor, winning awards for  
all three. He has authored twelve books on sports, business, health,  
and history, five of which are *New York Times* bestsellers. He appears  
often on TV, including HBO, ESPN, Fox Business, MSNBC, and the Big  
Ten Network.

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

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

**Proud to support the National Writers Series and the Mary Roach event**

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## MARY ROACH

Supported by Elizabeth Mostrom and  
Herm Triezenberg “Health & Wellness”  
Author Conversations

Please welcome back **MARY ROACH** with her latest book—*Replaceable You: Adventures in Human Anatomy*, a rollicking exploration of cutting-edge regenerative medicine. With characteristic humor and detail, Roach orients readers in a field that brims with medical solutions to meet some of the most daunting challenges posed by the unpredictable experience of inhabiting a human body.



From cataract surgeries to gender-affirming procedures, Roach charts the impressive expansion of medical possibility and celebrates how far we’ve come exploring the questions we still face today. Through interviews with patients, physicians, pathologists, engineers, and scientists, Roach immerses readers in the wondrous quest to build a new you.

Mary Roach is the author of the *New York Times* bestsellers *Stiff*, *Spook*, *Bonk*, *Gulp*, *Grunt*, and *Packing For Mars*. She has written for *National Geographic*, *Wired*, and *The New York Times Magazine*, among others, and her TED talk made the TED 20 Most Watched list. She has been a guest editor for *Best American Science* and *Nature Writing*, a finalist for the Royal



Society’s Winton Prize, and a winner of the American Engineering Societies’ journalism award, in a category for which, let’s be honest, she was the sole entrant.

### GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY

Literary Sponsor: **Great Lakes  
Orthopaedic Center**

Livestream Underwriter: **Nancy Davy**

**“We are all replaceable to some degree or another . . . with the exception of Mary Roach.”**

~ Jason Alexander, actor/director



**GUEST HOST DOUG STANTON** is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling 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 publications, including *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. He attended Interlochen Arts Academy, Hampshire College, and received an MFA from the Writers’ Workshop. He created the National Writers Series with his wife, Anne, and attorney Grant Parsons. He and Anne have three children and live in Traverse City.



— “ —  
The best gift anyone  
can give, I believe, is the gift  
of sharing themselves.

OPRAH WINFREY



Proud to support the National Writers Series  
and the Angela Flournoy event

Lola Jackson & Dilys Tosteson García  
“Community Building” Author Conversations



Celebrating writers...  
and readers!

Congratulations to the  
NATIONAL WRITERS  
SERIES  
for 15 wonderful years of  
inspired storytelling!

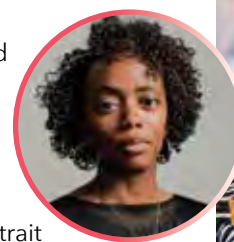
PROUD TO SUPPORT THE  
NATIONAL WRITERS SERIES  
**DIANA MILOCK**  
EVENT SPONSOR FOR THE  
ANGELA FLOURNOY AUTHOR EVENT

OCTOBER 2, 7PM • MILLIKEN AUDITORIUM + LIVESTREAMED

## ANGELA FLOURNOY

Supported by Dilys Tosteson Garcia &  
Lola Jackson “Community Building”  
Author Conversations

Angela Flournoy,  
National Book Award  
finalist and author of *The  
Turner House*, shares  
her stunning and long-  
awaited second novel,  
*The Wilderness*—an,  
emotionally resonant portrait  
of friendship, identity, and adulthood.



Spanning two decades in the lives of  
five Black women—Desiree, Danielle,  
January, Monique, and Nakia—*The  
Wilderness* traces their journeys through  
young adulthood and into midlife as  
they navigate motherhood, ambition,  
estrangement, viral fame, and the trials  
of building lives in rapidly shifting cities  
like New York and Los Angeles. Flournoy  
captures with disarming wit and electric  
language how the most profound  
connections over a lifetime can lie in the  
tangled, uncertain thicket of friendship.  
You'll be tempted to read this amazing  
novel all in one gulp!

Flournoy is a graduate of the Iowa Writers'  
Workshop and a writer whose work has  
appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New  
Yorker*, and *The Paris Review*. She brings  
extraordinary nuance to the complexities  
of contemporary womanhood and the

## The Wilderness



Angela Flournoy  
Finalist  
for the  
National  
Book Award

connections that sustain us.

Don't miss this unforgettable evening  
with one of the most gifted voices in  
American literature today.

### GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY

Event Sponsor: Diana Milock

Livestream Underwriter: Nancy Davy

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Triezenberg

“Expansive yet intimate, humorous yet  
devastating. I loved this book.”

~ Brit Bennett, author of *The Vanishing Half*

GUEST HOST AUDREY Irontree is a fiction writer, developmental editor,  
ghostwriter and educator. She received her Master of Fine Arts in Fiction  
degree from Northwestern University, her Bachelor of Arts from Brown  
University and her associate degree from The Bard College at Simon's  
Rock. Her short story, “The Toad,” recently appeared in the *Portland  
Review*, and her short story, “Koan,” was featured in *Meridian*, University  
of Virginia's literary journal. She is also the editor-in-chief of *Muse Literary*,  
an award-winning small, independent publisher.



