



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER
2019-2020 NUMBER 4

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FRIENDS OF AMERICAN WRITERS CHICAGO

www.fawchicago.org



President's Message

CHRISTINE SPATARO, *President*

Holidays are a time of gathering with family and friends, and so we are fortunate to gather with our friends at FAW. Also, holidays are a time of gratitude, and I would like to take this

opportunity to thank all who have brought new members and friends to share our luncheons and enjoy our speakers. You have our heartfelt thanks. Greetings to all—Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, and may the new year bring everyone happiness and joy. Happy New Year and Cheers. 🍷

DECEMBER PROGRAM

By TAMMIE BOB
Program Chair



The Bouvier Sisters Portrayed by Jennie Riddle

The Secret Lives of Janet Auchincloss and Her Daughters, Jacqueline Ken- nedy Onassis and Lee Radziwill

Many of you might think you already know all there is to know about Jackie Kennedy based on everything that has been written about her, but there is really more to learn—including how she interacted with her mother and sister. Jenny Riddle reveals some of the unknown information about the Bouvier women in her dramatic presentation based on Randy Taraborelli's fascinating biography.

Those of us who were smitten by the very sight of John F. Kennedy might be interested to learn that when Jackie Bouvier first started dating him, her mother Janet commented, "Well, John has an impressive pedigree, but doesn't he look a little unkempt?"

Janet was known for giving her daughters advice. Early on, she told both of them that the secret to happiness was money and power. Despite their determination to rebel against their mother (as daughters will do,) both



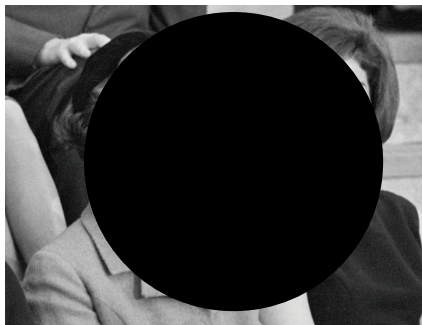
Jackie Kennedy Onassis and her sister Lee Radziwill

Lee and Jackie ended up following her advice.

Another little tid-bit that many people don't

know, but that Jenny will share, is that at one point, the glamorous Lee was ready to leave her husband, a Polish prince, for Greek billionaire Aristotle Onassis. She didn't because her mother convinced her that doing so would ruin JFK's presidency. Ironically, it was Jackie who later ended up marrying Onassis (after demanding a lump payment of \$3 million and a hefty monthly allowance.) You also may not know that the relationship among the Bouviers was, well, complicated. Jenny Riddle helps

us understand this complication in her depiction of the interactions among Janet (Bouvier, Auchincloss) and her daughters, Jackie (Bouvier, Kennedy, Onassis) and Lee (Bouvier, Canfield, Radziwill, Ross). This is a fascinating performance that you won't want to miss. 🍷



Jackie Kennedy Onassis and her mother Janet Auchincloss



ANNOUNCEMENTS

LUNCHEON RESERVATIONS

Fortnightly of Chicago
120 E. Bellevue Place

Luncheon reservations are due by 6 PM the Sunday prior to any scheduled meeting. No reservations will be accepted after 6 PM on the Sunday prior to the scheduled meeting. No reservations will be accepted after 6 PM on the Sunday prior to the scheduled meeting. No exceptions. To reserve, contact Peggy Kuzminski (1-773-710-8637) or Pat Adelberg (1-847-588-0911) Permanent reservations are preferred and can be requested when making a reservation. Regular reservations can be made month by month following the directions above.

Luncheon will be served at 12:00 noon in the main floor dining room of the Fortnightly Club of Chicago, 120 E. Bellevue Place. The cost of the luncheon 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.

Looking forward to seeing all of you on December 11.

Mark Your Calendars

Please note, the April 8, 2020 meeting will be held on April 1, 2020 so as not to conflict with the beginning of Passover.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

BY PATRICIA SCHNEIDER
Membership Chair

We welcome Christy Harvey, 55 East Erie Street, Apt. 2402, Chicago, IL to the Friends of American Writers. Christy joined our group in November

We know that Christy will be a valuable addition to FAW, and that she will be enriched by her experiences and interaction with our members.

FAW FOUNDATION FUND

BY ROBERTA GATES, *Trustee*

FAW's Foundation Needs You

The Foundation is a little-known branch of Friends of American Writers which gives us the opportunity to fund extra activities. Thanks to gifts from our members, the Foundation, which was created by the late Angie Higginson, now has more than \$44,000 invested in a Merrill Lynch account which is being handled for us pro bono.

