

## **Hudson Valley Writers Guild Newsletter**

August 29, 2008

In this Issue:

**Guild Announcements:** Board Meeting

**Member Announcements:** Elaine Doremus

**Area Announcements:** Arts Center, East Line Books, Festival of Books

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### **Guild Announcements:**

Mark your calendar for our next board meeting on September 24! Time and venue will be posted shortly and sent to board members. Anyone is invited to give input to the board.

### **Member Announcements:**

Elaine Doremus:

Elaine's book, *How to be on Time for Everything*, should be out in a month. It's taken longer than expected. (When does writing a book ever take a short amount of time?) Please view my publisher's online website to purchase: [www.tbmbooks.com](http://www.tbmbooks.com). The price will be under nine dollars. The table of contents below gives you a idea of what is covered. Thank you! Elaine

Why Is It Important to Be on Time?

Excuses Versus Real Emergencies

What Doesn't Work

Why Are You Late?

Solution 1: Make an Art and a Discipline of Getting Ready

Solution 2: Declutter

Solution 3: Keep a Calendar

Project Planning

## Time-Management Resources

edore2000@yahoo.com

518-218-0175

## Area Announcements:

### Arts Center

Arts Center to present award-winning author in 'interactive reading'

TROY—Award-winning author Lucia Nevai will use a central premise of her recently published novel, *Salvation*, as the springboard for a multi-faceted exploration of the concept of "selfhood" during what organizers term an interactive reading at The Arts Center of the Capital Region, 265 River Street in Troy.

The free and public program is set for 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 25. It will include a reading from *Salvation*, the story of "a deprived and damaged girl [who] not only survives, but triumphs," with a focus on how specific passages in the book track the development of the character's identity.

The reading will be prefaced by a brief discussion of the concept of selfhood, including the roles class, race and gender play in shaping identity, as well as the "sequence of crucial settings where identity is sometimes up for grabs," Nevai said.

Following Nevai's reading, the program will turn fully interactive, with relevant readings by other authors and audience members and a discussion of how the theme of selfhood is manifested in the lives—and art—of the participants.

Nevai, a Capital Region resident, is a critically acclaimed novelist and short fiction writer whose work has appeared in such publications as the *New Yorker*, *Glimmer Train*, *Iowa Review*, *Zoetrope* and *Tin House*. Her books include *Star Game*, which won the prestigious Iowa Award for Short Fiction, *Normal*, and *Seriously*, as well as *Salvation*.

For more information about Nevai's presentation or other writing programs at The Arts Center, call 518-273-0552, ext. 231.

CONTACT: AMY WILLIAMS,

PRESIDENT

THE ARTS CENTER OF THE CAPITAL REGION

518-273-0552 ext. 228

East Line Books, Clifton Park

East Line BOOKS Events Calendar

All events are free (except writing workshops) and take place at East Line BOOKS

1714 Route 9, Clifton Park (across from Snyder's Restaurant) 371-4151

\* Saturday, September 6 OPEN HOUSE

Description: Come and celebrate the opening of East Line BOOKS! Enjoy great food, music, camaraderie with other booklovers, and book-related activities for teens and children. At 12 noon, Robyn Ringler will speak about "The Literary Side of Clifton Park."

Time: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

\* Wednesday, September 10 REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11th

Description: East Line BOOKS will host a program of remembrance. We will read excerpts from historical and literary books, listen to a CD of Bill Moyers' memories of September 11th, and discuss how the terrorist attacks impacted our own community

Time: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

\* Saturday, September 27th THE IMPROV CLUB

Description: The Improv Club, a group of nine stand-up comics and experienced stage performers, will treat you to an improvisational comedy show that will keep you in stitches. Performers bring members of the audience into the show by using their suggestions in scenes as they play classic improvisational games like "First Line/Last Line", "Foreign Movie", and "3-Headed Expert". You will love this show!

Time: 2-3 p.m.

\* Thurs., October 2    READING BY AUTHOR M.M.E. GREALISH

Description: Maureen Grealish, author of *Just Plain Worm* and *Fleck of the Kingdom of Ranidae* will read from, discuss and sign her books. *Just Plain Worm*, a picture book for ages 5–8 about a lonely worm looking for a friend, has been used by elementary schools as part of their character education curriculum. *Fleck of the Kingdom of Ranidae*, an adventure for readers 9 and up, is a story of bravery, friendship, and good versus evil.

Time: 7 p.m. *Just Plain Worm* and *Fleck* will be available for sale.

\* Tuesday, October 7    READING BY AUTHOR ROSE KENT

Description: Rose Kent will read from, discuss and sign her book *KIMCHI & CALAMARI* (Harper Collins 2007).