# CITY OPERA HOUSE 2025-2026 SEASON

Learn more & get tickets at [www.cityoperahouse.org](http://www.cityoperahouse.org)



FRI 9/5

KITTEL & CO.



THU 10/2

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THU 10/16

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SAT 10/25

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FRI 10/31

FRANC  
D'AMBROSIO



SAT 11/1

HELLO DARKNESS  
MY OLD FRIEND



SUN 11/16

GUTHRIE &  
GRAHAM



SAT 11/29

ADA TWIST,  
SCIENTIST



SAT 12/6

HOLIDAY GALA



FRI 1/30

INVOKE



THU 2/5

INTERLOCHEN  
SINGER SONGWRITER



SUN 2/22

PUPPY PALS



TUE 3/31

WOMEN OF  
AMERICANA



SAT 4/11

MAGIC ROCKS



THU 4/16

INTERLOCHEN  
JAZZ

OCTOBER 16, 7PM • LIVESTREAM ONLY

## LANCE RICHARDSON

Peter Matthiessen (1927-2014) is a towering figure of twentieth-century American letters, who achieved so much during his lifetime, in so many different areas, that people have struggled to pin him down. While ambivalent about his WASP privilege—as a teenager he demanded that his name be removed from the New York Social Register—he attended Yale and cut his teeth in postwar Paris, co-founding *The Paris Review* as he worked undercover for the CIA. But then, after a rebellious stint as a Long Island fisherman, he escaped into a series of wild expeditions: floating through the Amazon to recover a prehistorical fossil; embedding with a tribe in Netherlands New Guinea; swimming with sharks off the coast of Australia. His novels, were unclassifiable meditations. His nonfiction became legendary: nature books like *Wildlife in America* as well as advocacy journalism supporting Cesar Chavez, Leonard Peltier, and Native American land claims.

Underlying all Matthiessen's disparate pursuits was the same existential search—to find a cure for "deep restlessness." This was most profoundly articulated in *The Snow Leopard*, his famous account of a 250-mile wildlife survey across the Himalayas.

In *True Nature*, Lance Richardson reconstructs the full scope of a spiritual quest that ultimately led Matthiessen, even as he inflicted great pain on his family, to the highest ranks of Zen. Richardson illuminates how the writer's uncanny gifts enabled him to sense connections between ecological decline, racism, and labor exploitation—to express, eloquently and presciently, that "in a damaged



human habitat, all problems merge."

Richardson previously published *House of Nutter: The Rebel Tailor of Savile Row*, a *New York Times* Editors' Choice and a 2018 notable title selected by *The Sunday Times*, *The Mail on Sunday*, *Esquire*, and the American Library Association. He teaches in the MFA in Writing program at Bennington College, Vermont.

**GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY**  
Livestream Underwriter: Nancy Davy

"A stunning, formidable achievement by a brilliant biographer. Lance Richardson takes his readers on a wild ride with Peter Matthiessen."

~ Kai Bird, Pulitzer Prize-winning author

**WITH GUEST HOST DOUG STANTON**  
#1 *New York Times* bestselling author and co-founder of NWS.



“

The future is ours to win.  
But to get there we can't  
just stand still.

~ Barack Obama

”

LITERARY UNDERWRITER

A GENEROUS FRIEND OF NWS

"I love the NWS... and I consider  
sponsorship a privilege."



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OCTOBER 22, 7PM • CITY OPERA HOUSE

MITCH ALBOM

The National Writers Series welcomes back Michigan author **Mitch Albom** for his latest novel: **Twice** which takes readers on an unforgettable emotional journey through love, second chances, and the choices that define our lives.

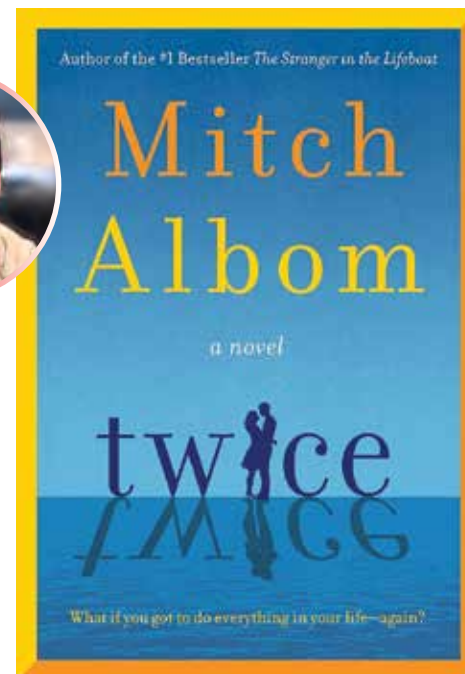


When he is eight-years-old, Alfie Logan discovers the magical ability to get a second chance at everything. He can undo any moment and live it again. The only catch is, he must accept the consequences of his second try – for better or worse. He grows up correcting his mistakes and saving himself from adolescent embarrassments.

