



FRIENDS OF AMERICAN WRITERS

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2025

January 8th,

The Fortnightly

120 E. Bellevue Place

Chicago 60611

First Course

Puree of Parsnip Soup with Brown Butter & Chestnuts

Entrée

**Grilled Pork Tenderloin, Wild Rice,
Brussels Sprouts & Bacon Sage Pan Sauce**

Dessert

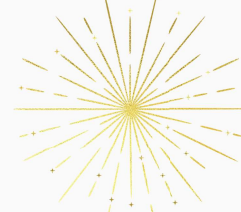
Chocolate Raspberry Trifle

\$50 payable by Zelle or check made payable to FAW

(reserve by phone by January 21st, 2025, no later than 6 p.m.)

Karen Klatt 312.909.4581 or Kathy Quaid 708.704.2161

Guest **Regan Burke**



Regan Burke's book, "In That Number," was a finalist for the Chicago Writers Association nonfiction Book of the Year. Her brief memoirs and personal essays appear in the Christian Science Monitor, Sun Magazine, Chicago History Museum "In This Together" Project, City Creatures, Safe 'n Sound, Easter Seals Blog, Chaleur, Rise Up Review, Bird Garden's Murder of Writers, and Writing Out Loud. She will speak to us about her book, which relays one woman's struggle to find grace and peace amidst the chaos of politics and alcoholism.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

2025

**KAREN BURNETT**

Happy New Year!!! Our first few months of the 2024/2025 season have been very successful with our members supporting our organization and attending our luncheons—our mission of encouraging emerging authors and supporting students studying to become writers. Angela Gall has identified another important opportunity for our organization. To assist underserved elementary students by providing books from one of our award winners to encourage reading at an early age. I support this initiative and hope that you will too. It is outlined later in the newsletter. We hope that the coming year will provide peace, health and prosperity for our membership!

Happy
New
Year

Donations Needed for FAW Children's Book Project

by Angela Gall, Young People's Literature Award Chair

Since returning to my teaching job these past two years, I have never felt the power of picture books more. For my Freshmen Writing Class, I have the students writing about the benefits of children's books for a research project. During this unit, I read to them a variety of books, so they can experience these benefits. I shared with them many of our award-winning authors. After reading one such book called *Thank You, Omu* by Oge Mora, they immediately broke out into applause. I can't tell you how much their reaction moved me--not only to know that we as FAW members picked such an endearing book for an award, but that kids today still have an open-heart for wonderful stories.

During this unit, we learned some fascinating things about picture books, one being that it is the great equalizer. "Sadly, brain development can be hampered by poverty. Studies have shown that early childhood poverty is a risk factor for lower educational attainment. It is also associated with differences in brain structure, poorer cognition, behavioral problems, and mental health symptoms. Results from a study from Berkeley discovered that children who read for pleasure had larger cortical surface areas in several brain regions that are significantly related to cognition and mental health. Importantly, this was the case regardless of socioeconomic status. The result therefore suggests that reading for pleasure in early childhood may be an effective intervention to counteract the negative effects of poverty on the brain (Sahakian et al)."

This year, our FAW Children's Book Project will be donating 150 books to elementary students at Carver Elementary in the Altgeld Gardens neighborhood in Chicago. We will be giving each individual student a copy of *Black Is a Rainbow Color* by Angela Joy, our 2022 FAW Young People's Literature Award Recipient. The teachers there thought this book would be an excellent addition to their Black History Month celebration. With this program, we hope to create a lasting relationship with Carver Elementary through teacher feedback.

I just discovered that only 2% of the students at Carver Elementary are reading at or above proficiency. This is significantly lower than the Illinois state average of 30%. Please join us in sponsoring our Children's Book Project. The transformative nature of literature is the greatest of gifts. **Please send your donations to our Treasurer, Diana Adams, by January 31st, with the memo of 'Children's Book Project.'** Thank you so much to our FAW President, Karen Burnett, for her active role in this project and to Vivian Mortensen, Ida Hagman, and the FAW Board for their support. Thank you all for your generous spirit and love for the beauty and might of literature!

Sahakian , Barbara Jacquelyn, et al. "Why Reading Is Important for Children's Brain Development."

Greater Good Science Center, 17 November 2023.

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why_reading_is_important_children_brain_development

Seating Arrangements

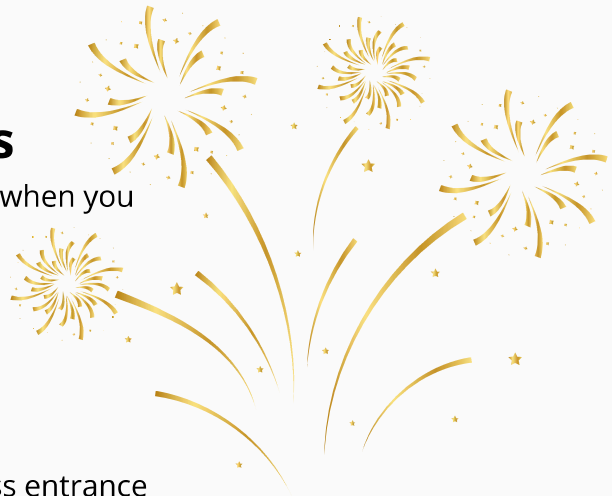
Please mention any special seating arrangements when you make your reservation.

- Guests
- Seated with a friend or group
- Disability seating

Every effort will be made to honor your request.

Do you have trouble climbing stairs? For a stair-less entrance to the Fortnightly call in-advance (312-944-1330) and staff will give you instructions. Would you like to make your reservation online? Visit the Member Reservation App.

www.fawchicago.org



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to

FAW

treasurer@fawchicago.org

Enrolled with Zelle® as FRIENDS OF

FAW 2024/25 Meetings:

- **September 11th**
- **October 9th**
- **November 13th**
- **December 11th**
- **January 8th**
- **February 12th**
- **March 5th (first Wednesday)**
- **April 9th**
- **May 2nd (Friday)**





December 13th, 2024, at FAW Luncheon, Michael Halberstam, co-founder of The Writer's Theater, regaled us with 'The Gift of the Magi' reading and 'A Story of Hannakuh' by Nina Jaffe. For more information about Friends of American Writers Bookclub, please visit www.fawchicago.org

