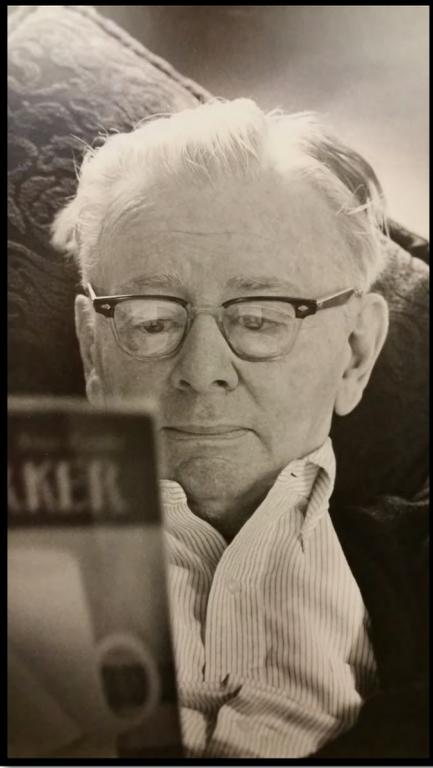


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Frank Sullivan:



Francis John Sullivan was born in Saratoga Springs on September 22, 1892 to Irish immigrant parents, through whom he was also related to the late Judge Michael Sweeney and television host Ed Sullivan. As a child he worked as a pump boy, serving spring water at the race track, and meeting turn-of-the-century luminaries like Diamond Jim Brady and Lillian Russell. He attended Saratoga Springs High School, working part-time for *The Saratogian* newspaper before graduating in 1910. His talent blossomed early, earning him a scholarship to Cornell University, where he graduated in 1914. Sullivan returned to Saratoga Springs and worked for the newspaper again until he was drafted in 1917. After two years as a 2nd Lt. in the Infantry, he moved to New York City, ultimately ending up as a reporter and feature writer for the *New York World*, becoming a columnist in 1924.

As a humorist, Sullivan was known for his gentle touch and for the collection of fictitious characters he created to give voice to his observations on life: Aunt Sally Gallup, Martha Hepplethwaite, the Forgotten Bach (a member of the Bach family who was tone deaf), and Mr. Arbuthnot, the cliché expert. Sullivan wrote his column until the *World* closed down in 1931, but he had also been writing humor articles for *The New Yorker* since 1926 and continued to do so until the 1950s. He also contributed to *Harper's Atlantic Monthly*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Vanity Fair*, and other magazines. His twelve books include *Broccoli and Old Lace* and *A Pearl in Every Oyster*. He often wrote fondly of Saratoga Springs. A critic described Sullivan as “the master of undersimplification – he could take the clearest and most obvious commonplace and... reduce it to its ultimate complexity.”

During the 1920s, Sullivan was a frequent member of the Algonquin Round Table, that legendary lunchtime gathering of wits from New York's literary and theatrical worlds. The crackling conversations often appeared in print, and the celebrities met later for parties featuring poker, charades and more wit and laughter.

A lifelong bachelor, Sullivan returned to his childhood home in Saratoga Springs in the 1960s, stating that it was “the most cosmopolitan small town this side of Europe; tolerant, urbane, often rowdy, but kind to the visitor.” Sullivan was a good friend to all in the vicinity of the house he shared with his sister Kate at 135 Lincoln Avenue, often stocking up on small presents to delight neighborhood children. He often wrote in bed, in pajamas; two of his typewriters are in local collections, including one in the Saratoga Room at Saratoga Springs Public Library. Until his death in 1976, he kept up an active correspondence with his many friends, who included Admiral Chester Nimitz, Walter Lippman and his show biz cronies from the Twenties.