The first activities funded by the Foundation were writers' workshops facilitated by the University of Illinois at Chicago faculty from 1986-89 and by Roosevelt University faculty from 1990-97.

Beginning in 1999, the Foundation started funding scholarships for promising students enrolled in graduate writing programs. Roosevelt University students were our first recipients, and in 2002 National Louis students were added. And while we no longer provide scholarships to Roosevelt students, we've added students from Columbia College.

But with a little help, we could do so much more! We'd love to give more and larger scholarships, possibly revive the writers' workshops, sponsor big-name speakers from time to time, and, last but not least, underwrite a few special activities in honor of our upcoming centennial in 2022.

You can help us make some of these dreams come true by giving to the Foundation. A gift of just \$100 will entitle you to be listed in perpetuity in our yearbook (see page 10 of our current yearbook), but we welcome gifts of any size. And for those FAW members and friends who are looking for a way to honor or memorialize a

loved one, consider making a gift to the Foundation in that person's name.

Members are also encouraged to remember the Foundation in their wills or to give from their 401K accounts at distribution time, which is also a way to sidestep taxes.

In addition, any substantial gift has the potential to be earmarked for something special. If you'd like to make a large gift and have a special interest in our scholarship program, for instance, you could talk to the Foundation members about having a scholarship named for you or a loved one.

So if you're interested in giving, here are a few facts to guide you.

Is the Foundation the same thing as the Patrons Fund?

No, it is entirely separate. Each year FAW solicits donations for the Patrons Fund to bankroll the prizes we give to our winning authors. The Foundation, however, is a discrete fund which can be used for scholarships, special events, or in any way the Foundation trustees deem desirable.

How much should I give?

That's entirely up to you, but gifts of \$100 or more are listed in perpetuity in our yearbook.

How do I go about giving?

You can give at any time by making a check out to "Friends of American Writers" and writing "Foundation" on the memo line. This check can be given directly to our treasurer, Vivian Mortensen, or sent to her at her home address: 506 Rose Ave., Des Plaines, IL, 60016.

How will I know my gift has been received?

One of the Foundation trustees will send you a hand-written thank-you.

What if I have questions?

Contact Edie Riley, the Foundation chair, or one of the two Foundation

trustees, Karen Burnett and Roberta Gates.

FAW ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

BY EDITH RILEY, *Foundation Fund Trustee*

On November 13th, the Foundation Fund Committee awarded scholarships of \$1,500 each to two deserving students in graduate writing programs. At National Louis University, Michael Rossi won the award, as did Ruby Orozco at Columbia College Chicago. This is part of the FAW mission to encourage new, talented writers associated with the Midwest.

Dr. Joanne Koch, who has been the Director of the Graduate Writing Program at National Louis University, described the work of Michael Rossi, the award winner from her school. For 15 years Michael has been an English teacher at Neuqua Valley High School. He has created many programs for working with teenage writers. He is the founder of Neuqua's Monologue Show which has staged hundreds of student-written performances, including several at Illinois' All-State Theatre Festival. He is also a published poet, playwright, and author of two novels. At National Louis he is seeking to hone his craft and discover new outlets for his work.

Dr. Jenny Bouilly is a creative writing teacher at Columbia College Chicago and an accomplished author, who was born in Thailand and raised in Texas. She introduced us to the award winner from Columbia College Chicago, Ruby Orozco. Ruby is a Mexican-American writer born in Chicago and raised on the Northwest side. She teaches Writing and Rhetoric. She is a first generation American whose work explores identity, biculturalism, and language. She will get her degree in May and is considering going on for a PhD.

ADULT LITERATURE AWARDS COMMITTEE

IDA HAGMAN, Co-Chair

The Adult Awards Committee members have been busy reading and discussing over 40 book titles from

emerging Midwest writers. We expect to receive more entries up to the December 10th deadline. The submissions have come from authors, agents, and publishers who responded to contest ads in Poets and Writers magazine, as well as suggestions from FAW members. The Awards Committee members began reading in September. We have had two lively meetings discussing the merits of the books read to date. The committee members will decide on a short list of finalists by February and will make the final decision in March.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S LITERATURE AWARDS COMMITTEE

BY ANGELA GALL, *Chair*

On Wednesday, September 18, members of the Young People's Literature Awards Committee gathered at the Original Pancake House near the Fortnightly. This meeting was mostly a meet-and-greet to get to know the new members and reacquaint with the returning ones.

