

November 24, 2019

Dear Friend of the WNBA,

Happy (almost) Thanksgiving! I hope you're enjoying the beautiful fall weather. We're still enjoying warmer weather here in LA, so the best I can do is paint my nails in fall colors and drink all the pumpkin spice lattes.



In WNBA National news, we just wrapped up October's [National Reading Group Month](#) and [Great Group Reads](#), and we're getting ready to announce our call for nominees for the [WNBA Pannell Award](#) (stay tuned for details!).

We have a lot to celebrate and be thankful for this fall. I recently went to a reading with seven amazing women writers, so I'm personally thankful for the ever-increasing opportunities to hear and validate women's stories and voices.

Most importantly, though, I'm thankful for YOU, our members and followers, for giving the WNBA the opportunity to support you and connect with you for 102 years.

Thanks and happy holidays, everyone!

Sincerely,

Rachelle Yousuf (Los Angeles)
President, Women's National Book Association (WNBA)
president@wnba-books.org

P.S. If you're going to buy books for presents this year (and I hope you do!), please shop your local indie bookstores. Better yet, shop at one of our previous [WNBA Pannell winners](#) if you can!

My Trip to the WNBA Archives

By Linda Rosen (South Florida)
National Recording Secretary &
GGR Co-Coordinator



Roz Reisner (NYC) and I recently had a great experience viewing a small portion of the WNBA archives at Columbia University.

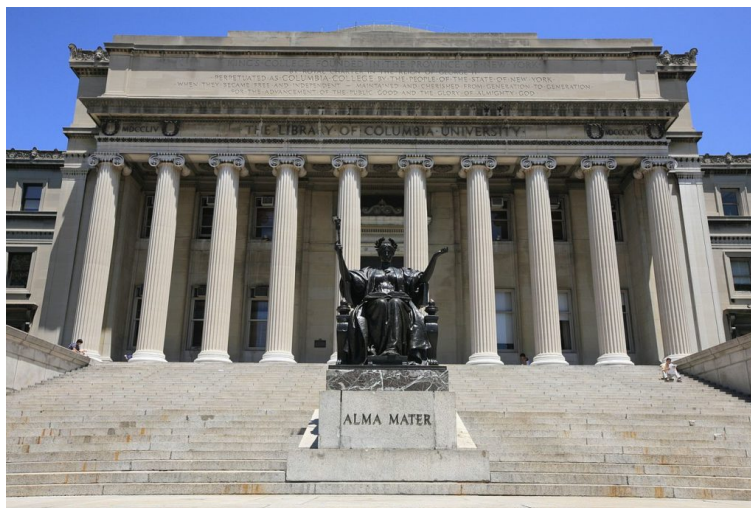
Upon entering the impressive Rare Books Room, I actually held the scrapbooks in my hands and turned the grayed pages filled with yellowed typewritten executive board minutes (and some handwritten, which wasn't easy to read), as well as read correspondence, programs, and treasurers' reports.

Crinkly, hardened pieces of scotch tape pressed those minutes and letters to the scrapbook pages. It was not only a lesson on the history of the WNBA but also a history of the times. It's amazing that they're still intact and amazing that they still exist for us to view.

Roz and I sat for about two hours engrossed in our history. For a few minutes, we spoke with Jane Gorjevsky and Lina Moe, the two women in charge of our archives (as well as many others). And then we dug in.

I learned more about the WNBA's original connection with the American Booksellers Association and read the correspondence surrounding our decision not to merge with the ABA but asking for more women to serve on the committee.

And, I even read a telegram sent to President Harding stating the WNBA's view on disarmament. We obviously had some clout!



Columbia University

As Recording Secretary, the minutes were especially interesting to me. Thankfully, we no longer use stenography — it was dispensed with in 1922, a good thing since those minutes were verbatim! (Can you imagine reading every single word uttered at our meetings?) Once they did away with steno, the minutes were succinct. They went from about six pages to one. Everyone was addressed as Miss rather than their full name, e.g., Miss Rosen was in attendance, and all the minutes stated “the president was in the chair.” I loved reading the “old” language.

Everything we read, which was up to 1934, showed WNBA was still only in New York City.

