

Women's National Book Association

The Nashville Edition

May, 2008

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General Meeting

First Thursday of the month,
Bronte Café,
Davis-Kidd Booksellers
Green Hills Mall
Networking starts at 5:00
Meeting starts at 6:00
(Free and open to the public)

PLEASE NOTE: May meeting to be held At Barbie Chadwick's home

Board Meeting

Beaman Library
Lipscomb University
Monday following
General Meeting
Meeting starts at 6:00

May Garden Party

Join the WNBA board for a GARDEN PARTY to celebrate spring and the 90th anniversary of WNBA. The celebration will take place in the garden of member Barbie Chadwick on May 1 from 5:30-7 p.m. at 4509 Glendale Place, Nashville. Dinner will be provided—bring your own beverage. Members will receive an e-mail reminder with address and directions. For more information, e-mail Barbie at bchadwick@comcast.net or call her at 297-2125. Plan to join us for the fun.



Congratulations to the Class of 2008

May you follow the path that leads to your dreams!



**THE
NASHVILLE
EDITION**

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**Newsletter
Advertising**

Monthly rates for business card-size ads are \$15 for WNBA Nashville Chapter members and \$20 for nonmembers.

Please submit advertising copy by the 10th of the month prior to the month of publication.

Contact
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for more
Information.

Words Worth Noting

FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

The subject of food permeates contemporary culture, not only on television but also in literature. Food has long been associated with more than mere sustenance. We easily envision the places where we first tasted certain foods, the people with whom we dined, and the occasion for which the food was prepared. Although food is necessary for survival both individually and collectively, the food artist possesses imagination, imbues hope, and practices hospitality. So, too, do writers of literature and readers of recipes.

Like many of you, I first encountered Charles Dickens' novel *Great Expectations* in the ninth-grade literature anthology. I vividly recall an illustration of the cobwebbed dining table upon which the decayed remains of Miss Havisham's never-eaten bride-cake and bridal feast rested. Like Pip, I was shocked by the total ruination of what was to have been a celebratory occasion. In later years when I revisited the novel, I was impressed by the graphic description that Dickens used to create this scene. As a more mature reader, I appreciated the parallels between that ruined feast and the ruined, bitter life that Miss Havisham fashioned for herself.

In recent years, however, I have read fictional works that feature food in a more positive light. In Natasha Cooper's novel *Sour Grapes*, a Willow King Mystery, the reader finds herself wishing that she, too, had in her employ a Mrs. Rusham, who serves as cook, house-keeper, and child caregiver for Willow King. Mrs. Rusham's skill as a culinary

artist means that "spuds" become "a gloriously savoury dish of potato slices layered with white onion and garlic cooked in strong veal stock, . . ." (Cooper, 27). Recently I have read several novels in Sarah Graves' "Home Repair Is Homicide" series. Set on Moose Island off the coast of Maine, the protagonist, her friend Ellie, and their families share meals of simple New England fare. However, Ellie has the culinary artist's touch, for she brews coffee and makes an orange bundt cake guaranteed to perk up Jacobia (Jake) Tiptree's tastebuds. Graves reminds us that sharing simple food and relaxed conversation around a kitchen table is as nourishing as gourmet fare and scintillating wit.

The food of the South has not been slighted in contemporary fiction, especially the novel *Sufficient Grace*. Many of us delighted in Ed Hollaman's metamorphosis from tire storeowner to culinary artist. We chuckled when Wally instructed Ed over the telephone how to hard boil eggs. Several pages later we learned that Ed now is a regular viewer of a cooking show and grinned when we read, "Ed is beginning to think of Chef Bernard as a son, or a nephew" (Arnoult, 107). The author uses Ed's evolution as a cook to convey his evolution as a character of greater depth, uniqueness and confidence.

Another character in *Sufficient Grace* around whom the preparation and serving of food is pivotal is Toot, an African-American woman who lives in the country. Toot prepares "soul food," or those fresh cooked meats, vegetables, breads, and desserts that make mouths

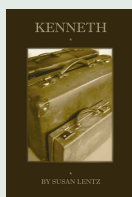
(Continued on page 11)

Member News

New
Member

Laurel
Coleman
Steinhice

Congratulations to our newest member, **Laurel Coleman Steinhice**, whose first book, *Marion*, was published by Westview Publishing in February, 2008. The book recounts the true story of Laurel's mother, Marion who was a war correspondent during WWII. Laurel is having a book launch and signing reception on **May 5** in the second floor conference room of the downtown **Nashville Public Library**, from **5:30–8:00 p.m.** She would like to invite all fellow WNBA members to attend.



