

January 2019
Winter Issue



The Guild Gab



Linda Peterson
President 2017 - 2019

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Eden Garcia-Balis, LMFT
Chief Executive Officer
AMCS

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The Prez Sez

Happy New Year!

As we reflect on last year's accomplishments, we want to highlight the selection of Airport Marina Counseling Service, the organization we support, as "Best Nonprofit," Candy Yip, our current Guild secretary and Guild Gab editor, as "Best Volunteer," and the Guild as a "favorite membership organization" by readers of the *Hometown News*. It is wonderful to be recognized, especially when the recognition is well-deserved.

As we look forward to 2019, we hope you will resolve to renew your membership in the Guild, as our annual membership drive starts this month, and a renewal envelope is included in this

newsletter. Membership is a very easy way for you to support the cause of good mental health in our community. All the proceeds from our fundraising activities underwrite AMCS, which helps to provide critical support to local people with group, family and individual therapy, as well as with outreach to schools and community groups like the Boys & Girls Clubs. In addition, AMCS is one of the best places in Southern California for training therapists. We need all our members to renew their support for these vital activities.

In addition to financial support for AMCS, our Guild

plays a role in improving the mental health and community spirit of our members with a variety of activities that are fun as well as fundraisers. In September, we relaxed and enjoyed Margarita Monday, before gearing up for our 36th annual Holiday Home Tour in November, both of which are described in this newsletter.

We have great things to look forward to as well. Check out the stories about the activities we are planning for this winter and the coming spring. We hope to see you soon at one of our events! Thank you for your support.

Linda Peterson
President 2017-2019

Eden's Epistle

AMCS continues to break new ground!

Last year, we were proud to unveil our new LGBT Affirmative Therapy Center, which specializes in psychotherapy for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender folks. The new center makes AMCS one of the few clinics in Los Angeles and the only one in the area specializing in services specifically geared toward the LGBTQIA population.

The clinic currently has more therapists in training, 60, than

ever before and, in partnership with Antioch University, the clinic will put on a continuing education course for licensed mental health professionals on working with Transgender and Gender Non-binary Clients in March. We are truly dedicated to educating the next generation of mental health professionals.

On the program side, we are excited to be expanding our At-Risk Kids Program, enabling us to help even more local students, and we're always looking to create new

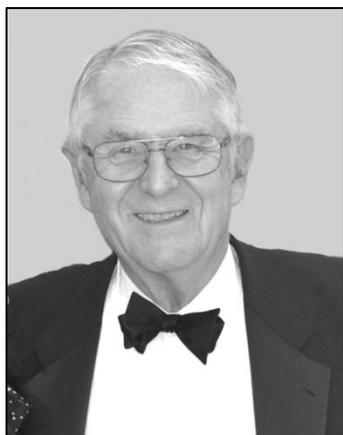
programs to match the needs of our community. Last year, for example, we were pleased to offer a very successful free group titled "Happy Holidays" for people who needed some additional support around the holidays.

Looking ahead, we are gearing up for our annual Spring into Well-Being Gala scheduled for April 11, 2019. This year's event will honor local realtor Jane St. John and will include lots of fun, food and surprises! Please save the date.

Here's to a great 2019!



Meet a Member – Jim Workman



Jim Workman is a familiar presence at the Holiday Home Tour, where he usually wears his tuxedo to be a docent at the New Year's Eve house. He has been an active member of the Guild since the death of his wife Marian, who had been a volunteer at the Guilded Cage and with the Guild. He has continued his Guild service as a tribute to Marian. Shortly after her death in January 1999, he bought a tuxedo to wear on a cruise and decided he could get his money worth

by wearing it to the Home Tour. He notes that his cruise trips rarely require tuxedos anymore, which is good because he has noticed that it doesn't fit as well as it used to fit, perhaps due to another of his volunteer activities. To keep busy between Home Tours, Jim volunteers as an "assistant chef" at Caltech, where he has done everything from bottle washing to cooking crepes for a midnight brunch during finals week. He now lives a bi-coastal life,

spending several weeks at his family's summer cottage on a small lake north of New York City. He hosts an annual summer party there for Caltech Alumni, with as many as 60 guests. He travels frequently, primarily taking river cruises. His next plans include a river cruise down the Danube from Budapest to the Black Sea, a tour of China, and a possible return trip to England, where his granddaughter is about to graduate from Oxford.



Meet a Member – Laura McGaughey



Laura McGaughey was born in New York and her family moved to California when she was young. Education was always her goal and she pursued several credentials, a Bachelor's, Master's and a Doctorate in Educational Administration. She held many jobs from Elementary school teacher through High School, including Gifted, Special Needs, High School Counselor and Principal. She

retired after being the Superintendent of the Culver City School District for 9 years. Her husband, Don, is also a retired educator. Her favorite job was being a High School Counselor because she felt she made the greatest impact on a student's life. They lived in Westchester for several years and moved to San Pedro and later returned to live in Playa del Rey. They asked a friend what charity

would be good to support and were told about the Guilded Cage and AMCS. Counseling services are something Laura values very much. She and her husband enjoy volunteering as docents on the Home Tours and attending the annual gala at AMCS. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, movies, cooking and traveling. Thank you, Laura and Don for being active and generous supporters.



