Reunion and Commencement 2018
Visiting Writer Seminar
Alumnae Authors
Summer Reading
Members of the Class of 2018 celebrate by tossing their flowers in the air after they are announced as graduates of The Ethel Walker School.

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ON THE COVER:
Graduates Marie Ettien and Margaret “Garet” Wierdsma celebrate during Commencement Exercises on Sunday, June 10, 2018. Pictured in the background are Board Chair Katharine “Kit” O’Brien Rohn ’82, Head of School Meera Viswanathan, Keynote Speaker Tiffany Dufu and Trustee Thomas “Tom” Regan P’13.
Dear Walker’s Community,

I hope your summer thus far has been filled with warmth, family, friends and joy! After a year of exciting changes and many discoveries, my summer days off thus far have been ones of much-needed reflection, rest and even torpor. For me that means days of alternating bouts of gardening, pleasure reading and thinking. This summer I seemed to have followed without any planning four simple rules for each pastime akin to a traditional bride’s preparation for her wedding — something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue.

In other words, this summer I’ve planted some seeds, cuttings or pots of things I’ve put into the ground before like brightly colored zinnias and dahlias; some new things like double Siberian irises and rhubarb; and some cuttings and seedlings given to me by friends — green shiso for the herb garden, new varieties of epimedium and the lovely dwarf Japanese Andromeda given to me by the Advancement Office staff at Walker’s. So too with reading and thinking, embracing and mulling over what I already know, what is novel and what I’ve borrowed from others. Most important are the blue things — blue as in the improbable, i.e. out of the blue, blue as in rarefied, bluebloods for example, and blue as in deeply moving and indicative of the human condition, the blues.

This summer I planted in blue aplenty, that color so desired and yet so rare in gardens: dreamy sky-blue morning glories, blue ageratum, blue sages and even, out of an abundance of improbable hope, blue poppy seeds of the famed Himalayan Meconopsis that I have grown and killed many times in the past, but never gotten to flower. Hope springs eternal! Meanwhile now with the advent of tetraploids and gene editing, I’m told we will see many blue kinds of flowers in the coming years. Will that change our sense of awe in the garden I wonder?

Blue also seems to figure largely in my reading — Joan Didion’s Blue Nights, a meditation on what it means to be a woman in middle age and the experience of loss, Penelope Fitzgerald’s The Blue Flower, a book that has sat on my shelf for years untouched until now, reminding me of the extraordinary inhering in the seemingly ordinary, and re-reading Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye. The last is a book I’ve taught a dozen times, but one that never fails to stun and move me with its ability to conjure beauty out of horrific experience.

What has consumed me most though this summer is reflecting and meditation, generally of course, but most especially about all things Walker’s. Thinking about all of the wonderful alums I’ve had the pleasure to meet this year at gatherings, at Reunion and on visits to campus, meeting prospective applicants and the newly entering students, and our current students full of animation and emotion, and possibilities. Questions arise. What can we do to ensure their present well-being and their future prospects? In our contemporary world, what does my job as an educator mean? Are we sufficiently cognizant of the changes taking place socially, economically, politically in our country and around the world? How can we better safeguard and advance our faculty and staff so that they can devote themselves to our girls and school?

At times, it would be easy to succumb to feeling daunted and even blue, given the enormity of the responsibility at hand and the challenges facing us today. But instead I am struck by this rare opportunity to be an educator now.

Educate, literally to lead out, out into the blue, to experience fully and most sentiently what the human condition entails. What the human condition entails in a world in which singularity in the sense of artificial intelligence is no longer unimaginable. Voltaire’s Candide ends with the line, “Il faut cultiver notre jardin.” We can take this to mean “We need to cultivate our garden,” meaning let’s tend to our own affairs as most translators have suggested or more radically as the brilliant translator Burton Raffel argued, “We need to work our fields.” Surely education is this kind of cultivation.

Here’s to the rest of summer — may it offer play and rest to all!

Cheers,

Dr. Meera Viswanathan (aka Ms. Vis)
Head of School
The Visiting Writer Seminar is a special initiative class in the English Department where students are introduced, on the page and in person, to a living writer. Participation in the Seminar is an immersive author experience where students become scholars in that writer’s works, and the course culminates with a visit by that writer to The Ethel Walker School. During the visit, the writer teaches master classes, conducts writing workshops and participates in class discussions. The writer also delivers a school-wide assembly and a public reading with the community.

Aimee Nezhukumatathil’s poem, “Invitation,” begins thus: “Come in, come in, the water’s fine! You can’t get lost / here.” As if responding to this invitation — an invitation to poetry and an invitation to see the limitless beauty in ourselves and on our planet — students in the Visiting Writer Seminar plunged into a study of Nezhukumatathil’s work.

Nezhukumatathil is an acclaimed poet, poetry editor of *Orion* magazine, and professor of English at the University of Mississippi. In the spring semester of the 2017-18 academic year, Visiting Writer Seminar (VWS) students read three of Nezhukumatathil’s collections of poetry in preparation for her visit: *At the Drive-In Volcano*, *Lucky Fish*, and her latest collection, *Oceanic*, which was released in April of 2018.

Nezhukumatathil touched down in Connecticut on May 10, 2018. For the next two days, she taught students about craft, invective poetry, persona writing, enjambment, and white space, among other elements of poetry. In addition to answering dozens of questions about her life and work, she imparted many
lessons: reminding students to look upon the world with wonder, challenging them to “embrace beauty and light in a climate where beauty and light are not always encouraged,” and urging them to never seek balance but, to instead allow themselves to be pulled by the things that they love.

Nezhukumatathil’s visit marked a joyful celebration of language, poetry, reading, writing, and social and environmental justice. It also served as a source of inspiration for the growing population of student writers who inhabit the Walker’s community. In reflecting on the class and Nezhukumatathil’s visit, VWS student Chichi Pannullo ’18 noted, “We were able to understand Nezhukumatathil’s reasoning behind her choices as a writer, which equipped us with more diverse ways to express our ideas.” She continued on to say, “I got the chance to meet with an amazing writer who gave me the tools to enhance my work and become a better writer.”

