



SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER
2018-2019 NUMBER 1

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FRIENDS OF AMERICAN WRITERS CHICAGO

www.fawchicago.org


President's Message

CHRISTINE SPATARA, *President*



FAW begins a new 2018-2019 year. As the new President, together with the Board, I welcome everyone to a season of interesting programs, delicious

lunches, and visits with new and old friends. We are an old organization, founded back in 1922, and as we progress into the future, we are determined to remain a vital institution with the steadfast desire to continue to promote new Midwestern authors. We encourage our members to promote for us as well. Bring a friend to a luncheon so that they can experience

first hand a pleasant afternoon in the midst of lovers of books, which is the commonality that binds us together. Our program committee has worked hard to find interesting speakers with wide-range appeal. Mark your calendars so as not to miss a single event. We look forward to seeing everyone at our first meeting on Wednesday, September 12. 

SEPTEMBER

PROGRAM

Capital Dames Jenny Riddle


KAREN PULVER, *Co-Chair*

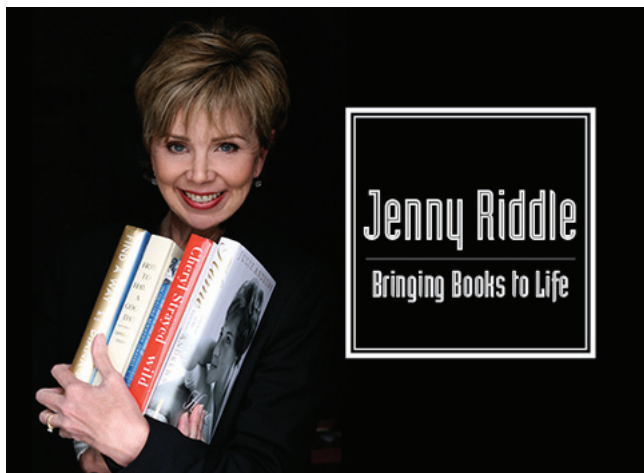
Be sure not to miss our September luncheon when actress and sto-

ryteller Jenny Riddle performs a rendition of Cokie Roberts' book, *Capital Dames: The Civil War and the Women of Washington*. Jenny Riddle's review will captivate you as she presents some of the women in Cokie Roberts' best seller, *Capital Dames*. You'll be familiar with such names as Dorothea Dix, Mary Todd Lincoln, and Sojourner Truth; but what do you know about Jessie (Mrs. John "The Pathfinder") Fremont, Varina (Mrs. Jef-

erson) Davis, Elizabeth Blair Lee, or ex-slave, Mrs. Lizzie Keckley? You don't want to miss learning how these women and others in Roberts' book reacted to the war, influenced the war, and moved women farther along the road to enlightenment and equality. Can you imagine a young female teacher in the mid 1850's telling a school board as she turned down their job offer, "I will never do a man's work for less than a man's pay." Clara Barton did just that—and she got the job! Join Jenny as she shares the stories of the women of The Civil War.

Jenny is co-owner of Prairie Path Books in Wheaton in addition to being a motivational speaker, teacher, and thrower of great parties.

Be there and bring your friends. 





ANNOUNCEMENTS

Luncheon Reservations

The September 2018 meeting of the Friends of American Writers will be held on Wednesday, September 12. Luncheon reservations for this meeting are due no later than 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 9, 2018. Please note, this deadline is firm. No reservations will be accepted following this date and time. To reserve, please contact only Lorraine Campione (773-275-5118) or Pat Adelberg (847-588-0911). If you wish a permanent reservation, please mention it to Lorraine or Pat when you call. All Board members automatically have permanent reservations. Also, a reminder that no permanent reservations are held over from last year to this year.

Luncheon will be served at 12:00 noon in the main floor dining room of the Fortnightly Club of Chicago, 120 W. Bellevue Place. The cost is \$45 per person, payable by check (preferred) in the front lobby on the day of the meeting. For group reservations, we ask that only one person make the reservation to avoid confusion. Please note, if you make a reservation and you cannot attend, you must cancel no later than 6:00 p.m. on the Sunday preceding the meeting. Reservations not cancelled must be paid for by the member.

