

**Old Lyme Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library presents Evening Book Discussions:
Sara Gruen's *Water for Elephants*
Tuesday July 14, 2009 at 5:00 pm**

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CONTACT:

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The Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library of Old Lyme will present an evening book discussion on Tuesday, July 14, 2009 at 5:00 pm featuring *Water for Elephants* by best selling author Sara Gruen.

The highly enjoyable, well-researched story brings to life the era of the traveling circus and small town America during the Depression. It tells a story of a love between two people that overcomes incredible odds in a world in which even love is a luxury that few can afford. The book was the winner of the 2007 BookBrowse Diamond Award for Most Popular Book.

When Jacob Jankowski, recently orphaned and suddenly adrift, jumps onto a passing train, he enters a world of freaks, drifters, and misfits, a second-rate circus struggling to survive during the Great Depression, making one-night stands in town after endless town. A veterinary student who almost earned his degree, Jacob is put in charge of caring for the circus menagerie. It is there that he meets Marlena, the beautiful young star of the equestrian act, who is married to August, the charismatic but twisted animal trainer. He also meets Rosie, an elephant who seems untrainable until he discovers a way to reach her.

Sara Gruen's first novel, *Riding Lessons*, was published in 2004. She is an animal lover who lives with her husband, three children, five cats, two goats, a dog, and a horse in an environmental community north of Chicago. Many of the characters and incidents in the novel are based on real people and true stories gleaned from her extensive research into the world of traveling circuses of the 1930s.

“The circus, the Great Depression, a complex elephant, equally complex love, the mists and twists of memory articulated in the utterly winning voice of a very old man who's seen it all: these are the irresistible elements of *Water for Elephants*. Sara Gruen has written an utterly transporting novel richly full of the stuff of life.” **Robert Olen Butler, author of *A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain***

Marsha Bansavage, the discussion leader, has been an educator for thirty-six years. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in English literature, a Masters and sixth year degree in Art and the Humanities. She is an active member of the Connecticut Humanities Council. Her passions are teaching, reading, art appreciation and antiquing.

The book discussion will take place in the Community Room and light refreshments will be served. This program is free and open to the public. Multiple copies of the book are available at the Circulation Desk and registration is encouraged for planning purposes.

The Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library is located at 2 Library Lane, Old Lyme, CT. Hours are Monday and Wednesday 10 am -7 pm, Tuesday and Thursday, 10 am - 6 pm, Friday 10am -5 pm and Saturday 10 am – 2 pm during the summer. For more information or to register for the program call 860-434-1684.