Walker’s students and faculty members read their own original poetry at a coffeehouse featuring Nezhukumatathil as guest reader.
Walker’s Simsbury campus came alive May 18 through 20 for Reunion weekend which was filled with a variety of activities giving more than 120 graduates the opportunity to see old friends and hear more about what is happening at Walker’s today.

Friday began with lunch in Abra’s followed by an afternoon tea with Head of School Meera Viswanathan and Associate Head of School Amy Wheeler. During the afternoon, a women of color panel of graduates convened in an informal setting with students to share their experiences both at Walker’s and beyond. Throughout the day graduates visited the archival display on the main level of Beaver Brook where they scanned yearbooks, saw photos from throughout the decades and viewed artifacts from the School’s archive including uniforms, athletic gear, and awards and plaques.

Following an art exhibit opening featuring the works of six alumnae artists (see page 6), the group convened in the new “Soc” in the Centennial Center for a reception followed by a Golden Hours dinner at Debby’s House (the Head’s House) for Reunion classes prior to 1968 hosted by Head of School Meera Viswanathan (or Ms. Vis as she’s known to the students) and her
husband, Dr. Eric Widmer. The 25th Reunion class headed to Associate Head of School Amy Wheeler’s house on the hill for a dinner co-hosted with her partner, Tim Reny. Other classes went to various restaurants for intimate dinners with classmates.

Saturday dawned with rainy skies but they didn’t dampen the hearty souls who came to campus for a 6:30 a.m. Mimosas and Majesties viewing of the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. After a yoga class, a Strawberries and Cream Breakfast was served in the lobby of Ferg prior to student presentations. Attendees got a sneak peak at this year’s spring musical, “Hairspray,” with an energetic presentation of “Good Morning Baltimore” followed by student presentations on the Small World Initiative Honors Biochemistry class, and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. Guests were treated to an exceptional recitation of poetry by Kristen St. Louis, a Freshman who took first place in a school-wide poetry competition and went on to represent Walker’s at the state finals.

Reunion Chapel, preceded by the parade of classes, was an opportunity to remember departed classmates and to celebrate the sisterhood Walker’s graduates share. Awards were presented (see page 7) and each member of the Class of 2018 was welcomed into the Alumnae Association with a sundial charm, a gift of the Leslie Halland Newman ’66 Alumnae Association Induction Fund. After lunch, Beaver Brook came alive with music from the African Drum team who performed during lunch then shared rhythm techniques and hands-on instruction.

A state of the school address presented by Ms. Vis preceded an alumnae panel moderated by Trustee Teresa Younger, president and CEO of the Ms. Foundation. This was followed by a talk about “Thinkers and Doers” which took place in the new engineering space in Galbraith while a LGBTQ discussion was held in the Constance Lavino Bell Library lead by Sarah Prager ’04, author of Queer, There and Everywhere. A drop-in “Milk Lunch” was offered in the library along with a chance to visit Walker’s apiary, participate in an alumnae ride at the barn, campus tours and open hours in the Centennial Center gym.

Awards were presented during Saturday dinner and no Reunion Weekend would be complete without a rousing Ba-Na-Na to cap off the evening. Those looking for a quieter time enjoyed a piano bar with live music provided by Music Department Chair Laurie MacAlpine P’08.

On Sunday morning, alumnae were invited to share brunch with Meera and reminisce about their time at Walker’s by sharing stories of their time as students. Most agreed that while times change, many things remain the same — Walker’s relationships last a lifetime.

Visit us as often as you can. We love welcoming Walker’s women back to Simsbury.
Reunion Weekend offered an opportunity to feature the work of alumnae artists Betty Flanders Foster ’53, MJ Levy Dickson ’68, Kim Matthews Wheaton ’68, Libby Swearengen Cerullo ’78, Vaune Hatch ’78 and Katharine Swibold ’78 in the Letitia McClure Potter ’55, P’85 Gallery on the main level of the Centennial Center. Their works included sculpture, painting, art quilts, illustrations and photography. In addition to an opening reception held on Friday afternoon where Reunion attendees enjoyed the exhibit, students were able to visit the gallery and read about each of the artists and her artistic journey.

Associate Head of School Amy Wheeler (middle) and her partner, Tim Reny, pause with Betty Flanders Foster ’53 near one of her sculptures in the Letitia McClure Potter ’55, P’85 Gallery in the Centennial Center.

Head of School Meera Viswanathan, Claudia Ramsland Burch ’68 and Kim Smith Niles ’68 enjoy the work of artist Kim Matthews Wheaton ’68.

A first floor conference room in Beaver Brook was transformed into a mini Walker’s museum filled with artifacts from the archive including yearbooks, photos, publications, clothing, awards, spirit gear and many other treasures.
The **GATES FAMILY BOWL** was established in 2002 by Sarah Gates Colley ’75 in honor of her parents, John and Christine Gates, and her family’s longstanding relationship with The Ethel Walker School. The Bowl is awarded to the Reunion Class that raises a gift to the Annual Fund for Walker’s of $100,000 or more. This year’s recipient of the bowl is the **Class of 1983**, which collectively gave gifts totaling $109,506 to the Annual Fund for Walker’s in honor of their reunion.

The **ELIZABETH NASH MUENCH ’55 TRAY** is awarded annually to the Reunion class (or classes) that has achieved the highest level of participation in the Annual Fund for Walker’s by Reunion Weekend. Hooray Sunray to the **Class of 1953** where 51.3% of the class made a gift in honor of their reunion!

Susie Kleinhans Gilbertson, Betty Flanders Foster, Betsy Rauch Rainoff and Bobbie Gerstell Bennett
Hooray Sunray to the Class of 2013 for earning this year’s **SUNDIAL BOWL** which is awarded to the class with the largest percentage of classmates registered for Reunion Weekend.