Literature Committee

The Literature Awards Committee News

TAMMIE BOB, *Chair*

Summers, FAW's Literature Awards committees are on hiatus, but we're always getting ready for the next season. This coming year, our meeting schedule will shift a bit to better expedite our process, or in plainer

English, we will be meeting more in the winter when we have our greatest influx of books, and less in the fall, when they only seem to trickle in.

We have some openings on our committee this year, and since you're reading this, please know we want YOU to join us---it's one way to be a better Friend of American Writers. Yes, you're busy (all of our members are busy!) but you do like to read, don't you? Most of our members were initially concerned that the reading load would be too onerous, but it always turns out not to be. Ask any of us: Diana Adams, Tammie Bob, Karen Burnett, Mary Robb Clarke, Dale Davison, Roberta Gates, Ida Hagman, Ellen Israel, Kathy Katz, Diane Miller, Karen Pulver, Dori Roskin, and Trish Ronan; and we'll explain in great detail how the committee works.

You'll also hear about the variety of books we encounter, and the fun (and yummy lunches) we have at our meetings at the beautiful Women's Athletic Club, as well as the pleasure of meeting and awarding our new favorite authors. Please contact Tammie Bob: bobtam410@gmail.com for more information. Make this the year you participate in this rewarding activity.

Young People's Literature Awards Committee

ANGELA GALL, *Chair*

Books are a uniquely portable magic.
—STEPHEN KING

The Young People's Literature Awards Committee concluded last year with two incredible books for our grand prize. The Stars Beneath Our Feet by David Barclay Moore is slated to become a movie directed by Michael B. Jordan, star

of *Creed* and *Black Panther*. Meeting the author, Tamara Bundy, of *Walking With Miss Millie* at the Awards Luncheon was such a treat. She embodied the true spirit of authorship when she emphasized the idea of books being a vehicle for change. We also learned that talent runs in her family when we met her beautiful daughter who is in a band called The Bundys with her two siblings. The Bundys were featured on the talent show The X Factor, and they opened for country star, LeAnn Rimes!

Moving forward, the Young People's Literature Awards Committee has high hopes for the upcoming year. The world of literature is never dull. With each new year, authors impress us with their ability to reveal the joys and sorrows of society along with answers for improvement without beating us over the head with it. This uniquely portable magic Stephen King refers to is why all members of our fabulous committee have returned for another year--Lorraine Campione, Vivian Mortensen, Tanya Klasser, Peggy Kuzminski, Colleen Kadlec, Jane Foster, and Deb Hall Reppen. We welcome any other FAW member who would like to join us in reading, discussing and choosing our next Great Midwestern Author to contact me at angelagall1@hotmail.com.

Below are the dates in which we will meet at The Women's Athletic Club in Chicago for our committee meetings at 11:00 am. (Thank you, Kathy Katz, for providing this beautiful facility!)

FAW 2018-19 Young People's Committee Schedule

September 5th (luncheon meeting at The Original Pancake House

near The Fortnightly)


October 3rd
December 5th
January 2 (only if needed)
January 16th
February 6 (only if needed)
February 20th
March 6 (only if needed)
March 20th

Membership Corner

IDA HAGMAN, *Chair*

Welcome new members and welcome back to renewing members! I hope you had an enjoyable summer. It's affirming to see so members renew year after year because they value FAW's support of emerging writers, and they enjoy our luncheons in the beautiful Fortnightly. Our membership is

strong but we need to bring in new members. We gained several new members last year because many of you brought friends to luncheons. Please invite friends and acquaintances to join us.

If you have not sent in your dues (\$50), you can mail them to me or leave them at the check-in table at the September meeting. Yearbooks will be handed out at the September luncheon. 

FEATURE ARTICLE

by SHIRLEY BAUGHER

IT'S SO

HARD

TO SAY

GOOD-BYE

TO

YESTERDAY

It happens every year. After the last honors are handed out at the Awards Luncheon in May, the Friends of American Writers disperse for the summer. Many head to exotic places like Rome, Paris, London, or Hong Kong. Some seek out new adventures like mountain climbing or spelunking. Still others snuggle into their favorite chairs and start going through the piles of books that they have been going to read when they have a spare moment.

