

**April
2017**

TypeRider

Arizona Professional Writers

Formerly Arizona Press Women

Learn to relax at Rim Chapter meeting

“**M**indfulness for Relaxation and Creativity” is presented by *Relaxing the Writer* author Amber Polo at noon on Wednesday, April 19, during the Rim Country District’s meeting in the Majestic Rim Living Chapel, 310 E. Tyler Parkway, Payson. The meeting is free and open to the public.

According to Polo, mindfulness offers help for stressed writers and everyone else. During her program, explore the many faces of mindfulness from meditation to coloring books, and discover the role of mindful practice in creativity. Gain ideas for balancing your artistic, meditative and active sides.

Learn a few relaxation exercises, and return home

See Rim Chapter, Page 3



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

You haven’t missed the board meeting. I’ve been trying to bring us into the 21st Century with a Skype or some other tele-meeting format, but keep running into dead ends.

Rather than wait any longer, I spoke with former APW President Pam Stevenson, and we decided to hold the meeting in Payson the last weekend in April. I need to contact our members up north to find out what day works best for them and where they suggest we meet. Mark your calendars.

See President’s message, Page 2

Myers’ Celebration of Life on April 1

RSVP by March 29

Long-time APW member Patricia Myers, who passed away on Feb. 2, 2017, will be honored with a Celebration of Life from 1 to 5 p.m. on April 1 at Kerr Cultural Center, 6110 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale.

About 30 top jazz musicians will play in four different sets at the event. During one intermission, there will be a special video of Myers.

“I hope other APW members will attend this special celebration,” says Carol Osman Brown, who helped coordinate the video footage with APW member Pam Stevenson and Suzanne McElfresh, Myers’ daughter. “It should be fun and just what Pat would want to offer her friends.”

RSVPs are required by March 29 to ASUKERR.com or 480-596-2660.



Wanted! APW Newsletter Editor

APW members looking for a fun way to add to their resume and give back to the writing community can apply for the newly opened APW Newsletter Editor position.

Since 2010, Lynda Exley has faithfully cranked out issue after issue, but since relocating to beautiful Sedona, Arizona, and picking up full-time work, she has reluctantly vacated the position.

“It was such a difficult decision to make,” says Exley. “But I just couldn’t juggle the long commute and full-time (plus!) hours any longer. Editing the APW Newsletter has been the most rewarding experience of my writing career.”



The position requires gathering and writing APW industry-related news,

editing articles from other writers and laying out the monthly issue. The time investment is about 12-15 hours per month. There is no set layout, so you can use any publishing program with which you are comfortable.

“The newsletter was done in Microsoft Word before I started,” says Exley. “However, I’m experienced in Page Plus, so I use that. It’s a great opportunity for a new member to get to know everyone in the organization.”

Anyone interested in stepping up to the plate can contact APW President Joan Westlake at Westwoman@aol.com.

IN TOUCH WITH APW



Jan Cleere, who nominated and succeeded in having Louise Serpa (1925-2012) become an honoree in the Arizona Woman's Hall of Fame, attended March's induction ceremony at Tempe's Arizona Heritage Center along with APW members **Pam Stevenson** and **Carol Osman Brown**. Cleere wrote a biography of Serpa, who was the first woman to receive a press card from the Rodeo Cowboy Association, allowing her to photograph a rodeo from inside the arena. An integral part of the rodeo community throughout Arizona and the Southwest, Serpa was an internationally acclaimed photographer.



Carol Osman Brown reports that while travelling she received an urgent request from Ellie Hutchison of AZ Humanities to send a testimonial about the Payson Book Festival to show how AZH funds have helped support this community event. She sent a three-paragraph email that morning. This resulted in the APW event being included in this congressional document presented to the appropriations committee. Way to go, Carol!

President's Message from Page 1

Before then, I'll hope to have seen you at the April 1 memorial celebration for Patricia Myers. The jazz lineup promises to be legendary. It makes me proud to have had such a role model for professionalism and giving back to her profession and community in our organization. Patricia was handling APW's public relations and volunteered as secretary up to her final days. I knew I could always count on her for advice, expertise, judging scholarship entries and an ear to whine to—plus an evening of wine and great stories.