During chapel on Reunion weekend, the Alumnae Association awards the **ALUMNAE BOARD SOCIAL ACTION AWARD** to the senior student (or students) who “has demonstrated a concern for issues of social inequality and has acted on her concern through actively promoting awareness or participating in community service, activism or social entrepreneurship intended to advance positive social change.” This year’s recipients are **Bri Goolsby** and **India Awe**.

2017: Brea Austin and Eshita Rahman  
2016: Lian Nicholson, Sara Lomba and Nell Shea  
2014: Kennedy Hilliard  
2013: Jacinta Lomba and Emilee O’Brien  
2012: Tahara Jordan

The **LONG DISTANCE AWARD** is presented annually to the alumna who has traveled the longest distance from her home state or country to attend Reunion Weekend. This year’s recipient is **Karen Kennedy ’08** who traveled 3,361 miles from London to attend Reunion!

Amey Amory DeFriez ’45
Margot Treman Rose ’80
Distinguished Alumnae Award

Amey Amory DeFriez ’45 was raised in Dover, MA, one of five children and the only daughter. After graduating from Walker’s in 1945, she went on to graduate cum laude from Radcliffe College, later chairing the boards of both institutions. Her own educational foundation inspired a lifelong passion for, and support of, education — women’s education in particular. “I have been fascinated by the way groups work and how they can accomplish more than the individual,” she told the Harvard Crimson in 1997. Amey’s life and her work are a testament to this principle as she drew people together, inspiring and challenging them to work harder both individually and collectively.

In 1948, Amey married Dr. Albert Ivins “Ivy” Croll DeFriez, went on to graduate from Radcliffe in 1949 and subsequently moved to New York City, where Ivy was finishing his residency. They later moved to the Boston area and raised a son, Nicholas, and two daughters, Pauline DeFriez ’67 and Elizabeth DeFriez Gibson ’69. According to Nicholas, “[Amey’s] first passion after we grew up was education. Some people get on boards for the name recognition. She actually made everybody work.”

Amey’s record of dedication and volunteer service to Walker’s spanned more than thirty years and includes work as class secretary and president of the Alumnae Board as well as leadership roles during two major fundraising campaigns. She was a trustee from 1967-75 and president of the board of trustees from 1972-75, the first alumna and first woman to lead the School’s board. She subsequently chaired Radcliffe’s board for ten years leading up to its merger with Harvard, was a charter member of the National Association of Independent Schools, and an incorporator of SPHERE, a consortium of independent schools in the greater Hartford area.

In 1994, Amey delivered the Baccalaureate address to Walker’s with her characteristic combination of humor and sound advice. “If I could leave you with three points to remember, at least one of them might stick and then we would all be ahead of where we were before.” She told the girls “Don’t be afraid to fail, don’t rush too much to get on with your education, and learn how to cut corners.” Thinking that the parents and faculty might take issue with this last point, she went on to clarify: “...after you hit the larger world, you’re going to have to learn how to cut corners. There’s just too much to do. So learn first what are the truly important matters, then what the deadlines are, and what are the things you don’t want to bother with... Don’t forget social service. My own volunteerism opened for me the door to a substantially salaried and most interesting occupation, as well as providing deep satisfaction in itself.” Amey concluded by saying, “...keep in touch with your EWS friends — they will turn out to be some of the best you’ll ever have. And I’ll include in that alumnae and future graduates as well. You are part of a distinguished and supportive continuum.”

Amey was a consistent annual donor to Walker’s throughout her life, and also remembered the School in her will. In honor of her 50th Reunion, Amey made a leadership gift that was announced by the School with these words: “Amey wanted to reaffirm and celebrate one of the primary missions of The Ethel Walker School — to develop leadership in its young women....To look at the life of Amey Amory DeFriez is to view the case statement for the value of the Ethel Walker experience. It is here that young women learn the value and joy inherent in stepping forward to make a positive difference in the world in which they live.”

In announcing this award, Board Chair Kit O’Brien Rohn ’82, the 2017 winner of the award, said ‘Amey’s name will be added to [the Margot Treman Rose ’80 Distinguished Alumnae] Bowl as a testament to her life of impact and her extraordinary service to our School. Please join me by standing and applauding for her and for what she inspired in us.’
Jean McIntire Leuchtenburg and Joan Woodford Russo

Cicily Warren Hajek and Barbie Welles Bartlett

Front: Liz Austell Straight, Grace Zelinka Becker (former faculty), Kim Matthews Wheaton, Merrill Ware Carrington, Anne Coit Williams, Kim Smith Niles
Back: Sam Schutrum Coughlin (former faculty), Claudia Ramsland Burch, Ann Stone Costello, Jan Mactier, Wendy Sargent Anderson

Front: Maria Hampton Klimczak, Annie Crandall Campbell, Cate Whiting, Jennifer Hermann, Linda Abizaid Wiener, Ashley Lickle O’Neil, Vaune Hatch and Heather King Taylor
Back: Ellen Fauver Reimer, Susan Griffin Yonkers, Helen Hummer Feid, Katharine Swibold and Libby Swearengen Cerullo
Front: Amanda Bryan and Sheila Dillman Fontanella
Back: Patsy York, Melissa Jackson, Loree, Jai Smith Rezac, Veonous Martin Jacques, Connie Mellon Kapp, Karalyne Sperling, and Margaret (Dolly) Meinert Eschbach

Front: Kim Edstrom Bivins, Jasmin Marquez Whitehead, Mandy Eastman and Toan Huynh
Back: Lisa Metzke, Glenna McMahan and Mimi Morrison Harrison

Front: Natalie Foreman-Wynn, Erin Shupenis Ellis and Rachael Rosselli

Front: Julie-Ann Sulman Toalston and Jessica Bruen

Front: Sarah Seferian, Arielle Haller-Silverstone, Kelly Harris, Lucca Troutman, Meg Mahoney (former faculty) and Vanessa Truglio
Back: Codie Kane, Carolyn Crosby Lavin, Lia Chafee, Lauren Milka, Karen Santana, Jessica Towle and Karen Kennedy
A beautiful spring morning dawned on June 10
with a sunrise breakfast on the deck of Associate Head of School Amy Wheeler’s
home on the hill behind the barn. This long-standing tradition began a series of events
that culminated in the 106th Commencement exercises of The Ethel Walker School.

