

**NATIONAL LEAGUE OF AMERICAN PEN WOMEN
HONOLULU BRANCH**
www.nlapwhonolulu.org

November 2010 Newsletter

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A. MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Gratitude is a quality similar to electricity: it must be produced and discharged and used up in order to exist at all. ~William Faulkner

The holidays whisper the approach of another year's end. Carved pumpkins, goblins and eager costumed kiddies make way for the hot roast turkeys that will soon grace many of our non-vegetarian tables, with friends and family coming together in thanksgiving. Every elementary school student knows the history of the holiday, but few of us can imagine setting up shop in a foreign country without the likes of Costco, Longs or Home Depot. That said, the world's inequities still overwhelm. I read recently that UN figures show 366 million Indians have access to private toilets or latrines, leaving 665 million who don't! And yet, when I am doing an exercise in gratitude, it doesn't occur to me to be thankful for basic plumbing. The same newspaper announced that newly installed 3G Towers now provide cell phone service at Mt. Everest's base camp. Hmmm. As a global community we have a long way to go, but I am still a big believer in the simple gestures we offer one another every day...small courtesies and kindnesses that can impact the people around us. A smile is a gift anyone appreciates – even if they've already received one that day. Someone once suggested the exercise: Each morning start the day with five things you are grateful for. I find it's a nice little buzz even before I turn on the coffee pot. I wish you and yours a rich and luscious holiday.

If you count all your assets, you always show a profit. ~Robert Quillen

--Susan Killeen

B. DELECTABLE DETOUR

NOVEMBER DELECTABLE DETOUR

WHAT: As a bonus for this season's Mark Twain celebration, a staged reading of Ron Powers' new play, *Sam and Laura*

WHEN: Tuesday, November 30, 7:30pm (Mark Twain's 175th birthday)

WHERE: Hawaii Pacific University's Paul and Vi Loo Theatre, Hawaii Loa Campus

SPECIAL: One night only—Reservations at 254-1845

General Admission: \$10.00 HPU students: \$3.00

Purchase a ticket and join the Pen Women for this special performance

Mark Twain's wit and social commentary are as familiar to most audiences as his pen name, but not all know of his personal struggles, and fewer still of the power of his dream life.

Sam Clemens met Laura Wright, the young girl who inspired those dreams and beliefs, in 1858, when she was 14. Although Sam's attempt two years later to court her was thwarted, Laura remained in his mind and heart. She visited him in a lifelong recurring dream, and became the model for his Becky Thatcher and perhaps other characters. In researching his biography *Mark Twain: A Life*, Powers saw Laura's presence as Sam's "healing angel who tempered the author's haunted memories of bereavement and despair."

In this play based on a real encounter, a young reporter who calls himself C.O. Bird arranges to meet the 80 year old Laura, and she spends her birthday evening with him. She gradually shares her story, enacted in scenes of young Sam and Laura's meeting, his dream life and their lifelong correspondence. Ultimately, recognizing Sam's spirit in Byrd, she entrusts him with the only tangible memento she has of Sam.

Joyce Maltby directs the cast, which features our own **Jan McGrath** and Maddi Ruhl as the Elder and Younger Laura, Seth Lilley as Sam, and Duncan Dalzell as Byrd.

C. PEN WOMEN IN THE NEWS

From **Jan McGrath:**

I'm so blessed to have had Victoria's help in bringing Emily Dickinson's poetry and spirit to such an appreciative audience. Your laughter was a joy, and your tears a gift I'll cherish. My director thanks you, my inspiration thanks you, and I thank you!

Reminder...To those interested in attending our *Sam and Laura* performance at HPU Theatre on November 30th, please call 254-1845 for reservations. We'd love to see you there.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS

You and a guest are cordially invited to attend the annual Pen Women's CHAMPAGNE CHRISTMAS BRUNCH at the Outrigger Canoe Club on Wednesday, December 8th, at noon. Free parking at the Outrigger Canoe Club. (Mention the Pen Women party and member Nancy Moss at the guard station.) Cost: \$30 per person. Send checks to Pam Sakamoto (2144 Hakanu Street, Honolulu, HI 96821) by December 1st.

Workshops:

Your Family, Your Story – Saving Memories for Future Generations. Learn how to develop your ideas, create and conduct an interview outline, evaluate equipment and organize a lifetime of photos for your family video history project. No camera or computer necessary. Workshops will be held on November 20, January 22, and a date in March which is yet to be determined. Presented by Pen Women Friend, Janette Sargent-Hamill. For more information, email Janette at windwardproductions@hawaii.rr.com

E. OCTOBER MINUTES

National League of American Pen Women

October 6, 2010

The October meeting of the National League of American Pen Women Honolulu Branch took place at Alan Wong's Pineapple Room. Attendees included 21 members, 16 friends, 25 guests, and 18 visitors.

