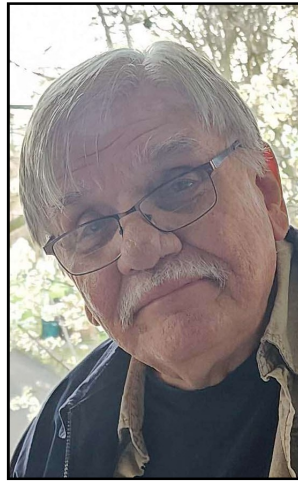


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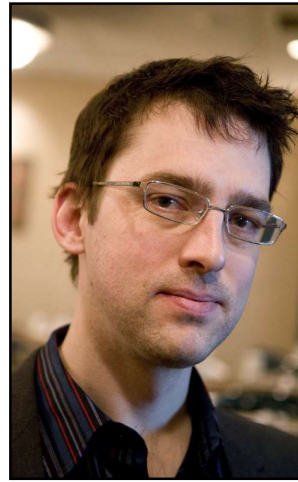
Kathie Giorgio's *Let Me Tell You; Let Me Sing*, a poetry collection, is scheduled to be released by Kelsay Books in late 2025. ... **Colleen Taylor Sen's** *Ashoka and the Maurya Dynasty: The History and Legacy of Ancient India's Greatest Empire* has been translated into Chinese and published in Beijing. ... **Grace Bauer's** poem "You've Got a Friend In" is included in the recent anthology *Keystone Poets: Contemporary Poets on Pennsylvania* (Pennsylvania State University Press). She also has poems in recent issues of Lily Poetry Review and Sheila Na Gig. Her essay "A Circling Variety of Lives: On the Inimitable Martha McFerren" appears in the most recent issue of Xavier Review. ... **Carol Fisher Saller** will celebrate the launch of her middle-grade novel *The Time-Jinx Twins* (See Literary License, April 2025) at 57th St. Books (1301 E. 57th St., Chicago) on Oct. 18, at 1 p.m. There will be cookies, a chance to make a personal pocket-sized time-travel machine and brief words from Carol on the challenges of writing about time travel. ... **Gail Lukasik** was scheduled to discuss her latest nonfiction book, *What They Never Told Us: True Stories of Family Secrets and Hidden Identities Revealed*, on Sept. 4 at Aspen Library in Vernon Hills, Illinois. The library's genealogy club was sponsoring the event. *What They Never Told Us* is the followup to Gail's best-selling *White Like Her: My Family's Story of Race and Racial Passing*. ... **Robert Marovich** tells Biblio File, "My article, 'Gospel Star Takes Creative Leap of Faith' was published in the New York Times July 17. On July 8, I was a guest on WBEZ's Reset program, hosted by Sasha-Ann Simons, to discuss Chicago gospel music legend Dr. Lou Della Evans-Reid of Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church, who passed away July 5. Mitch Dudek of the Chicago Sun-Times

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Midland Authors set to start 2025-2026 program season



Dominic Pacyga



Keir Graff



Steven Dahlman

For the Midland Authors' 2025, we have a new co-program chair, **Rebecca Johns-Trissler** of DePaul University, who knows venues and the book business.

Programs already lined up by Johns-Trissler and Program Chair Mary Wisniewski include:

On Oct. 14 at 7 p.m. at the University of Illinois at Chicago Richard J. Daley Library, 801 S. Morgan St., Chicago, **Dominic Pacyga** will discuss his new book, *Clout City: The Rise and Fall of the Chicago Political Machine* (University of Chicago Press, Sept. 9), with **Dick Simpson**, an author, former Midland Authors President and former Chicago alderman.

Doors open at 6, with snacks and soft drinks.

Pacyga is professor emeritus of history in the Department of Humanities, History

and Social Sciences at Columbia College Chicago.

He is the author of several books, including, most recently, *American Warsaw: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of Polish Chicago*, also from the University of Chicago Press.

The Midland Authors' Nov. program featuring **Keir Graff's** book about the Fine Arts Building and **Steven Dahlman's** book on Marina City will be at the Little Studio in the Fine Arts Building, 410 S. Michigan, Chicago.

Titled "Two Legendary Landmarks: The Fine Arts Building and Marina City," it will be presented by Dahlman with his book *Marina City: The Definitive History of a Chicago Landmark* and Graff with his book *Chicago's Fine Arts Building: Music, Magic, and Murder*.