*KIMCHI & CALAMARI* features a wise-cracking, lovable Korean teen that Kent based on her own adopted children. The book was recently selected for "Read on Wisconsin", the statewide reading initiative and has been featured by the Anti-Defamation League.

Time: 7 p.m. *KIMCHI & CALAMARI* will be available for sale.

\* Tuesday, October 14    MIDWIFE ASSISTANT GRACE HANNON DISCUSSES  
CHILDBIRTH & EARLY CHILD CARE

Description: Grace Hannon, a Mother's Legacy Doula (midwife's assistant) speaks about childbirth, breastfeeding and the challenges facing new mothers and fathers. She will discuss her favorite books on these issues. Come ready to ask Hannon questions about your personal experiences or concerns.

Time: 7 p.m. Books from Hannon's recommended reading list will be for sale.

\* Tues., Oct. 21    READING BY AUTHOR MICHAEL VIRTANEN

Description: Author Michael Virtanen will read from, discuss and sign his book *Within A Forest Dark, An Adirondack Tale of Love and Suspicion*, a detective mystery set in the Adirondacks and recent winner of the Adirondack Center for Writing's Fiction Award.

Time: 7 p.m. *Within a Forest Dark, An Adirondack Tale of Love and Suspicion* will be available for sale.

For further information, call Robyn Ringler at East Line BOOKS 371-4151  
or e-mail her at RLDSR12@aol.com

\* Writing Workshops from East Line Books:

Finding the Universal in the Personal:

September 17-October 29, Wednesdays, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Instructor: Robyn Ringler

\$120.00 for six weeks (There will be no class on September 24th)

Limit: 8

Place: East Line BOOKS, 1714 Route 9, Clifton Park

Call 371-4151 or e-mail Robyn at RLDSR12@aol.com to sign up.

This class will teach you "How to Write a Personal Essay." But it will also take you a step further. With Robyn's help, you will write about your own life's pivotal moments of discovery—falling in love, making an important decision, saying goodbye, watching a friend die. Then, through the editing process, you will take your writing to the next level. You will learn to find and express the honesty and universal truths in your story. Through this process, you will learn to write an essay that is powerful, engaging, and meaningful.

How to Write a College Admission Essay

October 6 & 13, Mondays, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Instructor: Robyn Ringler

\$50 for two weeks

Limit: 10

2 Scholarships are Available

Place: East Line BOOKS, 1714 Route 9, Clifton Park

Call 371-4151 or email Robyn at RLDSR12@aol.com to sign up.

In this class, the potential college student will learn to write a college essay that is original, compelling, and makes him or her stand out from the other applicants. You will explore topics, learn how to present the essay in clear, engaging language, and, most important of all, how to edit (and edit) until you get it exactly right. This class meets twice but also includes follow-up consultations by e-mail as you hone your essay to perfection.

East Line BOOKS

1714 Route 9

Clifton Park, NY 12065

371-4151 bookshop

935-7654 cell

[www.eastlinebooks.vpweb.com](http://www.eastlinebooks.vpweb.com)

Festival of Books:

**SPENCERTOWN ACADEMY FESTIVAL OF BOOKS INCLUDES APPEARANCES BY MORE THAN A DOZEN ACCLAIMED AUTHORS**

SPENCERTOWN, NY – This year's Festival of Books at Spencertown Academy Arts Center in Columbia County, NY, promises plenty to interest bibliophiles, with more than 10,000 books for purchase and appearances by more than a dozen acclaimed authors including Russell Banks and Mary Gordon.

During the first weekend of the Festival, the programming centers on the timely topic of immigration. On Saturday, Sept. 6, a panel of guest authors will explore the immigrant experience as revealed through personal memoir. Da Chen's candid memoirs explore his childhood growing up in communist China; Rutgers University professor Rigoberto Gonzalez wrote about his coming out and coming-of-age as a member of a Mexican migrant worker family in the United States; and documentary filmmaker Sadia Shepard wrote of her experience exploring the tiny Jewish community in India where her grandmother grew up.

On Sunday, Sept. 7, the discussion turns to the immigrant experience in post 9/11 America. Panelists include Ariel Sabar, a journalist for the Christian Science Monitor and author of a forthcoming book exploring his family's roots in Kurdish Iraq; Margaret Talbot, a fellow at the New American Foundation and

staff writer for The New Yorker; and Carl Strock, an editorial columnist for the Schenectady Gazette. Also on the panel is Steve Downes, an Albany attorney who worked with Albany Imam Yassin Aref to publish his memoir, "Son of Mountains," detailing his journey from Kurdistan as a UN refugee to his imprisonment on terrorism charges.

