

Author Talk - Sunday Oct. 16 4-6 PM: Westonite Frances Palmer, author of "Throwing Pots and Raising Dahlias: My Life in a Connecticut Garden"

Renowned potter and Weston resident Frances Palmer will be coming to the Weston Public Library to discuss her work, her process and how botanical interests influence the classic, one-of-a-kind vases and bowls that she hand-throws for a wide array of clients. Each piece is a perfect vessel for the myriad dahlias and other flowers lovingly grown in the spectacular, organic cutting garden adjacent to her sunny, windowed Weston studio.

Palmer believes there is a profound connection between her work and garden and will discuss the dynamic relationship between these outdoor and indoor spaces. Palmer's work has been featured in many publications, from *House & Garden* and *Vogue*, to *The New York Times* and *New York Magazine*. Her pottery was most recently showcased on the cover of the September 2011 issue of *Connecticut Cottages & Gardens*. Among the many distinguished sites where Palmer's work may be found is the Philip Johnson Glass House, for which she created a collection of white porcelain bisque vases in 2010. Several of Palmer's one of a kind pieces will be displayed and she will show slides of her garden and the many kinds of dahlias and other flowers she cultivates.

Lunch and Learn - Thursday, Oct. 20 12 noon-1:30 PM: Valerie Ann Leff, author of "Better Homes and Husbands"

Weston author Valerie Ann Leff's first novel, *Better Homes and Husbands* introduces us to a cast of memorable residents and employees at 980 Park Avenue in New York City. Black town cars line the sidewalk, and white-gloved doormen greet the residents. In addition to a glimpse into the lives of the rich and famous, Leff weaves into this novel a microcosm of the social and political fabric that was our nation during the years 1970-2000, from *The Second Sex* to white collar crime. Leff will be discussing *Better Homes and Husbands* as part of the Friends of the Weston Library's Lunch & Learn program on Thursday, October 20th.

What unfolds within 980 Park Avenue mirrors the outside world – suicide, a strike, a scandalous arrest. Stifled resentments lead to threats of a discrimination lawsuit. Feuds of class and caste are played out with ferocious etiquette by residents, domestic servants, and doormen. Each chapter, told by a distinctive narrator, seems at first glance to stand alone, but as time passes, the reader begins to recognize how these lives and events are inevitably entwined; Leff connects the players and plots in subtle and surprising ways.

Like many works of fiction, *Better Homes and Husbands* finds its roots in a real-life setting. Born in Los Angeles, Leff moved to Manhattan when she was a young girl and shared her Fifth Avenue address with members of New York's high society, including Jackie Onassis and the Rothschilds. She is the daughter of a Protestant mother who grew up in poverty and a Jewish father whose chauffeur drove him to and from his private school each day. A graduate of The Brearley School and Sarah Lawrence College, Leff made her mark in the world of international fashion, attended graduate school in California, and later settled in Asheville, North Carolina, where she founded a writing program. She now lives in Weston.

“*Better Homes and Husbands*,” says Leff “is a novel about a specific community – one that is usually either glamorized or satirized in literature and by the media. My goal was to create fictional characters that belong to this community and then to write about them on their own terms. It is a novel about complex people experiencing a wide range of human emotions – people who often behave in unexpected ways.”

Leff’s discussion begins at noon in the Library Community Room and participants are encouraged to bring a bag lunch. Copies of “*Better Homes and Husbands*” will be available for sale with all proceeds going to Friends of the Weston Public Library.

Thursday Morning Book Group - "Brooklyn" by Colm Toibin

Thursday, Oct. 13 at 10:30 AM

Amazon Best of the Month, May 2009: Committed to a quiet life in little Enniscorthy, Ireland, the industrious young Eilis Lacey reluctantly finds herself swept up in an unplanned adventure to America, engineered by the family priest and her glamorous, "ready for life" sister, Rose. Eilis's determination to embrace the spirit of the journey despite her trepidation--especially on behalf of Rose, who has sacrificed her own chance of leaving--makes a bittersweet center for *Brooklyn*. Colm Tóibín's spare portrayal of this contemplative girl is achingly lovely, and every sentence rings with truth. Readers will find themselves swept across the Atlantic with Eilis to a boarding house in Brooklyn where she painstakingly adapts to a new life, reinventing herself and her surroundings in the letters she writes home. Just as she begins to settle in with the help of a new love, tragedy calls her home to Enniscorthy, and her separate lives suddenly and painfully merge into one. Tóibín's haunted heroine glows on the page, unforgettably and lovingly rendered, and her story reflects the lives of so many others exiled from home.

Wednesday Evening Book Group - "In the Sanctuary of Outcasts" by Neil White

Wednesday, Sept. 21 at 7:30 PM

This is an extraordinary memoir - funny, poignant, uplifting and incredibly interesting : "Daddy is going to camp," is what Neil White told his children. But it wasn't camp; instead it was a Federal prison in rural Louisiana where he would be serving 18 months for bank fraud. However, this was no ordinary prison: the beautiful, isolated colony was also home to the last people in the continental U.S. disfigured by leprosy. Amid an unlikely mix of leprosy patients, nuns and criminals, White's strange and compelling new lift journey begins.

BOOK SALE COMING IN NOVEMBER

Mark your calendars for our Book Sale which will be held in the Library Community Room on Friday, November 4th – Sunday, November 6th. Thank you in advance for your support! We are very excited about the book sale and believe it will be a wonderful community event. Also, please note that we are no longer taking donations for the sale.