In his invocation, Dr. Eric Widmer, or Mr. Vis as he is known as the husband of Head of School Meera Viswanathan, reminded the 72 graduates and their families and friends, “Commencement signifies a beginning, to be sure, but because it also means saying goodbye, we must be forgiven our nostalgia — those of us who remain behind, cherishing our memories, knowing that our seniors will always be welcomed back to this very special place that they have done so much to make their own.”

In her remarks, Student Body President Esi Obeng ’18 reminded her classmates of all the things they have accomplished during their time as students. “In short, we left our mark. How did we do it?...Year after year, race after race, our time at Walker’s made us stronger and better equipped to face each set of obstacles. The time you spent here shapes you into the woman you will become. It’s one of the most extraordinary things about Walker’s. The community is so powerful that you start growing and evolving as soon as you become a part of it.”

Keynote speaker, Tiffany Dufu, a catalyst-at-large in the world of women’s and girls’ leadership and the author of Drop the Ball, shared with the graduates the “new elixir” for successful women and advised them “to find your crew.” She went on to detail the four things that a woman’s crew will do: “Your crew will allow you a space to be vulnerable and they will help you create a plan for your success. A crew member says, ‘What are
WE going to do about this? Your crew holds you accountable to your plan. And, your crew supports you transactionally, such as by re-Tweeeting your posts and promoting your work.”

Tiffany shared a story of when she was a little girl and her reaction toward a neighborhood boy who acted inappropriately toward her. Even at that young age, Tiffany knew that his actions were not acceptable and she followed her instincts. “Listen to your gut voice. Don’t confuse the voice in your head with the voice in your gut.” She also shared the early struggles of her parents and noted that with hard work and dedication, anything is possible “in this great country.” She concluded by saying, “In order to finish the next leg of the race, I encourage you to find your crew, listen to your gut voice and to do something that you’ve never done before. The world needs your leadership.”

Head of School Meera Viswanathan spoke to the class saying, “Today is a bidding of farewell as all of you go out into the world. There are two things additionally I would like you to take with you as you pack up your belongings: Heart and Imagination.” She quoted the work of authors and poets, including John Keats who said “I am certain of nothing but the holiness of the Heart’s affections and the truth of the Imagination.”

She then delivered her charge to the Class of 2018 imploring them to “…go out boldly in the world with heart and imagination remembering the words of our school meditation, ‘for in love lies the key to life.’ Remember that your bond to this School can never be severed, you will always be ours, we will always be yours. Though you will undoubtedly face many obstacles, manifest resilience, even in difficult times. Know that in the words from Virgil’s Aeneid, ‘Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit.’ Even at this too will you one day look back and smile.”

Funding for our commencement speaker was provided through the Margaret Huling Bonz Women of Distinction Speakers Series Endowment Fund. Dr. Bonz was head of school from 1988-1999.
The Ethel Walker Medal is the highest honor bestowed on an adult member of the Walker’s community whose service and dedication has been “of the highest caliber and represents the vision, tenacity and commitment of the founder of The Ethel Walker School, Ethel Walker herself.” The award, given at commencement exercises, is presented on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

This year, Trustee Tom Regan P'13 was presented with The Ethel Walker School Medal during Commencement exercises. In her comments about Tom, Board Chair Kit O’Brien Rohn ’82 said, “Tom’s longstanding leadership at Walker’s began during his daughter Chelsea’s enrollment in the middle school where he became involved as an active parent volunteer and fundraiser for the School. Tom joined Walker’s Board in 2014. His work on the board includes the investment committee, finance committee, audit committee, foundation board, executive committee and treasurer of the board.” She continued, “On the Board, he has been invaluable, working with Greg Jandreau, our CFO, to ensure careful oversight of our operational budget and investments, and embodying fiscal prudence and discipline, always candid and always kind in his approach.”

Regan, an attorney and partner with Brown Rudnick, LLP in Hartford and a graduate of Trinity College, Yale University and the University of Connecticut School of Law, was joined at the event by his wife, Melissa, and their son, Colin. His daughter, Chelsea, is a 2013 graduate of Walker’s who celebrated her fifth reunion in May.
BOOK AWARDS
THE BRANDEIS BOOK AWARD
Elisabeth Helmin ’19
THE BROWN BOOK AWARD
Stephanie Makowski ’19
THE DARTMOUTH BOOK AWARD
Alaina Vermilya ’20
GEORGE WASHINGTON BOOK AWARD
Stephanie Makowski ’19
THE HARVARD BOOK AWARD
Xinyu Wang ’19
THE MOUNT HOLYOKE BOOK AWARD
Celeste Davis ’19
THE ST. LAWRENCE BOOK AWARD
Annie Sherbacow ’19
THE SMITH BOOK AWARD
Maisy Smith ’19
THE TRINITY BOOK AWARD
Guo Chen ’19
THE WELLESLEY BOOK AWARD
Adaline Friedlander ’18
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE BOOK AWARD
Hannah Schweitzer ’19
THE YALE BOOK AWARD
Hannah Schweitzer ’19

