

## **Connections Book Discussion Leaders**



### **Sara Backer**

Sara Backer is a published novelist (*American Fuji*) and poet who currently teaches writing and literature at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. She holds a masters' degree from the creative writing program at the University of California at Davis and was a Djerassi Resident Artist fellowship recipient. She has travelled widely and lived in Japan and Costa Rica in addition to both coasts of the U.S.

Hollis

Cell: 978-726-7574

[sara@surfari.net](mailto:sara@surfari.net)



### **Susan Bartlett**

Susan holds a Masters in Literacy Education and is currently collaborating with Rubia, Inc. to create integrated sewing, language, literacy and economic development programs for resettled refugees in Manchester. To *Connections*, she brings a love of learning from books and a delight in the discovery that comes from talking about books in groups of people who are new to reading.

Antrim

Home: 603-588-2544

Cell: 603-209-6162

[nulheegan@yahoo.com](mailto:nulheegan@yahoo.com)



### **Suzanne Brown**

Through the Vermont and New Hampshire Humanities Councils, Suzanne Brown has spent 25 years facilitating discussions of books in hospitals, libraries, workplaces, schools, prisons, homeless shelters, and tutoring centers for new readers. She currently teaches at Dartmouth College. She loves working with *Connections* because “the only thing better than reading a book is seeing how much richer that book becomes as people share the different reactions, insights, and life experiences they bring to reading it.”

Etna

Home: 603-643-1352

[suzanne.h.brown@dartmouth.edu](mailto:suzanne.h.brown@dartmouth.edu)



### **Carolyn Cicciu**

Carolyn Cicciu spent 36 years teaching junior high level students in private and public schools in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. During her first year of retirement, she became involved with refugees in the Manchester area; the new English learners became an inspiration for their courage, determination, and gratitude, and she finds *Connections* offers a new way to reach out to them.

Goffstown

Home: 603-627-9473

Cell: 603-203-6207

[c.cicciu@comcast.net](mailto:c.cicciu@comcast.net)



### **Terry Farish**

Terry coordinates the *Connections* program for the New Hampshire Humanities Council. She's also a writer and teaches yoga but is not having good luck as a dog trainer.

Portsmouth

Humanities Council: 603-224-4071

Cell: 603-828-7911

[tfarish@nhhc.org](mailto:tfarish@nhhc.org)



### **Linda Graham**

Linda has worked with children and families in many capacities from preschool teaching to family literacy work and is currently a program specialist with the Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Developmental Services, Family Centered Early Supports and Services. She writes, "I love using children's literature as a powerful art form to stimulate discussion."

Concord

Work: 603-271-5036

[linda.graham@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:linda.graham@dhhs.state.nh.us)



### **Elaine Pacheco Kidd**

Elaine taught Spanish at Webster Elementary School and is a legal and medical interpreter for The Language Bank. She writes, "I love books and care very much for the immigrant community in New Hampshire."

Northfield

Cell: 603-731-3959

[pachecomila@yahoo.com](mailto:pachecomila@yahoo.com)



### **Sandra LeBeau**

Sandra has taught U.S., European and world history, primarily on the college level. She is working to bring Connections to community groups serving adults with special needs.

New London

Home: 603-526-7444

Cell: 603-748-3047

[melebeau@comcast.net](mailto:melebeau@comcast.net)



### **Jennifer Lee**

Jennifer is a “roaming humanist” for book discussions and other humanities projects, edits *Inquiry*, the University of New Hampshire’s online undergraduate research journal, and was a university teacher of English and Comparative Literature in NH, among other states and countries. Jennifer describes *Connections*: “It’s a rare time of direct, friendly, human communication beyond languages, of learning, laughing--and eating!”

Durham

Cell: 603-969-9959

[jennifer.greatlakes@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.greatlakes@gmail.com)



### **Rachel Lehr**

An award-winning artist and scholar, Rachel is a founder and US Executive Director of Rubia, Inc. She writes, “A close relationship to my immigrant grandparents, their foreign accents and the stories of their adjustment to America has colored my own experience with learning other languages and the struggle to communicate in a new environment. I empathize with the immigrant’s challenge and like to be part of their successes.”

Warner

Home: 603-456-3838

Cell: 603-229-7615

[rachellehr@gmail.com](mailto:rachellehr@gmail.com)



### **Aparijita Manchanda**

Apariita (Appy) has an MBA with a major in marketing and is working part-time as a tutor for the No Child Left Behind Program with the Manchester School Department. She writes, “I am interested in helping create a community by bringing people with different experiences and diverse backgrounds together, and by making a discussion come alive.”