Eventually, Alfie turns his gift to his love life, studying his crushes and going back to make himself more appealing. In time, he falls deeply in love with Gianna, the woman he believes is the one. He seems to find contentment. But as the years pass, Alfie's eye begins to wander. Which is when he learns a lone caveat to his power: once he undoes a love, that person can never fall in love with him again.

In this latest tale from America's favorite storyteller, Mitch Albom is at the top of his powers, *Twice* will make you think, weep, and burst with love from beginning to end.

Mitch Albom is an internationally renowned and best-selling author and journalist. His books have collectively sold



42 million copies worldwide; and have been made into Emmy Award-winning television movies. In 2006, he founded the nonprofit SAY Detroit, which provides pathways to success for Detroiters in need. Albom operates Have Faith Haiti, a home and school for impoverished children and orphans in Port-au-Prince. He lives with his wife, Janine, in Michigan.

**GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY**  
Event Sponsor: **Image 360**  
Literary Underwriter: **A Generous Friend of NWS**

"Think of Mitch Albom as the Babe Ruth of popular literature, hitting the ball out of the park every time he's at bat." ~ *Time*



**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 is the co-founder of the National Writers Series with his wife, Anne, and attorney Grant Parsons.



ART IS AN EXPRESSION  
OF JOY & AWE.

~ DAVID MAMET

Applauding the many  
artists, culture bearers and  
organizations that infuse  
arts and culture throughout  
Northern Michigan.  
**BRAVO AND THANK YOU!**

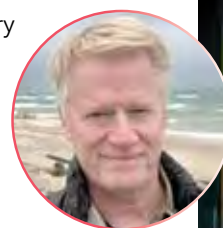
We are proud to support the  
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**JOHN U. BACON**  
**LITERARY UNDERWRITERS**

NOVEMBER 6, 7PM • CITY OPERA HOUSE + LIVESTREAMED

## JOHN U. BACON

On the fiftieth anniversary  
of the Edmund  
Fitzgerald's sinking, the  
bestselling author of *The  
Great Halifax Explosion*  
tells the definitive story of  
the "Mighty Fitz."

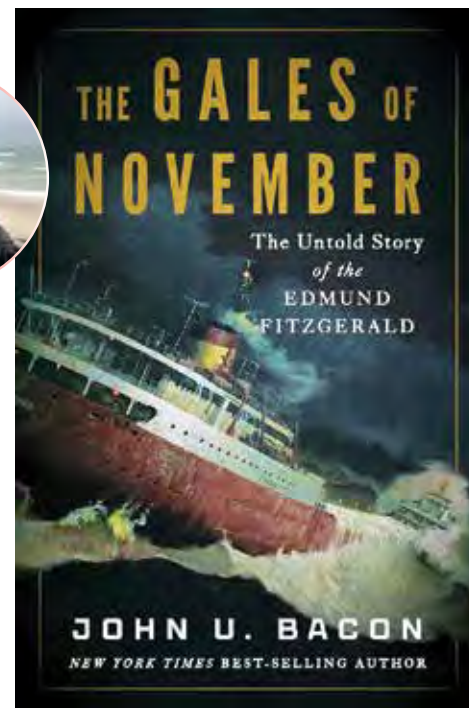


Few endeavors have bound time so  
mercilessly to money as Great Lakes  
shipping did at its peak, and no vessel  
had been more perfectly designed to  
maximize both than the S. S. Edmund  
Fitzgerald. The Fitzgerald at the time of  
her launch was the largest ship on the  
lakes, and she repeatedly broke her own  
records for the largest loads, the fastest  
runs, and the biggest season hauls.

But on November 10, 1975, when the  
"storm of the century" threw 100 mile-  
per-hour winds and 50-foot waves on  
Lake Superior, the Mighty Fitz found  
itself at the worst possible place, at the  
worst possible time. When she sank, she  
took all 29 men onboard down with her,  
leaving the tragedy shrouded in mystery  
for a half century.

In *The Gales of November*, award-winning  
journalist **John U. Bacon** presents the  
definitive account of the disaster, drawing  
on more than 100 interviews with the  
families, friends, and former crew mates  
of those lost. Bacon explores the vital role  
Great Lakes shipping played in America's  
economic boom, the uncommon lives the  
sailors led, the sinking's most likely causes,  
and the heartbreaking aftermath for those  
left behind—"the wives, the sons, and the  
daughters" as Gordon Lightfoot sang in  
his unforgettable ballad.

*The Gales of November* is both an  
emotional tribute to the Fitzgerald's  
captain and crew and a propulsive,



page-turning narrative history of  
America's most-mourned shipwreck.

John U. Bacon has authored fourteen  
books on sports, business, and history, the  
last seven of which are critically acclaimed  
national bestsellers, including five *New York  
Times* bestsellers. He lives in Ann Arbor and  
Northern Michigan with his wife and son.

### GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY

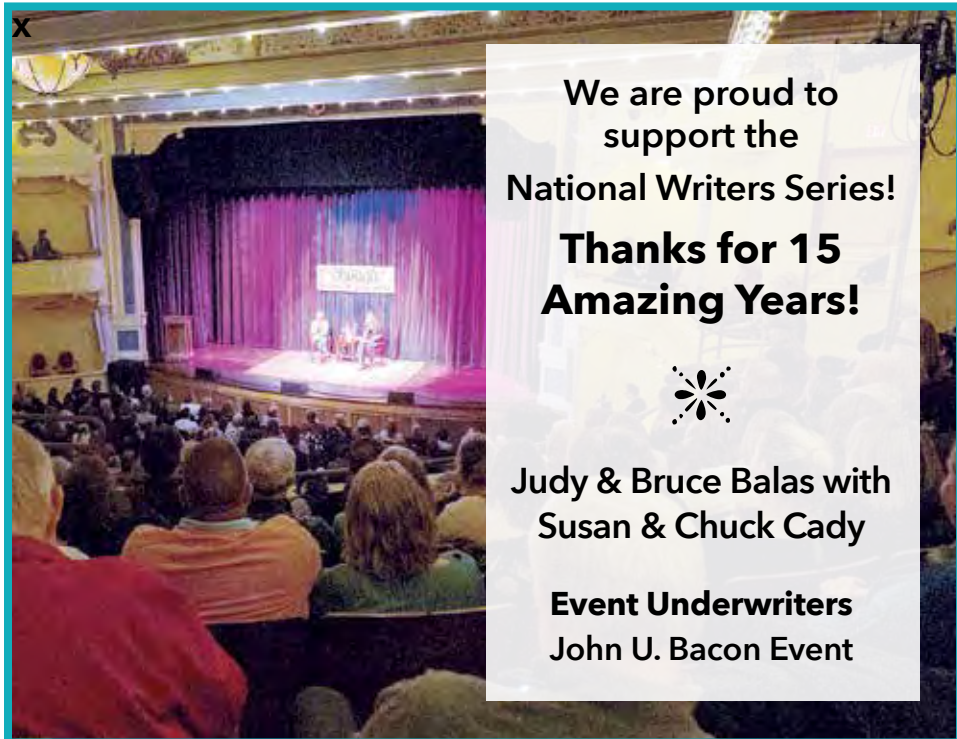
Event Underwriters: **Judy & Bruce Balas  
and Susan & Chuck Cady**

Literary Underwriters: **Ward & Mary  
Bevans Gillett**

Livestream Underwriter: **Nancy Davy**

"John Bacon has done it again! Bacon has  
rendered a huge monument to those lost  
and a great gift to the rest of us."

~ Ken Burns, award-winning filmmaker



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**Thanks for 15  
Amazing Years!**



**Judy & Bruce Balas with  
Susan & Chuck Cady**

**Event Underwriters  
John U. Bacon Event**



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## KUDOS TO NWS

"To me, one of the biggest charms of the series is how genuine and authentic it is. I have really enjoyed the authors and moderators sharing of themselves in such a personal way. When guests are such "real" people and share practical tips as Mitch Albom did regarding his actual "how I do it" with number of hours writing a day and why that works for him, it's inspiring yet less daunting all at the same time!"

~ Jannifer Stromberg,  
radiology oncologist

NOVEMBER 15, 7PM • CITY OPERA HOUSE + LIVESTREAMED

## JOE HILL

From #1 *New York Times* bestselling author **JOE HILL** comes a chilling tale of modern-world dangers, dark academia, and the unexpected consequences of revenge as six friends dabble in the occult and are tragically, horrifyingly successful.



Arthur Oakes is a reader, a dreamer, and a student at Rackham College, Maine, renowned for its frosty winters, exceptional library, and beautiful buildings. But his idyll—and burgeoning romance with Gwen Underfoot—is shattered when a local drug dealer and her partner corner him into one of the worst crimes he can imagine: stealing rare books from the college library.

Trapped and desperate, Arthur turns to his closest friends for comfort and help. Together they dream up a wild, fantastical scheme to free Arthur from the cruel trap in which he finds himself. Wealthy, irrepressible Colin Wren suggests using the unnerving Crane journal (bound in the skin of its author) to summon a dragon to do their bidding. The others—brave, beautiful Alison Shiner; the battling twins Donna and Donovan McBride; and brainy, bold Gwen—don't hesitate to join Colin in an effort to smash reality and bring a creature of the impossible into our world.

But there's nothing simple about dealing with dragons, and their pact to save Arthur becomes a terrifying bargain.



Joe Hill is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of the novels *The Fireman*, *NOS4A2*, *Horns*, and *Heart-Shaped Box*; *Strange Weather*, a collection of novellas; and the acclaimed story collections *Full Throttle* and *20th Century Ghosts*. He is also the Eisner Award-winning writer of a seven-volume comic book series, *Locke & Key*.

GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY  
Livestream Underwriter: Nancy Davy

"Joe Hill walks the tightrope between horror and fantasy with grace and menace. This is a tale infused with terror and hope."