Tasked with the effort of introducing ourselves, members were asked to compare their lives/personalities to a metaphor/simile. The results were both creative and insightful:

I'm like sunshine on a cloudy day!
I love sunflowers and my glass is half-full! ~JANE FOSTER

I'm as optimistic as a lamb in a den of lions. ~PEGGY KUZMINSKI

I am a lightning rod. I try to protect my friends from opposing political positions. I don't necessarily agree with them, but I don't want the lightning to strike in our gatherings.
~DEB HALL-REPPEN

As a retired teacher, I still think of myself as a lifelong learner. It's a reminder to keep my mind active—keep it open. For example, I have enjoyed learning to play pickle ball, an outdoor game similar to ping-pong or tennis. Also being a member of the Young People's Committee makes me aware of current issues and diverse ideas.
~COLLEEN KADLEC

To me, life is like a bowl of cherries. I just got back from a fun trip to Door County. Things are good now, especially reading for FAW! ~VIVIAN MORTENSEN

I am as tenacious as a virus. I persevered with our fear-aggressive rescue dog, a Bichon, for eight years. I worked with a trainer, sent him to boot camp, and helped him function as a companion to our family members and in our neighborhood. At the end of March, he underwent an emergency splenectomy and was diagnosed with hemangiosarcoma. For five months I cooked him a bland diet, went with him to the oncologist for infusions, our vet for blood draws and ultrasound and gave him numerous medications at home, including filling capsules, giving him tablets and powders, and monitoring his tolerance to all. ~SALLY KOWALEWSKI

I am the sedative friend. Scared of going to the doctor? I come along to be a calm distraction and listen to the answers you can't hear. I am especially helpful to friends with cancer diagnosis and hip replacements. I will cook, drive, distract. In all cases, I offer blunt affect and humor. ~JOAN GORDON.

According to Emily Dickinson, "Essential oils are wrung." My life is like this quotation, meaning everything rewarding is hard. Like being pregnant, being FAW president, and teaching writing to teenagers.
~ROBERTA GATES

Grass doesn't grow under my feet, but dirt is growing under my nails. I like to travel. Do not like to sit still. I have a new found love for gardening and getting my hands dirty."
~GAIL HAAS


"My life is like a book. There are good chapters and there are bad chapters. But when I get to a bad chapter, I don't stop reading the book." (Brian Falkner) When I became a young widow, I began to pursue a bachelor's degree. When we became empty nesters and missed our kids, we moved downtown. When I developed spinal

stenosis, I had a laminectomy/spinal fusion. ~TANYA KLASSER

Mottos best describe my life. For example, Love People—Cook Them Tasty Food. I'm a foodie and love to cook. If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need. ~VICKI LAMM

I am a butterfly. I'm all about the change. My life changed when I was able to take a break from my low-paying/all-encompassing teaching job and pursue other interests, such as making 'change' from my teacherspayteachers obsession (a website in which you can sell your homemade teaching materials to other teachers in need). I also hope

to make a small 'change' in the world by being kind and generous to others, starting with my family! ~ANGELA GALL

Our committee met again on November 20th at the Riverside Library. We had a thoroughly enjoyable time getting to know one another better and discussing our 29 books! 

Santa Claus Has Come to Town

An FAW
Newsletter Annual

FEATURE
ARTICLE

by SHIRLEY BAUGHER

Mention the name Santa Claus and most of us will envision a rotund figure in a red suit with long white hair and a white beard. That wasn't always the way people saw Santa. As a matter of fact, that image didn't even exist until the 1930s when an Old Town artist by the name of Haddon Sundblom created him for the Coca Cola Company. Here is how it all began.

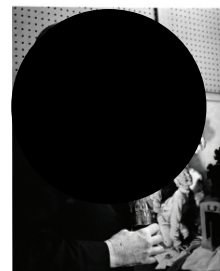
Haddon Sundblom Biography

Haddon Sundblom was born in Muskegon, Michigan. His parents came to America from Sweden and settled in Michigan. Though Haddon grew up in Muskegon, he moved to Chicago's Old Town neighborhood to pursue a career as an illustrator. He rented an apartment on Crilly Court, a haven for Chicago people in the arts. He worked as an apprentice for a design studio before deciding to become a free lance artist—a very wise move. He was to become one of the most successful commercial artists of the twentieth century who, more than any other artist, including Norman Rockwell, redefined the image of the American dream in paintings. Among his iconic images are the "Quaker Oats Man" and "Aunt Jemima."