I ask those who have not yet followed in her footsteps to volunteer for an office or at least some duties with APW. Please step forward. We need you!

Happy spring!

Payson Book Festival receives AZ Humanities grant

The Payson Book Festival, which takes place 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. July 22 at Mazatzal Hotel & Casino, Payson, is one of only four Arizona projects recently named to receive a mini-grant from Arizona Humanities.



This free community event brings more than 70 Arizona authors to Payson to help foster interest in reading among children and book-lovers of all ages. It is presented by APW's Rim Country Chapter.

"We are honored to receive this \$2,000 grant, which will help pay for some of the expenses of this annual

event that started in 2015," says Festival Director Connie Cockrell. "However, we still encourage local businesses and organizations to continue sponsoring this community literacy project."

Last month, the festival received national attention when it was mentioned during a congressional U.S. House Appropriations Committee meeting. The book festival was cited as a successful effort to address literacy problems in rural Arizona. It is among many community-based programs that benefit from funds distributed through the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts.

More information about this year's Payson Book Festival is available at PaysonBookFestival.org.

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF PATRICIA MYERS

co-hosted by ASU Kerr Cultural Center and The Nash

RSVP REQUIRED BY MARCH 29
TO RSVP@ASUKERR.COM OR 480.596.2660

Saturday, April 1 - 1 to 5 p.m.

ASU Kerr ASU Kerr Cultural Center
Arizona State University 610 N. Scottsdale Rd., Scottsdale

In lieu of flowers, please donate to Young Sounds and The Nash at the event.

LIVE MUSIC
FOOD
DRINKS

Rim Chapter from Page 1

more relaxed than when you came. The simple practices taught don't require special shoes, expensive candles, or week-long retreats.

Polo's book, *Relaxing the Writer*, offers stressed readers suggestions and simple exercises. Her CDs help listeners relax with the "Prelude to Sleep" track, which has helped more than 8,000 people find restful sleep while listening to her voice on their Insight Timer app.

Polo has worked as a librarian and yoga teacher (not at the same time). That may explain her fantasy series, *The Shapeshifters' Library*, which is filled with shape shifting librarians.

Happily settled in Arizona since 2000, her first novels reflected her love for her new state, including *Heads in the Clouds*. Set in her Verde Valley airpark neighborhood, the book won Best Romance at the 2014 New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards. To add to her eclectic bio, she's also a freelance writer for the *Flagstaff-Sedona Dog* magazine. Info: amberpolo.com.

AZ Humanities seeks speakers: March 31 Deadline to apply

In an effort to support public programming in the humanities that promotes the understanding of human thoughts, actions, creations, and values, AZ Humanities works with cultural and educational organizations to bring humanities programs to resi-

Presentations are designed to connect local experts to an inquiring public, and foster lively discussions on cultural and historical topics.

Speakers may choose to present as a particular historical figure as it fits their presentation.



dents throughout Arizona. Currently, AZH is seeking presenters for its AZ Speaks program, which is part of its outreach.

AZ Speaks members earn an honorarium to travel statewide to deliver presentations to public audiences at nonprofit organizations. These include public libraries, museums, historical sites, historical and archaeological societies, parks, tribal entities, K-12 schools, community colleges, community centers, and other organizations at AZH's discretion. AZ Speaks is comprised of two different presentation types:

Road Scholars

The *Road Scholars* program brings the best in humanities scholarship to virtually every corner of Arizona.

Speakers in the Schools

The *Speakers in the Schools* program offers top-quality lectures on a wide variety of humanities subjects relevant to Arizona K-12 curricula.

Speakers work directly with teachers prior to the program in order to tailor the presentation to a specific grade level, meeting Arizona educational standards.

Submit applications online at azhumanities.org/programs/speaker-application-form. Paper applications are not be accepted.