Expect cheese and wine and schmoozing at 6 p.m., then the talk at 7 p.m.

Literary Latest
New Books

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Biblio File

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interviewed me for the paper's July 7 obituary on Dr. Evans-Reid. ... **Jon Lauck's** *The Missouri, America's Longest River: A Cultural and Environmental History* will come out in 2026. ... Past Midland Authors President **Joanne B. Koch** is collaborating with dramatist, director and actor Diane Dorsey, composer Ilya Levinson and lyricist Francesca Peppiatt to bring "Merry Widows, the Musical" to the City Lit Theater on Nov. 2 in a staged reading directed by Joan Mazzone. It will be one of 10 new plays and musicals presented by the Chicago Writers' Bloc, which is focused on bringing new plays and musicals to Chicago area audiences and beyond. As a founding member of Chicago Writers' Bloc, Joanne has helped to bring over 100 new plays and musicals to Chicago area audiences, with several of these new works going on to theaters across the country. Joanne says, "If you have a new play that can benefit from development at monthly Zoom meetings and new play festivals, contact me at info@writersbloctest.org. If you are among the more than 14 million widows or widowers, be sure to put Sunday night, Nov. 2, at City Lit Theater on your calendar for 'Merry Widows.'" ... **Connie Goddard** writes to say her article

on John Dewey and Frank Lloyd Wright, two luminaries from Progressive Era Chicago, titled "Uniting Art and Labor with Education," appeared in the June issue of *Chicago History Magazine*. In March, Connie made numerous appearances in Baltimore and Princeton, as well as Red Bank, New Jersey, to discuss Dewey's relationship (or lack thereof) with W.E.B. Du Bois. Also, she says *Chicago History Magazine* has just published her article "Combining Art and Labor with Education: A Quartet of Chicagoans Defines the New Education and a New Industrialism." John Dewey and Frank Lloyd Wright are two of the quartet; the article grew out of research for her book, *Learning for Work: How Industrial Education Fostered Democratic Opportunity*, which was published last fall by the University of Illinois Press. And she's pleased to say that the book has received laudatory reviews from Choice (for academic libraries) and in *Teachers College Record*. Now she's looking for sponsors to do a documentary on the city's notable history as an innovator of programs that combined schooling of the hands and the head. (She says: "Suggestions welcome!") ... **Marlene Targ Brill** gave three different presentations, one each about Jane Addams, Dolores Huerta and the ABCs of Publishing, to visitors at Ohio's Lakeside Chattaqua along Lake Erie, a historic community that features educational programs and tons of other activities. Marlene says, "Who knew the Midwest had its own Chattaqua?" She also signed books at the Chicago Women's History Center's tribute to Jane Addams on Sept. 6 and at Printers Row Litfest. ... Here's what Biblio File hears from **David L. Harrison**: "Recently my picture book, *A Tree Is a Community*, was chosen by Bank Street College as one of the best 2024 picture books. My other title from 2024, *Wild Brunch, Poems About How Creatures Eat*, is one of 12 books up for the 2026 NC Junior Book Award. I recently spoke to students on the campus of Central Methodist University. I gave a poetry reading with Missouri's 5th Poet Laureate (I'm the 7th). I signed books at Sundog Books in Seaside, Florida, and



In April, these enthusiasts for the Midwest met at a Readers Fest sponsored by Dakota State University in Madison, South Dakota. Garrison Keillor (left) is still spinning his delightful tales, real and imagined. SMA Board Member Jon Lauck was there, too. (Photo by Connie Goddard)

am planning a party at Springfield's main library to celebrate the end of my term on Sept. 30. I've invited the governor. My weekly poetry column just featured its 92nd column and my free video library of poets reading their columns now features 52 readings. It has already have more than 1,600 views. I just signed a new picture book in collaboration with Jane Yolen." ... **Rick Kogan** wrote "When Harry met Wally, the result was a definitive book on how to watch television" by authors **Walter Podrazik** and Harry Castleman and their book *Watching TV: American Television Season by Season*, now in its fourth edition (Syracuse University Press) for the May 8 *Chicago Tribune*. ... The Midland Authors has become a partner institution with the Illinois 250 Commission. ... In July, sports historian **Charles Billington** was a featured speaker at the Pro Football Researchers Association's annual convention in St. Paul. His summer engagements including presentations at Onwentsia County Club, the North Shore Senior Center, the Elmhurst Library and the Evergreen Park Library in Illinois. ... Former Illinois state Representative Luis Arroyo is looking for an author to ghostwrite his memoir. Arroyo was the 36th Ward committeeman and served in the House from 2006-2019 and became assistant majority leader in 2017. Then he was caught up in a bribery scandal. His e-mail address is 11354arroyo@aol.com.

