

Surfwriters Newsletter

Vol. 50 Issue 10

April/May/June 2009

~~~ Announcements ~~~

*SURFWRITERS LUNCHEON MEETING  
ON THE PATIO  
OF THE  
PALOS VERDES ART CENTER*

*5504 W. Crestridge Road  
Rancho Palos Verdes 90275  
(310) 541-2479*

*FRIDAY, JUNE 26<sup>TH</sup>, 11AM - 1PM*

*The Luncheon Menu*

*Ziggy Novak will bring sandwiches. Other members are welcome to bring desserts, juice, tea -- anything that does not require preparation in the PVAC kitchen. June 26<sup>th</sup> is the Art Center's annual meeting. Surfwriters must exit the patio by 1PM so that staff can prepare for the meeting and buffet dinner to follow.*

*The Program*

*~~Conversation and Food, Memories and Fun~~*

*"Reminiscences"*

*Our lovely Mary Vandever left us on May 29<sup>th</sup>, this year. Luncheon attendees will share reminiscences of Mary through stories, poems and anecdotes.*

*"Just for Laughs"*

*We'll enjoy a brief (5-10 minute) performance by two talented writer-thespians.*

~~ April Success! ~~

*Poetry and Music in the Gallery -- Saturday, April 25, 2009*

*Thanks to the efforts of Virginia Twohy, Wanda VanHoy Smith, Elayne Sidley, Alice Sesno, Deborah Paul, President Maria Ruiz, all the poets and musicians and so many others, our annual event at the Malaga Cove Library Gallery was a great success. Alice and Deb presented each performer with a memento: a silky mesh bag containing an engraved medallion on a ribbon, plus a star-shaped chocolate. The thoughtful gesture conveyed thanks and said that our performers were winners, all!*

◊◊◊ -- Community Events -- ◊◊◊

~~ Writing Workshops ~~

(Free of Charge)

**Millie Ames Writing Workshop**

**Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.**

Peninsula Center Library

Conference Room (Main Level)

701 Silver Spur Road

Rolling Hills Estates 90274

Purpose: To help writers get published

Facilitator: Jean Shriver

Frequency: Meets Weekly

(no meeting the last week of the year)

Genre: Fiction and Non-Fiction

(no drama or poetry)

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~~ Writing Workshops ~~

(Free of Charge)

Writing Workshop

**Frequency: Meets Bi-weekly**

Fridays 1:45-4:00 p.m.

Next meeting: July 10

Palos Verdes Estates/Rolling Hills Estates

Purpose: Explore voice, form, and style;  
support/critique work; share publishing opportunities.

Facilitator: Rotating

(Everyone who wishes may participate as facilitator!)

Questions? Contact [kcjohnson@starnetdial.net](mailto:kcjohnson@starnetdial.net).

Genre: Poetry/Short Prose

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**Summer Sessions with Poet/Artist/Teacher**

~~ Regina O'Melveny ~~

**TENDING WORDS, CREATING A NATURE JOURNAL**

Regina writes: "I'll be offering a writing class again this summer in the South Coast Botanic Garden with the added opportunity of creating a nature journal with sketches. Please note, that this is optional and if you'd like to simply come and write, that would be wonderful. If you'd like to sign up, call the Botanic Garden at the number below. Hope to see you among the trees, Regina"

In this workshop we'll explore the paths of the botanic garden, immersing ourselves in the spirit of place. We'll cultivate the words and drawings that grow from our encounters. Please wear comfortable shoes, bring water and a journal as well as drawing materials if you wish. You may also want to bring binoculars for viewing birds or a magnifying glass for smaller creatures."

The dates are: June 25, July 2, 9, 23, 20, August 6

Cost is \$45 members \$50 non-members

Classroom "B" and garden grounds

South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation

26300 Crenshaw Blvd.

Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274

(310) 544-1948

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

~~ Coffee Cartel ~~

**Guests and Open Mic Readings**

No charge. Tuesdays 8:10 p.m. (Sign up for open mic at 7:50 p.m.)