Santa Claus took a number of forms before he emerged from the brush of Haddon Sundblom. Before Christianity became the main religion of Europe, the Germanic peoples celebrated a midwinter event called Yule. Many of the Yule traditions became part of the modern Christmas experience.

During Yule, supernatural occurrences were said to take place, such as the Wild Hunt, a ghostly procession through the sky. The leader of the wild hunt was Odin, a white-bearded figure in a blue cloak who rode an eight footed gray horse called Sleipnir and brought gifts to people. Odin's appearance might have influenced later concepts of St. Nicholas, although his gray horse was traded for reindeer in North America. Odin himself transformed into Father Christmas, then Santa Claus.

Above: Haddon Sundblom
Right: Odin the Wanderer

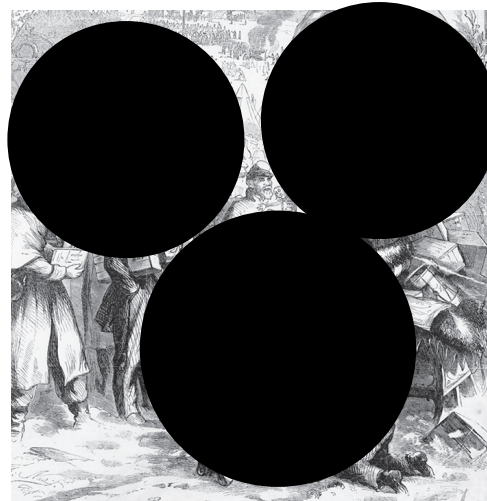


Santa Claus Through the Years

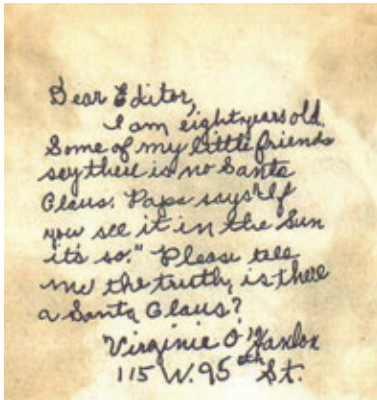
As the years passed, Santa Claus evolved in popular culture into a large, heavyset person. One of the first artists to draw a more modern version of Santa Claus was Thomas Nast, an American cartoonist of the 19th century. In 1863, Nast drew his idea of Santa Claus for a January 1863 issue of Harper's Weekly. He dressed Santa in an American flag and included in the drawing a puppet with the name "Jeff" written on it, reflecting its Civil War context.

Placing Santa Claus at the North Pole may also have been Nast's idea. In December 1866, Nast did a collage of engravings for Harpers which he called "Santa Claus and His Works." In the collage, he placed Santa in a place he called "Santa Clausville."

Right: Thomas Nast's Santa Claus addressing the troops during the Civil War



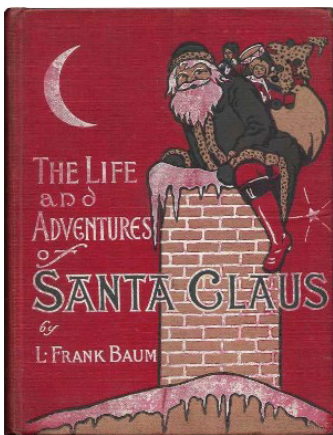
A color collection of Nast's pictures, published in 1869, had a poem also titled "Santa Claus and His Works" by George P. Webster. Webster popularized the notion that Santa Claus's home was "near the North Pole, in the ice and snow". A boy from Colorado writing to the children's magazine The Nursery in late 1874 said, "If we did not live so very far from the North Pole, I should ask Santa Claus to bring me a donkey."



Yes, Virginia, There Really Is a Santa Claus

"Is There a Santa Claus?" was the title of an editorial appearing in the September 1897 edition of The New York Sun. A little girl had written to the newspaper asking if there was a Santa Claus. The paper put her letter in an editorial, which included the famous reply "Yes, Virginia, there really is a Santa Claus." The response has become part of popular Christmas lore in the United States and Canada.

L. Frank Baum, creator of The Wizard of Oz, wrote a children's book in 1902 which he called The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus. Baum had a character in the book called "Neclaus" (Necile's Little One). Neclaus lived in



the Laughing Valley of Hohaho with ten reindeer—who could not fly, but who could leap in enormous, flight-like bounds. Baum's book established Santa Claus as a gift-giver. When Ak, Master Woodsman of the World, showed him the misery and poverty of children who lived in the world outside Hohaho, Santa decided he wanted to bring joy into the children's lives. He invented toys as a way to do this.

