

FRIENDS OF AMERICAN WRITERS

April 13, 2020 Fawchicago.org



Next Year's tentative meeting dates.
9/25/2020, 10/21/2020, 11/11/2020,
12/9/2020 and 1/13/2021, 2/10/2021,
3/10/2021, 4/14/2021 and 5/07/2021.

Literature Awards
September 25, 2020.

RESERVATIONS

Call:

Pat Adelberg (847) 588-0911 or
Peggy Kuzminski (773) 710-8637

Luncheon program reservations are due no later than 6:00 pm the Sunday before the event.

All reservation requests must be placed through Pat or Peggy. Special meal requests must also be made at this time. For group seating, have just one person call to arrange the reservation. Every effort will be made to honor your requests.

Please! No moving chairs and table settings around at the luncheon.

The FAW Literature Award Winners

2020 Literature Awards

- ★ **Seth Fried** for *The Municipalists* (Penguin Books) \$2,500
- ★ **Andrew Ridker** for *The Altruists* (Viking) \$2,500

Young People's Literature Awards

- ★ **Jessie Ann Foley** for *Sorry For Your Loss* (Quill Tree Books) \$1,650
- ★ **Ann Schoenbohm** for *Rising Above Shepherdsville* (Beach Lane Books) \$1,650
- ★ **Jasmine Warga** for *Other Words for Home* (Balzer + Bray) \$1,650

Celebrate our Award-Winning Authors

The FAW Literature Awards Luncheon has been rescheduled for Friday September 25, 2020. Mark your calendar and reserve this date to celebrate our award-winning authors.

***The Municipalists* by Seth Fried** (Penguin). Seth Fried grew up in Ohio. He is author of the acclaimed short story collection *The Great Frustration*. He is a recurring contributor to The New Yorker's "Shouts and Murmurs" and NPR's "Selected Shorts."

The Municipalists is a science fiction, buddy story about Henry Thompson, a city planning employee, and his side kick, Owen, the supercomputer with more personality than his human partner. When a terrorist plot

threatens the city, Henry and Owen set out to save the metropolis. Comedy, chaos and an ending with a message of unity follows. *The Municipalists* is a thrilling, funny, and touching adventure story, a tour-de-force of imagination that explores our relationships to the cities around us and the technologies guiding us into the future.

***The Altruists* by Andrew Ridker** (Viking). Andrew Ridker grew up in Boston and attended Washington University in St. Louis, which is the primary setting for his novel. He is the editor of *Privacy Policy: The Anthology of Surveillance Poetics* and his writing has appeared in The New York Times, The Paris Review, Guernica, Boston Review, The Believer, St. Louis Magazine, and elsewhere.

The Altruists is a family saga, structured around a family reunion. The characters and plot are hyper-realistic, for satirical effects. They are still recognizable individuals who are deeply flawed as they attempt to be “good” people. On the verge of losing the family home, Arthur invites his children back to St. Louis under the guise of a reconciliation. He is sure he can fix it all if he can get his son and daughter to come and visit. He'll convince them to give him the money they inherited from their mother. Though during this weekend with his children, they all come to learn things about themselves as they are pushed to their emotional limits.

***Sorry For Your Loss* by Jessie Ann Foley** (Quill Tree Books). Jessie Ann Foley loves to read and write. She reads about a book a week. Before becoming a professional writer of young adult novels, she spent ten years as a high school English literature and creative writing teacher. She holds an MFA in Fiction Writing from Columbia College Chicago.

Jessie lives in Chicago. She was born and raised on the Northwest Side of Chicago (where the cops live). In fact, her great-great uncle killed John Dillinger. Her family sold his gun at auction in 2009 for a modest sum.

Jessie is 100% American Irish. Her husband is from Ireland, and she knew she was going to marry him halfway through their first date. Together, they have three young daughters, each born a year apart.

Sorry For Your Loss is both a heartfelt and hilarious story about a teenage boy from Chicago who is the youngest of eight children dealing with the loss of his beloved brother through photography and young love. As the youngest of eight, painfully average Pup Flanagan is used to flying under the radar and underperforming. The only person who ever made him think he could be more was his older brother Patrick, but when he suddenly dies, Pup aimlessly drifts along trying to come to terms with his loss. Pup's teacher put a camera in his hands which gave him a new way to see things and share his feelings and pain via his art. His new-found talent helps Pup reconcile and understand many typical YA day-to-day issues and relationships.

***Rising Above Shepherdsville* by Ann Schoenbohm** (Beach Lane Books). Born in Ohio, Ann Schoenbohm began her journey toward becoming a storyteller. “The bookmobile that traveled once a week to my rural elementary school—a converted van—transformed into a moving library—its insides

lined with shelves that were filled with books. I waited impatiently every week for its arrival—having already read the two or three books allowed—often in one sitting— so that I could check out more."

These days Ann lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with her husband and two children. When she is not writing, she is teaching writing, or advocating for literacy by volunteering in community schools.