Following is an excerpt from a two-page review of *Kenneth* in *Airborne Quarterly* by Co. (Ret.) William E. Weber. *Kenneth*, authored by WNBA member **Susan Lentz**, is the true story of Susan's mother, WWII Army nurse Pearl Yarbrough, and infantryman Kenneth McDougall, the fiancé she still loved 60 years after his death.

"I rarely review books that are other than directly related to airborne topics. But I decided that "*Kenneth*" was a book our members—and particularly our 'airborner' ladies—would like. This is a love story told in third person, though based on and filled with the first person words, thoughts, hopes and dreams of a man and woman that destiny brought together—and a cruel fate decided should be deprived of their dreams.

The author has succeeded in making the reader feel as if one has been a part of the lives of Pearl and Kenneth. You come to know them as if they were close friends, not just acquaintances. When the reader reaches the end of this book, it seems as if Kenneth and Pearl were the authors. To that end, Susan Lentz has accomplished that which few could do—she has made a 'first person' story of a 'third person' story."

OUR MEMBERS RECOMMENDED READING :

About Alice by Calvin Trillin. A funny, touching memoir of his deceased wife.

Creeping Ivy, Fault Line, by Tasha Cooper. British mystery series—very good!

Boom by Tom Brokaw. For the "Greatest Generation Fans".

The Devil in the White City by Erik Larson. Great nonfiction book on the Chicago World Fair and the serial killer who preyed on attendees.

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress by Dai Sijie and Ina Rilke. Wonderful historical fiction story that shows how the power of books can change lives.

Schuyler's Monster, by Robert Rummel-Hudson. A compassionate story of a father's love for his wordless daughter.

Any of Michael Pollan's books. His latest title is *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto*.

Pretty is What Changes by Jennifer Queller.

Little Miss Smarty-pants by Suzanne Kopoulos. A very funny and well-told story from a new author.

Book Discussion News

May Book Discussion—Saturday, May 3 at 10 a.m.

Please join us at the Richland Park Library, located at 4711 Charlotte Avenue, for a discussion of ***On Chesil Beach*** by Ian McEwan, who is the author of two collections of stories and ten previous novels. The later include *Enduring Love*, *Amsterdam*, for which he won the Booker Prize in 1998, and *Atonement*.

In July of 1962, Florence is a talented musician who dreams of life on the concert stage and life as a perfect wife with Edward, a young history student at University College in London. The newly weds, both virgins, arrive at a hotel on Chesil Beach, both struggling with their worries about the wedding night.

Ian McEwan has caught the innocence of Florence and Edward at a time when marriage was presumed to be an outward sign of maturity and independence. *On Chesil Beach* is another masterpiece, a story of lives transformed by a gesture not made or a word not spoken.

Our 10 a.m. discussion will be facilitated by Ginna Foster, President-Elect of WNBA Nashville. Our book discussions are open to the public, and we hope you'll come and bring a friend. And don't forget to join us Saturday, August 9, when Emily Masters will lead a discussion on the book *Loving Frank* by Nancy Horan.

Joanne Slaughter

March Book Discussion Notes:

After postponing the book discussion of *Berlin Diaries: 1940–1945* for a week due to snow, thirteen intrepid folks braved heavy rains and the Ides of March to meet at the Richland Public Library on March 15. The book itself provided much discussion since it centered on the writings of an exiled white Russian princess, her family and friends, many of whom were involved in the infamous July 20th Plot to kill Hitler. Most attendees marveled at the author's ability to rise above the horror around her as Berlin was bombed nightly; then her male compatriots one-by-one were arrested and executed over the failed attempt to bring down the Third Reich.

Equally interesting were the personal stories and added information about the World War II years given by those attending. A special moment occurred when Pat Miletech shared a letter she found in the copy of the used book that she bought. It was written by a woman who had lived through some of the same experiences as the author, Marie Vassiltchikov. After reading *Berlin Diaries*, she apparently sent the book and letter to a relative to whom she confirmed the veracity of the author and all of the realism portrayed in what has been called "one of the most extraordinary war diaries ever written." (John leCarre')

Mary Grey James

New Chapter President

After one year of service as president of WNBA Nashville, Andrea Lindsey has resigned. Last June Andrea represented the Nashville chapter at the national board meeting in Boston. She returned to Nashville with a charge to encourage members to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of Women's National Book Association.