President **Susan Killeen** opened with meeting with the words, "We're not in Kansas anymore," and then added, "This place has never been so colorful."

Large umbrellas adorned the room, each covered with gold or some other brightly colored foil or paper. Hanging from the umbrellas were scarves, socks, colorful pieces of fabric, and many other eye-catching items.

Susan invited first time guests, of whom there were many, to introduce themselves. She then reminded members and friends to let her know of any awards or kudos they received, saying that Pen Women likes to celebrate our accomplishments.

She made note of the flyers on each table that announced Hawai'i Watercolor Society's 2010 Open Exhibition, October 2-29, juried by Linda Kemp. The flier cordially invited everyone to the Opening Reception, Thursday, October 7, from 4-6 p.m. at Pauahi Tower, 2nd floor lobby.

Other flyers announced a Workshop entitled "Ten Steps to Finishing Your Novel" at National Pen Women Headquarters in Washington D.C., and Susan reminded us that Pen Women who need a place to stay in D.C. are welcome to stay at National Headquarters.

She announced that a group of Pen Women members will be answering phones for the KIPO fund raiser, October 18 from 3:30-6:30 p.m. and reminded us that if we were planning to make a pledge to Hawaii Public Radio (new or renewing) this would be a good time to do it.

She also reminded members and friends that we will hold our annual boutique as part of the November meeting. We are welcome to bring our art work or books to sell. She said this is always a busy meeting, so we should make reservations early.

Next came the introduction of new friends: **Barbara Kozlovich** and **Alice Folkart**.

Vice President **Victoria Gail-White**, wearing a hat with peacock feathers because she had been told she was King, introduced our speaker, **Elsha Bohnert**, whom Victoria called, "an enchantress because she brought to this meeting more people than we've ever had before, and a guru, one who is a dispeller of darkness."

Elsha and her husband had until recently been living in Bali for a time, and Elsha devoted her talk to helping us to understand the life of that island. She said she wanted to help us get into the skin of a Balinese in order to look at our own life with the dimension of a Balinese.

She said **Sabra Feldstein** was the High Priest. If Sabra were in Bali, she would be sitting on a table, and everyone would address her with "thee" and "thou."

If you are Balinese, your birth order is important. Our name tags contained the name of our birth order. Elsha asked each group to stand as she explained their name. The first born, Wayan, came to earth to rule. (There were more Wayan than anything else.) When the second born, Made (pronounced "ma day") stood, Elsha asked them how they liked being ruled. There were only four third born, Nyoman, and also four fourth born, Ketut. With the fifth born, of whom we had only two, you start the names over again with Wayan. The title of your birth order is part of your name. She gave the example of Sabra, a first born, who, if she lived in Bali, would be "Wayan Feldstein Sabra."

Bali is half the size of the Big Island. The Big Island has 175,000 people, while Bali has four million. It is the only Hindu island in Indonesia. The others are all Muslim. Hinduism in Bali, however, is different from that in India.

On October 12, 2002, there were three terrorist bombings in Bali. This, Elsha said, was their nine-eleven. They responded by asking themselves, “How did we offend the gods?” and “What can we do to set it right?” One month later they held an all-Bali cleansing (purification) ceremony.

Other highlights of her talk: Each village is autonomous. Every married person is a member of the governing council of their village. Together they decide everything that happens in the village, including weddings and funerals. Their focus in life is to be in balance with God and to have harmony with all people and harmony with nature. Everything they do is to please God. For instance, they place flowers everywhere because they know that pleases God. The purpose of drama, painting, and all the arts is to please God.

The entire village works together—cleaning the streets, decorating the temple, making offerings, etc. When anyone needs help, they beat a drum and all villagers come to help. They cannot *not* help. Every villager spends ten days a month on temple work and ten days a month working for the well being of their neighborhood. On New Year’s Day all of Bali goes silent. No radio. No TV. All food for the day is prepared before hand.

Elsha said she thought she went to Bali to hide the person she was in Hawai’i. She didn’t realize that she went to Bali to be found, but that’s what happened.

This inspirational talk ended with a processional in which nine Pen Women each carried one of the umbrellas around the room, presumably picking up the offerings we had made by wrapping some of the candy and flowers from our tables into our colorful napkins. In the end, however, Elsha told us we could keep the napkins.

She wasn’t able to show her slide show due to technical difficulties, but said she would put it on the Pen Women web site. To find the web site, google “Honolulu Pen Women.”

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Alpert Mower
Secretary

F. NEXT MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, January 12, 2011
TIME: 11:30 a.m.
PLACE: Pineapple Room
SPEAKER: TBA

G. CONTACT THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

If you have news to share, please email editor Glenda Hinchey by the 13th of the month: glendahinchey@yahoo.com.