Sullivan is buried in St. Peter’s Cemetery. Perhaps the most fitting epitaph is: “Frank Sullivan was a Saratogian.” At his death in 1976, portions of Sullivan’s estate, were divided among three institutions: his personal papers, including correspondence with literary and cultural luminaries like Groucho Marx, Ogden Nash, E. B. White and Edna Ferber are split between the Saratoga Springs History Museum and Cornell University; while portions of his personal library are housed in the Saratoga Room at Saratoga Springs Public Library.

On November 3, 2016, Frank and Kate Sullivan’s home at 135 Lincoln Avenue, now owned by the Spinelli family, will be named a Literary Landmark by the Empire State Center for the Book, the New York State affiliate of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress.

Note: The majority of this biography was taken from Sullivan’s entry in the Saratoga Springs History Museum’s History Hall of Fame.

2016-17 Saratoga Reads Calendar of Events

- Thursday, November 3, 2016 Noon – Empire State Center for the Book Frank Sullivan Literary Landmark Announcement during NYLA Conference.
- Thursday, November 3, 2016 7:00PM – SaratogaReads! Selection and Junior Companion Reveal and “Coming Attractions”

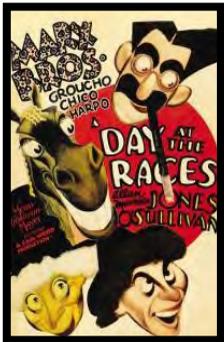


A Frank Sullivan / New Yorker Christmas Celebration with Patrick Donovan and The Living Library Sunday, December 11, 2016 2:00 PM

For over three decades, Frank Sullivan wrote *The New Yorker's* annual “Greetings Friends” Christmas poem, and his lone children’s book *The Moose in the Hoose* recounts a family’s Christmastime moose / mouse mashup. Those works, along with several other Christmas-themed pieces by Sullivan and other New Yorker contributors will form the basis of a special holiday-themed performance by Patrick Donovan and his Living Library colleagues.

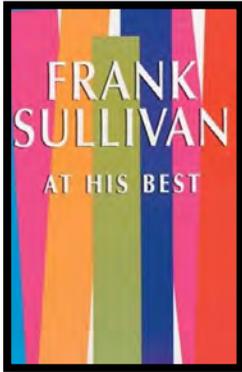
Frank Sullivan: The Sage of Saratoga with Chris Millis Thursday, January 12, 2017 Noon

Novelist, cartoonist, and screenwriter Chris Millis returns to Saratoga Springs Public Library to discuss one of his literary heroes, Frank Sullivan. A Sullivan scholar and aficionado, Millis, author of the prize-winning novel *Small Apartments* draws upon the resources of the library and the Saratoga Springs History Museum to paint a fascinating portrait of Sullivan, and his place as a local literary luminary.



A Day at the Races Tootsie-Fruitsie January Ice Cream Social Saturday, January 21, 2017 2:00PM

To celebrate Frank Sullivan’s friendship with Groucho Marx, documented in correspondence found in the collections of the library’s Saratoga Room and the Saratoga Springs History Museum, and to commemorate the 1967 Frank Sullivan Race at the Saratoga Racecourse, we’ll present a screening of the Marx Brothers zany comedy *A Day at the Races*. Come in costume, if you’d like, enjoy some ice cream in January, and have a good, old-fashioned fun time at the movies.



“Life is Short” discussion of writings of Frank Sullivan

Friday, February 3, 2017 10:30 AM

Dan Hubbs, Saratoga Springs Public Library’s Head of Adult Services, and leader of our monthly “Life is Short” short story discussion group, will facilitate a conversation about selections from Frank Sullivan at his best, and Sullivan’s 1954 “Carnival” piece for the *The New Yorker*, “A Saratoga Childhood.”