DEPARTMENT AWARDS AND PRIZES
THE MARY SCOULLER NELSON ENGLISH PRIZE
Isobel Lardner ’18
THE MANDARIN PRIZE
Elise Namnoum ’19
THE LATIN PRIZE
Theresa Jo ’18
THE SPANISH PRIZE
Jessica Marasco ’18
THE HISTORY PRIZE
Monique Pace ’18
THE SCIENCE PRIZE
Jiating Wang ’18
THE RPI CERTIFICATE
Maisie Smith ’19
THE MATHMATICS PRIZE
Xuanzi Zhao ’18
THE MUSIC PRIZE
Veronica Garcia ’18
THE MADELENE SALA CHOIR GIRL
Sofia Lomba ’18
THE VIRGINIA CHILDS RAMSEY HINMAN PRIZE
Jingyi Yan ’18
THE PERFORMING ARTS PRIZE
Sofia Lomba ’18

THE VISUAL ARTS PRIZE
Jingxuan Zhao ’18
Adeline Friedlander ’18
THE DOROTHY SILVERHERZ DANCE PRIZE
Caroline Strapp ’18
THE ELIZABETH OLSON MARSHALL DANCE PRIZE
Margaret Wierdsma ’18
Briana Goolsby ’18
THE THEATRE PRIZE
Madeline Ross ’18
THE TECHNICAL THEATRE PRIZE
Jessica Marasco ’18
THE VOORHEES CUP
Keeley Duran ’18
THE MERITORIOUS EFFORT CUP
Keeley Duran ’18
THE WILLIAM C. LICKLE ATHLETIC CUP
Keeley Duran ’18

THE CATHERINE HENDERSON MURTAUGH PRIZE
Briana Goolsby ’18
THE CATRY PAGE MEMORIAL PRIZE
Margaret Wierdsma ’18
THE HENRY B. SARGENT MEMORIAL PRIZE
Leslie Morales ’18
THE ALISON STONE MEMORIAL PRIZE
Esi Obeng ’18

SCHOLAR ATHLETES
Keeley Duran ’18
Lauren Gaddis ’18
Amande Joseph ’18
Isabel Lardner ’18
Caroline Strapp ’18
Margaret Wierdsma ’18
Saige Tapper-Young ’18
THE WILLIAM C. LICKLE CUP TO HONOR FRANK O.H. WILLIAMS
Laurel Gaddis ’18

THE MARY SCOULLER NELSON ENGLISH PRIZE
Isobel Lardner ’18
THE MANDARIN PRIZE
Elise Namnoum ’19
THE LATIN PRIZE
Theresa Jo ’18
THE SPANISH PRIZE
Jessica Marasco ’18
THE HISTORY PRIZE
Monique Pace ’18
THE SCIENCE PRIZE
Jiating Wang ’18
THE RPI CERTIFICATE
Maisie Smith ’19
THE MATHMATICS PRIZE
Xuanzi Zhao ’18
THE MUSIC PRIZE
Veronica Garcia ’18
THE MADELENE SALA CHOIR GIRL
Sofia Lomba ’18
THE VIRGINIA CHILDS RAMSEY HINMAN PRIZE
Jingyi Yan ’18
THE PERFORMING ARTS PRIZE
Sofia Lomba ’18

THE VISUAL ARTS PRIZE
Jingxuan Zhao ’18
Adeline Friedlander ’18
THE DOROTHY SILVERHERZ DANCE PRIZE
Caroline Strapp ’18
THE ELIZABETH OLSON MARSHALL DANCE PRIZE
Margaret Wierdsma ’18
Briana Goolsby ’18
THE THEATRE PRIZE
Madeline Ross ’18
THE TECHNICAL THEATRE PRIZE
Jessica Marasco ’18
THE VOORHEES CUP
Keeley Duran ’18
THE MERITORIOUS EFFORT CUP
Keeley Duran ’18
THE WILLIAM C. LICKLE ATHLETIC CUP
Keeley Duran ’18

THE CATHERINE HENDERSON MURTAUGH PRIZE
Briana Goolsby ’18
THE CATRY PAGE MEMORIAL PRIZE
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THE HENRY B. SARGENT MEMORIAL PRIZE
Leslie Morales ’18
THE ALISON STONE MEMORIAL PRIZE
Esi Obeng ’18

SCHOLAR ATHLETES
Keeley Duran ’18
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Caroline Strapp ’18
Margaret Wierdsma ’18
Saige Tapper-Young ’18
THE WILLIAM C. LICKLE CUP TO HONOR FRANK O.H. WILLIAMS
Laurel Gaddis ’18

SERVICE AWARDS
THE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
Margaret Wierdsma ’18
THE HEAD’S SERVICE AWARD
Alejandra Cortes-Fuentes ’19
Amanda Joseph ’18
Elisabeth Helmin ’19
Shiyue Huang ’19
Esi Obeng ’18
Alaina Vermilya ’20

THE CICERONE SOCIETY PRIZE
Caroline Niland ’18
THE MARGARET MALLORY CUP
Lara-Emilia Schwörer ’20
THE BRUNHILDE GRASSI CUP
Elisabeth Strapp ’20
THE CLARISSA GREEN CUP
Mariela D’Alessandro ’19
THE HELEN BLAIR MEMORIAL PRIZE
Adeline Friedlander ’18
THE BARBARA AND ELIZABETH BYRNES MEMORIAL PRIZE
India Ave ’18
THE EMILY CLUETT PRIZE
Marie Ettien ’18
THE CUMMINGS PRIZE
Esi Obeng ’18
THE ISABEL JACKSON MEMORIAL PRIZE
Eliza Wetmore ’18
THE CATHERINE HENDERSON MURTAUGH PRIZE
Briana Goolsby ’18
THE CARY PAGE MEMORIAL PRIZE
Margaret Wierdsma ’18
THE HENRY B. SARGENT MEMORIAL PRIZE
Leslie Morales ’18
THE ALISON STONE MEMORIAL PRIZE
Esi Obeng ’18

THE FACULTY PRIZE
Marion Carr ’18
THE TRUSTEES’ PRIZE
Lindsey Riggles ’18
Baccalaureate Chapel

On a beautiful early summer evening, students, faculty, staff, family and friends gathered for Baccalaureate Chapel to celebrate as a community and to hear from 2018 Baccalaureate Speaker Laurie MacAlpine P’08. Specials awards were given to a small number of girls in recognition of the qualities they possess as members of the Walker’s community. Chapel was followed by a dinner in Beaver Brook for the seniors and their families which was served, following tradition, by members of the junior class.