~Robin Hobb, *New York Times* bestseller



**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 is the co-founder of the National Writers Series with his wife, Anne, and attorney Grant Parsons.

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DECEMBER 3, 7PM • MILLIKEN AUDITORIUM + LIVESTREAMED

## KATE BAER

Renowned poet **Kate Baer** returns with ***How About Now*** (on-sale: November 4, 2025), a bold and compassionate collection that confronts the march of time in a shifting world.



With her trademark candor and curiosity, Baer explores what it means to grow older, to release children into the wildness of their own lives, and to reclaim the ever-evolving self. Raw, luminous, and urgent, this collection channels Baer's own journey to middle age into poems that are profoundly intimate yet resound universally, identifying the beauty, resilience, and fragility that arrive in every stage of life.

*How About Now* is a striking declaration of ongoing transformation and self-discovery. From the poet who has captured the heartbeat of the modern woman, this collection reaffirms Kate Baer's place among the most vital voices of our era.

Kate Baer is the three-time *New York Times* bestselling author of *What Kind of Woman*, *I Hope This Finds You Well*, and *And Yet*. Her work has also been published in *The New Yorker*, *Literary Hub*, *Huffington Post*, and the *New York Times*.



For more about Kate and her work, visit: [KateBaer.com/](http://KateBaer.com/)

**GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY**  
Livestream Underwriter: **Nancy Davy**

"Baer's poems are beautifully distilled and compressed, but they're enormous inside; they hold our world. *How About Now* is her best book yet."

~ Maggie Smith, *New York Times* bestselling author of *You Could Make This Place Beautiful*



**GUEST HOST BETH MILLIGAN** is a journalist and head writer for the *Traverse City Ticker*, and a frequent guest host of NWS. She has worked in marketing and PR roles for numerous community organizations including Up North Pride, the Traverse City Film Festival, Traverse Connect, National Writers Series. Beth is the co-host of *Currently with Christal Frost*, a weekly podcast featuring local journalists discussing the region's top news stories. Beth lives on a small hobby farm on Old Mission Peninsula with her partner, Joe Beyer.



The best way to support a community is to be a part of it.

Proud to Support the National Writers Series and the Love of Reading and Writing!

PAM & HAROLD LASSERS

Event Underwriters of the Todd Goddard Author Event



DECEMBER 8, 7PM • CITY OPERA HOUSE + LIVESTREAMED

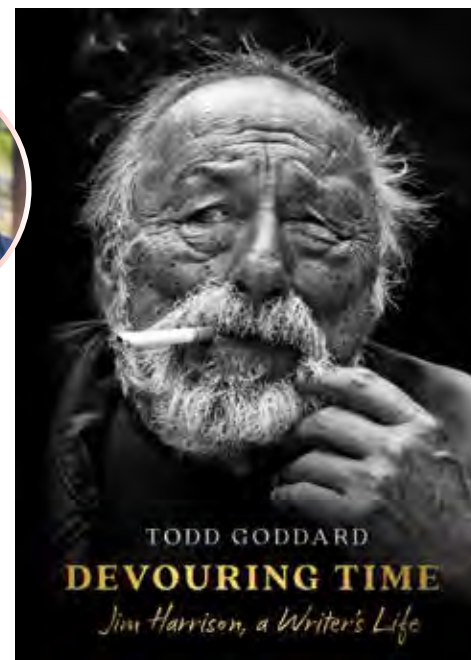
## TODD GODDARD

Join us in welcoming **Todd Goddard**, who explores the complicated life of Jim Harrison in a powerful new biography. Jim Harrison (1937-2016) was widely considered one of the finest voices of his generation and helped shape the course of contemporary American literature, influencing a generation of writers.



For all his notoriety as a writer of prose, however, poetry remained his first and longest-abiding love. He cherished his geographic remoteness from what he called the "dream coasts" of New York City and Los Angeles, preferring to hunt, fish, and drink in the backwoods bars of Michigan, Arizona, and Montana. Based on more than one hundred original interviews and drawing upon Harrison's collected papers, *Devouring Time* is the first and only literary biography of this beloved author, whose playful, irreverent, and spiritual work continues to find and delight new readers.

Todd Goddard is an associate professor of literary studies at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah. He received his doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His work has been funded by the Mellon Foundation and a Bordin-Gillette Fellowship from the University of Michigan. He lives in Salt Lake City.



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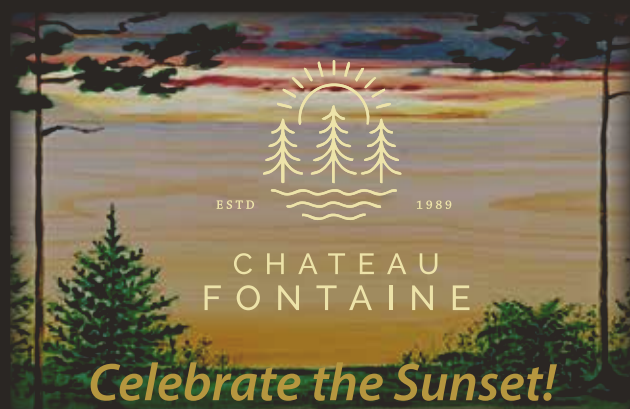
Livestream Underwriter: Nancy Davy

"Raw and revealing, yet with a sensitive eye for both the pain and the talent that made Jim one of modern America's most intriguing poets and novelists."