Paint and Sip *The New Yorker* Style

Monday, February 20, 2017

Three sessions: Adults - 9:30 AM; Teens - Noon;

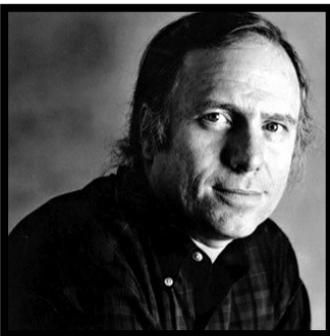
Children ages 8-11 with a grownup - 2:30PM

We’ll celebrate Frank Sullivan’s and E. B. White’s relationships with *The New Yorker*, and it’s unique visual sensibility, with our friends at Saratoga Paint & Sip Studio, by making art in the style of one of its covers or cartoons, while sampling different flavored teas. Because space is very limited, Saratoga Springs City School District residency required for these programs. Please register through our online calendar beginning December 1, 2016.



***In Conversation with Ian Frazier* Wednesday, March 15, 2017, 7:00 PM**

Reporter, Thurber-Prize-winning humorist, and *The New Yorker* staff writer, Ian Frazier joins us to cap off the Saratoga Reads! season with a discussion of his work, including his take on the *The New Yorker*’s “Greetings, Friends” Christmas poem. Among his eleven books are works of short fiction, short-form reporting, and long-form narrative non-fiction, including *Coyote vs. Acme*, *Great Plains*, *On the Rez*, *Travels in Siberia*, and *Hogs Wild: Selected Reporting Pieces*.



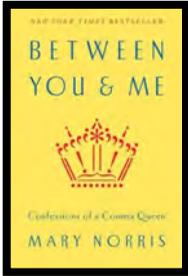
Tickets, which will be free, will be required, and will be available at the library beginning March 1. A book sale and signing will follow the program.

Related Events: “Books & Tea” and “Life is Short” Discussions

To celebrate Frank Sullivan’s historic connections to *The New Yorker* and the Algonquin Round Table, “Books and Tea”, the library’s monthly book discussion group, and “Life is Short”, our monthly short story discussion group, will read selections from authors associated with those two venerable institutions.

“Books and Tea” Book Discussions

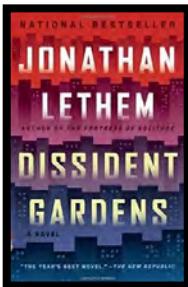
“Books and Tea” meets at 3:30 PM on the third Thursday of each month.



November 17, 2016 3:30PM

Discussion of *Between You & Me* by Mary Norris

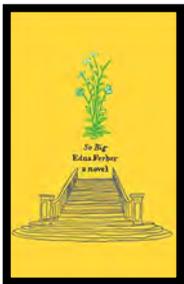
For more than three decades, Mary Norris has been a copy editor at *The New Yorker*. Here, Norris takes a fascinating and humorous look at the English language and all its pitfalls, in what might be the best book about writing since Strunk and White’s *Elements of Style*. Who knew grammar could be so much fun?



December 15, 2016 3:30PM

Discussion of *Dissident Gardens* by Jonathan Lethem

A frequent contributor to *The New Yorker* and an alumnus of Yaddo, Jonathan Lethem writes about New York City like no one else. This multigenerational novel explores the fascinating family politics of a Queens communist and the effect of her beliefs on her children.



January 19, 2017 3:30PM

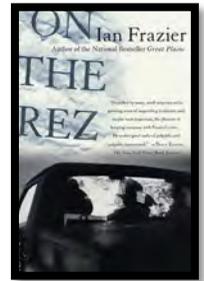
Discussion of *So Big* by Edna Ferber

Algonquin Round Table member and friend of Frank Sullivan, Edna Ferber won the 1924 Pulitzer Prize for *So Big*. Considered by many to be a feminist novel, *So Big* recounts the tale of a young schoolteacher transplanted from Chicago to the conservative farmlands of the town of High Prairie.

February 16, 2017 3:30PM

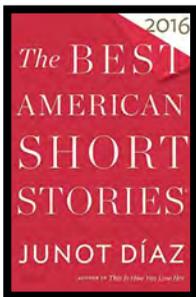
Discussion of *On the Rez* by Ian Frazier

On the Rez is a sharp, unflinching account of the modern-day American Indian experience. On the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in the plains and badlands of the American West, Frazier seeks out the descendants of Black Elk and Crazy Horse, taking the reader inside the world of the Sioux as few writers ever have, writing with much wit, compassion, and imagination.



