

# What is Literati With Lyme

Literati with Lyme is an effort by nationally-known authors, publishers, editors, literary agents, other publishing professionals, and the national non-profit Lyme Disease Association to raise awareness of this growing infectious disease threat and to raise research funds for a cure. Literati with Lyme is supported by Columbia University Medical Center, Houghton Mifflin, Milkweed Editions, Penguin Group (USA) Inc., IGeneX Labs, the DEET Education Program, and a growing list of others.

Literati with Lyme is the brainchild of Amy Tan, author of *The Joy Luck Club*, *The Bonesetter's Daughter*, and *The Opposite of Fate*; Jordan Fisher Smith, author of *Nature Noir: A Park Ranger's Patrol in the Sierra*; and Pat Smith, President of the Lyme Disease Association, Inc. They are joined by Meg Cabot, bestselling author of *The Princess Diaries*, E. Jean Carroll, best-selling author, advice columnist for *Elle Magazine* and Emmy nominated writer for *Saturday Night Live*, and executive editor Jennifer Weis of St. Martin's Press

Literati with Lyme will feature two days of events in Manhattan during Lyme Awareness Month in May of 2005.

On May 18, 2005, a private press breakfast will be held at Columbia University. Featured will be Amy Tan, Meg Cabot, Jordan Fisher Smith, Pat Smith, and Brian Fallon, M.D., Associate Professor, Clinical Psychiatry, Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC); Director, Lyme Disease Center, CUMC & NY State Psychiatric Institute.

That evening, there will be a by-invitation-only reception for major Literati with Lyme donors (over \$200) at the Manhattan home of Amy Tan. Other guests at the reception will include prominent Lyme researchers and clinicians.

On May 19, 2005, Literati with Lyme will host an evening

fundraising event for the public (\$20) at New York University entitled "Writer's Block of the Worst Kind," featuring authors Tan, Cabot, Carroll and Smith and executive editor Weis in conversation with doctors Fallon and Joseph Burrascano. The authors, who have all had Lyme, will discuss how the disease affected their lives and books. Fallon and Burrascano will discuss the physiological causes of the authors' often frustrating and sometimes hair-raising experiences with the disease. Public question and answer period will follow. The Expository Writing Department and The School of Social Work are NYU co-sponsors with Dr Dean Ornish underwriting the auditorium.

Literati with Lyme has selected Manhattan because it is the traditional home of American publishing and is located in a state that often reports the highest number of Lyme cases.

Lyme is now the most common vector-borne disease in America. Although sometimes associated only with fatigue, vague, flu-like symptoms, and joint aches, Lyme often invades the central nervous system, in some cases causing crippling disability and occasionally, even death.

The publishing industry is proud of its two centuries of service as a conduit of information to the American public. Its authors are welcomed into millions of homes as trusted friends. The authors and publishing professionals of Literati with Lyme are now reaching out to the public to discuss simple strategies to prevent, recognize, and secure early treatment for this infection. By doing so, they will share the dignity of their profession and their ability to verbalize their experiences with thousands of Lyme disease victims who suffer in silence.

Donations to Lyme Disease Association's Literati with Lyme are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law and will go to the Lyme Disease Association to support its public education and research efforts on causes and cures of Lyme disease,

including the proposed center at Columbia University Medical Center. Go to <https://lymediseaseassociation.org>

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