



National Writers Series

Brilliant Storytellers.



Thoughtful Conversations.

SUMMER 2026

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

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TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684

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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

*NWS Co-founders

A Letter From Anne

We're Heating Up Summer with Fantastic Author Events!

I am so excited to announce our 2026 summer line-up, which promises unforgettable conversations with fascinating authors at the National Writers Series, a year-round book festival. But first, a huge announcement. NWS was gifted a new home on the second floor of the Traverse City Connect building, which we are naming The Story Loft. This wonderful development is all due to the enormous generosity of Diana and Richard Milock, who saw that we had clearly outgrown our stuffy (and stuffed) one-room office. We envision this as a third place filled with classes, writer gatherings, author talks, and the joy of new stories to be told.

So, onto the author line-up, kicking off with two authors we've long wanted to host: Terry Tempest Williams, a passionate environmental activist, and Dave Eggers, who wowed the world with his first book *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, and never stopped amazing the literary world. Their events are just two days apart in conversation with #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Doug Stanton and McSweeney's publisher Amanda Uhle, respectively.

Next up is Barbara McQuade returning to NWS with *The Fix*. As a former federal prosecutor, McQuade is a firm believer in law and order, including the political arena. She reports how the mob tools of corruption, cruelty, and chaos are being used to dominate institutions and squelch accountability. I'm anxious to hear her talk with NWS host and bestselling author Doug Stanton about proposed fixes.

In July, Jillian Laine, a Traverse City native, author, editor, and a former NWS executive director, will talk with *Ticker* head writer Beth Milligan about her novel, *Henry Tudor Must Die*. You'll be transfixed by her suspenseful tale of how smart, scorned queens join forces to avenge a tyrannical, powerful, and paranoid ruler.

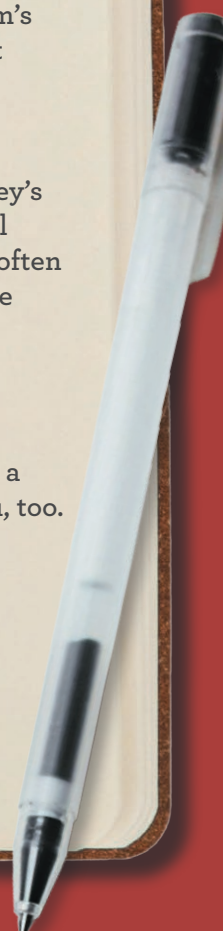
And for our nonfiction lovers, we offer Dr. Marc Berman, whose cutting-edge research reveals the untold benefits enjoyed by woods walkers. A University of Chicago psychology professor, he'll talk with Terrie Taylor, a world-renowned researcher of juvenile malaria, MSU professor, physician, and trustee of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy board.

We will begin August with Dr. Gregory Stock, a brilliant biophysicist, futurist, biotech entrepreneur and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Book of Questions*. He predicts that AI will improve the human race, intellectually and otherwise. Expect an invigorating conversation with guest host Dr. Jordan Lindberg, a successful entrepreneur who holds a doctorate in philosophy. Stock is also our summer gala keynote speaker on August 7.

In late August, we're proud to team up again with TC Tourism's Food & Wine with two amazing authors: legendary restaurant critic and bestselling author Ruth Reichl and Martin Sorge, winner of the Great American Bake-Off in 2023.

Don't miss the fabulous news on the education front in Audrey's report on the following page. Our events provide a wonderful synergy with our educational mission. Our visiting authors often take time to speak to writing students and our students recite their work before author events. These interactions are truly transformational.

Thanks to all of you—board members, donors, volunteers, grantors, and audience members for making these programs a reality. The staff works really, really hard, and they thank you, too.