The organization hosted a very successful annual banquet in Manhattan. In 1931,

we saw that 307 tickets were sold at \$4.50 per ticket. That year there was an impressive list of guests of honor including Frederic B. Melcher, editor of Publishers Weekly, and Maria Pavlovna Romanov, the Grand Duchess of Russia.



Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna of Russia

Correspondence showed us the effects of the Depression on the organization. The women were worried about our future and some thought the WNBA should die — yes, that was the word used. Yet, we persisted.

In 1932, there were 71 members listed (remember, the only chapter was in NYC) though actually only 52 had paid their dues of \$3.00. The banquet that year sold 191 tickets. Sadly, only 26 were members. It was decided that the fee was too high.

The organization persevered. Members held a bridge party where they charged a fee, but only 16 of the 131 attending were members. Still, the women didn't give up. They kept the annual dues at \$3.00, even in the depths of the Depression. We are thankful for that.

These were determined women. Wouldn't they be proud of us today? I wonder if they thought we'd still be carrying the torch over a century later.

Our experience shows us why WNBA members and chapters need to [send our materials to the archives](#).

I brought a flash drive today filled with the minutes from the Executive Board and Chapter Presidents' conference call meetings as well as the minutes from our annual meeting, end of year reports, and more, including photos and videos.

Let's give the future women and men of the WNBA a history of our times and our programs. I hope they'll use it when planning our 125th anniversary.

A Tribute to Carolyn Wilson

By Barbie Chadwick (Nashville)



Carolyn Wilson

Carolyn Wilson, a long-time WNBA member who served tirelessly at both the local and national levels, [passed away mid-September](#) after a short illness. Her service to the WNBA Nashville Chapter is legendary among the book community. There would be no such chapter without Carolyn.

One member put it quite well:

“Indeed, for more than a generation, Carolyn Wilson was WNBA — she was each newmember's first friend. For myself, I deeply appreciate Carolyn's leadership and have always recognized that it was Carolyn and her generation that paved the way for so many of us. She was the vanguard and yet so much more — Carolyn Wilson was a dear friend and mentor who has made the world a better place because she was here, and her legacy lives on in the countless lives she touched.”

Carolyn was the heart and soul of the Nashville Chapter. Many of our members joined because of her. She had several ways of recruiting us into the chapter, from getting us to go to a program we might be interested in to asking us to volunteer for a specific job.

As a leader of the WNBA, Carolyn was a driving force on the Humanities Tennessee organizational committee that started the Southern Festival of Books and was an active volunteer for almost 30 years. She coordinated teams of WNBA volunteers to help host, drive authors to and from the airport, man the signing area, and much more. To this day, the WNBA is a presence at the Southern Festival of Books because of Carolyn.



Carolyn presents the WNBA Award to Barbara Bush

On behalf of the WNBA, Carolyn also single handedly organized and presented the 6 week Summer Reading Series in partnership with Lipscomb University, where she was Head Librarian. Each year had a different theme, and each week a discussion would be held about a book that fit into that summer's theme. Classes were taught by local teachers, university professors, and librarians. A community of readers was created just by this series. Carolyn was a wonderful mentor to so many of us, quietly guiding and encouraging us in our personal and professional lives.

Here's what another member said:

"She wisely (and gently) counseled the WNBA board. Never once did I see Carolyn lose her patience with board presidents who had little or no experience. Carolyn loved generously, and she will be missed."

Carolyn was such a role model for all of us that the Carolyn Wilson Volunteer Award was created to honor a member who exemplified her commitment to serving WNBA in a volunteer role. Carolyn was given an honorary membership from the Nashville chapter because of her long and faithful service. She continued to serve on the local board right up until her untimely death.

Carolyn has left a large legacy for the Nashville Chapter — the true legacy is each WNBA member who is a member because of her. She will be missed.

Note from Julie:

Carolyn generously provided the *Bookwoman Blog* with a [Power Behind the WNBA Interview](#) in February. We are grateful to her dedication and thankful for the impact she has made on the WNBA and the literary community.