She interviewed Dr. Willodene Scott, charter member, as our chapter representative for the commemorative edition of *Bookwoman*, the national newsletter. During October area bookstores and branches of the public library displayed posters commemorating WNBA's 90th anniversary. Members of area book discussion groups were invited to the November meeting as special guests and recognized for their contributions to the community of book lovers. Guests and members were given books, book bags, notepads, and a commemorative bookmark designed especially for the Nashville chapter by Kate Lanigan, a local artist.

Chapter programs and the holiday dinner and book sale showcased the diverse talents and interests of our members. Dr. Esther Swink, Dean of the

School of Education at Trevecca Nazarene University and WNBA member, ably represented the Nashville chapter at the ATHENA Award ceremony at the end of March.

President Andrea has accepted the recommendation of the chapter nominating committee and selected Lee Fairbend to serve as interim president during the 2008–2009 chapter year. Lee previously served as president of the Nashville chapter from 1993–1995 and was our ATHENA Award nominee in 2007. Lee retired in January as Executive Director of Book'em, an organization that promotes childhood literacy. Please welcome Lee as our new president and give her your full support during the upcoming chapter year.

*Remember to Renew Your
WNBA Membership
(Form is on Page 8)*

Summer Series—Writing and Reading About Food

The Summer Series will be held again this year at Lipscomb University during the months of June and July. Following is the list of books to be discussed:

My Life in France by Julia Child and Alex Prud'Homme, Anchor Books, 2007, \$14.95

Like Water for Chocolate by Laura Esquivel. Anchor Books, 1995, \$13.95

A Debt to Pleasure by John Lanchester, Picador, 2001, \$14

Home Cooking: A Writer in the Kitchen by Laurie Colwin, Harper Perennial, 2000, \$12

The Measure of Her Powers: an M. F. K. Fisher Reader by M. F. K. Fisher, edited by Dominique Gioia, Counterpoint, 2000, \$22

The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals by Michael Pollan, Penguin, 2007, \$16

A complete schedule will be available in May at the WNBA Garden Party and on the Nashville chapter Web site. Please mark your calendars to attend these entertaining and informative lectures, co-sponsored by **WNBA and Beaman Library**, which are free and open to the public.

Carolyn Wilson

April Meeting Review

WNBA's April 3rd meeting took on the atmosphere of a poetry reading when local writers Rick Hilles, Kate Daniels, and Blas Falconer shared their work with an appreciative audience. All three authors offered intriguing glimpses into their family backgrounds and early literary influences, and each credited a strong maternal relationship with helping them find their muse.

Rick Hilles, who teaches in the MFA program at Vanderbilt, has a myriad of honors and awards to his credit, including the 2005 Agnes Lynch Starrett Poetry Prize, Foreword Magazine's 2006 Poetry Book of the Year award, and The Missouri Review's Larry Levis Editors' Prize. Rick advised aspiring poets to visit The Poetry Society of America's Web site to find legitimate help getting work published.

The audience found Rick's background particularly amusing when he admitted that his mother had read poems to her children in an effort to distract them and keep order while they waited for the school bus. It was through those early morning readings that Rick inherited his mother's love of poetry.

Kate Daniels, a member of Vanderbilt's Creative Writing faculty, has published three volumes of poetry and edited Muriel Rukeyser's selected

poems. Her work has been widely anthologized and will be included in *Best American Poetry, 2007*.

It was her mother, reciting poems she had learned as a schoolgirl in England, who fostered Kate's interest in writing. Kate's sense of family, so evident in the stories she told and the pieces she chose to share aloud, honors her mother's influence.

Blas Falconer teaches Creative Writing at Austin Peay State University and is the Poetry Editor at Zone 3 Literary Magazine/Zone 3 Press. He has published two books of poetry, *The Perfect Hour* and *A Question of Gravity and Light*.

Raised in a bilingual home, Blas grew up attuned to the rhythms

and nuances of speech that have served him so well as a poet. He found his career path through his grandmother, who read poems to him when he was a child.

The highlights of the program were readings by Rick, Kate and Blas. To the delight of those present, each author took a few minutes to explain the inspiration behind the verses they chose—an effort that made their poetry all the more meaningful.