Anne Stanton

Anne Stanton

Executive Director and Co-founder

A Letter From Audrey

If Northern Michigan has one lesson to teach us, it might be **“Good things come to those who wait.”**

It’s finally time for sunsoaked days by the lake with a good book and long, clear evenings filled with frogsong. This summer, we have more opportunities than ever for young writers to encounter our beautiful piece of the world and to learn to articulate their experiences. Kids will take to the water with Wind Sailing, a 36-foot sloop, and then write about their adventures. They’ll go on a series of evening hikes, learn to take notes in nature, and transform their thoughts into compelling essays and stories. And our most creative writers will be asked to imagine something stranger than frogs or foxes lurking in our local woods by inventing their own cryptids (if that term is new to you, think Bigfoot, Nessie, or the Dogman.)

Our screenwriting class for high schoolers is back, and we have a new class about writing the strange and surreal. We have a novel drafting class for adults, as well as a one-day novel revision class (you’ll see me there—I need all the help I can get!) And of course, we have sessions of our class *The College Essay: Tell Your Story*. If you have a rising 12th grader in your life, you might drop the helpful hint that getting their personal statement done this summer makes senior year way less stressful.

Where will these wonderful classes take place? When



The Racing Readers

we're not hiking or sailing or out staging screenplays, we'll be in our gorgeous new classroom at 202 E Grandview Pkwy. We had been searching for a new, permanent home for our classes for over a year, but, here's that lesson again: Good things come to those who wait. Thank you to Richard and Diana Milock for underwriting our new NWS home and all the donors and grantors whose gifts, large and small, have made this really good thing happen for young writers in Northern Michigan. All of our classes are entirely free for youth who participate, and now have an amazing new home, thanks to your generosity.



Audrey Irontree

Education Director

Education@nwstc.org

Mrs. Cobb at Traverse Heights



Poetry Party

Audrey Irontree



Romance Writing

Become a Friend of NWS!

The National Writers Series is a nonprofit organization that brings today's most compelling writers and thinkers to our community for engaging, thought-provoking conversations about books, ideas, and the world we share. Through live events and our Raising Writers programs, we create meaningful opportunities for connection—between writers and readers, and among community members who come together to listen, learn, and reflect.

When you support NWS, you help make these experiences possible.

FRIENDS OF NWS

Supporters who contribute \$50 or more annually are considered Friends of NWS and receive:

- Early access to ticket sales for upcoming events (via email prior to public on-sale dates. This means you can secure seats to high-demand events before they sell out.)

HOW TO GIVE

Make a donation online by visiting: NationalWritersSeries.org/donate/

Or mail a check to:

National Writers Series
202 E. Grandview Pkwy, Suite 200
Traverse City, MI 49684

Your support directly fuels our author events and youth programs—thank you!

— “

**There is something
infinitely healing in
the repeated refrains
of nature...**

~ **RACHEL CARSON**

SILENT SPRING

” —

H. Triezenberg and E. Mostrom

NAMED SPONSOR FOR THE MARC BERMAN EVENT

DUNES REVIEW

LITERARY JOURNAL
vol. 29 no. 2
fall/winter 2025

Dunes Review is northern Michigan's premier literary journal, in publication since 1997.

Support and subscribe!
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Traverse City Philharmonic

2025-26 Season at a Glance



MASTERWORKS SERIES

A NIGHT IN VEGAS

Saturday, October 3, 7:30 pm
City Opera House
TC Phil Pops
Dominic Fortuna & Joan Ellison

BEETHOVEN: SYMPHONY 7 + 'EMPEROR' CONCERTO

Sunday, October 25, 3 pm
Corson Auditorium
Traverse City Philharmonic
Kevin Rhodes, conductor
Sean Chen, piano

MENDELSSOHN 4 + ROREM CONCERTO

Sunday, November 15, 3 pm
Milliken Auditorium, Dennon
Traverse City Philharmonic
Kevin Rhodes, conductor
Kyle Stachnik, cello

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS: LET IT SWING!