Questions should be directed to Programs and Grants Coordinator Yadi Fajardo at 602-257-0335, ext. 23, or dfajardo@azhumanities.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE EVENTS

Be certain to confirm meeting details before leaving home, as locations, dates or times may change after the newsletter has gone to print.

April 1: 1-4 p.m. Polish your presentation or storytelling skills with the help of author Ethel Lee-Miller and professional storyteller Penelope Starr at a YWCA, 525 N. Bonita Ave., Tucson. Although geared for storytellers and writers, this workshop is also applicable to entrepreneurs and community members. You can use your PayPal account to sign up, or mail the \$35 fee to: Ethel Lee-



Ethel Lee-Miller

Miller, 5292 N. Spring View Drive, Tucson, AZ 85749. Info: ethel.lee.miller@gmail.com.

April 6: 5 p.m. Arizona's Unsolved Mysteries is presented by APW member Jane Eppinga, author of *Unsolved Arizona: A Puzzling History of Murder, Mayhem and Mystery*, at Prescott Public Library, Prescott Public Library, 215 E. Goodwin St., Prescott. Learn about some of Arizona's most notorious unsolved mysteries including disappearances and murders. This free program is sponsored by Arizona Humanities. Info: 928-777-1526, prescottlibrary.info.



See Calendar, Page 6

Journaling on writer's block

by Betty Webb

For me, writing is like opening a vein. As I was writing on *Desert Lost*, I kept a journal about the difficulties of the writing life. Below are some excerpts from that journal.

I can't, I can't, I just can't...

The writing has gone horribly for weeks. It seems like every day I've sat there in front of the computer screen waiting for inspiration to come. But it never did. I wrote anyway.

At first, the words I wrote were bland and the sentences clunked along like lead boots. It seemed like my characters wouldn't do anything I wanted them to do.

The plot seemed predictable and the theme – if there was one – was so well hidden even I couldn't find it.

I wrote anyway. Every day. From 4 a.m. to noon. All the time, I felt depressed and no longer believed in myself or my work. I decided to accept the fact that I was nothing more than a typing robot, a writer with no talent – just a writing habit.

It was my writing habit that kept writing, not me. I'd been doing this for so long, that I couldn't stop myself. The morning that I came down with that horrible stomach thing ... I wrote between trips to the bathroom. The day I had the argument with my friend ... I wrote to make myself stop crying.

But I wrote anyway, thank God. Because eventually, I wrote my way through the crap, and fought my way through to the good stuff.

People talk a lot about writer's block. As a journalist, I've never believed in it. After all, if a reporter tells her editor she's blocked and can't write a story that is due at 3 p.m., that reporter gets fired. Above my desk is a plaque given to me by Arizona Press Women (now known as Arizona Professional Writers). It says: "THE ULTIMATE INSPIRATION IS THE DEADLINE."

I've found that to be true. Writing is NEVER easy. People who are experiencing what they interpret to be "writers block" often believe that if writing starts getting painfully difficult, there's a problem. So they turn their backs on their computer and run away. Bad move. The truth is that writing is almost always painful. Sure, every



now and then you get a thrill when everything is working great and the words just flow. But I've found that feeling of ease and exhilaration to be very, very rare. Mostly you just slit open a vein, then sit in front of the computer and wait for the blood – and words – to flow. Still, what do you do when the words won't come?

A long time ago I read an inspirational piece that said 95 percent of the secret to success is to just "show up."

I truly believe that. When the words don't flow for me, I still sit there at the computer every bit as long as I do when the words DO flow. This means that I go to my computer at 4

a.m. every morning and sit there until noon – regardless of whether the words are flowing or not. And guess what? Those words begin flowing after I've sat there for an hour or so. One caveat: by "sitting there" I don't mean checking my emails or surfing the net. No, I mean sitting there, hands hovering over the keyboard, staring at the story that is giving me heartache. When I continue to do that, no matter how silly or heartbreaking it all seems, my "block" eventually disappears. Why? I have no idea – it just does.