“Life is Short” Short Story Discussions

“Life is Short” meets at 10:30AM on the first Friday of each month.

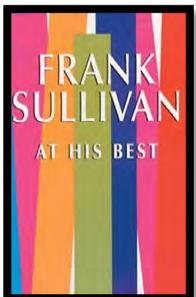


January 6, 2017 10:30AM

Discussion of Selections from

The Best American Short Stories, 2016

This month’s “Life is Short” discussion will focus on stories from *The Best American Short Stories of 2016* that originally appeared in *The New Yorker*, including “Apollo” by Chiminanda Ngozi Adiche and “Cold Little Bird” by Ben Marcus.

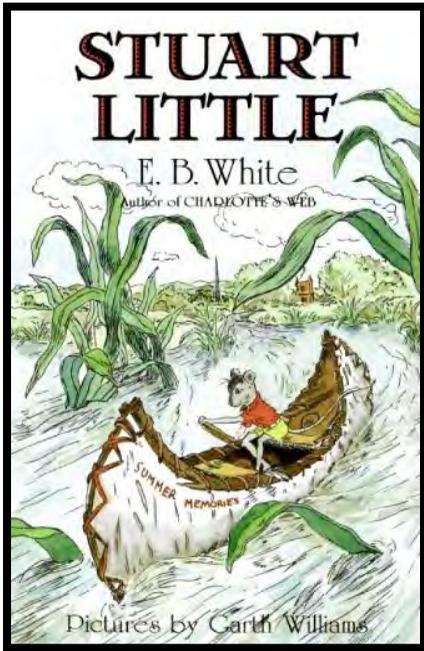


February 3, 2017 10:30AM

Discussion of selections from *Frank Sullivan at His Best*

Frank Sullivan at His Best collects stories which appeared in three of Sullivan’s books: *A Pearl in Every Oyster*, *The Night the Old Nostalgia Burned Down*, and *A Rock in Every Snowball*. The conversation will also feature Sullivan’s 1954 “Carnival” piece for the *The New Yorker*, entitled “A Saratoga Childhood.”

Junior Companion Discussions and Activities



A contemporary of Frank Sullivan, though a few years younger, E. B. White was a frequent contributor to *The New Yorker*, where his wife Katherine was an editor. Like Sullivan, White was a Cornell alumnus who worked as a newspaper reporter before finding success as a columnist, poet, and author.

Although it is now considered a classic of children's literature, when it was first published in 1945, *Stuart Little* was the source of some controversy, particularly with the New York Public Library's children's librarian, Anne Carroll Moore, who sought to block its publication. White's second book for young people, *Charlotte's Web*, is among the best-selling children's books of all time. White is the recipient of the American Library Association's Laura Ingalls Wilder Medal for his contribu-

tion to children's literature, the National Medal for Literature, and a Special Citation from the Pulitzer Prizes.

Saratoga Reads, Jr. Discussion Night

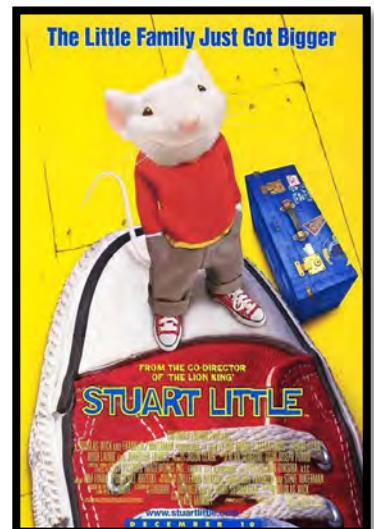
February 2, 2017 6:30 PM

Discussions of *Stuart Little* led by Skidmore College student group mentors. Students in 4th - 6th grade may register at the library.