Dec 19, 7:30 pm | Dec 20, 3 pm
Corson Auditorium
TC Phil Pops
Lonnie Klein, guest conductor

MOZART REQUIEM

Sunday, March 21, 3 pm
Corson Auditorium
Daniel Singer, guest conductor
NMC Choirs

TCHAIK SERENADE + VIVALDI 4 SEASONS

Sunday, April 18, 3 pm
Corson Auditorium
Traverse City Philharmonic
Kevin Rhodes, conductor
Tina Chang Qu, violin

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DAVE EGGERS

FRIDAY, JUNE 12

CITY OPERA HOUSE

DOORS AT 6:00 P.M. | SHOW AT 7:00 P.M.

From the author of *The Circle*, Dave Eggers returns with *Contrapposto*, another novel of staggering genius.

Dave Eggers is one of the most notable writers of his generation, recognized for such critically acclaimed books as *What Is the What* and *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*. His new novel is titled *Contrapposto*, an art term that describes a relaxed, lifelike human pose, a groundbreaking concept in ancient sculpture.

This is a tale of Cricket Dib and his childhood friend, Olympia Argyros, a captivating force of nature. Early on, she recognizes Dib's artistic talent and convinces him to deface a popular playground. He does it willingly, already in love, and thus begins a 65-year entwining between Cricket and Olympia, always his champion, but with her eyes always seeking something—and someone—else. Their love changes over time,



but their commitment to each other never wavers, nor their belief that they can bring change and new meaning to the art world.

Dave Eggers is the author of *Zeitoun* and *The Circle*, among many other books. He was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and the National Book Critics Circle Award, and received the American Book Award and the Newbery Medal. As a philanthropist, he has founded several human rights and literacy nonprofits, including 826 Valencia. Before his writing career, Eggers was classically trained as a painter and spent many years as an illustrator and graphic designer.



Guest Host Amanda Uhle is executive director and publisher of *McSweeney's*, an award-winning quarterly literary journal, humor website, and book publishing program, originally founded by Eggers. Her writing has appeared in *The Washington Post*, *Politico Magazine*, and several other national magazines. Her memoir, *Destroy This House*, was an *Elle* magazine best book of 2025.

CITY OPERA HOUSE SUMMER CAMPS



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JULY 20-24, 2026



TAKE IT FROM THE TOP
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Camp!

August 24-27, 2026



TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS
SUNDAY, JUNE 14
TRAVERSE CITY WEST HIGH SCHOOL
+ LIVESTREAMING
DOORS AT 6:00 P.M. | SHOW AT 7:00 P.M.

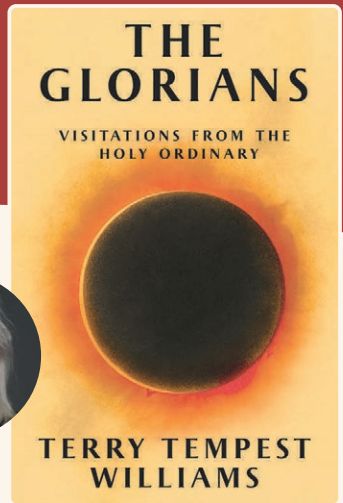
Presented by The Clark and Karen Bunting
“Natural Wonders” Author Series

An Evening with
New York Times bestselling
author Terry Tempest Williams

From the visionary *New York Times* bestselling author comes a revelatory work of narrative nonfiction exploring beauty in the desert, climate change, and transformative moments of power in a world beset by uncertainty.

“Whether we believe it or not, rapid change is upon us. I am searching for grace.”

In this time of political fragility, climate chaos, and seeking glimmers of hope, Terry Tempest Williams introduces us to the Glorians. They are the ordinary, often overlooked presences—animal, plant, memory, moment—that reveal our interconnectedness with the natural world. The Glorians can be as small as an ant ferrying a coyote willow blossom or a night sky. But they collectively teach us about the radical act of attending to beauty and carrying forward against all odds.



Terry Tempest Williams is the award-winning, internationally published author of seventeen books of creative nonfiction, including the environmental classic *Refuge – An Unnatural History of Family and Place*. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts & Letters and the writer-in-residence at the Harvard Divinity School. She divides her time between Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Castle Valley, Utah.