Hosts Jim Doane, Larry Colker & Stephany Prodromides

**Featured Readers in June-July 2009**

June 2 Mike the PoeT, Bard of LA

June 9 Eric Howard

June 16 Fernando Castro

June 23 Walter Bargaen, Missouri State Poet Laureate

June 30 Keith Niles & David Shane Smith

July 14 John Menaghan

July 28 Jan Wesley

1820 So. Catalina Ave., Riviera Village

Redondo Beach 90277

(310) 316-3544

For info, call (310) 548-5344

or visit [www.redondopoets.com](http://www.redondopoets.com).

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~~ SUMMER STUDIOS: FREE ART EVENT! ~~

**4<sup>th</sup> Friday "ART JAM Night!" - Art, Music, and Poetry**

**Friday - June 26 - 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.**

**Come Celebrate the Arts!**

Summer Studios Arts Academy supports the local arts community every month with "ART JAM! Night." Artists sign up to bring an art piece for display, writers and poets a page to read, and musicians a song to play for an exciting evening of cultural enrichment, refreshments, and relaxed socializing.

**Free to the Public**

Don't miss this evening of art, music, and poetry!  
Come join the fun and mingle with the art crowd!

**This month's theme: "Summertime"**

Upcoming Themes:

July: "Let's Dance!" August: Open Mike

September: 2009 ALL MEDIA - Juried Art Awards  
Competition - Open Reception

SUMMER STUDIOS ARTS ACADEMY

2161 Lomita Blvd., Lomita, CA 90717

(1 block east of Narbonne Ave.)

All talent must call and speak with David Parsons prior to Art Jam (no later than Tuesday, June 23) regarding signup and specific requirements.

Contact David Parsons, Exec. Director

Phone: (310) 325-8801

[www.SummerStudios.net](http://www.SummerStudios.net)

~~ Mary Blei Vandever ~~

After 70 full years, Mary Vandever has left this world. We'll miss our friend and colleague. What can one say about her? Mary --tall, regal, with blue eyes and lovely smile. And who can forget her dry wit?

Here are a few excerpts from Mary's bio, written in 1996, and her obituary, written by her just a couple of weeks ago.

**Mary Vandever, in (Most of) Her Own Words**

Born March 1, 1939, to Anton and Catherine (White) Blei at their ranch in the Rocky Mountain foothills near Westcliffe, Colorado, Mary was the youngest of four children. She attended the Willows School, a one-room schoolhouse listed in the historic registry, later graduating from Custer County High School. As a young girl, she spent Saturdays reading in the library while her mother donated time. Surrounded by books, Mary concluded that authors experienced all the fun and adventure they described. She decided to do the same, wanting to hop freights and ride the rails, or at least hunt dinosaurs. But when her father taught her to drive, she discovered that wheels roll where rails don't go. Mary became a cross country truck driver and spent several years driving big rigs, becoming known up and down the "super slab" as the Dragon Lady. One night, on a highway somewhere between Boston and L.A. she decided to share her adventures with the world, whether it was prepared to hear them, or not. So, she began spinning tales of her own.

Mary's writing credits include books, short stories, poetry and a nomination for the Pushcart Prize. Her articles have appeared in *Truckers/USA* and *The Daily Breeze*. The Palos Verdes Theater Workshop once produced a skit of hers. An active member of writing groups in Southern California, Mary edited the Southwest Manuscripters anthology in 1996 and served two terms as president of Surfwriters in 2006-2008. Recently, Mary drafted the final chapter of her latest novel. Wherever Mary is, she's sure to be stirring up adventure, excitement --- and laughs!

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Marcia Reed suggested that members might wish to share their reminiscences of Mary V. If anyone would like to write a short piece and send it in, we could devote some pages in a future newsletter to remembrances.

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~~ May Speaker, Don Johnson ~~

Don Johnson at Surfwriters, May 29

Members and guests were delighted with the opportunity to hear Don Johnson, author, teacher, and Toastmaster International's World Champion of Public Speaking. In his 33 years experience, Mr. Johnson has given over 600 talks to corporate and community groups. During this outstanding free event, Don Johnson discussed the writing process and his latest book, "Speaking from the Right Side of the Brain," after which, he answered questions posed by attendees.