The second weekend of the Festival brings a line-up of distinguished authors, beginning with the award-winning writers Russell Banks and Mary Gordon on Saturday, and an impressive line-up of local authors on Sunday including Shelia Weller, Rebecca Flowers, Elizabeth Hess, Julia Pomeroy, Alan Gelb, David Rubel and Lucia Nevai.

Both Saturday mornings will feature a children's book breakfast with appearances by everybody's favorite crimson canine, Clifford the Big Red Dog, plus children's book authors, story time and arts and crafts. The children's event begins at 9 a.m. on Sept. 5 and 12.

The festival will be held at Spencertown Academy over two weekends: September 5-7 and September 12-14. Admission to the Festival of Books, including all author readings, panel discussions, and children's events, is free. The opening night preview party on Friday, Sept. 5 from 6-8 p.m., featuring wine and hors d'oeuvres, costs \$25; those who attend will have "first pick" of this year's book offerings. Tickets for the Harvest Dinner on Saturday, Sept. 13 at 6 p.m., which honors the distinguished authors participating in the festival and features Columbia County local food, are \$125.

Now in its third year, the Festival of Books has grown from a sale of donated, high-quality books (donated collections have included books on filmmaking and cinema and an entire library from a NYC estate) into a premiere literary event.

"In a few short years this event has grown into a significant regional literary festival, and it keeps getting better, as evidenced by this year's roster of acclaimed authors," said Mary Ann Lee, director of Spencertown Academy. "Many people are attracted by the size and quality of our book sale. Because this is a community of readers and book lovers, the Festival has a wide variety of top-notch offerings."

The Festival schedule: Preview Party Friday Sept. 5, 6-8 p.m.; \$25 admission; Saturday, Sept. 6, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, Sept. 7, 12-5 p.m.; Friday, Sept. 12, 9-5 p.m.; Saturday, Sept. 13, 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.; Sunday, Sept. 14, 12 - 5 p.m., all books half price.

Spencertown Academy is located on Route 203 in Spencertown, NY, about halfway between Route 22 and the Chatham/Spencertown exit on the Taconic Parkway. For more information and updated schedule, call 518-392-3692 or visit website [www.spencertownacademy.org](http://www.spencertownacademy.org) .

About the authors appearing at the Festival of Books:

A panel of Albany-area journalists will discuss the book "Son of Mountains," a memoir by Yassin Aref, a Kurd from Iraq who was living in Albany, New York, when he was arrested and convicted of supporting terrorists. He is currently serving time at a prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, though he maintains his innocence and is attempting to appeal. "Son of Mountains" tells the story of his struggle as a Kurd in Iraq, how he survived the Anfal genocide, his struggle for freedom, his journey to America with his family and how he ended up in prison.

Award-winning author Russell Banks has made a life's work of charting the causes and effects of the terrible things "normal" men can and will do. His novels and short story collections include "Affliction" and "The Sweet Hereafter," both adapted into acclaimed feature films. Banks also has contributed poems, stories, and essays to The Boston Globe Magazine, Vanity Fair, The New York Times Book Review, and numerous others. His latest novel, "The Reserve," is set in the Adirondacks at the height of the Great Depression, and raises dangerous questions about class, politics, art, love, and madness. His novels "Dreaming Up America" and "Continental Drift" also deal with societal and cultural issues from the viewpoints of a variety of classes and cultures in American society.

New York Times bestselling author Da Chen penned "Colors of the Mountain" and its adaptation, "China's Son," candid memoirs about his boyhood growing up during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Chen was born in 1962, in the Year of Great Starvation. Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution engulfed millions of Chinese citizens, and the Red Guard enforced Mao's brutal communist regime. Chen's family belonged to the despised landlord class, and his father and grandfather were routinely beaten and sent to labor camps. Despite this background of poverty and danger, Chen grows up to be resilient, tough, and funny, learning how to defend himself and how to work toward his future.

John Fass Morton began a career in theater, film, and writing in London in 1974 where much of his work involved music. Following a starring role in a West End musical, he appeared in major films, including The Empire Strikes Back. His book "Backstory in Blue" is a behind-the-scenes look at the epic moment in American cultural history when Duke Ellington and his big band got everybody on their feet and moving as one with their performance of "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue," at the 1956 Newport Jazz Festival. It is the story of who and what made Ellington's performance so compelling and how one piece of music reflected the feelings and shaped the sensibilities of the postwar generation.

Rebecca Flowers is a writer living in western Massachusetts with her husband and two children. She has been an independent radio producer whose satires and commentaries have appeared on NPR's All Things Considered and Day to Day. She's one of the founding members of The NPR Players. "Nice To Come Home To" is her first novel, and tells the story of 36-year-old Prudence Whistler, who makes some life-changing decisions as she approaches middle age and finds her carefully constructed life isn't all she had hoped for.