“I go to Terry Tempest Williams for the reasons I go to Whitman and Thoreau: to recover a capacious spirit and to rejoin the urgent living world. She gives me something bigger than hope.”

~ Richard Powers,
author of *The Overstory*



NWS Host Doug Stanton is a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author and the co-founder and creative director of NWS. His book *Horse Soldiers* was the basis for *12 Strong* starring Chris Hemsworth. *In Harm's Way*, an international bestseller, won the Audie, Michigan Notable Book and *New York Times* Notable Book awards. He has written for *the New York Times*, *Time* and *the Washington Post* and has appeared on the *Today Show*, *Morning Joe*, and CNN.

We are privileged to honor Anne Stanton

When Anne co-founded the National Writers Series in 2010, she believed in something simple and profound: that great stories have the power to connect us, challenge us, and change us.


Over more than a decade of leadership, Anne has brought hundreds of the world's most celebrated authors to Traverse City — Pulitzer Prize winners, National Book Award recipients, and *New York Times* bestsellers — and welcomed them not just onto the Opera House stage, but into a community that she helped make hungry for ideas and hungry for words.

But perhaps her greatest legacy is the one quietest in the room — the young writers whose voices were lifted up through the literacy and education programs she championed, because Anne always knew that the next great story might just belong to a kid who needed the chance to tell it.

We are grateful for her vision, her dedication, and her abiding love of the written word.

~ Sue and Jon Kinne

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ANN PATCHETT

THURSDAY, JUNE 25

CITY OPERA HOUSE + LIVESTREAMING

DOORS AT 6:00 P.M. | SHOW AT 7:00 P.M.

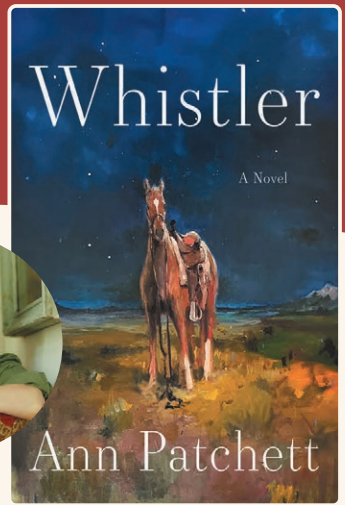
Presented by The Sue and
Jon Kinne “Fiction” Author Series

An Evening with Ann Patchett

Ann Patchett, one of the most acclaimed and influential authors writing today, returns to Traverse City with *Whistler*, a luminous novel that reminds us of the sweetness and impermanence of life and the power of connection to defy time.

On a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Daphne Fuller and her husband notice a man following them. He turns out to be Eddie Triplett, who was married to her mother for about a year when Daphne was nine. Now 53, Daphne hasn't seen him for years, not since the fateful event that changed both their lives: a harrowing car accident on a snowy Massachusetts night. The aftermath of this accident ripples through the novel in vivid flashbacks, deepening our understanding of Daphne's present.

Whistler is a story about two adults looking back over the choices they made, and the choices that were made



for them—and how being truly known by just one person, even briefly, can change everything.

Ann Patchett has written many novels, including the #1 *New York Times* bestselling *Tom Lake*, works of nonfiction, and children's books. She is the recipient of multiple awards, including the PEN/Faulkner and the Women's Prize for Fiction in the UK. She was chosen by *Time* as one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World, awarded the National Humanities Medal, and selected as a Pulitzer Prize finalist. She lives in Nashville, Tennessee, where she owns Parnassus Books.

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Guest Host Erin Anderson Whiting is a senior charitable giving specialist for the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy. She has devoted her philanthropic career to arts and conservation, serving at Interlochen Center for the Arts and cofounding Parallel 45 Theatre. She lives in Traverse City with her husband, Ben, and their very good dog, Scooter.