Susan Lentz

....each (author)
credited a strong
maternal relationship
with helping them
find their muse.

Tennessee Writers Alliance Conference—June 6–7

Author, storyteller Estelle Condra to be featured speaker at TWA Writers' Conference on June 6–7, 2008 at Battle Ground Academy in Franklin. For more information, check the Tennessee Writers Alliance Web site at <http://www.tn-writers.org/Workshops.asp>

Esther Swink's ATHENA Report to WNBA



ATHENA—a much larger-than-life replica of the goddess of wisdom—adorns Nashville's Parthenon, which serves as the venue for the Nashville ATHENA Award ceremony. The ATHENA Award originated in Michigan because of the desire of Martha Mayhood Mertz

to give recognition to the leadership of professional women. This award is now given in numerous cities to honor the leadership and service of women who have made significant contributions to their communities. As WNBA's nominee for 2008, I am grateful for the confidence in and support to me that the WNBA leadership expressed throughout the process. I was greatly complimented to be one of twenty-nine nominees and to spend time during the process with these very impressive women.

Beginning in October 2007, the nomination process extended for six months, culminating on March 27, 2008 with a reception at the feet of ATHENA and a festive awards ceremony under a tent on the Parthenon's lawn. From October until January 5, 2008, the nominees spent a great deal of time responding in writing to an extensive set of questions about our work, beliefs, contributions, and experiences. In February, each of us gave a three-minute speech before judges representing the thirty-six sponsoring organizations. Based on a quote by Wilma Rudolph, the topic for our speeches was "What dreams do you have that will inspire women to achieve their greatness?"

After giving the speech, everything else was a joy. We were treated to a reception, a luncheon at the Gaylord Spring House, and a luncheon sponsored by the Nashville City Club. We were constantly affirmed and told that being a nominee is a great honor even though only one would receive the ATHENA award, a lovely free-flowing statue. Each of us received a silver pin, a rendering

of the statue. Joyce Searcy, the CEO of Bethlehem Center and a deserving candidate, received the award. As co-chairs, Theresa Markum and Ann Pruitt gave outstanding leadership and were assisted by Teresa Campbell, Joanne Futrell, and a host of others.

The tenets of the ATHENA model of leadership are:

Authentic Self—Understanding who you are, your values, beliefs, and thoughts. Accepting personal responsibility.

Celebration & Joy—Appreciating and acknowledging your accomplishments. Looking forward to your life with a sense of hope/purpose.

Collaboration—Reaching out beyond what you can achieve on your own. Working in unison with others, celebrating diverse viewpoints.

Courageous Acts—Standing up and standing firm in the face of fear. Taking risks to speak the truth or challenge the way things have always been done.

Fierce Advocacy—supporting and acting on our passion for people, causes or ideas.

Giving Back—Serving the greater good. Committing to help your community of family, friends and peers as well as the global village.

Learning—Challenging yourself to listen and be open to what is unfamiliar. Expanding and developing your knowledge, skills and experiences. Teaching.

Relationships—Connecting with and embracing others. Appreciating the gifts and talents of different people.

This year's nominees exemplified the ATHENA tenets and will continue to serve our community in a variety of ways. Thanks to WNBA for being involved in honoring the contributions of professional women in Nashville.



**Women's National Book Association
Nashville Chapter
Membership Form 2008-09**

Please make your check for \$25 payable to WNBA and mail your check and updated form to Shirley Blakley, 4153 Outer Drive, Nashville, TN 37204. The membership year for the Nashville chapter of WNBA runs from June 1, 2008, through May 31, 2009.

Thank you. We value your membership!

Please update your information for the Nashville membership directory.

Name: *Please p-r-i-n-t!* _____

Job Title and Organization: _____
(If retired, check here. _____)

HOME street address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

Home phone: _____ **Office phone:** _____

Fax: _____ **Birthday: (month/day only)** _____

Email: _____

Web site: _____

May we call on your expertise? We need your help to make WNBA all that it can be! Please indicate committees on which you are willing to serve:

Newsletter _____ **Membership** _____ **Publicity** _____

Directory _____ **Financial** _____ **Programs** _____

Hospitality _____ **Special Events** _____ **Mailings** _____

As a member of the Nashville Chapter of WNBA, you are automatically a member of the national WNBA organization. Your dues entitle you to full access to the national Web site (www.wnba-books.org), including the password-protected, member directory used for networking opportunities.