Viewing of *Stuart Little* movie

February 9, 2017 6:30 PM

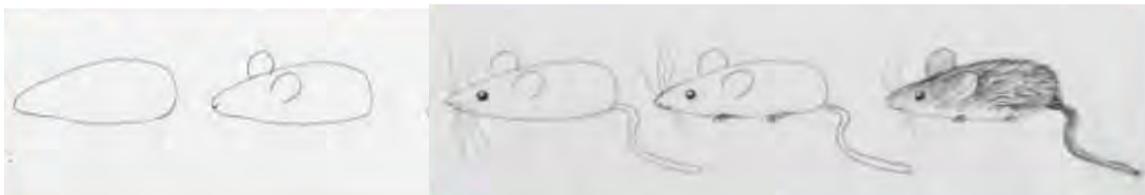
Popcorn and a movie. Students in 4th - 6th grade may register at the library.



Mouse in the House

Thursday, December 29, 2016 11:00AM-Noon

And all through the house...Not a creature was stirring...Not even a mouse! Join illustrator Bruce Hiscock and learn to draw a Christmas mouse. Then we'll branch out and sketch our own Stuart Little, in celebration of this year's SaratogaReads! selection.



Mouse Hunt

Throughout the Month of February

In honor the SaratogaReads! Junior Companion selection, step downstairs to the Children's Room during the month of February to see how many mice you can find! Find the bonus mouse and receive a small reward. No worries... the mice aren't real and the reward is not cheese!

Tang Museum Family Day

Thursday, February 23, 2017 10:00 - 11:30AM

Family craft —Children's librarian Ms. Kali will be part of the fun **at the Tang Teaching Museum's** Family Day in February, with a fun mouse-related craft. Best for Children 5 years old and up (younger siblings will need adult assistance)

Make a Mouse and a Maze or Amazing Walnut Mice!

Monday, March 13, 2017 4:15-5:00PM

Make a cute mouse using a walnut and a marble and then test it's skills in a homemade maze. Best for young people ages/grades: grades k-3



Preschool Story/Art

Fridays, 3/3-3/31/17 (except 3/17) 2:00-2:30PM

Children ages 42 months-5 years will enjoy stories and a craft activity each week. The first week will feature a Saratoga Reads Jr. mouse craft. No registration required.

Stuart Little Discussion Guide

Stuart Little is no ordinary mouse. Born to a family of humans, he lives in New York City with his parents, his older brother George, and Snowbell the cat. Though he's shy and thoughtful, he's also a true lover of adventure.

Stuart's greatest adventure comes when his best friend, a beautiful little bird named Margalo, disappears from her nest. Determined to track her down, Stuart ventures away from her home for the very first time in his life. He finds adventure aplenty. But will he find his friend?

1. In the first two chapters, how does Stuart's size benefit his family?
2. In chapter 3, Stuart has difficulty washing up and brushing his teeth. How do he and his family solve these problems?
3. Why does Mrs. Little think Stuart is in the mouse hole?
4. Stuart and Dr. Carey, the boat owner, discuss sailing terms that are spelled the same except for one letter (e.g. jib/jibe, deck/dock, mast, mist). Can you name pairs of words that have only one letter different?
5. Read chapter 6. How does Stuart move safely around the city?
6. What adjectives would you use to describe Stuart (e.g. adventurous, resourceful)? What are his main character traits?
7. Retell the events that occur in chapter 9. How does Stuart get in trouble? How is he saved?
8. In chapter 12, Stuart becomes a substitute teacher. What subjects do his students study? Which is your favorite? Which is your least favorite? Why?
9. In chapter 12, Stuart and his students discuss the most important things in the world and the laws that they believe everyone should follow. What do they choose? Do you agree with them? Why or why not?
10. Why does the storekeeper think that Stuart should meet Harriet Ames? How does Stuart feel when he first sees her?
11. In chapter 14, Stuart's date with Harriet does not go as planned. How does Stuart react? Do you agree with Stuart's behavior? Why or why not?
12. Read the last page of Stuart Little. Do you like the ending? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions provided by HarperCollins Publishers