Friends often reconnect with other friends they have not seen for months, or even years. And, inevitably, some of those we have known, known of, and admired pack up and move out in the night. Among those whose lives will no longer touch ours are iconic author Philip Roth (*Portnoy's Complaint*); author Tom Wolfe (*The Right Stuff*); culinary sage and author Anthony Bourdain; master French chef Joel Robuchon; Chicago Blackhawks great Stan Mikita; Nobel Prize winning writer V. S. Naipaul; Ghanian diplomat Kofi Annan; and the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin.

Aretha Franklin was only 24 years old when she sat down at a piano in the Atlantic Recording Studio in New York City and sang,

R-E-S-P-E-C-T
Find out what it means to me.
R-E-S-P-E-C-T
Take care TCB



Oh, sock it to me, sock it to me
sock it to me, sock it to me.

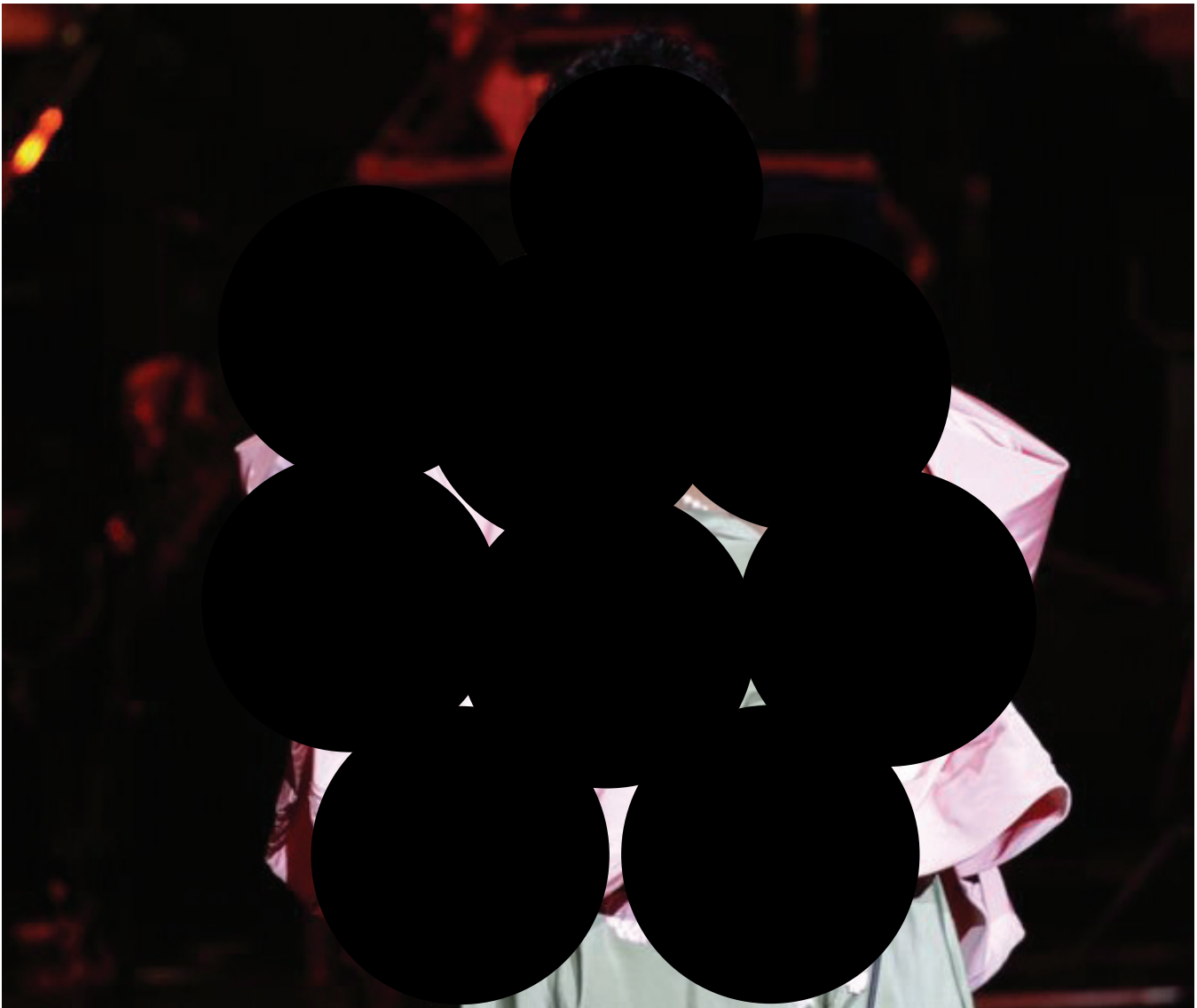
Although Aretha did not write the song, (Otis Redding did), she believed she could bring something new to it. Her sisters Carolyn Ann Franklin and Erma Franklin