Rigoberto Gonzalez, associate professor of English at Rutgers University, is the author of poetry books, bilingual children's books and novels. His memoir, "Butterfly Boy: Memories of a Chicano Mariposa," won the American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation. "Butterfly Boy" is a coming out and coming-of-age story of a first-generation Chicano. Growing up among poor migrant Mexican farmworkers, González also faced the pressure of coming-of-age as a gay man in a culture that prizes machismo. He lost his mother when he was 12, and was forced to confront his father's abandonment and cultural estrangement, both from his adopted home in the United States and from a Mexican birthright. By finding his calling as a writer, and by revisiting the relationship with his father during a trip to Mexico, González finally claims his identity at the intersection of race, class, and sexuality.

Mary Gordon is the author of the novels "Spending," "The Company of Women," and "The Rest of Life," as well as the memoir of her father, "The Shadow Man." She has received a Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Writer's Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the 1997 O. Henry Award for best short story. She teaches at Barnard College and lives in New York City. In the memoir "Circling My Mother," Gordon remembers the life of her mother, Anna Gagliano Gordon, who died in 2002 at the age of 94. A hard-working single mother (Gordon's father died when she was still a girl), Anna was the personification of the culture of the mid-century American Catholic working class. Gordon writes about Anna in all of her roles: sister, breadwinner, woman of faith and single mother.

Lucia Nevai is the author of "Seriously," a novel, and her short stories have appeared in Tin House, Iowa Review, Zoetrope All-Story, the New Yorker, Glimmer Train, and other literary magazines. Her first collection, "Star Game," won the Iowa Short Fiction Award. A native of Des Moines, Iowa, she lives in upstate New York. Her recently-released novel, "Salvation," is a story of the coming of age of Crane Cavanaugh, a budding scientist whose mother tried unsuccessfully to abort her and who later is adopted by an adoring, middle-class family.

Ariel Sabar writes about the 2008 U.S. presidential campaigns for the Christian Science Monitor and is an award-winning former staff writer for the Baltimore Sun and the Providence (RI) Journal. His work has appeared in the New York Times, The Washington Monthly, Mother Jones magazine, and other publications. He lives with his wife and two children in Washington, D.C. His first book, "My Father's Paradise: A Son's Search for his Jewish Past in Kurdish Iraq," will be published in September 2008. The book details Sabar's journey with his father, Yona, to today's war-torn Iraq in a quest to rediscover a forgotten land. As Ariel retraces his father's footsteps, he brings to life the eccentric characters, extraordinary determination, and fascinating historical odyssey of the Kurdish Jews.

Sadia Shepard is a documentary filmmaker for television and film. Her credits include the Outsourcing episode of Morgan Spurlock's award-winning series 30

DAYS, and RJ Cutler's forthcoming film *The September Issue*, about Vogue editor-in-chief Anna Wintour. Her documentary *In Search of the Bene Israel* premiered at the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival on August 10, 2008. In 2001 Shepard traveled to Bombay, India, to try and understand the history and future of the tiny Indian Jewish community where her grandmother grew up, with the goal of making a documentary. Two years later she returned, still trying to make sense of what she had seen and experienced. Over the next three years, she culled material from her videotapes and notes and turned them into a manuscript for "The Girl From Foreign." She is currently at work on her second book.

Margaret Talbot is a staff writer at *The New Yorker*. She has also written for *The New Republic*, *The New York Times Magazine*, where she published numerous cover stories as a contributing writer from 1999 to 2003, and *The Atlantic Monthly*, among other publications. Her essays have been anthologized in several books, including "The Best American Science Writing 2002" and "Because I Said So: 33 Mothers Write about Children, Sex, Men, Aging, Faith, Race, and Themselves." Talbot is a recipient of a Whiting Writer's Award and a Senior Fellow at the New America Foundation. Her work explores such themes as the changing contours of family life, women's work, and children's culture in the 21st century, and politics and moral debates as they intersect with both science and the law.

Sheila Weller is a *New York Times* bestselling author and award-winning magazine journalist. She is the senior contributing editor at *Glamour*, a contributor to *Vanity Fair*, and a former contributing editor of *New York*. Her six books include a family memoir, "Dancing at Ciro's," which *The Washington Post* called "a substantial contribution to American social history." Her latest book, "Girls Like Us: Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon – and the Journey of a Generation," has received lots of media attention and praise from a variety of reviewers.

CONTACT: Mary Anne Lee, Spencertown Academy, 518-392-3693

**The Hudson Valley Writers Guild offers space in its newsletter for submission and program opportunities, but does not endorse any programs or publications that are not offered through the Guild.**