~ Carl Hiaasen, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Fever Beach*



**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 is the co-founder of the National Writers Series with his wife, Anne, and attorney Grant Parsons.



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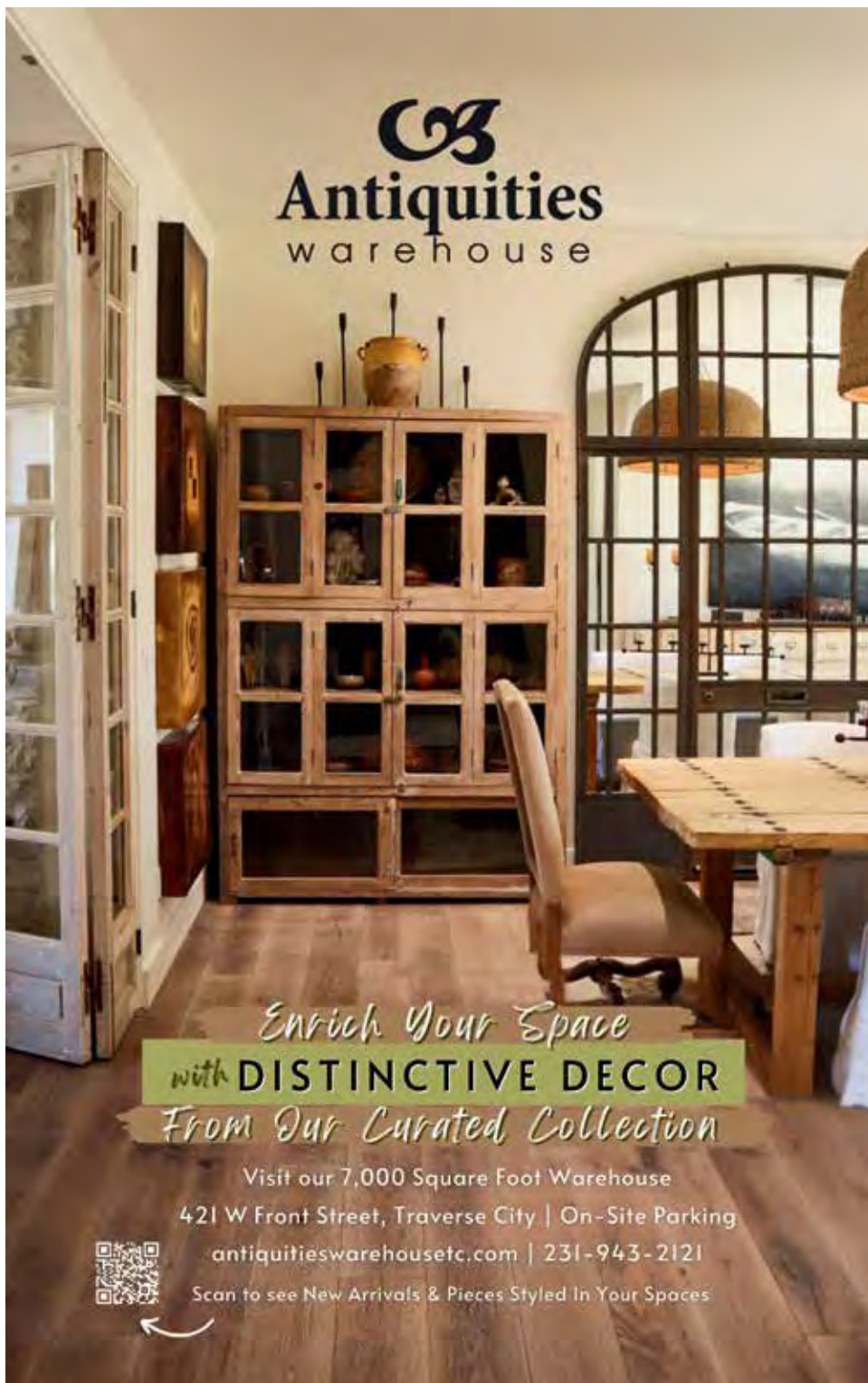
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Monday - Thursday 12-5pm  
Friday - Sunday 12-6pm

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December-April  
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Kathy Tuckerman hosts the refreshment table.



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know the significance  
of a moment until it  
becomes a memory.

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the most in life aren't the  
things you did...they are  
the things you didn't do.

.....