Meet a Member – Sandy Lubovski



Sandy Lubovski is a native Californian and grew up on the Westside. She and her husband, Marty, moved to Westchester in 1969. They have 2 children, Susan and Rich, and a granddaughter Jana, who is the light of her life. Sandy graduated from LMU with a degree in Business Administration. She was very active at her children's schools. She participated in PTA, was a Camp Fire leader for 10 years and was a co-founder of the Westchester

Neighborhood School which is now known as the Westside Neighborhood School. Sandy says "action" has always been her middle name because the minute she joined WMHG, she got involved. Her home was on the First Annual Home Tour 36 years ago. Sandy volunteered at the Guilded Cage, chaired the advertising committee, was editor of the Guild newsletter for 13 years, served as President of the WMHG and received the Heart of Gold Award in 2000. She continues

to serve as Co-Chair of the Advertising Committee responsible for the Home Tour program booklet and serves on the Board of Directors for AMCS and WMHG. Sandy says the friendships she has made working with volunteers who support mental health issues are very rewarding. Her favorite pastime is playing golf. We salute Sandy for her years of service and generous support to WMHG and AMCS.



36th Annual Home Tour

Our 36th annual **Holiday Home Tour**, held this past November, once again was a terrific success as our largest fundraiser of the year. This year's Tour not only raised more than \$50,000 for **AMCS**, it celebrated our community and introduced new people to our organization.

We were happy to feature five special houses in the community, each decorated for a particular holiday, but all differing in size, architecture and features. There were four Westchester homes, including a Kentwood bluff home with amazing city, marina and ocean views that featured Thanksgiving décor, two totally redone two-story homes both decked out for Christmas, and a renovated bungalow decorated for New Years' Eve. A large new Playa del Rey home with a modern open floor plan and views of the ocean and marina was decorated for Chinese New Year. In each home, arrangements from Flowers by Felicia enhanced the holiday theme. Pictures from our **36th Annual Tour** are available on our website, at www.westchestermhg.org.

Former Guided Cage volunteer Kathy Davison won **AMCS's** Hawaii raffle prize, scoring a great trip. Our basket raffle, featuring 21 unique gift baskets, also was a tremendous success. In addition, the Holiday Marketplace featured 12 different vendors, who sold a wide variety of merchandise, including handbags, jewelry, candles, holiday decorations, and food. The vendors included three tables with popular handcrafted products created by a group of volunteers called the Guild Crafters. Students from Westside Neighborhood School who participated in our **Home Tour** logo contest attended the event, which featured the two logo contest winners.

Our **Holiday Home Tour** does not happen without the dedicated participation of a large number of people. We are very appreciative of the homeowners, the realtor sponsors, and the local businesses and individuals who have purchased advertising in our Home Tour Program or provided in-kind support for our prize drawing or the flowers to adorn the houses.

Please support these companies by using the Program as a local business directory throughout the year. All of these entities recognize the importance of community, and that alone is a good reason to patronize their businesses. We also were delighted to have more than 100 community members volunteer as docents at the five houses, as well as many other volunteers who worked at the reception.

You should mark your calendar for next year's **Tour**, which will be **Sunday, November 3, 2019**. If you have a home you think should be included in the Tour, or if you'd like to help with Tour preparations, please let the Tour committee know by contacting Janie Guthrie at janieguthrie@gmail.com or 310-305-9808.



WMHG President Linda Peterson and AMCS Chief Executive Officer Eden Garcia-Balis congratulate our Hawaiian vacation prize winner, Member Kathy Davison.



2018 Home Tour Co-Chair Janie Guthrie with Pam Crockett



Guild Treasurer Judy Dews with Sponsor/Member Jane St. John



Congresswoman Maxine Waters with Guild Secretary Candy Yip

The Banner Mystery

For two years in a row now, our Home Tour banner fastened to the fence at the YMCA on Sepulveda has disappeared. No one at the Y has any idea what happened to it. We fasten the banners with cable ties, so we are fairly sure it didn't blow away, but what has happened two years in a row is a complete mystery. Two of our Home Tour committee members have gone by the day after the Home Tour each year to take down the banner at the Y, but each year someone beat them to it. Does anyone have any clues?





Margarita Monday = Tasty Fun



Annual Meeting

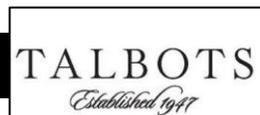
This year's Westchester Mental Health Guild **Annual Spring Meeting** is scheduled for **May 15, 2019 at 11:30am** at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Our guest speaker is **Nicole Barkopoulos**, who will be discussing the stressful transitional period of the aging adult population using meaning-centered therapy.