sang the background vocals, and they are the ones who added the phrase, "sock it to me." It was Aretha's idea to spell out the word R-E-S-P-E-C-T. They worked out their version just before arriving at the studio.

Aretha Franklin made "Respect" her own. She transformed it into what would become an anthem for both the civil rights movement and the women's rights movement. She put into her interpretation feelings many black women knew all too well—a fire in their souls and a well of pain. Her reinvention of "Respect" had more power than the original version. She gave it a universality that Redding's version never had. In the words of one reviewer, "Otis sings the hell out of it, but Aretha, in her reinvention, personalizes it." She made it "...a woman thing." In the past year, it even became a symbol of the "Me Too" movement.

When Franklin's version was released in April of 1967, it soared to the top of the music charts and stayed there for more than three months. One critic wrote of her voice then, "It came like a cannon ball, blowing holes in the stylized and chifon Motown sound, a strong new voice with a range that

continued 



hit the heavens and a center of gravity that was very close to the earth.”

Biography

Aretha Franklin grew up in Detroit, Michigan. Her father, the Reverend C. I. Franklin preached to a large congregation at the New Bethel Baptist Church there. His services were broadcast both in Detroit and in other urban areas around the country. It was in Reverend Franklin’s church that Aretha learned to sing gospel and spirituals. Sixty of his sermons were recorded and released as albums. Years later, Aretha recalled, “Daddy had been preaching black pride for decades, and we as a people had rediscovered how beautiful black truly was and were echoing, “Say it loud, I’m black and I’m proud.”

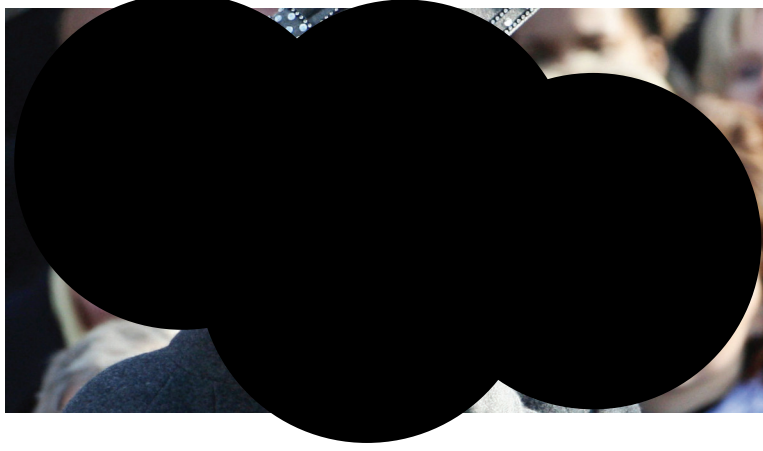
Reverend Franklin was a friend of many powerful civil rights leaders of the 1960s, including Martin Luther King, Jesse Jackson, and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Two months before the 1963 March on Washington, Reverend

Franklin led a freedom march in Detroit. Walking beside him was the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Aretha was just a teenager when Dr. King invited her to tour the country with him as he preached nonviolence in the movement for civil rights. She was joined by a young Harry Belafonte, Andrew Young, gospel legend Mahalia Jackson and gospel singer Sam Cooke. After King’s assassination in 1968, Aretha performed at his funeral.

