



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER
2018-2019 NUMBER 4

Editor: Shirley Baugher
Designer: Norman Baugher

FRIENDS OF AMERICAN WRITERS CHICAGO

www.fawchicago.org



CHRISTINE SPATARO, *President*

The holidays are upon us and in keeping with the spirit of Hanukkah and Christmas, FAW will be celebrating with music and song at our December luncheon inspiring the joy of the season. It is a time of celebration and sharing all our best wishes with our members. It is a time of

gratitude for a wonderful meal together in a beautiful setting.

We are so fortunate to be part of our FAW community, an organization that prides itself in encouraging new authors to fulfill their dreams. Best wishes to all. Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas. Cheers. 🍷

DECEMBER

InterfriendtionS

PROGRAM



InterFRIENDtionS

A Program of Christmas and Hanukkah Music

By ROBERTA GATES

You are going to be thrilled with this fabulous, festive, interFRIENDtionS program. The group will offer some musical surprises, along with familiar Christmas, Chanukah, and seasonal melodies. The FRIENDS promise to make you smile, rejoice, and remember what the holidays are all about.

Who Are The Friends

This talented group of FRIENDS includes Joanie Winter, Sharon Carlson, John Escola, and Ronna Kaye (stager/chore-ographer). Each has had successful individual careers. Cabaret was the magnet that pulled these five FRIENDS together once again as interFRIENDtionS.

Joanie Winter's resume spans five decades of theatre, commercials, films, TV, radio, trade shows, industrials, jingles, Children's Theatre & cabaret. She graduated from North-western University as a theatre major and began her professional career in AEA Musical Theatre. She understudied the lead role in the touring company of "Evita". She also played leading roles in touring productions of "I Do! I Do, Damn Yankees; "State Fair," "Guys and Dolls," "Oklahoma," "The King and I," and "Man of La Mancha." She appears regularly with the SAG-AFTRA Radio Players at the Cultural Center. Joanie, John, and Pat have performed their "Let's Duet" cabaret all around Chicagoland.

Sharon Carlson, a U. S. Danish gymnast, has appeared in productions of "Sweeny Todd," "Gypsy," and "Grovers Corners." Sharon has also worked in Vegas at the Sands, the Hacienda and Cesar's Palace. An

opera satirist, she delighted audiences in “Excuse My Wind, Madama Butterball,” “Hot Flashes on the Road to Spandex,” and for three years as talent director for Disney TV’s “Out of the Box.” She is an adjunct professor of musical theatre at Columbia College.

John Eskola made his debut as a cabaret performer at New York’s Metropolitan Room in “A Little Touch of Coward in the Night,” a revue of Noel Coward’s works. In Chicago, he has performed at Maxim’s, Drury Lane’s Water Tower Theatre, The Royal George Cabaret, The Cultural Center, and Davenport’s. He is a member of the vocal quartet Espresso and a founding member of Chicago Cabaret Professionals. On stage John has appeared in “Evita; “ The Visit, “Phantom of the Opera,” and “Sweeny Todd.” He is a Choir Director at Assumption Church in Chicago where he regularly sings at masses and weddings. Howard Reich of the Chicago Sun Times called him a “superb singer whose voice is a prism of shining color and variety.”

Patricia Rusk, pianist and musical director, has performed in concert halls, theatres, cabarets, piano bars, recording studios, and even a few churches. She toured in “Side by Side by Sondheim” with Hermione Gingold. Chicago audiences remember her as the pianist/musical director for the long running “Forbidden Broadway” in the 1980’s. She received a Bachelor’s Degree from the Eastman School of Music and a Master’s Degree from Northwestern University. She currently teaches at the Chicago Academy for the Arts. Recently, she received the school’s Faculty Legacy Award, which included a scholarship created in her name.

Ronna Kaye choreographed the original production of “Grease,” and “Black Patent Leather Shoes.” She has directed and/or staged numerous musicals, trade shows, videos and film. Working with interFRIENDtionS has brought her real joy.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Luncheon Reservations

The December 2018 meeting of the Friends of American Writers will be held on Wednesday, December 12, 2018, at 12:00 noon at the Fortnightly of Chicago. Luncheon reservations for this meeting are due no later than 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 9, 2018. Please note, this deadline is firm. No reservations will be accepted following this date and time. Permanent reservations are accepted for the meetings. To make your reservation, please call:

- Pat Adelberg (847 588 0911)
- Peggy Kuzminski (773 775 4540)
- Pay by check(preferred) payable to FAW at the door. Cash is accepted also.
- Vegetarian meals may be requested at the time you make your reservation.
- You must call to cancel your reservation, otherwise you will still be charged.
- Discounted parking is available two doors west of the Fortnightly at 100 Bellevue Place
- Group reservations - please only have one person make the group request to avoid confusion.
- Cancellations must be received by the 6:00 pm deadline the Sunday preceding the meeting, or you will be responsible for the luncheon charge.