— “ —

**It is essential for
all of us to become
critical thinkers.**

” —

Pam and Harold Lassers

EVENT SPONSORS FOR THE BARBARA MCQUADE EVENT

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of the NWS*

Pickles and Maggie
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BARBARA MCQUADE

MONDAY, JULY 13

CITY OPERA HOUSE + LIVESTREAMING

DOORS AT 6:00 P.M. | SHOW AT 7:00 P.M.

An Evening with Obama's former U.S. Attorney, Barbara McQuade

For a piercing exposé on the threats to our democracy, look no further than *The Fix*. As a former U.S. attorney under President Barack Obama, Barbara McQuade has prosecuted corruption cases of all stripes, including former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, the “underwear bomber,” and Volkswagen for emissions violations. She now reveals how organized crime and political opportunism are exploiting the levers of power—using corruption and cruelty as tools.

McQuade exposes the tactics of information warfare, retribution, and the relentless dismantling of checks and balances to uphold justice. She argues the threats we face are not future possibilities—they are here. Yet *The Fix* is not just a warning; it is a call for reforms that can reclaim the rule of law and the power of the people.

Barbara McQuade is a University of Michigan Law School law professor



The Fix

Saving America from the Corruption of a Mob-Style Government



Author of
THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER *ATTACK FROM WITHIN*
Barbara McQuade

and a legal analyst for NBC News and MSNBC. She also co-hosts the popular #SistersInLaw podcast. From 2010 to 2017, she served as the US Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan. She previously worked as a sportswriter, copy editor, law clerk, attorney, and an assistant US attorney. She wrote the national bestseller, *Attack from Within*. She lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with her husband and four children.

“Nice book you got here, McQuade . . . be a shame if anything happened to it.”

~ Robert De Niro

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**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
LEELANAU COUNTY**



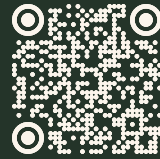
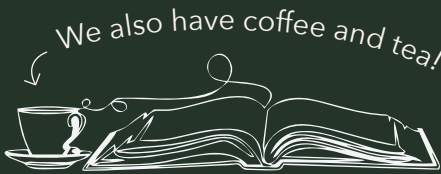
NWS Host Doug Stanton is a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author and the co-founder and creative director of NWS. His book *Horse Soldiers* was the basis for *12 Strong* starring Chris Hemsworth. *In Harm's Way*, an international bestseller, won the Audie, Michigan Notable Book and *New York Times* Notable Book awards. He has written for the *New York Times*, *Time* and the *Washington Post* and has appeared on the *Today Show*, *Morning Joe*, and CNN.

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www.TheFoldedLeafNomi.com

— “ —

Paying attention is a form of reciprocity with the living world, receiving the gifts with open eyes and open heart.

~ ROBIN WALL KIMMERER

BRAIDING SWEETGRASS: INDIGENOUS WISDOM, SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE, AND THE TEACHINGS OF PLANTS

” —

Clark and Karen Bunting

NAMED SPONSOR FOR THE TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS EVENT

JILLIAN LAINE

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22

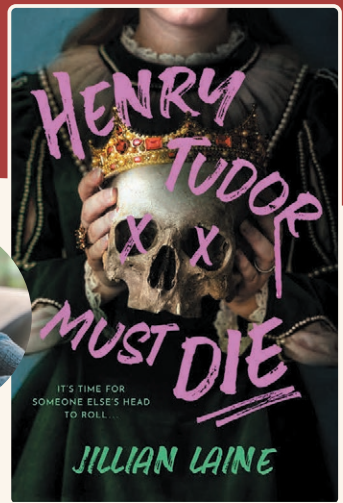
MILLIKEN AUDITORIUM + LIVESTREAMING

DOORS AT 6:00 P.M. | SHOW AT 7:00 P.M.

Jillian Laine debuts with a reimagining of Henry the VIII in *Henry Tudor Must Die*

In this feminist, witchy fantasy, debut author Jillian Laine reimagines the tale of Henry the VIII, weaving together history, magic, a secret society, and the power of vengeful women.