Career Highlights

In 1960, when Aretha Franklin was just 18 years old, she signed a major recording deal with Columbia Records. Six years later, she signed with Atlantic Records and released one hit after another. She was never out of the public eye. Her greatest hit was always “Respect,” which was chiefly responsible for getting her inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987. She was the first woman to achieve that honor. In 1967, she won two Grammys for “Respect,” one for Best Rhythm and Blues Solo Vocal

Performance and the other with producer Jerry Wexler for Best Rhythm and Blues Recording. Wexler would later say, "There are songs that are a call to action. There are love songs... But it's hard to think of another song where both those elements are combined."



as comfortable in off the rack attire as she did in fur coats and sequined gowns. She made no apologies for or attempts to hide the curves that came with age; and she strutted about onstage in architecturally popping hairstyles. She drew crowds wherever she performed: Detroit, New York, Las Vegas,

Envoi

Aretha Franklin was a universal woman. She spent a lifetime singing about and epitomizing respect for women. "I think women have to be strong," she once said. "If they are not, some people will run right over them." She could change her appearance according to the occasion. She could look ordinary, which made the average woman relate to her. And she could look positively regal, as though she should be put on a pedestal. She looked

and the capitals of Europe. She left us on August 16, 2018. She was 76 years old. On August 31, people will gather in Detroit to bury Aretha Franklin. Congress has introduced bipartisan legislation to award the singer the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor bestowed by that legislative body. In September, she will be honored with a gala at Radio City Music Hall in New York. Music lovers all over the world will sit with their chosen devices and sing along, R-E-S-P-E-C-T as they say goodbye to the one and only "Queen of Soul", Aretha Franklin. ■■

The Reading Corner

Clock Dance
by Anne Tyler

Reviewed by VIVIAN MORTENSEN

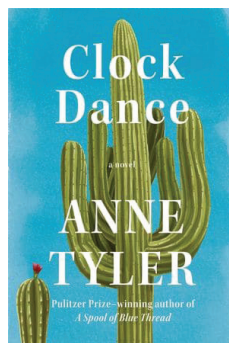
Willa is the "nice girl" who always smooths ruffled feathers. In her childhood she soothes her little sister whenever her mother acts out. At twenty, traveling to meet her fiancé's parents, she has a disturbing encounter with a man sitting next to her on the plane. But when her future husband dismisses the incident, Willa goes along with him instead of creating a scene.

Now in her sixties Willa wonders if tranquility is enough. She lives with Peter her current husband on an Arizona golf course where the heat seems stifling. She wants to finish her college degree but can't get motivated. She'd love to dote on grandchildren but she's lost touch with her two unmarried sons. Her life is in a rut. When a Baltimore woman calls to report that Denise, her son's former fiancé, has been shot in the leg, and Denise's nine-year-old daughter

Cheryl needs a babysitter, Willa feels compelled to help them. Things get more complicated when everyone assumes Cheryl is Willa's granddaughter and Willa doesn't correct them. Peter trails along too although he can't stop grumbling and misses his obedient little wife.

The Baltimore neighborhood is a revelation to Willa, full of characters and lifestyles she has never met before. The street is filled with older, crumbling homes inhabited by quirky characters. The little girl Cheryl is slightly overweight and needs hugs. Airplane, the dog, has crazy ears. Denise, the girlfriend, is very opinionated and smart-mouthed. The local doctor Ben is a hippie. The boy next

door has tattoos and a motorcycle. While her husband Peter rejects it all, Willa is in awe. The set-up is typical Anne Tyler who has written over 20 books. She creates characters who seem ordinary until you meet them. Their lives become rich with detail, from the trauma of selling Girl Scout cookies to finding a restaurant in a strange city. And while there's not much plot, it's their day to day existence that is fascinating. The writing is witty and at times laugh-out-loud funny. A real treat to read. ■■





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