Nicole is a Marriage and Family Therapy Associate who has been at AMCS for 2 years. She has had the opportunity to train in the Initial Consultation track, the Immediate Intervention track, worked with youth and currently runs groups for the clinic. She has facilitated the Self-Esteem Group, the Medication Support Group, the Holiday Group, and will be starting the 50+ Know Your Why Group. She currently works at a Crisis Residential Treatment Program as the therapist on staff providing case management and therapy from a Trauma-Informed perspective.

Nicole's long term goals are to work with the underserved young adult population, assisting them through that stressful, transitional period of their lives where many mental health disorders tend to surface, as well as doing the same for the aging adult population. *"I plan to incorporate meaning-centered therapy no matter what population I work with, as finding meaning can help us all through both terrible and wonderful times."*



2019 Fundraisers



CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN
Thursday, February 28

The Guild invites you to enjoy a California Pizza Kitchen fundraiser on **February 28, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.** Come enjoy a meal at CPK, 3320 North Sepulveda Boulevard, Manhattan Beach and the restaurant will donate back 20% of the bill, excluding tax and tip, to WMHG. Be sure to tell the waiter you are supporting the WMHG fundraiser when ordering. This is a great way to raise money for AMCS and have delicious food at the same time. For double fun, enjoy our fashion show, then walk across the parking lot for a CPK lunch.

www.cpk.com

Gather friends and friends.
Bring your coupon. Enjoy.
February 28, 2019
11am – 10pm

Westchester Mental Health Guild
FUNDRAISER
February 28, 2019



CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN

Additional coupons
available on our website
www.westchestermhg.org

TALBOTS FASHION SHOW
Thursday, February 28

The Guild will be hosting a fashion show fundraiser at Talbots Store located at 3200 North Sepulveda Boulevard, Manhattan Beach on **February 28th 2019 at 9:30 a.m.** Come see the latest spring fashions and also have a chance to win Talbots gift cards. Light refreshments will be served. The price is **\$20** and checks should be made to the Westchester Mental Health Guild. Proceeds from this event will be given to AMCS. Please invite your friends. Seating is limited. Please contact Marlene Obrietan at (310) 645-9698 for reservations.

www.talbots.com

Great Investment Opportunity

You can invest in your community's mental health and receive the dividend of knowing you are helping provide services which will be of benefit to many who otherwise could not afford them. Membership dues paid to the Westchester Mental Health Guild are used to help support the valuable work of the Airport Marina Counseling Service. With membership, you will be kept informed of activities in which you can participate – excursions, social events, fashion shows, special speakers, Fun(d) raisers, Home Tour, etc.

Please use the enclosed envelope to pay dues: \$35 Individual/Family Membership; \$50 Patron membership; \$100 or more "100 Plus Club" Membership.

Thank you for investing with us!

Gail Ruhlen, Membership Chair
gailruhlen@aol.com

Benefits of Volunteering

If you are looking for a way to improve your own mental health, please consider volunteering. Numerous studies confirm multiple benefits from volunteering, whether you pack boxes at a food pantry, walk shelter dogs, or answer travelers' questions at the airport. Helping others furthers your own mental health because volunteering improves the brain's biochemical activity by releasing endorphins, the "feel good" chemicals that help combat stress. It also makes you feel a part of the community, rather than merely one of millions in our metropolis. Volunteer work is also a proven way to make new friends.

You might also consider volunteering with us. We are looking for new **Board members** to participate in the planning of our activities. Board members are expected to attend monthly Board meetings (when possible) and to participate in one of our committees. If you are interested, please contact Linda at lspeterson7053@ca.rr.com.

If you are unable to make that commitment, please consider volunteering at one of our many events. Not only is it good for you, it's fun to do!

Happy New Year!



Holiday Home Tour and Reception Memories



Thursday, February 28th
California Pizza Kitchen

Thursday, February 28th
Talbots Fashion Show

Thursday, April 11th
AMCS Spring into Well
Being Celebration

Wednesday, May 15th
11:30 am Annual Meeting

Sunday, November 3
37th Annual Home Tour

CALENDAR



Westchester
Mental Health Guild

c/o Airport Marina
Counseling Service
7891 La Tijera Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90045

* * *

**Westchester
Mental Health Guild**
and Airport Marina
Counseling Service



Visit our website
www.westchestermhg.org

Contact Us
info@westchestermhg.org

Tribute Cards

Remember to purchase **Tribute Cards** to honor family and friends. **Tribute Forms** are available on our website.

New Members

WMHG welcomes
new members
Heather and Kevin Ivey!



Accolades in 2018

Hometown News Readers Poll

AMCS was voted **Best Nonprofit Organization**, WMHG was voted **Favorite Membership Organization**, and our own **Candy Yip**, WMHG secretary and newsletter editor, was voted **Best Volunteer**.

New Board Member



WMHG welcomes our newest
Board Member, **Pat Hedge**.

The love of our
neighbor
in all its fullness
simply means
being able
to say to him:

*"What are you
going through?"*

-Simone Weil

Westchester Mental Health Guild
c/o AMCS
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