Manchester

Home: 603-669-0186

Cell: 603-867-0439

[gr8apm@hotmail.com](mailto:gr8apm@hotmail.com)



### **Courtney Marshall**

Courtney recently moved to New Hampshire from Los Angeles. She’s an Assistant Professor of English and Women’s Studies at the University of New Hampshire and is writing a book about law and African-American women’s literature.

Dover

Cell: 603-531-3711

[Courtney.marshall@unh.edu](mailto:Courtney.marshall@unh.edu)



### **Rodger Martin**

Rodger is a poet (*The Battlefield Guide*), editor (*The Worcester Review*), and teacher (*journalism, Keene State College*). He enjoys leading *Connections* programs featuring poetry because he “loves language and the give-and-take between languages as the group learns from and about one another.”

Hancock

Home: 603-525-4715

[rodgerwriter@myfairpoint.net](mailto:rodgerwriter@myfairpoint.net)



### **Stephanie Minter**

Stephanie has been a children’s librarian in Milford, a teacher of Spanish in Franklin, and is a writer and a weaver. *Connections* for her is “just that - closing the circuit by using words, pictures, discussion and, like magic, the universal truth of story units us. We develop a new, intangible way to relate to one another--our shared story.”

Jaffrey

Home: 603-532-7486

[stephanie7486@gmail.com](mailto:stephanie7486@gmail.com)



### **Maggie Moore**

Maggie worked with college student writers at the Robert J. Connors Writing Center at UNH, is currently volunteering with GED and ABE students at the Dover Adult Learning Center of Strafford County. “Our group discussions about the stories we read in *Connections* expand our world, encourage meaningful conversations, and give us confidence that our individual contribution leads to a deeper appreciation of the stories, our community and ourselves.”

Durham

Home: 603-868-2965

Cell: 603-767-5904

[mkjjmoore@comcast.net](mailto:mkjjmoore@comcast.net)



### **Maria Cristina Rojas**

Maria is a Bilingual Family Liaison for the middle and high schools in the Manchester School District. She works closely with parents and students and helps parents become knowledgeable about the U.S. educational system. She has studied in Bogota, Colombia, Québec, Canada, and UNH, Manchester. She speaks English, Spanish, and French.

Goffstown

Cell: 391-9569

Home: 606-2789

[rojasmacri@hotmail.com](mailto:rojasmacri@hotmail.com)



### **Hetty Startup**

Hetty has been an educator at the Children’s Museum in Providence and the Currier Museum and now is an adjunct professor of art history. She writes, “I see all kinds of lifelong learning as a way to 1) enliven our grasp of new information, 2) encourage critical thinking skills, and 3) most importantly, to foster opportunities to grow and enrich our lives and the lives of the people around us.”

Manchester

Cell: 603-858-5393

[hms1815@gmail.com](mailto:hms1815@gmail.com)



### **Maren C. Tirabassi**

Maren is a pastor, workshop leader for all ages, and non-fiction author of sixteen books, two of which are anthologies of poetry and interfaith spiritual writing from around the world. She is passionate about stories -- the ones in books and the ones people tell -- and has never had such a great time with both kinds of stories as in the *Connections* program.

Portsmouth

Home: 603-436-9352

Cell: 603-674-0886

[mctirabassi@hotmail.com](mailto:mctirabassi@hotmail.com)



### **Tammi Truax**

Following a twenty year career working with children and families specializing in literacy development, and teaching at the college level, Tammi has been working from home as a writer across all genres while raising two children. Several book projects are in the works, most of which are children's picture books, and children's literature remains a passion.

Portsmouth

Cell: 603-498-4940

[t4tu@comcast.net](mailto:t4tu@comcast.net)



### **Johanna**

Johanna is a poet, naturalist, teacher and long-distance swimmer. She has worked with adult refugees for over 6 years, helping them to increase their literacy skills in English and to feel more comfortable and welcome in their new homes. She has been the coordinator of several *Connections* programs for adult refugees in Concord.

She has also coached women cancer survivors to enable them to complete their first sprint distance triathlon and to rebuild trust in their bodies after a cancer diagnosis. She lives in a small town in Sullivan County with her husband and cat.

Sullivan County

[jsoulnh@gmail.com](mailto:jsoulnh@gmail.com)