NOTE: Contact information for use by WNBA members only will be published unless you check here. _____

_____ **Member Signature**

_____ **Date**

Write Now! By Bunkie Lynn



Eating well gives a spectacular joy to life and contributes immensely to goodwill and happy companionship. It is of great importance to the morale.

– Elsa Schiaparelli (1890–1973),
Italian fashion designer

Elsa was a woman after my own heart, as I eagerly anticipate May's celebrations and requisite good food: Mother's Day, WNBA's Garden Party, graduations, and Memorial Day promise delightful salads, fried chicken and devilled eggs. Summer's fresh produce returns, to be transformed into strawberry shortcake, peach pie, and blackberry cobbler, and the Southern standby: the Tomato-and-Mayonnaise Sandwich.

Lucky for us May 6 is International No Diet Day, an annual celebration of body acceptance and diversity for all sizes. Mary Evans Young, the director of the British anti-diet campaign Diet Breakers, and the author of *Diet Breaking: Having It All Without Having To Diet* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1995), was moved to act after viewing a news report on the alarming increase of healthy young women who sought to have their stomachs stapled to "lose a few pounds." International No Diet Day was born in 1992, and its participants pledge:

- I will not diet for one day.
- Instead of changing to fit someone else's standards, I will accept myself just as I am.
- I will feed myself if I'm hungry.
- I will feel no shame or guilt about my size or about eating.
- I will think about whether dieting has improved my health and well-being or not.
- And I will try to do at least one thing I have been putting off "until I lose weight."

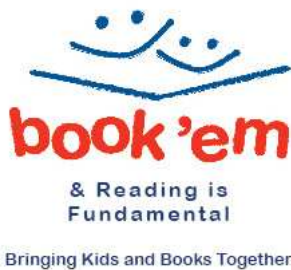
We all know the benefits of making good food choices and exercising. But when we obsess about our bodies, our dress size, or what we put into our mouths, we lose sight of the beautiful beings we were created to be. If we don't feel guilty for reading an extra chapter of a page-turner, why should we feel guilty for indulging our tastebuds? According to Elsa Schiaparelli, if food is important to our morale, no wonder drastic diets fail!

As a lifelong member of the Big Girls' Club who keeps ten different sizes of clothing in her closet, I realized at long-last that diets and exercise have their place; self-loathing and guilt don't. If we're honest with ourselves, it's not the food we crave (exception: chocolate!), it's the experience: the memorable setting, the friends at our table, the occasion of it all. I can't remember what was served at last year's Fourth of July barbecue, but I'll never forget the loved ones and laughter that surrounded me that evening.

If Life is a gift, then shouldn't we make merry as much as possible? If once every day, we stopped to smell the flowers, laugh out loud, and proclaim our existence with good food, good friends and good books, our life experiences would be heightened, our minds stretched, and our Fun Meters would red-line.

A veritable toast to you, my fellow WNBA members and Life Celebrants! I wish you happy times in the summer to come, and your share of great books, garden parties, and delicacies untold. As for me, there's a chaise lounge with my name on it, next to a stack of novels and a cooler full of chocolate-covered strawberries...

© 2008 Bunkie Lynn. Bunkie is the author of *The Big Girls' Guide to Life* and *A Comedy of Heirs*, available at Barnes & Noble or Amazon.com.



What better time than a beautiful, sunny day in May to celebrate Hispanic Americans' heritage? Cinco de Mayo, a date commemorating the Mexican victory over the French in the Battle of Puebla in 1862, is virtually

ignored in Mexico. However, this day of celebration has become immensely popular in the United States, largely because of the exploding Hispanic population.

In February, the Hispanic Nashville Notebook reported that 25% of all new-to-English students in Tennessee public schools live in Nashville. Across Tennessee, 2.1% of all public school students are learning English as a second language. In Nashville, 14% of Metro's students are Hispanic.

Book'em strives to inspire a love of reading in all children. Since 2005, our program Biblioteca sin paredes (translation: Library without Walls) has distributed thousands of books to Nashville's Spanish-speaking children. The program focuses on children from toddlers through fourth grade. In addition to book donations, it also provides bilingual story hours so that children and parents can enjoy reading together. Books provided by Biblioteca sin paredes are bilingual—Spanish and English are paired together to teach children to read in both their native and adopted languages.