Seating Arrangements

Please mention any special seating arrangements when you make your reservation such as guests, seating with friends, disability seating.

Young People's Literature Committee – Angela Gall, *Chair*

As we do every year, The Young People's Literature Committee reflected upon what makes a great book. We also asked, "What type of book would we like to see win this year's competition?" Pondering these questions help us to evaluate our role as members on such a worthy committee.

This year, one of our committee members, Deb Hall-Reppen stated, "I would love to award a book that empowers women. "The "Me-Too Movement" has been dominating headlines this past year, and our committee would like to see this issue interwoven in a literary work. As Michelle Obama eloquently stated: "No country can ever truly flourish if it stifles the potential of its women and deprives itself of the contributions of half of its citizens."

Jane Foster commented, "I love a book with an amazing theme." We all agreed that a book without a life-giving theme is hardly a book worth considering. We want a theme that not only makes us think, but one that makes us think about transforming our own lives. The poet, Pablo Neruda, captured our sentiments exactly: "A great book that comes from a great thinker is a ship of thought, deep freighted with truth and beauty."

Colleen Kadlec added, "I would love to award a book that focuses on multiculturalism." We've all felt the pangs of discord in our society in the past few years. And to have a book that tries to heal those wounds would be lovely. Famed novelist, Jean Rhys, said it best, "Reading makes immigrants of us all. It takes us away from home, but more important, it finds homes for us everywhere."

Tanya Klasser concluded, "As always, I'm looking for a really great read!" We all had to admit, that yes, any book that we award must be first and foremost enjoyable to our senses. Carl Hiaasen, a phenomenal author of young adult literature, wrapped it up perfectly: "Everybody's idea of a great book is different, of course. For me it's one that makes my jaw drop on every page, the writing is so original."

The Young People's Literature Committee spent this month diligently reading from the list of 15 books we have received so far this year. Although it is a shorter list than what we have encountered in the past, we have already discovered quite a few gems, many of which encompass all the above criteria!

Membership Corner – Ida Hagman, *Chair*

Membership Magic –

My first meeting at the Fortnightly was for an Adult Literature Committee meeting, not for an FAW luncheon. I was immediately charmed by the Georgian Revival building which was infused with the gentility of a previous era. Beautiful music floated out into the entryway. I peeked into what looked like a ballroom and saw a rapt audience listening to early opera. It all seemed magical. With its holiday decorations, the Fortnightly will be just as magical at our December luncheon, so this a good time to invite a friend, neighbor, or family member. In addition, if your guests decide to join FAW, a reduced membership fee of \$25 is available to those who join from January to May.



“ME TOO”

Contrary to popular belief, the “Me Too” movement did not begin with accusations of sexual harassment against movie mogul Harvey Weinstein. The phrase was coined in 2006 by Tarana Burke, a social activist and community organizer. She used the phrase on the Myspace social network as part of a campaign to promote empowerment through empathy among women of color who had experienced sexual abuse, particularly within underprivileged communities. Burke, who is now creating a documentary titled *Me Too*, has said she was inspired to use the phrase when a 13-year-old girl came to her and confessed she had been sexually assaulted. She was unable to respond. Burke now says she wished she had simply told the girl, “Me too.”

“Me Too” in Hollywood and Beyond

As time went on, “Me Too” became widely used in the entertainment community. On October 15, 2017, actress Alyssa Milano encouraged spreading the hashtag #MeToo, to draw attention to sexual assault and harassment in Hollywood. Milano tweeted «Me too» around noon. It had been used more than 200,000 times by the end of the day and tweeted more than 500,000 times by the next day. On Facebook, the hashtag was used by more than 4.7 million people in 12 million posts during the first 24 hours. Some men, including actors Terry Crews and James Van Der Beek, responded to the hashtag with their own experiences of harassment and abuse, while others acknowledged past behaviors against women and came up with the hashtag #HowIWillChange.

Discussion of sexual harassment in the workplace spread far beyond the movie industry, “Me Too” stories cropped up in the music industry, sciences, academia, and politics. In a *Time* magazine article, feminist author Gloria Feldt stated that many employers were being forced to make changes in response to #MeToo, by examining gender-based pay differences and improving sexual harassment policies. Others have noted an increasing pressure on companies, specifically in the financial industry, to disclose diversity statistics.

In November 2017, the hashtag #ChurchToo was started by Emily Joy and Hannah Paasch on Twitter as a way to highlight sexual abuse taking place in churches worldwide. In early January 2018, about a hundred evangelical women launched #SilencelsNotSpiritual to call for changes in how sexual misconduct is dealt with in the church. #ChurchToo went viral later that month in response to a live-streamed video admission by Pastor Andy Savage to his church that he sexually assaulted a 17-year-old girl twenty years before as a youth pastor while driving her home. Savage received applause for admitting to the incident and asking for forgiveness.