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~~ More Literary Riches ~~

**La Jolla Writers Conference**

**Marcia Reed** reminds us of the La Jolla Writers Conference, which takes place November 6-8, 2009, at the Paradise Point Resort & Spa.

<http://www.lajollawritersconference.com/ljwc>

<http://www.lajollawritersconference.com/ljwc/location-and-dates>

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Thanks to **Mel Harter** for forwarding the **Santa Barbara Writers Conference (SBWC)** newsletter. Below, you'll find information from the **SBWC website**.

**Workshops for 2009/Conferences for 2010**

"We are busy planning the conferences for March and June 2010 and in the meantime will hold a series of one-day workshops in poetry, plus workshops in fiction, memoir and marketing, this summer and fall."

**SBWC's First Annual National Writing Contest**

"We are pleased to announce our First Annual SBWC Writing Contest in Fiction, Nonfiction and Poetry! Winners in each category will receive tuition scholarships to the June 2010 conference, and a grand prize winner will receive a scholarship and have an opportunity to have lunch with a top agent during the conference."

Santa Barbara Writers Conference  
P.O. Box 6627 \* Santa Barbara, CA 93160  
info@sbwriters.com \* (805) 964-0367  
www.sbwriters.com

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**Peninsula Friends of the Library**

~~ Books for Troops ~~

A \$15 donation will provide 40 books for our troops around the world. To donate, contact Malaga Cove Library, 2400 Via Campesina, Palos Verdes Estates 90274, (310) 377-9584 x553.

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~~ Anthology Project Update ~~

With the anthology pre-publication phase drawing to a close, we decided it was time to revisit the topic of self-publishing. This past weekend, we attended a seminar to learn the latest developments in the field and confirm or revise previous decisions. We wondered: Has pricing changed? What new options are available? Is it still advisable to work with a POD (Print on Demand) publisher? Printer or POD publisher: which is best for us? Since we have chosen our cover design already, should we proceed on our own? What are the advantages in working with a small firm? Armed with up-to-date information by experienced writers/publishers, we are undertaking new research in order to make a head-to-head comparison of options.

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*What is the Pushcart Prize and what is its history?*

**The Pushcart Prize** is a prestigious American literary prize by Pushcart Press that honors the best "poetry, short fiction, essays or literary whatnot" published in the small presses over the previous year. For over three decades the Pushcart Prize, and the small presses and authors honored, have flourished. Many new presses and dozens of new authors emerge annually, and so the Pushcart Prize has been renewed since its first edition in 1976.

*What is the Pushcart Prize nomination process?*

Little magazine and small book press editors (print or online) may make up to six nominations from their year's publications by the December 1 deadline each year. The nominations may be any combination of poetry, short fiction, essays or literary material. Editors may nominate self-contained portions of books—for instance, a chapter from a novel, as well as translations, reprints and both traditional and experimental writing.

*How is a nominee selected for the Pushcart Prize?*

Small-press editors nominate works from their journals in the fall, which are then reviewed by judges through the spring. The winners' work appears in a "Best of the Small Presses" anthology distributed annually by W.W. Norton & Company.

*What is the Pushcart Prize "Best of the Small Presses" series?*

Hundreds of presses and thousands of writers of short stories, poetry and essays have been represented in the pages of the annual collections over the years. Pushcart Prize annual editions are found in most libraries and bookstores. Each volume contains an index of past selections, plus lists of outstanding presses with addresses.

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*Wishing best of good health to all our members in 2009!*

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Please send newsletter announcements to Editor-Publisher, KC Johnson: [kcjohnson@starnetdial.net](mailto:kcjohnson@starnetdial.net).

Read the monthly newsletter online at the **Surfwriters website**: [www.palosverdes.com/surfwriters/newsletters.htm](http://www.palosverdes.com/surfwriters/newsletters.htm)

*Welcome to Surfwriters*

Palos Verdes Art Center  
5504 West Crestridge Road  
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