In forming the Caroline Walker Honor Society, the Class of 1958 defined the four requisite qualities for membership in the Society: kindliness, loyalty, courage and humility. The 2018 members of the Society are Keeley Duran, Addie Friedlander and Jeanine Wang.

During Commencement exercises, two prizes are awarded to graduating seniors including:

The Prize for Scholarship is awarded to the top student in the senior class who “is an exceptional student who has taken a remarkably difficult course load during her time at Walker’s, and has excelled in each of those classes. This year’s recipient is Joyce Sun ’18.

The Beatrice Hurlburt Memorial Prize for character and influence is awarded to a student of “outstanding character. Character means possessing those qualities such as integrity, honor, unselfishness. Influence means positive leadership either actively or by example.” This year’s recipient is Keeley Duran ’18.

The Amy C. Rehfuss Award is presented during Baccalaureate Chapel to a girl who is “a versatile and sensitive young woman. Her grace and gentle manner complement her many talents.” This year’s winner is Liyanni Vasquez ’20.
Eight students are attending college for engineering

Six students are attending college for visual or performing arts

Five students will be playing a varsity sport in college

As of June 10, 2018
Rays of late afternoon sun beaming into the Chapel created the ideal setting to celebrate 13 eighth graders as they moved from being middle school students to rising ninth graders. During Walker’s 28th Middle School Promotion, family and friends gathered to hear remarks by school administrators, the Middle School president and faculty advisors who read comments about each girl and the time they spent together.

Welcome remarks were delivered by Head of School Meera Viswanathan followed by comments from Associate Head of School Amy Wheeler. In her remarks, Ms. Wheeler encouraged the girls to employ three strategies for success in high school and beyond “aside from hard work and commitment.” In illustrating her first point, lead by example, she commented on Student Body President Esi Obeng ’18. “Esi just does what is right and good. She finds joy in others, is curious, passionate and kind.” She continued, “She is quiet and confidently leads by her actions. This is the most authentic kind of leadership and I encourage you to learn from her and lead by example.”

Ms. Wheeler encouraged the girls to “make the people you are with feel important and valued” and she also asked them to strive for a balance between strength and gentleness saying “Strength and softness are not mutually exclusive. You can have both. The challenge is finding the right balance for the circumstance.”

MEMBERS OF THE EIGHTH GRADE CLASS:
Sarah Dale
Olivia Dargis
Christina Fares
Nancy Gfeller
Asha Haug
Karrah Hayes
Ana Hunt
Mae Johnson
Katherine (Kate) Manderlink
Njeri (Bejay) Mugo
Sofia Sheintop
Hailey Suller
Kaitlyn Suller

What is the Gwen Couch Award?
During the early years of the Walker’s Middle School, Ms. Gwendolyn “Gwen” Couch built a community based on friendship, citizenship, and a curiosity for learning. She had a way of bringing students together and encouraging them to be their best selves. Ms. Couch held dear the Walker’s traditions that fostered and deepened our common bonds. For these reasons, the Gwen Couch award is given to the Middle School student who best embodies those admirable traits of our beloved Ms. Couch: a warm welcome for all, a sense of creativity, strong school spirit, a joy of learning, and kindness to everyone. Ms. Couch is the mother of Meghan “Mega” Couch-Edwards ’10 and Alicia “Liss” Couch-Edwards ’07.

Associate Head of School Amy Wheeler and Middle School Director Lee Ann Harris presented the following awards during the ceremony:

HIGHEST ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
Grade 8
Karrah Hayes ’22

HIGHEST ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
Grade 7
Eleanor Lardner ’23

GWEN COUCH AWARD
Njeri (Bejay) Mugo ’22
Janet “J.J.” Taylor Lisle ’65
Quicksand Pond

Echoing the themes and tone of Lisle’s Newbery Honor–winning Afternoon of the Elves, this loss-of-innocence novel traces the delicate friendship built between two girls from different backgrounds. Irritated with everyone in her family, 12-year-old Jessie Kettel is in a “separatist mood” when she arrives at a rented Rhode Island cottage for summer vacation. While her father and siblings find other ways to occupy their time, she goes off by herself to the nearby pond, where she finds a dilapidated raft and later meets Terri, a local girl. Terri is eager to help Jessie fix the craft, and as the girls make repairs, Jessie becomes unsettled by Terri’s stories about the downfall of her family, her destructive home life, and her dreams to get away. With characteristic subtlety and enormous compassion, Lisle expresses complex family and social conflicts while showing how Jessie’s understanding of the world and her newfound friend expand, even as the views of those around her remain narrow. Terri’s struggle against oppression and prejudice will have as profound an impact on readers as it does on Jessie. For ages 10 and up.

https://www.publishersweekly.com
Paperback
ISBN 978-1-4814-7222-7
Akiko Busch ’71
The Incidental Steward

A search for a radio-tagged Indiana bat roosting in the woods behind her house in New York’s Hudson Valley led Akiko Busch to assorted other encounters with the natural world — local ecological monitoring projects, community-organized cleanup efforts, and data-driven citizen science research. Whether it is pulling up water chestnuts in the Hudson River, measuring beds of submerged aquatic vegetation, or searching out vernal pools, all are efforts that illuminate the role of ordinary citizens as stewards of place.