Book'em needs volunteers who speak both English and Spanish to read to young Spanish-speaking children in Nashville. To share a love of reading—in both Spanish and English—please contact Martha Ann Pilcher, Volunteer Coordinator, at volunteers@bookem-kids.org.

Thank you, WNBA for your support! Please visit us on the web at <http://www.bookem-kids.org/>. Have a great summer!

Kristi Gillis

A Challenge for Creative WNBA Thinkers! Tagline Contest—Win \$25 Gift Card

We're looking for a tagline that will be used in conjunction with the WNBA logo in all future publicity materials. The idea behind the concept is to create a memorable phrase that will sum up the mission of the WNBA, and help members and the larger community both understand our purpose and associate, over time, the tagline with the organization. Here are a few examples of successful taglines for nonprofit organizations:

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet—Sierra Club
Saving babies, together—March of Dimes
Providing Medical Relief Worldwide—Doctors Without Borders

Our members are those who know the organiza-



tion best, and many of you are writers, editors or readers whose passion for books introduced you to the WNBA. We hope you'll take a little time to jot down your views on WNBA's programs and mission and craft a tagline

that you think suits the organization. There will be a \$25 gift card to Davis-Kidd given to the winner!

The deadline for submission is **June 1, 2008**. Please send your ideas to [Serenity Gerbman](mailto:serenity.gerbman@gmail.com) at: serenity.gerbman@gmail.com

Serenity Gerbman

National News

WNBA 2008 Award Nomination Submissions:

Nominate an outstanding woman who has done meritorious work in the world of books beyond the duties of her profession. For more information, or to submit your nomination, contact nancywkelly742@yahoo.com by **May 9**.

WNBA's National Board Election

Be sure to vote on the following open positions:

Vice President/President-Elect:

Mary Grey James
Nashville Chapter Member)

Secretary: Ruth Light

Treasurer: Margaret Auer

Send your vote to Michele Leber by **May 1** at: Michele.Leber@comcast.net or 1805 Crystal Drive, #911, Arlington, VA 22202

(Continued from page 2)

water and nourish heart-weary souls. Reading those passages in Arnoult's novel reminded me of meals prepared by my maternal grandmother and aunts. Fresh-from-the-garden tomatoes, corn on the cob, and green beans were daily fare at their tables. Fried apple and peach pies, prepared by loving hands, completed meals shared by three generations of family members. Whenever I pour over recipes in cookbooks sold by church congregations, I imagine the hospitable nature of those persons who have submitted their favorite recipes and wonder about their ethnic backgrounds and the occasions for which the dishes were served—fellowship suppers, family reunions, or bridal and baby showers.


As our chapter year comes to a close, we will gather at the home of Barbie Chadwick for a

garden party and supper on May 1. Join us for a communal meal prepared by chapter officers and executive committee chairmen. Discuss books you have read recently or plan to read this summer. Learn about the books to be featured in the annual summer lecture series. Share with other chapter members those memories associated with favorite foods. Come and nourish both body and soul.

Works Cited:

Arnoult, Darnell. *Sufficient Grace*. New York: Free Press, 2006.

Cooper, Natasha. *Sour Grapes*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.

An Evening with an Author
Books, Wine and Smart Conversation 

Featured Author: Denise Hildreth on *Will of Wisteria*
Date & Time: Thursday, May 22nd from 6:00-7:30pm
Place: Tinney+Cannon Contemporary in downtown Nashville (237 5th Avenue North)
RSVP to Ginna Foster: eveningwithanauthor@yahoo.com

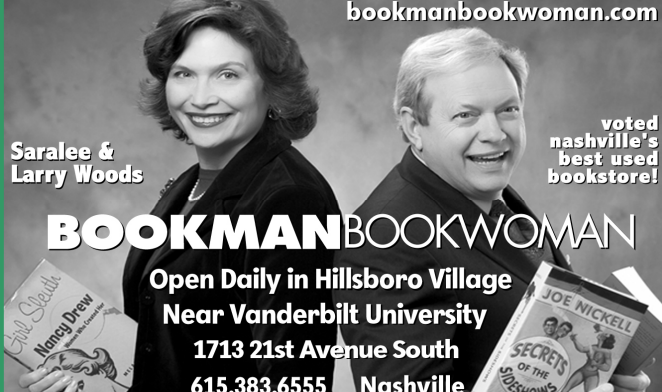
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