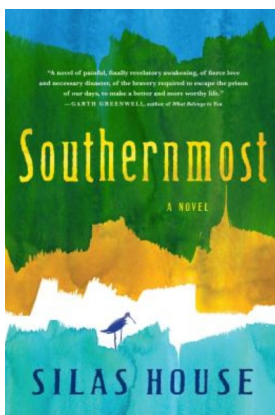
Carolyn's family asked that the WNBA be one of the charities people [donate to in memory of Carolyn](#). Thank you for helping her legacy live on.

More Books from the 2019 GGR List

By Tina Ollenburg (Network)

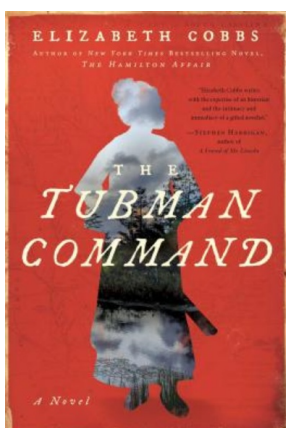
The [2019 Great Group Reads List](#) is here! We featured a few of the titles last month and thought we'd highlight a few more of the selections. It's a great list of books!

You can read more about all twenty titles at [National Reading Group Month](#).



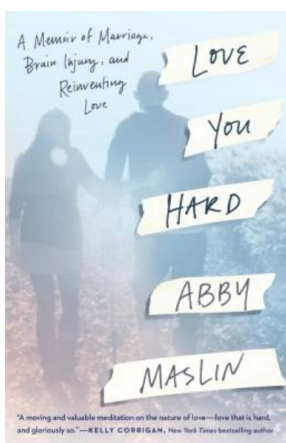
[Southernmost by Silas House](#)

An evangelical minister in Tennessee reexamining his beliefs and teachings finds himself at odds with his congregation and his wife over the issue of homosexuality in this soul-searching novel about tolerance, family, right versus wrong, and forgiveness.



[The Tubman Command by Elizabeth Cobbs](#)

Harriet Tubman was more than a conductor on the Underground Railroad. She was also a spy for the Union Army during the Civil War. This fictionalization of that time in her life brings her into sharp focus as a woman and a hero, deserving of her legend.



[Love You Hard: A Memoir of Marriage, Brain Injury, and Reinventing Love by Abby Maslin](#)

This is an emotional memoir about T.C. and Abby Maslin's life and marriage after T.C. suffers a traumatic brain injury as the victim of a senseless crime. Abby becomes her husband's caretaker during his long recovery while also caring for their toddler son and watching her beloved father's health deteriorate. Her anguish and hope, her exhaustion and commitment, her anger and grace all shine through this story of a woman faced with a new reality, a changed life, and a determination and strength to remake her family in the face of the unfathomable.

WNBA National Network Membership

WNBA NATIONAL NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FROM WNBA



Earlier this year, the WNBA launched the [National Network Membership](#). This membership option is open to individuals who do not live in or within easy commuting distance to one of our chapters.

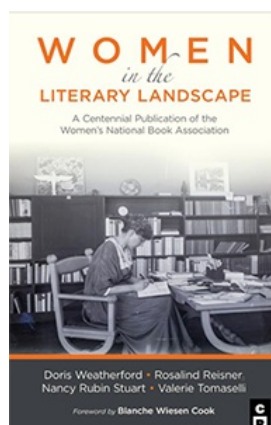
That means you can join the WNBA wherever you are!

Benefits of Network Membership Include:

- Listing in our Online National Directory
- Listing of your blog on our website
- Promotion in the *Bookwoman's* Member News, including new publications, jobs or promotion, participation in panels or readings, etc.
- Eligibility to publish articles or book reviews in the [Bookwoman Blog](#)
- Promotion of your book or professional service on our website for an additional \$30 a year
- Adding your book to the Boston Public Library's WNBA collection.
- Discounted fees for entry in the WNBA Writing Contest
- Eligibility to join Great Group Reads/National Reading Group Month selection committee
- Eligibility to make WNBA Award nominations
- Eligibility to serve on the national board
- Discounted admission to chapter events, available at the discretion of each individual chapter

[Join Now!](#)

Support the WNBA



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**Women in the Literary
Landscape!**

With *Women in the Literary Landscape*, the Women's National Book Association breaks new ground with a narrative connecting women's contributions to the literary world with the relevant social history.

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