

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Library Celebrates Annual On The Same Page Program with *A Star for Mrs. Blake*

Now in its thirteenth year, On The Same Page brings community-wide reading to the spotlight. Thanks to the readers who enjoy the fellowship of sharing a thought-provoking book, this program is one of the longest standing and most successful of its kind in the nation. Each year, the Public Library partners with a host of organizations around Greater Cincinnati and the tradition continues this year with *A Star for Mrs. Blake* by April Smith.

From **February 1- March 31**, readers can take part in this community-wide “book club” by reading this year’s title and participating in various events at the library including a chance to meet Smith. The Library is happy to host On the Same Page in partnership with the Friends of the Public Library, The Mercantile Library, Mount St. Joseph, Xavier University and the Brueggeman Center for Dialogue, Metro, WVXU and Joseph-Beth Booksellers.



### Meet April Smith, Author of *A Star for Mrs. Blake*

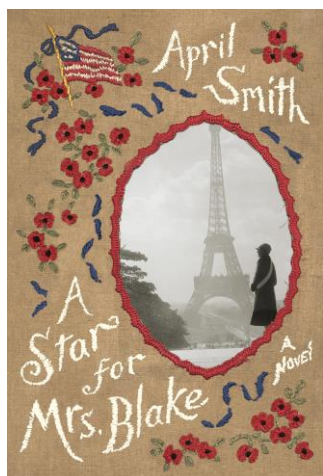
Fans of the book have a chance to meet the author April Smith on **Saturday, March 8 at 2 p.m.** in the Main Library’s Reading Garden Lounge. A book signing will immediately follow the discussion and books will be available for purchase courtesy of Joseph-Beth Booksellers. April Smith is the author of *North of Montana*; *Be the One*; *Good Morning, Killer*; *Judas Horse*; and *White Shotgun*. She is also a television screenwriter and producer, whose most recent work was a TNT original movie based on *Good Morning, Killer*. She lives in Santa Monica, California.

Smith will also appear on Friday, March 7 at 12 p.m. at Mercantile Library, 414 Walnut Street, in Downtown Cincinnati. Reservations requested to that event at [reservations@mercantilelibrary.com](mailto:reservations@mercantilelibrary.com) or by calling 513-621-0717. And Smith will make another appearance at Joseph-Beth Booksellers on Friday, March 7 at 7 p.m. The store is at 2692 Madison Road. Both appearances are free and open to the public.

### About the Book

The United States Congress passed legislation in 1929 to fund travel for mothers of the fallen soldiers of World War I to visit their sons’ graves in France. Over the next three years, 6,693 Gold Star Mothers made the trip. In this emotionally charged, brilliantly realized novel, April Smith breathes life into a unique moment in American history, imagining the experience of five of these women.

They are strangers at the start, but their lives will become inextricably intertwined, altered in indelible ways. These very different Gold Star Mothers



travel to the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery to say their final good-byes to their sons and unite along the way to face the unexpected: a death, a scandal, and a secret revealed.

None of these pilgrims will be as affected as Cora Blake, who has lived almost her entire life in a small fishing village off the coast of Maine, caring for her late sister's three daughters, hoping to fill the void left by the death of her son, Sammy, who was killed on a scouting mission during the final days of the war. Cora believes she is managing as well as can be expected in the midst of the Depression, but nothing has prepared her for what lies ahead on this unpredictable journey, including an extraordinary encounter with an expatriate American journalist, Griffin Reed, who was wounded in the trenches and hides behind a metal mask, one of hundreds of "tin noses" who became symbols of the war.

With expert storytelling, memorable characters, and beautiful prose, April Smith gives us a timeless story, by turns heartwarming and heartbreaking, set against a footnote of history – little known, yet unforgettable.

### **Read the Book in Two Formats**

You can place a hold on *A Star for Mrs. Blake* now by visiting [www.CincinnatiLibrary.org](http://www.CincinnatiLibrary.org). The book is available in print and eBook. You will receive an e-mail or text when the book is available for pickup at the branch of your choice.

### **Community Partners**

On the Same Page is a project of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and is made possible in part by the Friends of the Public Library, Joseph-Beth Booksellers, Xavier University and Brueggeman Center for Dialogue, the College of Mount Saint Joseph, and the Mercantile Library with support from WVXU and Cincinnati Metro.

The Public Library is also partnering with the Cincinnati Opera to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. Special programs will be presented at Library branches as part of the "Cincinnati Remembers WWI" community event series. Visit [CincinnatiOpera.org/wwi](http://CincinnatiOpera.org/wwi) for more information.

### **On The Same Page Website**

For a complete list of programs, book discussions, discussion questions, and more, visit [www.CincinnatiLibrary.org/SamePage](http://www.CincinnatiLibrary.org/SamePage) after January 20 for a complete list of events. This year's title offers the added opportunity to acquaint yourself with the Library book clubs and other reading lovers around this area.

### **History of On The Same Page**

In an effort to foster a sense of community through reading, area organizations joined in partnership in 2002 to establish On The Same Page, a citywide reading project. This project was modeled after the first organized community reading event, which was held in Seattle in 1997. [The Library of Congress](#) maintains a state-by-state list of past and current "one book" reading projects. Past titles include *A Lesson before Dying* by Ernest Gaints, *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, and *The End of Your Life Book Club* by Will Schwalbe.

**Photo Credit:** (Top) Photo of April Smith courtesy of Benjamin Brayfield.

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For more information about The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, visit [www.CincinnatiLibrary.org](http://www.CincinnatiLibrary.org) or call 513-369-6900.



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