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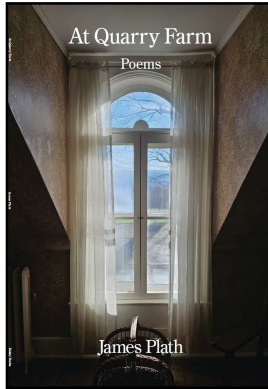
Copy Editors: Marlene Targ Brill,
Dorothea Frisbie

www.midlandauthors.org

Society of Midland Authors members can pay their membership dues, buy tickets to the annual dinner and make donations on our website with PayPal (there is a fee to help cover PayPal's charge). To make a donation, visit our home page at www.midlandauthors.org and click on the "Donate" button in the upper right corner.



Literary Latest



COMPELLED TO WRITE POEMS

James Plath spent two weeks as a fall 2023 Quarry Farm Fellow in Elmira, New York, working on an essay detailing



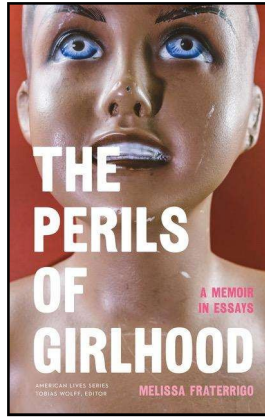
James Plath

how Mark Twain modeled how to be a celebrity-writer for both Hemingway and Updike. Plath conducted that research, but also felt compelled to write poems about the house and its inhabitants.

The result: *At Quarry Farm* (Kelsay Books, 2025), the first drafts of which were written while in residency. Plath, the Colwell Professor of English at Illinois Wesleyan University, was invited to return to The Farm in May 2026 as part of “The Trouble Begins” series to read from and talk about *At Quarry Farm*.

FIRST MEMOIR

Melissa Fraterrigo tells Literary Latest, “I’m delighted to share that my third book and first memoir, *The Perils of Girlhood*, was scheduled to come out Sept. 1 with the University of Nebraska Press as part of the American Lives Series edited by Tobias Wolff. The book interrogates the personal and emotional



toll of being female and serves as a reckoning. In celebration of the book, I am scheduled to be in conversation with Michele Morano on Sept. 24 at Women and Children First.

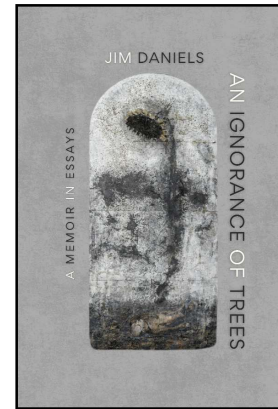
“I began the book during the pandemic. A fiction writer by trade, I could not finish a single story. My pre-adolescent daughters were attending school via Zoom and my own classes had shifted online. Everything felt fraught, and I found myself craving true stories and essays.



Melissa Fraterrigo

“I was working my way through several essay anthologies and happened upon Scott Russell Saunders’ *Under the Influence*, about the legacy of his father’s alcoholism. Sanders’ voice was so clear that it unlocked something in me, giving me the chance to reflect on my own suburban Chicago family, my father’s anger, and how I felt responsible for it. At the same time, my daughters were beginning to make comments about their bodies and sometimes I would find them sobbing over their thighs. All of this coalesced and I began to consider how I might help them navigate their own girlhoods. And while the book includes personal narratives that developed from my

experiences, the universal truths compel all of us to consider how best to bring our daughters into the future.”



‘A VERY MIDWESTERN BOOK’

Jim Daniels’ new book is *An Ignorance of Trees* (Cornerstone Press, Aug. 26, 2025).

Daniels tells Literary Latest, “It’s a very Midwestern book, as most of mine are.

“When I read Richard Powers’ Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *The Overstory*, which is so grounded in trees and the natural world, I was struck by how little I knew about nature growing up in a working-class neighborhood on the edge of Detroit and started to think about what effects that lack of knowledge had on me.



Jim Daniels

This sparked the title essay of *An Ignorance of Trees*.