In this elegantly written book, Busch highlights factors that distinguish twenty-first-century citizen scientists from traditional amateur naturalists: a greater sense of urgency, helpful new technologies, and the expanded possibilities of crowdsourcing. The observations here look both to precisely recorded data sheets and to the impressionistic marginalia, scribbled asides, and side roads that often attend such unpredictable outings. While not a primer on the prescribed protocols of citizen science, the book combines vivid natural history, a deep sense of place, and reflection about our changing world. Musing on the expanding potential of citizen science, the author celebrates today’s renewed volunteerism and the opportunities it offers for regaining a deep sense of connection to place.

Hardcover, paperback and ebook
ISBN 978-0300178791

Barbara “Barbi” Heimbach Webber ’78
(with co-author Carrie Thiel)
Surviving Disordered Eating: One Bite at a Time

Written by an eating disorder survivor and a licensed clinical professional counselor, this book offers practical tips and strategies for anyone recovering from anorexia, bulimia, binge eating, or other forms of disordered eating. It is also a useful resource for parents, other family members, friends, teachers, mental health and medical professionals.

Paperback and ebook

Pamela Constable ’70
Playing with Fire: Pakistan at War with Itself

A volatile nation at the heart of major cultural, political, and religious conflicts in the world today, Pakistan commands our attention. Yet more than six decades after the country’s founding as a Muslim democracy, it continues to struggle over its basic identity, alliances, and direction. In Playing with Fire, acclaimed journalist Pamela Constable peels back layers of contradiction and confusion to reveal the true face of modern Pakistan.

In this richly reported and movingly written chronicle, Constable takes us on a panoramic tour of contemporary Pakistan, exploring the fears and frustrations, dreams and beliefs, that animate the lives of ordinary citizens in this nuclear-armed nation of 170 million. From the opulent, insular salons of the elite to the brick quarries where soot-covered workers sell their kidneys to get out of debt, this is a haunting portrait of a society riven by inequality and corruption, and increasingly divided by competing versions of Islam.

Beneath the façade of democracy in Pakistan, Constable reveals the formidable hold of its business, bureaucratic, and military elites — including the country’s powerful spy agency, the ISI. This is a society where the majority of the population feels powerless, and radical Islamist groups stoke popular resentment to recruit shock troops for global jihad. Writing with an uncommon ear for the nuances of this conflicted culture, Constable explores the extent to which faith permeates every level of Pakistani society — and the ambivalence many Muslims feel about the role it should play in the life of the nation.

Hardcover and ebook
ISBN 978-1-4000-6911-8

During the school year, time is set aside each week in our regular schedule to D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything And Read). In a nod toward the tradition of Milk Lunch of years ago, warm cookies and milk are served to the girls during the reading hour.
Alumnae share their favorite book recommendations

**1953**

Susan "Susie" Kleinhans Gilbertson

The contact information for our class correspondents has been removed to protect their privacy but we want to hear from you! Please send your news to alumnae@ethelwalker.org.

Susan "Susie" Kleinhans Gilbertson says, "My book suggestions are *The Velveteen Daughter* by Laurel Davis Huber and *Horse Soldiers* by Doug Stanton."

Louise "Rusty" Hodgman Huff recommends *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles, adding, "This book is very popular and I really enjoyed it."

Betty Richards Tripp

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Mary H. Stein Dominick-Coomer submitted these picks:

*Kitchens of the Great Midwest* by J. Ryan Stradal

Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng

The Things We Keep by Sally Hepworth

*A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

Before We Were Yours by Lisa Wingate

Beneath a Scarlet Sky by Mark Sullivan

The Immortalists by Chloe Benjamin

The Second Mrs. Hockaday by Susan Rivers

Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi

Helen Harvey Mills loved the following titles:

The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah

The Gourmand's Way: Six Americans in Paris and the Birth of a New Gastronomy by Justin Spring

The House in Prague: How a Stolen House Helped an Immigrant Girl Find Her Way Home by Anna Nessy Perlberg (Also known as Anna Backer Perlberg, a former History teacher at Walker’s.)

Betty Richards Tripp’s list includes two of Mary’s choices: *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi, which Betty says is "an incredibly well researched historical novel covering many generations from Ghana to the U.S., is beautifully written and compelling to read." Betty also adds, *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles is a wonderful if improbable tale of a Russian nobleman confined to his Moscow hotel under the Soviet regime. Additionally, Betty recommends *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* by J. D. Vance and says, "This heralded memoir portrays, with empathy and feeling, the trials and tribulations of those most affected by the end of the industrial era in the U.S." Betty’s final recommendation is *A World Elsewhere: An American Woman in Wartime Germany* by Sigrid MacRae. “Written by her youngest daughter, the life of a rather naïve debutante from West Hartford, CT, who marries a Russian-German nobleman in pre-WWII Paris and all too soon is left widowed with five children in Nazi Germany. Post-WWII they move to Maine with minimal money and restore a house with no electricity and minimal plumbing.”

Sarah Elting Doering writes, “Please see page 20 for information on our classmate Janet “J.J.” Taylor Lisle’s book *Quicksand Pond*. She writes children’s books that have earned awards and she is quite well known. She couldn’t come to our 50th but she lives in Rhode Island and I am in contact with her.”

**1954 REUNION**

Cynthia Smith Evanisko

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Mary H. Stein Dominick-Coomer submitted these picks:

*Kitchens of the Great Midwest* by J. Ryan Stradal

Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng

Sarah Elting Doering

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Charlotte Smart Rogan’s novel, *The Lifeboat*, is being made into a movie! The book is described as “[a] page-turning novel of hard choices and survival, narrated by a woman as unforgettable and complex as the events she describes.”

Hooray Sunray Charlotte!
Joanna Betts Virkler says “I bought a couple of books for grandchildren in the 4th to 6th grade range at a school book fair. I wanted to read them myself first and completely fell in love with a couple of them. The first one is The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle by Leslie Connor. The second is Wonder by R. J. Palacio. Many of you may have seen the movie. I have not, but I am sure it is good. The book is very good, but I honestly enjoyed “Mason Buttle” more and it has a similar storyline. The third book is Not If I Save You First by Ally Carter. The fourth is Goodnight Mister Tom by Michelle Magorian. This book was published first in 1981, and I thoroughly enjoyed it but I think the story is just too intense for children. The other three books are great for children of all ages. They also have the advantage of being shorter!”

