

National League of American Pen Women



Palm Springs Branch

P.O. Box 1166, Palm Desert, CA 92261

Newsletter Volume XI, Issue 19

March, 2010

Patricia Moloney Dugas, Editor

Promoting the development of art, letters, and music of professional women.

The President's Message by Joan Petit-Clair



The rain is gone and it looks like spring is finally here ... the wildflowers are already starting to bloom throughout the valley. Enjoy the nice weather now ... the heat of summer isn't that far off.

It's election time again on both the local and National level. On the local level, you will be receiving an envelope in the mail this week containing the Election Ballot and a return envelope addressed to Carol Mann, plus your dues renewal letter and a return envelope addressed to Kathy Bjork. Both envelopes must be returned to the designated parties by April 1, 2010.

On the National level, as some of you have probably heard via numerous emails that have gone out to the general membership, there has been a lot of discord regarding the upcoming National League of American Pen Women national election.

You all received your initial ballot in *The Pen Woman* Publication. Since then, on February 17, 2010, after a special meeting of the National Executive Board of Directors in Washington, D.C., a motion was approved to issue a second Official Ballot allowing you more choices. You should be receiving the second official ballot in the mail along with biographical information on the write-in candidates and the candidates on the first ballot.

Please be sure to read about these additional qualified women and vote your choice. No matter how you vote, just be sure to vote and have your ballot postmarked by March 15, 2010.

Joan Petit-Clair

President Janpix40@aol.com

March 16, 2010 Luncheon

Guest Speaker: O'Jay Vanegas
on the history and art
of storytelling

Stories or narratives have been shared in every culture and in every land as a means of entertainment, education, preservation of culture, and to instill moral values. Crucial elements of stories and storytelling include plot and characters, as well as the narrative point of view.

O'Jay Vanegas, Director of Education at the Aqua Caliente Cultural Museum, will talk about promoting the stories of culture of the indigenous people of the Americas.

Reservations: Make reservations at least 1 week before this Desert Falls Country Club luncheon, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Reservations are a must. You must cancel 24 hours in advance if you cannot make it, or we will have to charge you for the reservation. \$22 for members and \$27 for non-members.

Make your reservations by email to
Joanna Jacobs
penluncheon@earthlink.net -
or call her at 760-902-3273.



Who's News by **Dodie Cross**

Jone Dupre - Jone has been accepted by IMAGESNAP INC. to represent her humorous tile line – www.imagesnap.com gallery. She has been working on this for six years.

Kathryn Jordan – Kathryn will be doing a *Gladys and Capone* book talk / signing at Palm Springs Library March 30th at 6:30 pm. Two great reviews were posted on Amazon recently for this book — take a look. Her “Egypt” novel is speeding up, closing in on 200 pages.

Carol Mann and Kathy Bjork – Carol and Kathy both submitted poems to Bette Miller, a La Jolla Pen Woman, for her “A World of Women” project. A World of Women is the story of women in developing countries told through a blend of newly composed piano and harp music and original poetry. Sonabai Rajawar, a renowned Indian clay sculptor held in captivity, was the focus of Carol’s poem, and Corazon Aquino, who helped oust a dictator and became the first woman president of the Philippines, was the subject of Kathy’s poem.

Audrey Moe – Audrey reports on her book signing at Barnes & Noble, where she sold 18 books. She has been invited back in the fall for a holiday book signing before Christmas. Another surprising event for her was being chosen as an honoree at the Children's Nature Institute for their 25th Anniversary Gala, “Making the World of Difference,” at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. They found a copy of her book *Desertwalk*, passed it around their board of directors, and called her. Their mission is taking disadvantaged children on nature walks. This fundraiser will be held at the Skirball Center on May 27, 2010. It is a \$200 per person event. She is “...deeply honored to be receiving this recognition.”

Dessa Reed – will be giving a talk at the Palm Springs Art Museum, Sunday, March 14, 2010 at 2:00 pm in the Jackie Lee Houston Atrium. Her talk is entitled, “The Poetry of Architecture” and will relate to their ongoing architectural exhibit.

Correction: In the February Newsletter Who’s News column, Marilyn Walker was incorrectly listed as Carolyn Walker. It should have read:

Marilyn Walker – won third prize in the All Cities Branch publication of *Pen Women Magazine* entitled, “If I Were an Artist”.

WOMEN OF DISTINCTION IN THE ARTS 2010

The Women of Distinction in the Arts event will be held on **Sunday, April 11, 2010**, at Wally's Desert Turtle in Rancho Mirage.

Invitations will be mailed the first week of March. If you have friends who would like to receive an invitation please notify Marge Dodge at margedodge1@aol.com or 760-333-0733.



Pick a Flower for a Scholar

Do you provide editing services, computer tutoring, photography, or writing workshops? If so, we would like to showcase your talents by adding your gift certificate for services to our Pick a Flower for a Scholar tree.

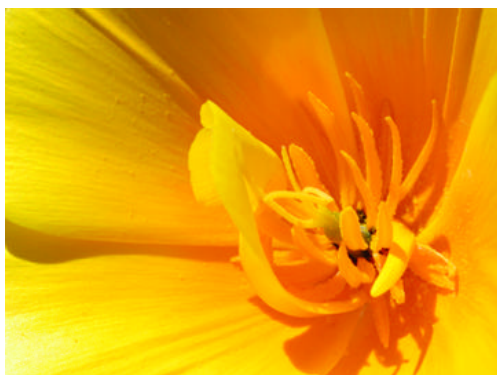
Please contact Pick a Flower for a Scholar co-chairs Lynne Spreen at 951-926-3875 or lmispreen@yahoo.com, or Judie Ruzek at 760-568-4771 or plus2@aol.com.

Our Scholarship Program

The Women of Distinction luncheon is a major fundraising effort for the benefit of our young women in the Coachella Valley who will be our future. In the last three years, the Palm Springs Branch of the National League of American Pen Women has awarded nearly \$20,000 dollars in scholarships.

Graduating seniors who have shown exemplary academic standards and talents in writing, art, or music (often all three), are selected to receive a \$1,000 scholarship to help with their college tuition. These young women have been highly recommended by their teachers or counselors and show a dedication to pursue higher learning and a career in their chosen field. Please support this effort to encourage and support our future young women writers, artist, and musicians.

Tammy Coia, Scholarship Chairperson.



WILDFLOWER SEASON IS HERE !

The rains this season should provide us with a grand display of wildflowers.

Check out this website for updates on the different sites here in Southern California. Good luck.

<http://www.desertusa.com/wildflo/wildupdates.html>

26th Annual SDSU Writer's Conference: A Report by Dotti Reiss

Fired up with the energy from spending two and a half days with over 300 writers, editors, and agents, I returned from the San Diego State University Writer's Conference on January 31, 2010. It's impossible to come down off a writer's high fueled by stellar keynote speakers, author and screenwriter Chris Vogler, and best-selling author, Robert Dugoni, and over 75 learning sessions taught by 40 agents and publishing house editors.

Time allowed each participant to choose 12 classes from 75, including genre-specific topics, writing skills, pitching, market awareness, attracting editors and agents, and more. Many sessions were interactive. You dropped off your first four pages, or your query or synopsis, at a desk in the front of the room. The instructor read it aloud, professionally critiquing. All the time you enjoyed, or at least survived, feedback from your fellow writers. And there were even night-owl on-the-spot critiques! No sleeping.



The highlight for most participants was the opportunity for reading and consultation appointments in the form of ten-minute, one-on-one meetings with an editor or agent of your choice. Booked in advance of the conference, we were given up to three consultations, and for only one were allowed to submit the first ten pages of our work (usually a book). You had a real face-to-face with an established agent or editor that you might not get any other time of your life!

What's been preventing me from getting my book published? That's the question I took to the writing conference. I found out! Wrong first chapter, wrong first ten pages, too much telling, not enough showing, wrong pitch, and wrong approach to agents. But the fixes are not impossible.

Bottom Line: My roommate Carol Haack, from my Palm Springs critique group, had her three consultations on Saturday. All went well, all interviewers asked for more pages of her book, and the reading editor told her she wrote like Alice Sebold! She was walking on air.

On the other hand, if the Coronado Bridge had been nearer our hotel, I would have jumped off. I knew I'd sent the wrong ten pages before I left home - all the other writers, work was magnificent compared to mine - and my first face-to-face with a New York agent, Dena, resulted in a lecture - delivered by her to misguided me.

But Sunday was a new day and my next agent, Ellen, also New York, looked at my query, loved what I told her about my book, and asked me to send her the entire manuscript! Next, the reading editor, Elyse, agreed my ten pages were awful, but said my book was the kind she loves to read and because she only works with agented writers, she would call Ellen and see if we couldn't work together!

The final room for our ten-minute consultations was set up like a boiler room with forty tables and two chairs at each. The energy was palpable. Writers left either crying or dancing a foot off the ground. Like I said, I can't come down.

Dotti Reiss

-----Remaining General Meeting Agendas For 2009-2010 -----

April 11, 2010 **Women of Distinction in the Arts at Wally's Desert Turtle**

May 18, 2010 **Ekphrasis exhibition presented by Dessa Reed**

Ekphrasis exhibition **How Do You Pronounce That?**

Ekphrasis is a creative device in which one medium of art relates to another medium by defining and describing its essence and form. For example, a descriptive work of prose or poetry that highlights what is happening in the visual arts, thus enhancing the original art. Some other examples are a painting of a sculpture, a poem or story that portrays a photograph, or a sculpture that depicts a heroine of a novel -- any art that describes any other art is ekphrasis.

As Pen Women, we create many different types of art that we can bring together for our final meeting of the season at our Ekphrasis presentation at our May 18 meeting.

✍ We need artists to submit their artwork electronically so our writers can use their words to describe their response to the artwork.

If you are interested in participating as an artist or a writer, please contact Dessa Reed at 760-372-4134 or desssareed@aol.com.

1. **Artists** will need to email their work to Dessa by **April 1** and writers will then select the artwork they would like to write about.
2. **Writer's** deadline is **May 1**. At the May meeting the art will be displayed as the corresponding writing is read.

Let's have some fun with this!

See Italy While You Write

Stephen Webber, Adjunct Professor at New Mexico State University, is conducting a writing and wellness retreat as a terrific and inexpensive way to see Italy and work on a creative writing project.

It takes place in the remote wooded hills of Umbria at Casa della Pace, just a short drive from Assisi. The price includes everything - room & board and tuition for the program – this means yoga, Reiki, Pilates, sound healing, and creative writing workshops every day for two weeks.



The retreat's website is at <http://www.summerwritingretreat.com> or you can email him directly at comments@writingimmersion.com with any questions.



Who's New - Membership by Lynne Spreen

I'm happy to report that two Provisional members, Dawn Spitz and Jenny Gumpertz, have decided to apply for National membership.

The benefits of National membership include eligibility for contests in which one can win money and recognition; joining a nationwide organization of hundreds of creative women; automatic subscription to (and having your work represented in) the quarterly *Pen Woman* magazine; having your book reviewed or other work publicized; and attending the Biennial Convention and regional Pen Women conferences around the country.

During the next year, I hope the current National members will think about ways in which they or the Palm Springs Branch can help Provisional members qualify for National membership.

I will soon be updating the Member Directory for the new year. If your contact information has changed since the last printing, and you have not yet informed me, please do so at this time. Thank you!

A reminder about contact information: If any of your information changes, please let me know. Contact information will not appear in this newsletter, as it then becomes accessible on the Internet. If you need contact information on members not listed in our Membership Directory, please call me at 951-926-3875 or email me at LMSpreen@yahoo.com.

Time to Renew Your Membership!

Kathy Bjork, our Treasurer, reminds us that membership dues for 2010-2011 are payable no later than April 1. Mail your check to her at 72631 Spyglass Lane, Palm Desert, CA, 92260. As soon as she receives your check, we will reserve an updated copy of the Membership Directory for you. Remember, dues are tax deductible. The membership year runs from May 1 through April 30. Dues are not prorated for those joining after May 1.

Active or Associate National member: \$65
Lifetime National member: \$25
Provisional member: \$20

Please note that the Board has considered the ratio of Provisional to National members in the Palm Springs Branch, and in order to continue to provide adequate mentoring and support, has adopted a moratorium on new Provisional members for the upcoming year.

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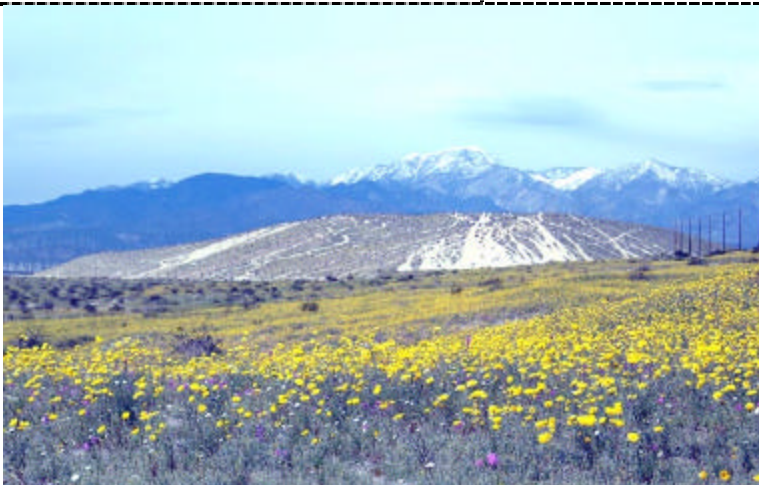
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Our Scholarship Fund
Please contact any Branch officer
if you wish to make a donation
to our scholarship fund
in memory of a loved one.

Our tax ID # is 23-7214209



Varner Road, 2005

Have a grand Spring

Editor, Patricia Moloney Dugas