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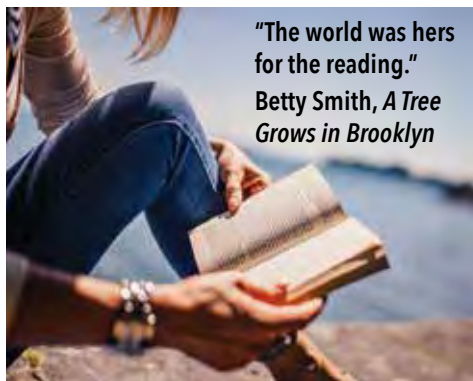
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for the reading."  
Betty Smith, *A Tree  
Grows in Brooklyn*

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*in memory of David Bump*



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*Cheers to many more!*

~ LORRAINE BEERS

"When I get a little money  
I buy books; and if any is left  
I buy food and clothes."

~ DESIDERIUS ERASMUS



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NATIONAL WRITERS SERIES  
and their outstanding service  
to our community



ISIAH & MARLENE SMITH

## SUPER SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

- 1 Guest host Doug Stanton interviews Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson about her memoir.
- 2 The Outpost's Tyler Smith-Terhaar and his husband, Dustin, with Antoni Porowski in the Green Room.
- 3 Carl Hiaasen and a full City Opera house on May 29!
- 4 Guest host Matthew Fletcher with Robin Wall Kimmerer.
- 5 Top Chefs were "Dishing it Out" with Mei Lin, Sarah Welch, Reality TV producer Jim Berger and guest host Matt Rodbard (far left).
- 6 Ticker's head writer Beth Milligan in conversation with Jeanine Cummins.
- 7 Elk Rapids own debut author Lt. Kegan "SMURF" Gill.
- 8 Adriana Trigiani shared a few hilarious stories!
- 9 Miriam Pico with sweet fan Olivia entertaining us all.
- 10 IPR's Ellie Katz in conversation with debut author Katie Yee.





JEANINE CUMMINS



KAVEH AKBAR



BONNIE GARMUS

## LOOK WHO'S BEEN HERE!

### 2009

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  
Mary Roach  
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  
Jeff Shaara  
Harlan Coben  
Hampton Sides  
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  
Amy Goldstein  
Tayari Jones  
Alice Walker  
Richard Clarke  
John U. Bacon

### 2019

Jen Sincero  
Tommy Tomlinson  
Keith Gave  
Grace Lin  
Lisa Scottoline  
Elizabeth Berg/  
Lynne Olson  
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  
Alua Arthur  
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

Daniel Lieberman  
Michael Schur  
Honorée Fanonne  
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  
Timothy Snyder  
Shelby Van Pelt  
Paula Hawkins  
Aphrodite Jones  
Ethan Kross  
Kimberly Brubaker  
Bradley  
Bill Morris

### 2025

Geraldine Brooks  
Scott Turow  
Jonathan Eig  
Jennifer Weiner  
Patrice Gopo  
Lyndsay Currie  
Leif Enger  
Alua Arthur  
Rick Atkinson  
Jeanine Cummins  
Carl Hiaasen  
Jocelyn Benson  
Kegan Gill  
Adriana Trigiani  
Katie Yee  
Robin Wall  
Kimmerer  
Antoni Porowski  
Top Chefs Panel  
Chefs Mei Lin,  
Sarah Welch  
TV Producer,  
Jim Berger

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April Baer  
Nancy Baker  
David Baldacci  
Sarah Bearup-Neal  
Holly T. Bird  
Dana Black  
Kate Botello  
Jennifer Blakeslee  
Geraldine Brooks  
Fleda Brown  
Benjamin Busch  
Elizabeth Buzzelli  
Elon Cameron  
Cynthia Cauty  
Phil Caputo  
Kendra Carr  
Susan Casey  
Brittany Cavallaro  
Jeremiah Chamberlin  
Coco Champagne  
Alan Cheuse  
Rick Coates  
Michael Delp  
Tony Demin  
Jerry Dennis  
Michael Dow  
Nick Edson  
David Ebershoff  
Loren Estleman  
Rich Fahle  
Christal Frost  
Bob Giles  
David Griffith  
Bryan Gruley  
Jeff Haas  
Leigh Haber  
Colin Harrison  
Ed Helms  
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Laura Hohnhold  
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Jean Jennings  
Ron Jolly  
Bronwyn Jones  
Karl Klockars  
Walter Kirn  
Shannon H. Kleiber  
Elizabeth Kostova

Major General  
Michael Lehnert  
Deb Leonard  
Chad Lindsey  
Mardi Link  
Pat Livingston  
Jacki Lyden  
Thomas Lynch  
Cara McDonald  
Paula McLain  
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Angie Morgan  
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Leonard Pitts, Jr.  
Nargis Hakim  
Rahman  
Megan Raphael  
Rochelle Riley  
Ed Ronco  
Matt Rodbard  
Neal Rubin  
Lynn Rutan  
Paul Saginaw  
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Colleen Wares  
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### KATE BAER

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Mission Table Restaurant  
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### NATIONAL WRITERS SERIES

## summer GALA

AUGUST 10, 2025

The McMullen Family Conservation Center  
at the  
Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy

With special guest  
Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer



Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer



Gala guests Ed & Laura Ness, Wayne & Terry Lobdell and friends enjoy a beautiful evening.



