

## **Elizabeth Strout, author of *Olive Kitteridge*, to be Guest Speaker at *People & Stories* Spring Benefit**

Princeton, NJ: Elizabeth Strout, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Olive Kitteridge*, and of *The Burgess Boys*, *Abide With Me* and *Amy and Isabelle* will read from her work at the *People & Stories / Gente y Cuentos* annual spring benefit to be held at the Nassau Club, 6 Mercer Street, Princeton at 7:30 P.M. on Friday, April 11, 2014. Proceeds from the event will go to support *People & Stories / Gente y Cuentos*, a reading and discussion program offered in English or Spanish for adults and young adults who have had limited opportunities to experience the transformative power of great and enduring literature.

From a young age Elizabeth Strout thought of herself as a writer, keeping notebooks filled with the details of her days in the small towns of Maine and New Hampshire where she lived. An avid reader she spent hours in the local library studying the way American writers, in particular, told their stories. "Reading was essential to me. It connected me to the world." By the age of sixteen she was sending out stories to magazines.

After graduating from Bates College, she studied Law at Syracuse University, finishing with honors in 1982, the same year her first story, "The Suicide's Daughter," was published in *New Letters*. Her first book, *Amy and Isabelle*, was shortlisted for the 2000 Orange Prize and nominated for the 2000 PEN/Faulkner Award for fiction. The novel had taken almost seven years to write, and only her family and close friends knew she was working on it. In 2009 Strout was honored with a Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *Olive Kitteridge*, a collection of connected short stories about a woman and her immediate family and friends on the coast of Maine. Her most recent novel, *The Burgess Boys*, was published in 2013.

Sheila Kohler, an O'Henry Prize winner twice over, will introduce Ms. Strout at the April 11 event. Ms. Kohler's short story, "Magic Men," is included in *Best American Short Stories 2013*. Penguin will publish her latest novel, *Dreaming for Freud*, in July 2014. Ms. Kohler is also a member of the board of *People & Stories / Gente y Cuentos*.

For reservations, please email [stephanieh@peopleandstories.org](mailto:stephanieh@peopleandstories.org) or contact Pat Andres at 609-393-3230. Alternatively, contact Michelle McKenna at 609-688-8494. Ticket prices range from \$100-\$1,500. Sponsors (\$250) receive a dinner with the author before the reading, Patrons (\$500) include dinner and a signed book, and Benefactors (\$1,500) receive dinner for two, two tickets and two signed books.

Since 1972, *People & Stories / Gente y Cuentos* has been connecting lives to literature through vibrant reading and discussion programs set in diverse settings, including residential treatment facilities, prisons, homeless shelters, adult education programs, libraries, and senior centers.

For more information, please visit [www.peopleandstories.org](http://www.peopleandstories.org).