“I was struck by the fact that basically I could only identify two kinds of trees, pine trees, and trees with leaves. Most of the other essays touch on that tension, that ignorance, in one way or another – trees, above-ground swimming pools, pets, hoarding (its own kind of wilderness

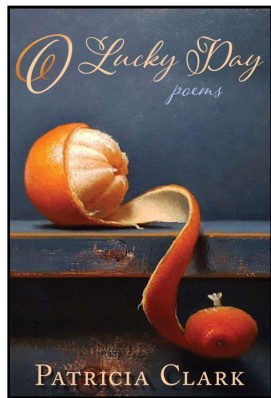
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Literary Latest

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in our domesticated landscape). I hope the collection also reads like a biography of place – how we carry where we're from with us no matter where we go. That's certainly been the case for me and Detroit."

Midland Authors member **Sue William Silverman** wrote: "Daniels is probably the most introspective and sensitive tough guy writing today."



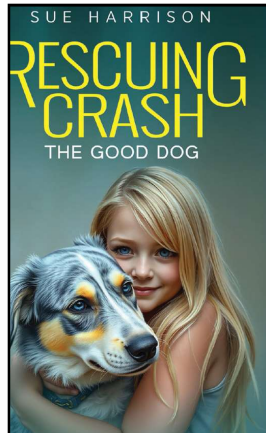
EXPLORING CONCERNS

Patricia Clark's latest poetry collection *O Lucky Day: Poems* (Madville Publishing, Jan. 21, 2025) explores her concerns about family and mortality, silence and loneliness, widening to include losses in the natural world.

These sorrows often emerge along with an exuberance found in the sensual pleasures of taste and touch. Clark trains herself "to disappear, into the shagbark / hickory, the scarred maple, / the viburnum just about to flower." She knows

that whatever upheaval we bring to the world, and ourselves, "something was broken, then healed, then / transformed." She advises us to "loaf and ponder," but also to rise with the rustling grasses in lament of environmental degradation, voicing our insistence for reverence of what remains.

These lyric poems of intensity and acute detail render the physical world in its tattered glory.



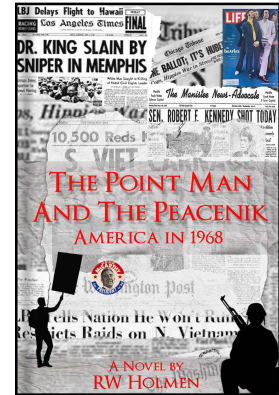
STORY OF BROKEN HEARTS AND BONDS

In **Sue Harrison's** *Rescuing Crash, the Good Dog* (Modern History Press, Feb. 25, 2025), Britta, an 11-year-old girl, has lived in soul-deep sorrow since her mother left their family. When Britta's father forgets her birthday, he decides to give her a dog (although Britta asked for a cell phone). They adopt Crash, an Australian shepherd from their local animal shelter in Sault



Sue Harrison

Ste. Marie, a small city in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and the adventures begin. *Rescuing Crash, the Good Dog* is a story about broken hearts – not only Britta's and her father's but also a dog's broken heart – and it is a story about the bonds between daughters and fathers and good dogs and also not-always-so-good cats.



EYEWITNESS VIEW

R.W. Holmen's *The Point Man and the Peacenik: America in 1968*

(Wretched Man Publications Oct. 15, 2024) offers an eyewitness view of the events of the most turbulent year of the 20th century: political upheaval, the height of the Vietnam War, assassinations, urban riots, and the rise of hippie counterculture. If you lived it, remember the times, the tunes, and the tribulations. If you want to understand an entire generation, and maybe America herself, meet Dave and Beans and Angie and Wendy as they come of age while "the times, they are a'changin'."



R.W. Holmen

Literary Largesse

Dues cover mailings and other organizational expenses, but the Society always needs additional money for programs such as the annual May book awards banquet.

Thanks to **Theresa Amato, Richard Besette, Donna Boonstra, Charles Billington, Catherine Browder, Anthony Bukowski, Anne Burke,**

Dennis Byrne, Anne Calcagno, Patricia Camalliere, John Cella, Garnett Kilberg Cohen, Carol Felsenthal, Edward Gordon, Thomas Frisbie, Linda Gartz, Dan Gerber, Frank Gonzalez-Crussi, Jarice Hanson, David Harrison, Sue Harrison, Michael Haupt, Michael Craft Johnson, Steven L. Jones, Rebecca Johns, Ann Durkin Keating, Susan Croce Kelly, James T. Klise, Carla Knorowski, Richard

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