David Tabolt, Lisa Genesen & NWS co-founder Grant Parsons



Laura Asiala & Lynne Elmore



Glen Chown, Exec. Dir. of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy



Lola Jackson, Terry Griffin & Dilys Tosteson Garcia



Robin Wall Kimmerer, Mike & Jeanne Haynes



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Lisa Thauvette & Brian Thelen



The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy generously hosted the gala at its Three Mile headquarters.



Doug Stanton, NWS co-founder



GTRLC staff and guests



Audrey Irontree, Tess Tarchak-Hiss, Lisa Tarchak



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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 conversations with world-renowned authors, provide creative writing and poetry classes to area youth, award eight 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!

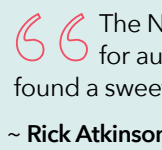
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## WHAT AUTHORS ARE SAYING...



“If every stop on a book tour was as much fun as the National Writers Series in Traverse City, no author would ever complain about going on the road. I'm telling all my writer friends -- the well-behaved ones, at least -- to put this event at the top of their list. Also, it's the only time that any of us will get invited on stage at an opera house.”

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“The National Writers Series is a wonderful meeting ground for authors and readers. Doug and Anne Stanton have found a sweet spot for those who cherish the written word.”

~ **Rick Atkinson**, three-time Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Fate of the Day*



## Look What We've Done - Celebrating 15 Years!

- \* 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 \$78,000 in scholarships to 62 college-bound students in partnership with the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation.
- \* We've hosted 290 author events for onstage conversations over the past 15 years.
- \* Our Raising Writers program engages some 1,000 students each year from a six-county area and beyond.
- \* Every year dozens of teams are engaged in a creative and fun Battle of the Books. Fourth- and fifth-graders enjoy reading and being quizzed on eight books.
- \* Each spring, we host poetry workshops at Traverse Heights and Blair elementary schools. Last 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 publish an annual *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 the NWS website.
- \* Co-founder Doug Stanton a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author, is a Stephen E. Ambrose Oral History Award winner and past Michiganian of the Year.
- \* Traverse City has been a "Book City" since 2015.



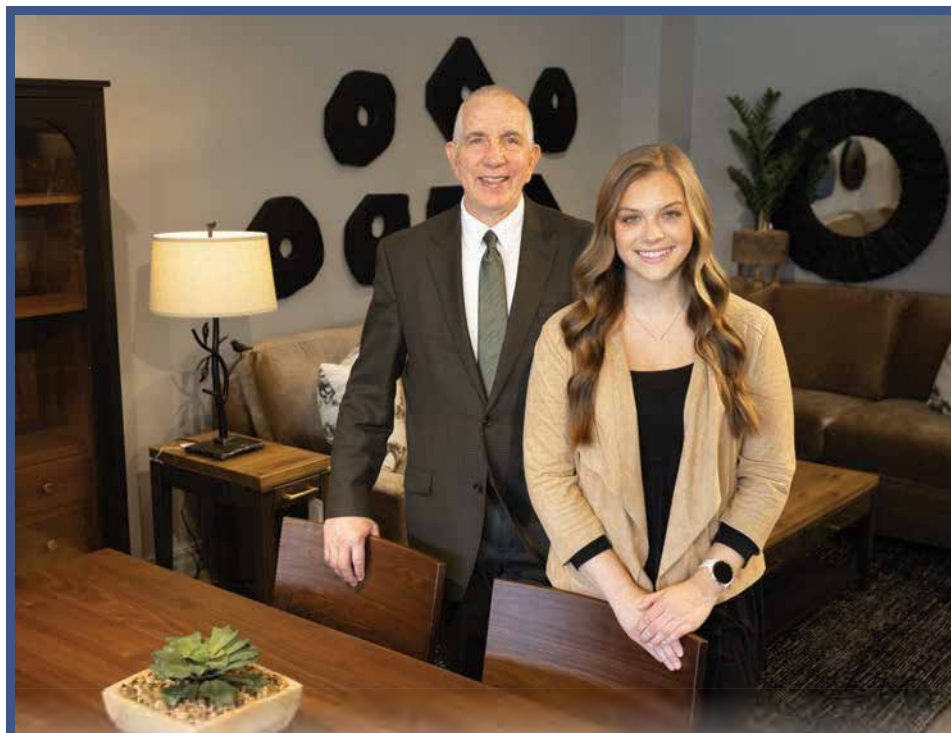
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## HOW CHINA WON & LOST AMERICA

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**OCTOBER 23**

## PUTTING THE GLOBAL ORDER BACK TOGETHER

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**NOVEMBER 12**

## FIGHTING FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION: CREATING A FUTURE WHERE GIRLS ARE FREE TO LEARN & LEAD

**ZIAUDDIN  
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EDUCATOR & ACTIVIST, CO-FOUNDER OF MALALA FUND,  
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**SUE GUNAWARDENA  
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**OCTOBER 8**

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DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING W/  
FOUNDER OF PADMAD, WORKING IN  
KENYA, SOMALILAND, MALAWI

**MADHVI DALAL**



**COMMUNITY  
NIGHTS**

**NOVEMBER 5**

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