Although the financial industry is known to have a prevalence of sexual harassment, as of January 2018, no high-profile financial executives had stepped down as the result of #MeToo allegations. The first widely covered example of sexual harassment with concrete consequences in finance occurred when two reporters went undercover at a men’s only Presidents Club event meant to raise money for children. Women were not allowed to attend except as “hostesses.” The so-called “hostesses” had to wear tight, short black dresses with black underwear. The two enterprising female reporters got jobs as “hostesses” and documented the sexual misconduct they observed. As a result, The Presidents Club was shut down, and revelations of sexual misconduct in the finance industry poured in. In March 2018, a top Morgan Stanley broker was put on administrative leave after the *New York Times* printed a story of harassment allegations by four women, including multiple arrests for the violation of restraining orders, and a threat to burn down an ex-girlfriend’s house.

Statehouses in California, Illinois, Oregon, and Rhode Island have responded to allegations of sexual harassment, and several women in politics have spoken out about their experiences of sexual harassment, including United States Senators Heidi Heitkamp, Mazie Hirono, Claire McCaskill, and Elizabeth Warren. Congresswoman Jackie Speier has introduced a bill aimed at making sexual harassment complaints easier to report on Capitol Hill. Detective Leslie Branch-Wise of the Denver Police Department spoke publicly for the first time in 2018 about experiencing sexual harassment by Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock. The detective provided sexually suggestive text messages from Hancock sent to her while working for his security detail in 2012. After six years of keeping the incident secret, Detective Branch-Wise credited the “Me Too” movement as an inspiration to share her experience.

Me Too Bill in the US Congress

Jackie Speier proposed the Member and Employee Training and Oversight on Congress Act (Me Too Congress Act) on November 15, 2017. The bill, an amendment to the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, proposes changing how the legislative branch of the U.S. federal government treats sexual harassment complaints. Under the old system such complaints went through the Office of Compliance, which required complete confidentiality through the process and took months of counseling and mediation before a complaint could be filed. Any settlements were paid using federal taxes. After a decade, only \$15 million of tax money had been spent settling harassment and discrimination complaints. Speier’s bill ensured that future complaints could only take up to 180 days to be filed. For the first time, the same protections would also apply to unpaid workers, including pages, fellows, and interns. The bill would allow the staffers to transfer to a different department or work away from the presence of an alleged harasser without losing their jobs, and Representatives and Senators would have to pay for their own harassment settlements. The Office of Compliance would be required to publicly publish the settlement amounts and the associated employing offices.

In late 2017, allegations from a 2016 Indianapolis Star article resurfaced in the gymnastic industry against former U.S. Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar of Michigan State University. Nassar was called out via #MeToo for sexually assaulting gymnasts as young as six years old during “treatments.” Rachael Denhollander was the first to lodge a complaint. Nothing was done after the initial allegations came out in 2016. Then, more than 150 women came forward, and Nassar was tried and effectively sentenced to life in prison. The president of Michigan State University, Lou Anna Simon, resigned in the wake of the scandal.

In the medical field, research shows that among U.S. academic medical faculty members, about 30% of women and 4% of men have reported experiencing sexual harassment, as well as 60% of medical trainees and students. Most did not report the incidents because medical staff who complained often suffered a negative impact on their careers.

In music, the band Veruca Salt used the #MeToo hashtag to air allegations of sexual harassment against James Toback. Alice Glass used the hashtag to share a history of alleged sexual assault and other abuses by former Crystal Castles bandmate Ethan Kath; and singer/songwriter Halsey (Ashley Nicolette Frangipane) delivered her poem “A Story Like Mine,” at the 2018 Women’s March in New York City. The poem detailed personal stories of being sexually abused as a child and of sexual assault and violence she had experienced throughout her life. She ended with this plea:

*But we are not free until all of us are free
So love your neighbor, please treat her kindly
Ask her story and then shut up and listen
Black, Asian, poor, wealthy, trans, cis, Muslim, Christian*

*Listen, listen and then yell at the top of your lungs
Be a voice for all those who have prisoner tongues
For the people who had to grow up way too young
There is work to be done
There are songs to be sung
Lord knows there's a war to be won.*

Sexual harassment in the military is more common than among civilians. In the wake of “MeToo,” MeTooMilitary came to be used by service men and women who were sexually assaulted or harassed while in the military. In January 2018, at the Golden Globe Awards honoring female soldiers in the military, Oprah Winfrey honored those “whose names we’ll never know” who have suffered sexual assault and abuse to make things better for women today.