Karen Brooks recommends her sister’s book, Alannah by Leslie Brooks ’70. “It’s young adult fiction but I loved it, too — I’m not much of a reader (eyes don’t cooperate) but I downloaded it to Kindle and it worked fine.” Karen also shared the link to Leslie’s book: www.recorder.com/New-book-5965367

“This is my favorite book at this time, Essential Oils: Ancient Medicine by Josh Axe, Jordan Rubin, and Ty Bollinger,” says Babette “Babbie” Epple Melka. Babette adds, “Mosby’s Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing & Health Professions is fascinating. And of course, all the Harry Potter books.”

Barklie Eliot touts, “I really enjoyed Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood by Trevor Noah. It’s both funny and thoughtful. I also love The Book Thief by Markus Zusak, which has been out a while. Exit West: A Novel by Mohsin Hamid is a really interesting take on the whole issue of immigration. The book, The Power, by Naomi Alderman will engage and jolt your sensibilities. Starts a bit predictably but takes an unexpected turn near the end. Finally, if you like biographies, anything by Ron Chernow or Walter Isaacson is excellent.”

Jane Hadden Geisse highly recommends A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman and says it is “one of the best books I’ve read in years — it’s fiction.” Jane adds, “A really interesting non-fiction book is The Stranger in the Woods: The Extraordinary Story of the Last True Hermit by Michael Finkel. It’s the true story about a man who lived in the Maine woods for 25 years without any human contact. I know I have read other good books, but of course can’t recall them when I try to. Hope everyone out there is well.”

“I’ll go with the book I have recommended the most so far this year, The House of Broken Angels by Luis Alberto Urrea,” says Gilda Rogers. “It’s a story about a Mexican-American family who have the patriarch of the family who is looking forward to his own passing and throws himself a party. While the subject would usually be rather somber, the story is told with lots of humor. The family story gives a look at a family that is going in different directions but they all come together in their love for their family. I enjoyed the writing and I enjoyed the characters.”

Classmate Sarah House Denby has these two recommendations: “Oryx and Crake” by Margaret Atwood (the first of the MaddAddam trilogy, but they’re all stand-alone novels) and To Be Sung Underwater, by Tom McNeal.”

Dr. Doris “Veda” Pendleton recommends the following: Lilac Girls by Martha Hall Kelly The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah Shanghai Girls by Lisa See All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr Pachinko by Min Jin Lee

Leslie Baldwin likes these three: The Mermaid Chair and The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd What I Told My Daughter: Lessons from Leaders on Raising the Next Generation of Empowered Women by Nina Tassler

1979 REUNION

Karen Polcer Bdera provides this summer reading list, courtesy of the Class of 1979: Uncommon Type: Some Stories by Tom Hanks Doctor Sleep by Stephen King The Black Box by Michael Connelly The Woods by Harlan Coben The Empathy Exams: Essays by Leslie Jamison

From the Class of 1980, Ann Steiner O’Reilly sends: A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles Sing, Unburied, Sing by Jesmyn Ward Lilac Girls by Martha Hall Kelly The Collectors by David Baldacci I Am Pilgrim by Terry Hayes A Fine Balance by Rohinton Mistry

Editor’s note: We’d like to suggest Dr. Doris “Veda” Pendleton’s book, I Mastered Parenting, and Here’s What I Did: Parenting Strategies That Work.
Elizabeth England shares these titles: “Mrs. Caliban” by Rachel Ingalls; *The Perfect Nanny* by Leila Slimani (riveting); *Transit* by Rachel Cusk (she’s not for everyone, but I LOVE her!); *Little Fires Everywhere* and *Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng; and my pal, April Stevens, has written a young adult book that is breaking my heart (in a good, perfect way). *The Heart and Mind of Frances Pauley*. EWS should have it in the library! To the Class of 1981, Elizabeth adds, “Hellooooo, everyone! xx”

For the U.S. market, Lauren Howard Sentuc translated *You Changed My Life*, by Abdel Sellou, a memoir on which the film was based. Lauren adds, “Apart from that, I translate/adapt novels, screenplays, subtitles and ad campaigns.”

Suggestions from Kate Estock: *In a Dark, Dark Wood* and *The Woman in Cabin 10* by Ruth Ware

**1990**

Amanda Pitman

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Ipsita Das recommends: *Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng

The Horizons program began in 1964 at New Canaan Country School. In 2017, Horizons served over 5,000 students in 52 programs in 17 states. There are currently eight programs in Connecticut.

2017

Idabelle Paterson

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Shiyl “Koko” Fei recommends the classic, *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf.

*Stay in touch!*

We love to hear from our alumnae and want to know more about what you are doing out in the world. Send us your news and be sure that we have your most up-to-date contact information on hand so that we can share news about what is happening in Simsbury. Please email us at alumnae@ethelwalker.org or contact us by phone at (860) 408-4259.

Many of you remember the summer reading list that we all received as students. We thought you would enjoy seeing the list our girls are reading from for this coming school year. [https://www.ethelwalker.org/summer-reading-2018](https://www.ethelwalker.org/summer-reading-2018)
THANK YOU!

Walker’s girls had a great school year because of you. Thank you for supporting The Ethel Walker School.

To learn how your gift made an impact, please watch this thank you video:

www.ethelwalker.org/thankyou2018
Spread the word about your alma mater!

Visit campus, learn about our curriculum, riding program, athletics and art offerings, and meet and interact with students, faculty and staff.

**OPEN HOUSES**
Monday, October 8 | 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Monday, December 3 | 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**INFORMATION SESSION**
Thursday, November 8 | 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

www.ethelwalker.org/admission