

National League of American Pen Women



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

Newsletter Volume XI, Issue 16
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Patricia Moloney Dugas, Editor

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

The President's Message **By Joan Petit-Clair**



It is an honor to be taking over for Audrey Moe. I would like to thank her for all she has done and wish her luck in all she plans to do in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have graciously stepped in to fill the terms of the various board and chairperson positions that were open.

Unfortunately, Cheryl McFadden, who was to be our Recording Secretary, had to resign for personal reasons so we are still looking for someone to fill that position. If anyone is interested in filling that board position, please contact me.

Melody Fleming, our Scholarship Chair, has also resigned. She sold her home and is moving to Carpinteria. To quote Melody, *"Most things about the move bring me joy, but leaving the great group of members of Pen Women is definitely a negative. I will miss everybody, but hopefully, I will be able to visit a couple of the meetings this season."* Tammy Coia has agreed to fill that position. Thank you Tammy and welcome on board.

I look forward to serving as your president and encourage everyone to get involved in the year's upcoming events.

Joan Petit-Clair

October 20, 2009 Luncheon

Guest Speaker: Denise Welch
President/CEO of Computerworks,
Inc.

Computerworks, Inc., is a local personalized computer consulting company based in Palm Desert. Denise will share with us new ways to market a creative business using social media tools, a part of "viral marketing."

If you are looking for creative, innovative, and more importantly, inexpensive techniques to spread the word about your writing, art, or music, then don't miss this meeting.

Reservations: Make your reservations at least 1 week before this luncheon at the Desert Falls Country Club, 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. \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members. Make your reservations by email to Joanna Jacobs penluncheon@earthlink.net - or call 760-902-3273.

----- **Upcoming General Meeting Agendas** -----

- October 20, 2009** Denise Welch on Viral Marketing
November 17, 2009 Margaret Seeley on Dr. Seuss
December 15, 2009 Julie Warren on the Altered Book Art Project
January 19, 2010 Maureen Gilmer on turning your passion into a business
February 16, 2010 Patricia Taylor Lee on Virginia Waring International Piano Competition
March 16, 2010 O'Jay Vanegas on the history and art of storytelling
April 11, 2010 Women of Distinction in the Arts at Wally's Desert Turtle
May 18, 2010 Ekphrasis exhibition presented by Dessa Reed

The programs listed are subject to change.

----- **Events of Interest** -----

Writers Retreat -- October 10-11, Join **Mike Foley** for the autumn 2009 Big Bear Writer's Retreat. The two-day event offers you a chance to improve your work, while enjoying the beautiful fall days in the San Bernardino Mountains. The retreat fee of \$325 includes meals and accommodations.

Mike Foley is editor of *Dream Merchant Magazine* and author of more than 700 published stories and articles. He also teaches fiction and nonfiction writing in the extension program at UC-Riverside. Since 1986, he has operated the Writer's Review critique service, helping hundreds of aspiring writers improve their fiction and nonfiction projects. To contact Mike, email: mike@writers-review.com

The Coachella Review **Submissions Requested** -- A new online literary journal is currently looking for submissions for its inaugural issue.

The Coachella Review (<http://www.thecoachellareview.com>) is the literary journal produced by the MFA program at UCR-Palm Desert, directed by Tod Goldberg. The journal is looking for fiction, nonfiction, poetry and short films -- all of the guidelines are listed on the website noted above. A few "featured" selections will be paid a small-but-enough-to-buy-a-nice-dinner-for-two-plus-wine honorarium. Send your submissions to the email address on the web page: thecoachellareview@gmail.com.



Five-week Creative Workshop at Melvyn's -- Frank Furino, Hollywood writer and Creative Writing Instructor at UCLA, will help you master the essentials of creating storylines, plot, characters, dialog, and conflict. 11 am to 2 pm on Thursdays, November 5, 12, 19, December 3, 10. Five-week series is \$300 and includes lunch at Melvyn's Private Dining Room in Palm Springs.

If you are interested in being part of this fun workshop series, please e-mail FRANK FURINO at fvfworkshop@yahoo.com.

Who's News --- May through September, 2009

By Joan Petit-Clair

Shirley Brenon – co-wrote a story with Murray Ross called, "Best in the West Jets" that was just published in the August issue of *Model Aviation*. **Judie Ruzek** and **Joan Petit-Clair** also had their pictures in the article.

Dodie Cross – entered two excerpts from her book: *A Broad Abroad in Thailand*, in the 2009 Solas Awards on Best Travel Writing. One chapter was awarded gold for Best Travel Story in the Funny Travel category, and the second chapter won Silver in the Bad Travel category. Travelers Tales noted that winning stories could be picked to appear in their next book, *The Best Travel Writing*, and she is eagerly awaiting notification.

Pat Dugas – calling herself a "Societal Tamperer," has entered the world of poetry. She read her poem "Economical Pandemical" and others at the Barnes & Noble Poetry Reading session in August. She is using Dickensian whimsy to create poetic societal statements. She says it gives her a vehicle to treat serious subjects with whimsical yet jabbing commentary.

Pat took 1200 pictures on a writers & photography trip to Las Vegas, and is now headed to Boston to catch Fall Foliage pictures for sale and for paintings.

Jenny Gumpertz - sold her flash fiction story "Bear Weather" to the ezine *Big Pulp* for their August edition, which is still available online at bigpulp.com. Click on Adventure, and then click on the text of the story "Bear Weather" to read the whole thing.

Joanne Hardy -Barbara Ady and Joanne went to a DAR convention in Washington D. C. and stayed at the PenArts Building for six days. See the full article of her trip on page 5 following.

Kristen Johnson - was interviewed by *ChickLitGurrl* in July: To read the whole article, go to <http://chicklitgurrl.blogspot.com/i009/07/writer-of-all-trades-kristin-johnson.html>. Kristin also completed several writing projects over the summer.

DeAnn Lubell - has been busy all summer setting up charity events for the upcoming season ... Angel View Fall Fashion Show and Luncheon on Thursday, October 22,

2009 www.angelview.org, U.S. Vets Veteran's Day Celebration on Wednesday, November 11, 2009 www.usvetsinc.org, and The 18th Annual Good Samaritan of the Year Gala on Saturday, November 21, 2009 www.dsfte.org. For more information, please check the website or contact DeAnn.

Carol Mann – her short story "Not Even Gloria" and the poem "Desert Sky. . ." were published in the August/September 2009 edition of *The Sun Runner Magazine - Third Annual Desert Writers Issue*.

Lynne Spreen - published a humorous short article entitled "Technology for Mummies" on www.More.com, (the online version of *More* magazine) and she encourages other Pen Women to check out the website. It's a good way to receive writing credits. Also, she was pleased to serve as a judge in a creative writing contest. The "Glass Woman Prize" is for fiction or creative non-fiction and the first place prize is \$700. For future contests, Pen Women should go to <http://www.sigriddaughter.com/GlassWomanPrize.htm>.

Marci Stillerman - her book, *Something Terrible Happened on Kenmore* will be out the end of October. Her publisher, Westside Books, is considering another book for publication and she is working on a third book which her publisher is interested in considering.

Mardiyah Tarantino - was sent to a forum of the UN in Geneva by her charity, SusilaDharma, and there she took more notes than in an entire college semester. These pages of notes, with dozens of acronyms and statistics like a treatise on chemistry, will have to be alchemized into a poignant account on the State of World Poverty. Therein lies the writing. If she can't manage, she'll hail the kind ladies of her critique group, who are always ready to oblige.

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Save the Date: We are gearing up for the first event of the season, our annual "New and Prospective Member Tea" on Saturday, November 7th.

Although details are still being finalized, it's not too soon to mark this date on your calendar and begin thinking of a friend who would benefit from the synergy, creativity, and support of Palm Springs Pen Women.

Second V. P., Membership, Lynne Spreen, 941 926-3875, LMSpreen@yahoo.com

STAYING AT THE PENARTS BUILDING, DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION, and DOING WASHINGTON D.C.

By Joanne Hardy

Six nights in the PenArts Building is like staying six nights in a museum. A short flight of stairs leads to two heavy, carved doors – the entrance – which then open into a wide foyer. On the right is a traditional dining room with a spacious table and chairs. On the left is a parlor with period pieces, a chandelier, fireplace, and grand piano. Rising before you is a beautiful (and daunting) stairway with a carved banister that zigzags its way up three stories. There is also a fourth floor. As you ascend the stairs there are pictures on the walls of the many women who have served as president of Pen Women dating back to the beginning of the organization. An old mansion with presidential connection, it was built for opera star Sara Adams Whittemore, descendant of President John Adams. And was once home to Todd Lincoln, son of the president. Art objects and paintings abound throughout, but the second floor is where the serious business of running the national organization takes place.



Barbara Ady and I, who were attending Daughters of the American Revolution's Continental Congress, along with another "Daughter," found our rooms and settled in. We soon found that Pen Woman President Taylor Collins was invited to attend the first night of DAR as well. When we arrived at DAR's Continental Hall that first night, she was escorted up on stage and we were seated in the California section.

Opening night at Constitutional Hall was filled with pageantry of state flags carried down the center aisle by young pages dressed in white gowns, while music from the United States Marine Chamber Orchestra filled the auditorium. About 5,000 women were seated in the Hall. Taylor Collins, President of Pen Women, was given recognition onstage at Continental Congress on opening night for representing an organization that has given support and validation to women for over a century.

The speaker was Lieutenant Colonel Michael R Strobl, retired, the real-life marine who is portrayed by actor Kevin Bacon in the HBO movie, *Taking Chance*.

Not all was the business of the convention; there was lunch in Georgetown, dinner at the historic Ebbets Grill (Taylor Collins came with us), a dessert extravaganza at The Willard Hotel, and dinners at a half-dozen other neat, tucked-away places, a couple of museums, and at Arlington, we waited silently to watch a military funeral. At the Capitol, we watched a man surrounded by officers, led out in handcuffs and locked in the back of a police car. Oh-hum, just another day at the Capitol.

The PenArts Building is the best deal in town, the hospitality to its members truly warm and welcoming; and the rooms are filled with the graciousness of a more gently paced time. Joanne





Membership by Lynne Spreen

When Joanne Hardy invited me to the first ever New/Prospective Member Tea at Estelle Shanley's beautiful home, I was excited and nervous. I would be mingling with published authors and accomplished musicians, artists, and artisans of every stripe. After that evening, I quickly joined, and now three years later I am your new Membership VP! Thank you, former Membership VPs Shirley Coombs and Joanne Hardy for your guidance. Thanks also to Judy Fabris, who is renowned for bringing in new members. I recently asked how she does it, and Judy replied, "I tell them if they are serious about their creative work, they need this group. To be among women who are so supportive will give your career a boost." I can hardly wait to tell prospective members about the synergy and creativity of Pen Women. Also please note on your calendar that this year's new and prospective member tea will be held on November 7th, details to follow.

One of my new responsibilities is to maintain the membership database, so if your contact information changes, please tell me. Members contact information will no longer appear in this newsletter, as it then becomes accessible on the Internet. If you need contact information before the Directory is published in May, please call or email me.

We're sorry to note that member Melody Fleming (Letters) has relocated and will no longer be attending our meetings on a regular basis. Melody, best wishes in Carpinteria, California.

RECIPIENTS OF OUR SCHOLARSHIPS

This past May we selected six outstanding young women to each receive a \$1,000 scholarship to pursue an education in the Arts. The bar was set high to qualify for this honor; the recipient must have excelled in art, letters, or music, must have an overall 3.0 grade point average, and must be going on to higher education and a career in the Arts. The following exceptional high school graduating seniors were honored at award ceremonies at each of the high schools:

1. Sabrina Al Sarabi-Rubakovic from La Quinta High School in Writing and Music
2. Nasim Attaripour from Palm Desert High School for Art
3. Cindy Gastelum from Cathedral City High School for Digital Art, and Broadcast Journalism
4. Alana Johnson from Palm Desert High School for Art, Photography, Digital Art and Writing
5. Adriana Phillips from Desert Hot Springs High School for Writing
6. Kaitlin Sliney from Palm Springs High School for Musical Theatre

In addition to the above scholarships, we donated \$1,000 to the California State University San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus writing program and an additional \$500 to Bianca Escalante, one of our 2008 scholarship recipients.

The scholarship awards were the result of the Women of Distinction in the Arts event held last April by the Pen Women. The event honored three outstanding women in the Coachella Valley: Betty Francis, Valerie Mahabir and Kim Waltrip, and raised funds for the recently awarded scholarships.

BRANCH OFFICERS and CHAIRS for 2009-2010

President
Joan Petit-Clair
760 341-7265
jpc7934@aol.com

**First V.P., Programs/
Special Events**
Marge Dodge
760 564-9329
margedodge1@aol.com

Second V.P., Membership
Lynne Spreen
941 926-3875
LMSpreen@yahoo.com

Third V.P., Newsletter
Patricia Moloney Dugas
760 327-6624
pdugas@usc.edu

Treasurer
Kathy Bjork
760 346-4433
kbo67@yahoo.com

Recording Secretary

Open

**Corresponding
Secretary**
Carol Mann
760 564-0834
cstanfield@dc.rr.co

Historian
Anice Schwartz
760 321-1351
misswindsor54@hotmail.com

Scholarship Chair
Tammy Coia
760 989-2232
tlceducator@yahoo.com

Publicity Chair
Susan Heiligman
760 773-5831
sheiligman@yahoo.com

Hospitality Chair
Joanna Jacobs
760 902-3273
jevnes@earthlink.net

Web Master
Judie Ruzek
760 568-4771
plus2@aol.com

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 53-0115640



**These autumn
pictures were taken
at Whitewater
Canyon Preserve
off the I 10 just
west of route 62.**

Plan a picnic....

Pat Dugas, Editor



[www.wildlandsconservancy.org/twc_preserve whitewater.html](http://www.wildlandsconservancy.org/twc_preserve_whitewater.html)