A report from the Pentagon indicated that 15,000 members of the military reported being sexually assaulted in the year 2016. Since only 1 out of 3 people assaulted made a report, this suggested that as many as 45,000 assaults had occurred that year. Veteran Nichole Bowen-Crawford has said the rates have improved over the last decade, but indicates the military still has a long way to go and recommends that women veterans connect privately on social media to discuss sexual abuse in a safe environment.

A “MeTooMilitary Stand Down” protest, organized by Service Women’s Action Network, gathered at the Pentagon on January 8, 2018. The protest was endorsed by the U.S. Department of Defense, who stated that current service members were welcome to attend as long as they did not wear their uniform. The protest supported the Military Justice Improvement Act, sponsored by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, which would move “...the decision over whether to prosecute serious [sex] crimes to independent, trained, professional military prosecutors, while leaving uniquely military crimes within the chain of command”.

Where Are We With “Me Too?”

Today “Me Too” has spread to dozens of other countries and has come to mean different things to different people. Tarana Burke accepts the title of the leader and creator of the movement but says she considers herself a worker in a much bigger cause—a cause that has grown to include both men and women of all colors and ages. Burke says people must be educated from a young age that they have the right to say “no” to sexual contact from any person and to report predatory behavior. She advises men to talk to each other about consent, to call out demeaning behavior when they see it, and to listen to victims when they tell their stories.

Burke further emphasizes that the movement must be used to give people the resources to have access to healing. She impresses the need to process all untested rape kits, re-examine local school policies, improve the vetting of teachers, and update sexual harassment policies. She has called for all professionals who work with children to be fingerprinted and subjected to a background check before being cleared to start work. She advocates for sex education that teaches kids to report predatory behavior immediately.

Other #MeToo advocates stress that the movement must change the laws surrounding sexual harassment and assault by instituting protocols giving victims in all industries the ability to file complaints without retaliation. They support legislation making it difficult for publicly traded companies to hide cover-up money from their stockholders and want to make it illegal for employers to require that new workers sign non-disclosure agreements as a condition of employment. Gender analysts such as Anna North have stated that #MeToo should be addressed as a labor issue due to the economic disadvantages to reporting harassment. North suggested combating underlying power imbalances in some workplaces, for example by raising the tipped minimum wage, and embraces innovations like the “portable panic buttons” that are mandated for hotel employees in Seattle.

Other suggested policy-based changes include reducing limited managerial oversight, creating clear internal reporting mechanisms, instituting more effective and proactive disciplinary measures, and creating a culture that encourages employees to be open about serious problems.

Media coverage

In the media coverage of “MeToo,” there has been widespread discussion about the best way for sufferers of sexual abuse or harassment to stop what is happening to them at work. There is general agreement that a lack of effective reporting options is a major factor that drives unchecked sexual misconduct in the workplace.

In France, a person who makes a sexual harassment complaint at work is reprimanded or fired 40% of the time, while the accused person is typically not investigated or punished. In the United States, a 2016 report from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission states that although 25–85% of women say they experience sexual harassment at work, few ever report the incidents, most commonly due to fear of reprisal. In Japan, as few as 4% of rape victims report the crime, and the charges are dropped about half the time.

“Me Too” has brought about the creation of “whisper networks,” or private lists of “people to avoid” that are shared unofficially in nearly every major institution or industry where sexual harassment is common. These lists emphasize the need to warn other workers in the industry and are shared from person-to-person, on forums, in private social media groups, and via spreadsheets. However, there is a danger that these lists can become weapons that are used to spread unsubstantiated gossip.

The main problem with trying to protect more potential victims by publishing whisper networks is determining the best mechanism to verify allegations in a way that is fair to all parties. Suggestions include (1) strengthening labor unions in vulnerable industries so workers can report harassment directly to the union instead of to an employer, and (2) maintaining industry hotlines which have the power to trigger third-party investigations.

Reform and Implementation

Although #MeToo initially focused on adults, the message spread to students in K–12 schools where sexual abuse is common both in person and online. #MeTooK12 is a spin-off of #MeToo. #MeTooK12 is meant to show the widespread prevalence of sexual misconduct towards children in school, and the need for increased training on Title IX policies, as only 18 states require people in education to receive training on what to do if a student or teacher is sexually abused. It was created in January 2018 by the group Stop Sexual Assault in Schools. Nearly 80% of public schools never report any incidents of harassment. A 2011 survey found 40% of boys and 56% of girls in grades 7–12 had experienced some type of negative sexual comment or sexual harassment in their lives. Approximately 5% of K–12 sexual misconduct reports involved 5 or 6-year-old students.

In September 2018, CBS announced that it would be donating \$20 million to organizations that support #MeToo.