The story begins with one queen living in exile. Another headed for the gallows. Both are hungry for revenge. Anne Boleyn is going to die, and her clever mind and witchery can't save her. But then her late rival, Catalina de Aragón, miraculously appears in her cell on the eve of her execution, very much alive and offering an escape plan. Lina lacks Anne's magic but seethes with the same hate for England's wretched king. She breathes only for a clandestine society with a vested interest in keeping both queens alive. Add in three other wives of Henry VIII, who have their own bones to pick with the king. One by one, they infiltrate the court and eliminate the men who plotted against them.



Always inching closer toward the head of their one true target.

Jillian Laine is an author, journalist, and editor. She has written multiple children's books and has worked as an acquisitions editor, executive director of NWS, and literary award judge. She and her husband live with their pride of cats in Traverse City.

"History as it should have been, *Henry Tudor Must Die* delivers the delicious revenge we've been craving for centuries."

~ Kirsten Miller, author of *The Change* and *The Women of Wild Hill*

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SUE AND JON KINNE

— ENTERTAINMENT SPONSOR —

THE FOLDED LEAF



Guest Host Beth Milligan is the head writer for the *Traverse City Ticker* and has served in marketing, PR, and board roles for numerous community organizations. She is the co-host of *Currently* with Christal Frost, a weekly podcast featuring local journalists discussing the region's top news stories.



GRAND TRAVERSE REGIONAL

LAND
CONSERVANCY

Love the land. *Pass it on.*



Clean water, healthy forests, local farms, and access to nature are the foundation of physical, mental, and social well-being.

As development pressures increase, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy stands ready to protect the places we love. Protecting and stewarding land strengthens local economies, sustains the outdoor traditions that define our region, and contributes to the mental and physical health of the people who visit or call this place home. Learn more and join us: **GTRLC.ORG**



MARC BERMAN, PH.D

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

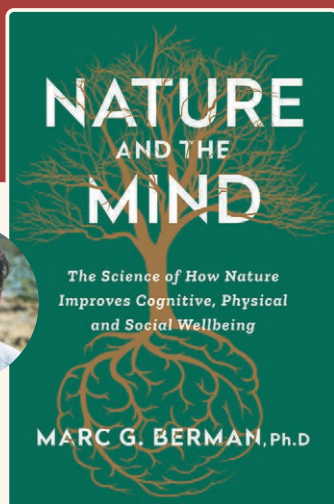
MILLIKEN AUDITORIUM + LIVESTREAMING
DOORS AT 6:00 P.M. | SHOW AT 7:00 P.M.

Presented by the Herm Triesenberg and Elizabeth Mostrom “Health and Wellness” Author Series

An evening with the world’s leading environmental neuroscientist Marc Berman, Ph.D

What if a simple walk in the woods were a prescription for our scattered attention? Dr. Marc Berman, author of *Nature and the Mind: The Science of How Nature Improves Cognitive, Physical, and Social Well-Being*, uses science to show that spending time in natural environments can ultimately boost our ability to focus attention (a staggering *twenty percent* improvement in attention-related abilities). In this introduction to a revolutionary new scientific field, he explains how and why taking a stroll in a park—even surrounding ourselves with indoor plants—is good for us in a deep-down, necessary way.

He also writes how the positive effects of nature don’t end with the individual; people also become more apt to care for one another, promote economic and racial justice, and protect the environment.



Dr. Marc Berman is the director and founder of the University of Chicago’s Environmental Neuroscience Laboratory and a professor of psychology. He is the world’s leading environmental neuroscientist. His work has been featured in national media, including CNN, NPR, the *Hidden Brain* podcast, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *National Geographic*.

“Marc Berman is a brilliant academic star of the new nature movement, and his pioneering new book *Nature and the Mind* is sure to become a seminal force in the burgeoning new field of environmental neuroscience.”

~ Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods*

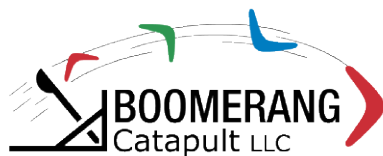
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Guest Host Dr. Terrie Taylor has worked in the College of Osteopathic Medicine at Michigan State University since 1986, coordinating studies to understand the pathogenesis of fatal cerebral malaria in Malawian children. A Traverse City native, she is the first second-generation member of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy Board.