Enter Haddon Sundblom

Which brings us to Haddon Sundblom. In 1931, Coca-Cola approached Sundblom with the idea of creating a Coca-Cola Santa for the holidays. The company did not want the grim characters who had been associated with Santa Claus in past years. They wanted a happy person who would characterize the season and, of course, make viewers want to enjoy what later became known as the "pause that refreshes."

When Sundblom was searching for an inspiration for his Santa Claus, he thought of Clement Moore's poem "A Visit From St. Nicholas" (written in 1822). You know how it goes, "T'was the night before Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse." Moore went on to describe the toy maker as "chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf." Haddon Sundblom had his inspiration. He changed that elf into a friendly and jolly human. He started out using his friend, Lou Prentice, a retired salesman, as his Santa model. But Lou died suddenly. Instead of finding another model, Haddon Sundblom looked in the mirror and decided to use himself. Since he didn't have a beard, he just painted one on.



The Reading Corner

Leadership in Turbulent Times

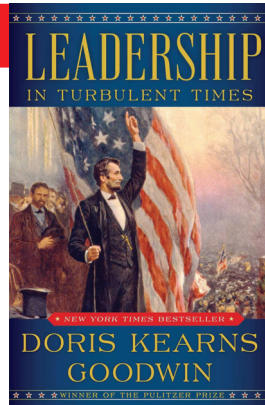
by Doris Kearns Goodwin

REVIEW BY: KAREN PULVER,
Literature Awards Chair

About a year ago my husband and I drove to Springfield, where the Lincoln Library and Museum was holding a fundraiser. We've been members of the museum for several years and enjoy bringing friends and family to this Spiel-

berg-inspired and designed facility. I often think that one can feel the presence of Abraham Lincoln when walking around Springfield, a place very different from the Chicago suburbs.

We were drawn to this particular fundraiser because Doris Kearns Goodwin would be there talking about her latest book. After a gala reception in the Library, the crowd moved to the lobby of the museum



where a member of the museum staff conducted a conversational interview.

Leadership in Turbulent Times compares the political styles of Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson. Goodwin, popularly known for her contributions to several of PBS series created by Ken Burns, has published other books about these presidents, the best known being



SHIRLEY BAUGHER
1710 N. Crilly Court
Chicago, IL 60614

Team of Rivals. She writes and converses as though she knows all these men and their families, not just Johnson in whose White House she worked.

The main thrust of the book involves the Presidents' handling of the major crises that occurred during their terms in office: for Lincoln it was the Civil War; for Johnson, the Vietnam War and the days following the Kennedy assassination; for FDR, the Great Depression, polio and beginnings of World War II; for Theodore Roosevelt, his personal health challenges, labor strikes, and bitter political treachery.

I recently visited the LBJ Ranch and the LBJ Library in Austin and the Roosevelt homes in Hyde Park and Oyster Bay, New York. Presidential libraries are often a part of our car trips. They make this book and author event even more meaningful to me. I hardly need to recommend the work of a respected author (who has struggled with her own professional troubles), but I cannot praise more highly the study of U.S. history through travels to places like Springfield, Illinois and meeting with authors, as FAW enables us to do.

**Happy Holidays to All
May Your Every Wish Come True** 📖

FAW MEETINGS 2019-20

A reminder of the FAW meetings for 2019-20. Be sure to mark your calendars. You won't want to miss a single one!

September 11, 2019

Rosellen Brown
Award-winning author of
Before and After

October 9, 2019

"Confessions of a Literary Translator: The Prose and the Cons"
Ann Fisher

November 13, 2019

"Flappers, Cocktails, and Temperance: True Stories of Prohibition"
Susanna Caulkins, author of
The Speakeasy Murders

December 11, 2019

Jenny Riddle brings to life
"The Bouvier Sisters"

January 8, 2020

"All About Pork"
Cynthia Clampett

February 12, 2020

"Meet the Vanishing Woman"
Doug Peterson and Ellen Craft

March 11, 2020

"Growing up Jewish and Surviving in Nazi Germany"
Eric Blaustein, Holocaust Survivor

April 1, 2020

Jane Hamilton
Award-winning author of
The Book of Ruth.

May 1, 2020:

Literature Awards Program