The lesson I've taught myself? Don't run from the pain – embrace it. In other words, just show up. Eventually, something magical will happen ... if you just show up.

The fact that *Desert Lost* is in stores is testament to the fact that "showing up" works. The book's lead character, Lena Jones, knows that life can be hard, and I, her creator, know that writing is just as hard. In the long run, though, both life and writing are worth every painful, bloody hour.

To close, I'd like to quote from the wonderful columnist Erma Bombeck, now deceased: "When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left, and could say, 'I used everything you gave me.'"

Erma showed up.

Betty Webb is also the author of *Desert Rage*, www.bettywebb-mystery.com, and *The Puffin Of Death*, www.bettywebb-zoomystery.com.

CALENDAR FROM PAGE 4

April 11: Noon. APW Colorado River Chapter Regular Monthly Luncheon. Lisa's Bistro, 1595 Mohave Drive, Bullhead City. Program TBA. Open to the public. Free to attend. Attendees order lunch from the menu with separate checks. Info and RSVP: Brenda Warneka at warneka@cox.net, 602-740-9579.

April 20-23 Arizona History Convention at Little America Hotel, Flagstaff. Joint meeting with New Mexico. Info: arizonahistory.org.

May 18: 4-5:30 p.m. Ghost Towns of the Second World War: Arizona's Historic Military Sites is presented by Erik Berg, an award-winning historian and writer, who's contributed to several books. His work's appeared in the *Journal of Arizona History*, *Arizona Highways* and *Sedona Magazine*. Berg discusses Arizona's war-time role by focusing on the stories of those World War II sites in Arizona that still have significant remaining features from the war period. Included are many photographs and first-hand accounts. This Arizona Humanities presentation is free and takes place at Saddlebrooke Mountain Clubhouse, 38759 South Mountain View Blvd., Tucson. Info: 805-886-7519, AZHumanities.org.



June 2: 11 a.m. "Writing the Reader-Friendly Memoir" is taught by APW member and author Betty Webb at North Valley Regional Library, 40410 N. Gavilan Peak Parkway, Anthem. This free event is part of the Maricopa County Reads Summer Reading program. Info: 602-652-3000, mclcdaz.org.

June 8: 6-8 p.m. Arizona Humanities hosts author Pulitzer Prize-winning American novelist Edith Wharton when Dr. Rivers-Norton discusses excerpts from *Edith Wharton: When Words First Spoke*, the fourth chapter of her latest book *The Demeter-Persephone Myth as Writing Ritual in the Lives of Literary Women*, at 1242 N. Central Ave., Phoenix. Free. Includes refreshments. RSVP required at AZHumanities.org, click on Programs. Directions: 602-257-0335, AZHumanities.org.



June 10: 2 p.m. "Writing the Reader-Friendly Memoir" is taught by APW member and author Betty Webb at Chandler-Sunset Library, 4930 W. Ray Road, Chandler. This free event is part of the Maricopa County Reads Summer Reading program. Info: 480-782-2800, chandlerlibrary.org.



June 19: 6 p.m. "Writing the Reader-Friendly Memoir" is taught by APW member and author Betty Webb at Litchfield Park Branch Library, 101 W. Wigwam Blvd., Litchfield Park. This free event is part of the Maricopa County Reads Summer Reading program. Info: 623-935-4118, mclcd.maricopa.gov.

June 28: 6 p.m. APW member and author Betty Webb explains her approach to writing fact-based fiction to the Scottsdale Society of Women Writers at Paradise Valley's Franciscan Renewal Center, 5802 E. Lincoln Drive, Scottsdale. This free event is part of the Maricopa County Reads Summer Reading program. Info: 480-250-5556, patricia@plbrooks.com.

July 22: 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Payson Book Festival at Mazatzal Hotel & Casino, Highway 87, Mile Marker 251, Payson. Info: Paysonbookfestival.org.

Sept. 7-9: NFPW National Conference, Birmingham, Alabama. Info: NFPW.org.

Oct. 26-29: "Set in the West: Cultures Old and New," