

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF AMERICAN PEN WOMEN HONOLULU BRANCH

October 2011
Newsletter



IN THIS ISSUE

- A. MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
- B. DELECTABLE DETOUR - pg 2
- C. PEN WOMEN IN THE NEWS - pg3
- D. ANNOUNCEMENTS - pg 4
- E. OCTOBER MINUTES - pg 5-7
- F. NEXT MEETING - pg 1
- G. CONTACT THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR



F. Next Meeting

F. NEXT MEETING

Date: November 2, 2011, 11:30-1:30pm
Place: Alan Wong's Pineapple Room,
Macy's at Ala Moana
Featured Speaker: Vera Williams
Topic: The Writing is the Least of it

Remember, we will again offer the November Boutique. It's a great opportunity to get some holiday shopping done early – and, at the same time – support your fellow Pen Women.

Members are free, and the fee for a table for Friends is \$10. All those interested should send their requests, which will be handled on a first come, first serve basis, to:

victoriagailwhite@gmail.com

A. MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The National Branch of the League of American of Pen Women will host the 2012 Biennial Conference in Washington, DC from April 19th to 22nd to celebrate the talents of the many women in the organization. The Biennial is also open to the public. Should you find yourself planning a trip in that direction, the conference promises a number of workshops including publishing and finding an agent. Sessions are in development.

www.americanpenwomen.org/announcements/Announcements.cfm

This coming Conference coincides with the Centennial Celebration of the National Cherry Blossom Festival taking place from March 20th through April 27th. In 1912, the city of Tokyo, Japan gave Washington DC an incredible gift of 3,000 cherry blossom trees to be planted around the Tidal Basin in West Potomac Park, in East Potomac Park and on the grounds of the Washington Monument. The 100th anniversary of these gorgeous trees will be celebrated with a series of magnificent events.

<http://www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org/>

Yes, our Honolulu Branch is anchored some 5,000 miles from DC, and it will take more than a train ride to get there, but there are opportunities for many of us even if we can't attend. A number of competitions have been designed in both Arts & Letters and more information is available. I'd love to see Hawaii represented!

<http://www.americanpenwomen.org/competitions/Competitions.cfm>

Painting is silent poetry, and poetry is painting with the gift of speech. Simonides

-- Susan Killeen



B. NOVEMBER DELECTABLE DETOUR



WHAT: TAG, The Actor's Group presents *THE FUTRELLE-OGY* DEARLY BELOVED, CHRISTMAS BELLES_& SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

WHEN: SUNDAY, NOV. 20TH! At 1, 4 or 6pm (see below)

WHERE: TAG - The Actors' Group, 650 Iwilei Rd, Suite 101

TICKETS: \$25 or \$26 (see below for details)

The BBQ will be catered by Sam Choy's Breakfast Lunch & Crab, and the menu consists of green salad, cole slaw, baked beans, corn, fried chicken, BBQ ribs & bread pudding.

1. Come at 1 p.m. to see all three plays and have a great Texas barbecue with us between the 2nd and 3rd play.
2. Come at 4 p.m. to see the 2nd play and stay for dinner. You can see the 3rd play if you wish.
3. Join us for the Barbecue at 6 p.m. and stay and see only the 3rd play.
4. If you have already seen all three plays or have reservations on other dates, then just come and have a good old Texas Barbecue with your TAG friends.

The BBQ is \$25 if you call 722-6941 to make reservations and mail a check to:

TAG - The Actors' Group, 650 Iwelei Rd., Suite 101, Honolulu, HI 96817

The BBQ is \$26 if you prefer to order online at tagtickets@hawaii.rr.com

<http://www.taghawaii.net/> for details about the plays.



C. PEN WOMEN IN THE NEWS

Barbara Clemens has recently created a series of 110 instructional videos, published by Cengage Learning for their Illustrated series of college texts. She wrote the scripts, managed and edited the voiceovers, and constructed the videos themselves. The videos teach students how to use Microsoft Office, and are distributed in a CD "Video Companion" pack and online. She is also about to publish the 2010 version of her online course, "What's New in Microsoft Office?" for Education To Go (ed2go.com) The publisher wholesales the course, with hundreds of others, to over 2,000 college and universities worldwide.

Carol Egan has articles on dance and theatre soon to be published in the Halekulani Living and HILuxury magazines and Malamalama, the UH alumni magazine.



Victoria Gail-White, having just directed **Jan McGrath's** wonderful play, "The Maestro's Woman," at TAG, now gets to act in the upcoming production of "Futrelle-ogy" (November's Delectable Detour – see above).

Joan Gencarelli and **Elisabeth Knoke** will have their War Stories read for Aloha Shorts. The reading will take place November 6 at 6:45 at Hawai'i Public Radio's Atherton Studio. It is free to the public. However, because of limited space, you are urged to call early for reservations. Contact Bamboo Ridge at 626-1481. The program is scheduled for broadcast February 21, 2012.

Mara Miller, author of *The Garden as an Art* and an art historian and philosopher specializing in East Asia. gave a talk on MYTH & LEGEND IN THE CHINESE GARDEN, at the Mission Houses Museum on October 12.

Nancy Moss' play *Will the Real Charlie Chan Please Stand Up?* won Kumu Kahua's Hawaii Prize this year. The play is about Chang Apana, the Chinese detective who was the model for Charlie Chan.

Vera Williams' book, "WASPs: History of the Women's Airforce Service Pilots of WWII" has been rereleased and celebrated with programs at the Arizona Memorial Visitors Center and at the Pacific Aviation Museum. The book includes a new forward by Daniel Martinez, the historian at Pearl Harbor, and new photos of the WASP receiving Congressional Medals. On November 19th there will be a whole WASP day at Pacific Aviation Museum on Ford Island. The book is available at www.pacifichistoricparks.org and, for information about Vera's talk, go to www.pacificaviationmuseum.org



Dorothy Wright, who was honored in September with a Lifetime Membership Award from the Honolulu Branch of Pen Women, just received a copy of THE WINTER HOUSE, a Christmas Anthology from Canada, with her story, "Angel Wings." She wrote the original over twenty years ago for the Atlantic Advocate, who published it in December, 1990. The Advocate has long ceased publication, but one of the editors of THE WINTER HOUSE had come across an old copy somewhere, read it, liked it, and asked if they could publish it. Dorothy says, "Of course, I was overjoyed, but more than that, I realized that I'm not as passé as I thought I was; that I am still a part of the literary world and having compensation for my writing has placed me back on the "active" list. I feel empowered again; ready to write again. The main thing is, I guess, that we writers never retire, and I'm sure I'll keep writing as long as I'm able to hold a pencil."

Dee Van Dyke had three mixed media collages from her "Windows" series in the Windward Artist Guild juried show at Pauahi Tower in April and May. All three received Honorable Mention, and she sold one. Vince Hazen of the Linekona Arts Center was the juror.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Apologies in the timing of the announcement below due to the time required to develop a new design for our newsletter)

2nd Friday PLAY READING GROUP

October 14, 2011

6:00 pm Bring snacks to share.

OK to be late. We'll get settled and start munching.

Meet at the **Unitarian Church**

2500 Pali Hwy @ Niopola

Free parking and Free event

CHANCE ROOMMATE

By RICHARD CAULFIELD GOODMAN

The author will bring copies.

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Fourteen Pen Women and several spouses and friends enjoyed our September Delectable Detour, a terrific evening in the theatre preceded by a fine dinner at Uncle's Seafood Restaurant.

Special kudos to our own Pen Women, Playwright **Jan McGrath**, Director **Victoria Gail-White** and Actor **Susan Killeen**.

SAVE THE DATE: Our October Guest Speaker, Sonja Sironen, will perform with Anita Shanmuganathan, a Bharata Natyam dancer from Chennai, India, at Mid-Pac's Auditorium on November 12 from 6-7:30. The event is free and open to the public.

SAVE THE DATE

**THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF AMERICAN PEN WOMEN
HONOLULU BRANCH
PRESENTS
2012 BIENNIAL WRITERS' CONFERENCE**

**THE POWER
of STORY**

**Friday Evening, March 30, 2012 &
Saturday, 8 AM - 5 PM, March 31, 2012**

PUNAHOU SCHOOL CAMPUS

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
JACQUELYN MITCHARD,
best-selling author of books for adults,
young adults & children**

E. OCTOBER MINUTES

The October meeting of the National League of American Pen Women, Honolulu Branch took place at Alan Wong's Pineapple Room on October 5, 2011. Attendees included 18 members, 13 friends, 8 guests, and 2 visitors for a total of 41. President **Susan Killeen** opened the meeting at noon. She asked first time visitors to introduce themselves. She then introduced our new Friend, **Karuna Josh-Peters**, who talked a bit about herself.

Susan reminded people about the Writers' Conference, March 30 & 31, with Keynote Speaker, Jacquelyn Mitchard. She said there was a sign-up sheet on the back table for the November boutique, and reminded people to send in or update their bios for the web site.

Susan gave the following information about Pen Women in the News:

Elisabeth Knoke and **Joan Gencarelli** will have their pieces read in an upcoming taping of Aloha Shorts at Hawaii Public Radio on November 6th at 6:45 p.m. The theme of the program is "War."

Dee Van Dyke has three pieces in the 44th Annual Statewide Juried Exhibition of the Hawaii Craftsmen at Linekona, which runs from October 7 through November 2, and two more in the Windward Artist Guild (WAG) show at Ho'omaluhia Botanical Gardens, which runs through October.

Susan reminded us about the National Branch Biennial Conference, April 19 - 22, 2012

Elisha Bohnert announced that she, **Elizabeth Knoke**, and **Kris Barry** meet every Friday from 1:00 – 4:00 P.M. and they need more artists.

Vice President, **Victoria Gail-White** said that **Carol Egan**, who has spent her life in dance, was the appropriate person to introduce our speaker, Sonja Sironen.

Carol told us that Sonja, who is German, went to Sri Lanka to study medicine but ended up studying Bharata Natyam (the classical dance form of South India) instead. In Honolulu, Sonja met Judy VanZile, a Dance Ethnologist, and learned about the UH program in Dance Ethnology. Eventually she received her Bachelors and Masters in Dance Ethnology from UH. When Carol was invited to give a guest lecture to a class in dance history at UH, she met Sonja. Carol went on to say that Sonja has taught and performed in Germany, Asia, and across the United States. She gives classes at Still & Moving Center in Honolulu and frequently teaches at UH.

Sonja said she would introduce us to the historical and aesthetic background of Bharata Natyam.

She opened with a dance of three minutes, which represents the opening of a Lotus Bud and is traditionally the first piece performed.

She said she would give us 2000 years of history in 10 minutes. The earliest references to this dance date back 2000 years. They can be seen as carvings on temple walls and in Hindu scripture written between the 3rd and 7th centuries A.D. These writings are still a source for dancers. They include not only descriptions of the dance but also of the architecture of the theatre and appropriate themes for dances.

Continued on the next page...

E. OCTOBER MINUTES - continued

The early dancers, all females, were traditionally dedicated to the temple in childhood. They had a ritual marriage with the temple and were allowed to learn reading, writing, poetry, music, and dance, all unusual skills for girls at that time. They remained associated with the temple their whole lives. They could have children, and their daughters often became dancers themselves. Dancers had the right to own property and could pass it on to their offspring.

This art flourished with the protection of the temple. But during the colonial period it didn't seem appropriate to the British and eventually got less and less financial support. Many of the British considered the dancers prostitutes.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, during the push for independence, the people wanted to find their own culture. They wanted to identify with the traditional dances but not with the dancers. Thus developed a dance that was purified in costumes and repertoire but that marginalized the original dance. At that time all upper class young girls learned the dance form but didn't pursue it as a career.

Although most young Indian girls today study Bharata Natyam, very few continue dancing after they have made their initial debut. Today the dance is performed in theatres by professional dancers. The job of the dancers is to lead the audience into different emotional experiences. Most dances are based on love, which is usually not a pleasant experience.

She demonstrated a dance about Krishna. He begins as a baby and grows up in a small village. One day he comes across young girls who have taken off their clothes to bathe in a pond. Krishna sneaks in and steals their clothes. As a child, he doesn't remember that he is a god and does many naughty things. For the next number she demonstrated an abstract dance that emphasized rhythms.

All dances begin and end with a prayer to the earth.



Continued on the next page...

October Minutes continued:

Sonja's exquisite dancing was followed by a question and answer period. The following are some of the topics covered:

Q: Has dance gone back to the temple?

A: Not as ritual but as performance.

Q: This dance has a strong connection to spirituality. Did you spiritually connect with it as you danced?

A: Absolutely. Anything I do spiritually is reflected in my dance, and my dance reflects my spirituality.

Q: What has Bollywood dancing done to this?

A: Many Bollywood dancers are trained in classical Bharata Natyam style.

Q: What role does traditional choreography play?

A: Many traditional dances get passed down, but every teacher adds something.

Q: Has Yoga developed out of dance?

A: Not out of, but side by side.

Q: This is such a demanding dance style. How does it work in such a hot climate?

A: After dancing for three hours, you completely re-dress. You lose a lot of weight while dancing and must drink 1 ½ gallons of water to get back to the same weight.

Q: Is there much use of improvisation?

A: There used to be a lot, but there's not so much today. Now it has kind of narrowed down to one set of choreography.

Q: Is traditional Indian dance alive and well in India?

A: It changes and evolves but isn't the same as Bollywood. It's taught at schools and universities and there are many performances.

Sonja added that she will be performing with a guest teacher from India at Mid-Pac's Auditorium on November 12.

Susan adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.



G. Contact the Newsletter Editor

If you have news to share, please email editor Carol Egan by November 13, 2011:
eganc001@hawaii.rr.com.