Frank Sullivan Discussion Guide

In the 1930s and 40s, humorist Frank Sullivan took dead aim at the American scene in hilarious pieces written for *The New Yorker*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Town and Country* and other publications. Dispensing humorous commentary and criticism that could be gentle or cutting, sad or sympathetic, he entertained without ever being mean-spirited or condescending. Wonderfully good-natured, this vintage humor will tickle modern funnybones and keep readers chuckling at Sullivan's tongue-in-cheek comments on a wealth of subjects from the not-so-distant past.

1. In 1960, Frank Sullivan was well-known enough to be invited to the inauguration of John F. Kennedy. Before his writings were chosen for this season of Saratoga Reads! were you familiar with his work?
2. One of Sullivan's most enduring characters is Mr. Arbuthnot, the cliché expert. Do you think these works stand the test of time? About what sort of clichés do you think Mr. Arbuthnot would "testify" if these stories were written today?
3. Sullivan was a frequent member of the Algonquin Round Table. How do you think his wit compares with the likes of Dorothy Parker, Robert Benchley, Alexander Woolcott, et.al? Does it seem more genteel, or equally as cutting?
4. Many of Sullivan's writings concern life returning to "normal" after WWI and WWII. What do you think are the similarities and differences in soldiers' homecomings then and now?
5. For several decades, Sullivan wrote the annual "Greetings Friends" Christmas poem for *The New Yorker*. Those poems are filled with allusions to contemporary politics and popular culture. Read a few of the poems and see how many names you can identify. Who do you think would appear in the poems now?
6. Many of Sullivan's pieces are about the political climate of his times. How do you think the tone of political discourse has changed since Sullivan was active?
7. A few of Sullivan's pieces concern technology and the gadgets of the day. Do these pieces resonate with you? Can you think of some contemporary gadgets that elicit puzzlement and confusion?
8. Sullivan's writing was definitely a product of his time. Is there anything in his writing that you think contemporary readers would find objectionable or surprising?
9. Many of Sullivan's writings are nostalgic for childhood and simpler times. What do you remember from childhood that makes you most nostalgic?
10. How does Sullivan's humor differ from that of popular comedians of today? Can you cite examples?

SaratogaReads! Inspired Events

SaratogaReads! Book Fair at Barnes & Noble Bookstore

Saturday, December 17, 2016

Shop at the Wilton Square Barnes and Noble on Saturday, December 17, and when you present your voucher, a portion of the proceeds will go to the Friends of Saratoga Springs Public Library to help support SaratogaReads! programming!

Dorothy Parker Cocktail Hour at Hamlet & Ghost

Sunday, January 29, 2017

To celebrate Frank Sullivan's association with the Algonquin Round Table, the Friends of Saratoga Springs Public Library will be teaming up with local watering hole Hamlet & ghost for an evening of cocktails inspired by the book *Under the Table: A Dorothy Parker Cocktail Guide* by Kevin C. Fitzpatrick, with proceeds to help underwrite future SaratogaReads! programs. Ticket Prices TBD: watch the Friends website (friends.sspl.org) for updates.

New York City 1920s Literary Walking Tour

Saturday, April 1, 2017

Hop on a bus with us, as we head to New York City to take a walking tour of the Big Apple's 1920s literary scene, including stops at the Algonquin Hotel and other Round Table haunts, including the sites of apartments, offices, and speakeasies frequented by the era's literati.. Ticket prices TBD: watch the SaratogaReads! website (www.saratogareads.org) for updates.

Thank you to our partners and supporters:

Saratoga Springs History Museum

Skidmore College

Saratoga Springs City School District

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Hamlet & Ghost

and especially

Friends of Saratoga Springs Public Library!



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