The Next Chapter Starts Here and Now



The best ideas begin in the margins. Boomerang Catapult partners with early-stage Northern Michigan founders to grow their ideas into vibrant, value-creating enterprises — from bold concept to scale and success and creating outstanding jobs along the way.

We Invest in Northern Michigan companies that create high value through intellectually intensive effort and export it to the world.

BoomerangCatapult.com

Please Join the National Writers Series Annual

Summer Gala

An evening of live music, cocktails, dinner, and dessert, plus a special student reading and exciting updates.

SUNDAY, AUG 9

Cocktails at **5:00 P.M.**

Dinner at **6:00 P.M.**

JACOB'S FARM

At the top of the hill

7100 E. Traverse Highway,
M-72 West, Traverse City, MI

Cocktail Attire

WILL AI HELP US? OR BECOME US?

Come find out. Join us for an entertaining night of big questions and bold ideas with special guest **Dr. Gregory Stock** as we imagine together what lies ahead. Your support of the gala directly fuels NWS educational programming and makes Traverse City one of America's great literary towns.

GREGORY STOCK, PH.D

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9

CITY OPERA HOUSE + LIVESTREAMING

DOORS AT 6:00 P.M. | SHOW AT 7:00 P.M.

AI and the Human Future: Who—or What—Will We Become?

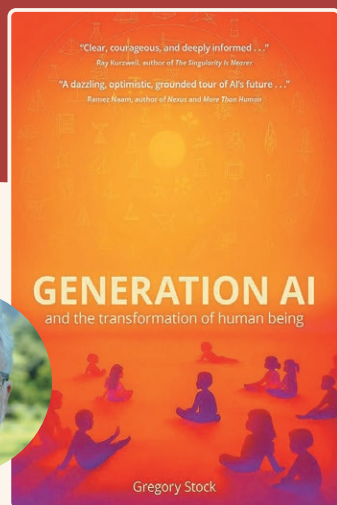
Analysts often discuss what AI and other advanced technologies may become, but few have thought through what we will become. Generation AI—those born after the year 2022—will be the first humans to grow up in a world of immersive AI and intelligent robots, blurring the boundaries of born and made. They will differ fundamentally from us, yet their future is our future too.

Drawing on evolutionary biology, social science, and progress in advanced technologies, renowned scientist-philosopher Dr. Gregory Stock offers the most comprehensive analysis yet of how AI will reshape not just our world, but our very nature. *Generation AI: The Transformation of Human Being* is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the profound transformation already underway—and our place within it.

Dr. Gregory Stock is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Book of Questions* and subsequent books in the series, selling 4.5 million



Guest Host Dr. Jordan Lindberg is a digital commerce entrepreneur, contract manufacturer and importer, and logistics industry expert. Prior to his business career, he taught philosophy at Central Michigan University for a decade. He holds an A.B. from Albion College, an M.A. from Michigan State, and a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Missouri-Columbia.



copies. With a doctorate in biophysics from Johns Hopkins and an MBA from Harvard Business School, he is a leading authority on the broad impacts of advanced technology. He teaches at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, where he co-directed the Harris Center for Precision Wellness. He also founded the Medicine, Technology and Society program at UCLA's School of Medicine. He is the CEO of Socratic Sciences, which helps people leverage the tool of questioning to better understand themselves and others, deepen relationships, and reduce social isolation.

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An Afternoon with Six-Time James Beard Award Winner Ruth Reichl

Join the National Writers Series at Traverse City Food and Wine, now in its second year. We are honored to host the legendary Ruth Reichl, recognized as one of the most discerning voices in the food world as a bestselling author, revered restaurant critic, and culinary industry influencer. Her iconic status stems from her groundbreaking roles in food journalism as the lead restaurant critic at the *New York Times* and editor-in-chief at *Gourmet* magazine.

