

Creative Living

celebrating all good things

Bliss for bibliophiles

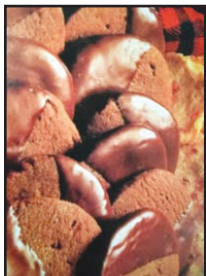
'Book it' to the Beekman Arms this Sunday for a Holiday Signing event. *by Kate Goldsmith*

Holiday Book Signing
Sunday, Nov. 5, 1-4 p.m.
Beekman Arms
Route 9, Rhinebeck
Free admission
(845) 876-7077

Despite those Negative Nellies who've been predicting the death of hard-copy books since the dawn of the computer age, many folks still prefer the tactile experience of a physical book to an e-reader, the scent of paper pulp to, let's say, the hum of a laptop fan. And it's not just those of us who were around when Gutenberg was putting monks out of work with his newfangled printing press; you might be surprised by how many children love them, too.

Bibliophiles from near and far are invited this Sunday to spend a few hours among kindred souls (and put a dent in that gift list) when the Beekman Arms in Rhinebeck hosts a festive Holiday Book Signing from 1 to 4 p.m., featuring local authors writing on history, cooking, regional interest and more, including several titles for young people. Admission is free.

Attendees can speak to the authors as they sign their purchased books, while enjoying coffee or tea compliments of the Beekman Arms. Sweet delights baked by Kathleen Brazee of Rhinebeck and her sister, Roberta Gerth of Highland, will be



At the event, sisters Kathleen Brazee of Rhinebeck and Roberta Gerth of Highland will sell sweet treats such as these chocolate mocha cookies dipped with chocolate (top) and turtle mini cheesecakes. *Courtesy photos*



available for sale.

Organizer Joanne Michaels (herself the author of regional travel guides and other titles celebrating the Hudson Valley) has presented these almost-annual events at other venues in the region, including the Millbrook Winery and Locust Grove. She's enthusiastic about this year's location.

"I'm excited about having it in a venue where people can walk in from the Village," she said in a recent phone interview. "And I love Rhinebeck! I'm hoping for the best."

The story of how the Beekman Arms became the 2017 host site begins at last year's Holiday Book Signing, which took place at Locust Grove.

"This couple came along holding a lot of books," said Michaels. "They were the Bantas [who own the Beekman Arms]. They're lovely people."

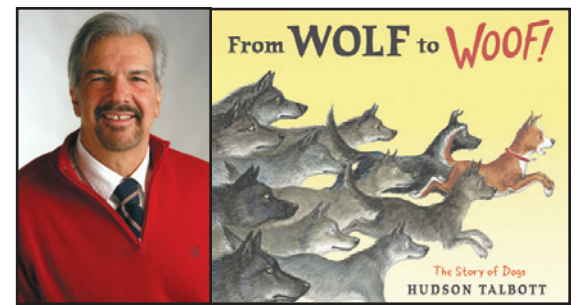
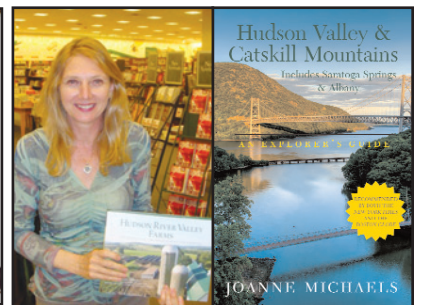
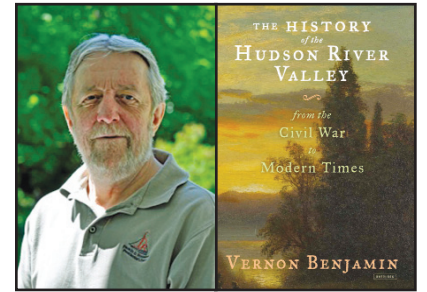
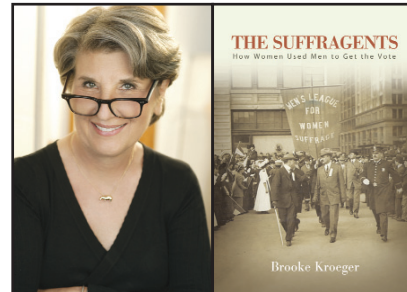
They complimented Michaels on the event and asked if she'd consider holding the next one at their establishment.

Michaels hopes the Holiday Book Signing will draw in residents and visitors who are in the Village for other reasons on a Sunday. Previously, these events were held on Saturdays.

"Book people are gonna come, I think, because they're into books," she said. "It's a family event; Sunday is a better day for something like this. Rhinebeck has so many restaurants, so it's a wonderful thing."

The majority of books on hand will be nonfiction and children's titles, the categories that traditionally do the best at this sort of event. Returning this year is regional historian Vernon Benjamin, whose two-volume set, "The History of the Hudson River Valley," did very well at Michaels' 2016 event, she said. Publisher Overlook Press notes it is "richly illustrated and scrupulously researched..." and predicts "...Benjamin's magisterial new history will be the definitive text for years to come."

Also back is award-winning children's book author Hudson Talbott ("It's All About Me-Ow," "From Wolf to Woof,"



Authors participating in the Holiday Book Signing this Sunday at the Beekman Arms include (clockwise, from top left) Brooke Kruger, Vernon Benjamin, Joanne Michaels, Hudson Talbott, Lesa Cline-Ransome and Leslie T. Sharpe. *Courtesy photos/images*

WRITER ROUNDUP

Kathy Stevens (Executive Director, Catskill Animal Sanctuary): "Where the Blind Horse Sings," "Animal Camp"
Vernon Benjamin (regional historian): "The History of the Hudson River Valley" (2-volume set)
Hudson Talbott (award-winning children's book author): "River of Dreams," "It's All About Me-Ow," "United Tweets of America," "From Wolf to Woof," "Leonardo's Horse"
Leslie T. Sharpe (naturalist and former VP of the NYC Audubon Society): "The Quarry Fox: And Other Critters of the Wild Catskills"
Scott Ian Barry (animal behaviorist): "Wolf Empire," "Castles of New York"
Stephen M. Silverman (journalist and former news editor at People Magazine): "The Catskills: Its History and How It Changed America"
Mark Greenberg & David Tait (photojournalist and author): "The Historic Presidency of Barack Obama: 2920 Days" (Introduction by Ken Burns)
Jon Bowermaster (Hudson River advocate & adventurer): "Crossing Antarctica," "Descending the Dragon (My Journey Down the Coast of Vietnam),"

"Wildebeest in a Rainstorm" (an anthology of conservationists), "The Hudson: River at Risk"
Brooke Kroeger (NYU professor): "The Suffragents"
Nava Atlas (vegan and vegetarian cook and illustrator): "Wild About Greens," "Vegan Holiday Kitchen," "Secret Recipes for the Modern Wife," "Literary Ladies"
Lesa Cline-Ransome (award-winning children's book author): "Germ: Fact and Fiction, Friends and Foes," "Before She Was Harriet (Tubman)," "Quilt Alphabet," "Whale Trails, Before and Now," "My Story, My Dance: Robert Battle's Journey to Alvin Ailey"
Ellen Messer: "Back Rooms: Voices From the Illegal Abortion Era," "The Rabbi's Cholent"
Graham Blackburn (custom-furniture-maker/author): "Traditional Woodworking Handtools," "Tango Slim" (a novel), "Illustrated Encyclopedia of Woodworking Handtools"
Joanne Michaels: "Let's Take the Kids," "Hudson River Journey," "Hudson River Towns," "Hudson River Valley Farms," "Adirondack High"

"Leonardo's Horse").

"Hudson Talbott is doing a book on Thomas Cole; he has so many books and they sell so well," said Michaels. "He illustrates his own books, as does Nava Atlas," vegan and vegetarian cook and illustrator who will also put in an encore appearance with some of her titles, including "Wild About Greens," "Vegan Holiday Kitchen" and "Secret Recipes for the Modern Wife."

Kathy Stevens, executive director of the Catskill Animal Sanctuary, has participated in at least one previous Holiday Book Signing; she'll be on hand for this one with "Where the Blind Horse Sings" and "Animal Camp," stories of love for the rescued animals at the Saugerties sanctuary.

Rhinebeck's own Lesa Cline-Ransome will take part in this book signing. An award-winning writer of children's books, Cline-Ransome has collaborated with her husband, renowned illustrator James Ransome, on several titles, including "Before She Was Harriet," "Germ: Fact and Fiction, Friends and Foes" and "My Story, My Dance," a picture book biography of Robert Battle, artistic director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

With New York celebrating the centenary of women's suffrage in the state, NYU professor Brooke Kroeger puts in a timely appearance with "The Suffragents," the story of how and why a group of prominent

and influential men in New York City and beyond came together to help women gain the right to vote.

Hudson River advocate and adventurer Jon Bowermaster will bring some of his titles, including "Crossing Antarctica," "Descending the Dragon (My Journey Down the Coast of Vietnam)" and "The Hudson: River at Risk." Bowermaster is a noted oceans expert, award-winning journalist, author and filmmaker.

"He just did a marvelous film on the Hudson River," said Michaels. "His books are terrific. I thought, 'This is a good year to have some environmental awareness in the group.' He's quite an interesting person; he quite literally travels around the world."

Photojournalist Mark Greenberg and author David Tait will bring their collaboration, "The Historic Presidency of Barack Obama: 2920 Days" (with an Introduction by noted historical documentary filmmaker Ken Burns).

"I really think the Obama book is absolutely stunning," said Michaels. "It's a huge oversized hardcover, selling like crazy across the country."

See sidebar for complete list of authors scheduled to participate.

Michaels advises attendees to park in the municipal parking lot on East Market Street in the Village of Rhinebeck. The Beekman Arms is a short walk from there. ❖