Ann holds an MFA in writing for children and young adults from Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a BFA in acting from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. *Rising Above Shepherdsville* is her debut novel.

Rising Above Shepherdsville is a powerful story of a young girl who goes mute after the death of her mother by suicide, and only through the healing element of nature and others does she regain her voice.

In the summer of 1977, twelve-year-old Dulcie Louise Dixon arrives on the doorstep of her Aunt Bernie's farmhouse in Shepherdsville, Ohio, with no voice, a spelling bee trophy, a Webster's Dictionary, and a box full of ashes. She tries to adjust to her new situation but can't forget the words she left behind or the mother she's lost to suicide. But in her new home in Shepherdsville, she'll find new family, new friends, and a nest of swans that will teach her more than words ever will. The vocabulary word featured at the beginning of each chapter is unique. All the characters have unique, different personalities that positively impact Dulcie. This debut will make your heart ache, your cheeks hurt, and eyes water in a beautifully cathartic way.

***Other Words for Home* by Jasmine Warga** (Balzer + Bray). Growing up, Jasmine Warga loved to read. She read about every book she could get her hands on. She also loved to tell stories. She comes from a long line of storytellers. Jasmine only met her paternal grandmother twice because she lived in Jordan, but one of her most distinct childhood memories was of her grandmother telling her a story about the mermaids that live in the Dead Sea.

Jasmine graduated with a degree in Art History and History. After graduation, she found a job teaching 6th grade science! While teaching, she began writing. She is now the author of three novels. Her books have received multiple starred reviews and have been published in over twenty-five countries. *Other Words for Home* was awarded the John Newberry Honor.

Jasmine grew up outside of Cincinnati, Ohio, but currently lives in the Chicago area with her husband and two little girls.

Other Words for Home is an enchanting story written in poetic form that reads like prose about a young Muslim girl from Syria who moves to Ohio to live with relatives where she must learn to navigate her new world with bravery. The reader is introduced to Jude, a Syrian girl who, with her mother, escapes to America when things at home in Syria are growing tense, violent, and uncertain and unfolds in beautiful verse. This is a story about many things, but central themes are immigrating, growing new roots, finding yourself, and the gnawing ache of separation. Readers of all levels and abilities will find this a new favorite.

Announcements

The amount of email each of us receives in a day can be overwhelming, but it is also the most cost-effective and quickest method for Friends of American Writers to communicate with members. How can you make sure you receive the email version of the FAW newsletter? Number one – make sure we have your correct email address. Sometimes our email provider will identify valuable email as junk and send it to our junk or spam folder. Check your junk or spam folder for

bulletin@foawriters.org and mark it as 'not junk or spam'. You can also add

karen.baker@foawriters.org to your contacts, send an email to that address or mark it as a safe sender. If you are not getting the newsletter, please let Karen Baker know at

karen.baker@foawriters.org.

Looking ahead at the calendar for the next FAW meeting year, these are the tentative meeting dates. 9/25/2020, 10/21/2020, 11/11/2020, 12/9/2020 and 1/13/2021, 2/10/2021, 3/10/2021, 4/14/2021 and 5/07/2021.

The FAW Board will meet on June 10, 2020 at 11:00 AM to discuss the upcoming year. If meeting in person is not a possibility, we can decide whether to make it a conference call.

We are looking forward to another great year of meetings.

On the upside of being housebound

Time to read! Bring on the books! Remove those jigsaw puzzles from the closet and get to work. Relearn Solitaire, Dominos or test your brain with crossword puzzles, sudoku and word scrambles. Write! Start a journal. Breathe deep, relax and meditate. Stretch. Work on your flexibility, lift some weights, do sit-ups or squats. Take some nice naps. Rearrange your furniture to make it seem like a new room. Let your imagination go and make something creative with yarn, scraps of fabric, paint, clay or just doodle. Sort through all those old photos stuck in a box or drawer. Try on all your clothes and determine whether they “spark joy” à la Marie Kondo. Read all the old magazines then throw them into recycle. Buy an item on eBay that is donating to a charity. Sew a mask to wear from scraps or a no-sew mask from bandanas, scarf or fabric dinner napkins. As the weather improves, take walks. Buy gift cards from your local favorite business to help keep them in business. Order grocery delivery or food delivery. Call friends and talk! Sing or make some music. Take an on-line course. Check with your library to see if they offer curbside pickup of materials or will send them by mail.

New books from past FAW Award Winners

Little Faith – Nicholas Butler (Ecco, March 2019), 336 pages

Our Wayward Fate – Gloria Chao (Oct, 2019) YA, 320 pages

Darius the Great Deserves Better – Adib Khorram (Release Aug, 2020) Grade 7 – 9, 352 pages

Saturday – Oge Mora (Oct, 2019) Preschool – 3, 40 pages

Pixie Pushes On – Tamara Bundy (Jan, 2020) Grade 5 – 6, 240 pages