Reichl will be joined in conversation with returning guest host Matt Rodbard to talk about her life of food writing and most recently her first fiction work, *The Paris Novel*. It's a coming-of-age story about Stella, a young book copy editor who inherits money from her estranged mother with instructions to go to Paris. Set in the 1980s, the novel follows Stella as she discovers herself through food, fashion, and art, exploring her mother's past and finding a new passion for



life, with vivid descriptions of French cuisine and culture. The book blends a personal journey of self-discovery with a historical mystery involving a Manet painting and the House of Dior.

Ruth Reichl is a six-time James Beard Award winner. Capped by her 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award, her work transcends all platforms with top honors for bestselling books, magazine feature writing, restaurant critique, and multimedia food commentary.

Born and raised in New York City, she moved to Berkeley, California, in the early 1970s, launching her career as chef and co-owner of The Swallow Restaurant. She later held court as one of the top restaurant critics in America, influencing commentary during the early days of the foodie explosion.



Guest Host Matt Rodbard is a writer, editor, and author of food and culture books with more than two decades of experience working in television, magazines, book publishing, and online media. He's the author of several cookbooks and the Founding Editor of online food and culture magazine *Taste*.

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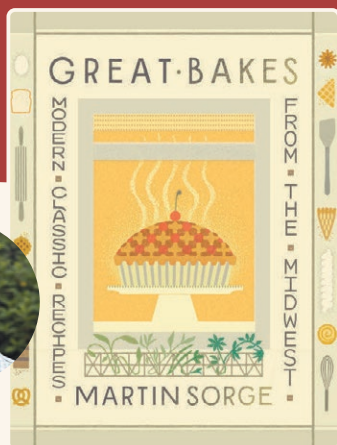
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An Afternoon with the 2023 Winner of the Great American Baking Show Martin Sorge

When Paul Hollywood and Prue Leith crowned Martin Sorge the winner of the *Great American Baking Show* in 2023, few would have guessed that his baking journey began with him setting the microwave on fire, trying to make a biscuit. But after years spent in the kitchen, he had become a full-fledged “baking nerd next door.” He is the perfect guide to explain *simply* how to adjust a recipe for rye flour or perfect your pavlova without bogging you down with too many details.

In this debut cookbook, *Great Bakes: Modern Classic Recipes from the Midwest*, Martin shares more than 100 recipes for sweet and savory bakes that celebrate the bounty of the Midwest, from modern classics to innovative show-stoppers. These breads, cookies, crisps, cakes, pies, pastries, and—yes—biscuits sneak surprising ingredients into the classics: Super-Soft Malted Cinnamon Rolls that elevate the childhood staple, Glazed Lemon Verbena Shortbread that gets a bit of zing



from the window-box herb, and Sweet Corn Milk Bread that highlights the perfection of an ear of summer sweet corn. From the Midwestern flavors of Chicago Dog Focaccia and Michigan Forest Cake to traditional Christmas Stollen and Swabian Soft Pretzels rooted in Martin’s German heritage, *Great Bakes* welcomes bakers of every level with recipes they’ll reach for again and again.

Martin Sorge is a baker, recipe developer, and food writer who splits his time between Chicago and Michigan’s pinky finger. A native Hoosier, Martin takes his approachable Midwestern roots and his not-too-serious (sometimes corny) personality and combines those with his nerdy technical knowledge to create accessible recipes for the home cook. When he’s not in the kitchen baking up a storm, Martin enjoys board games, jumping in lakes, exploring places near and far with his husband, and spoiling their two cats.



Guest Host Matt Rodbard is a writer, editor, and author of food and culture books with more than two decades of experience working in television, magazines, book publishing, and online media. He’s the author of several cookbooks and the Founding Editor of online food and culture magazine *Taste*.

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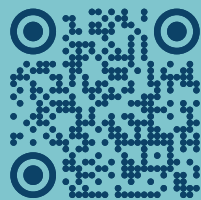
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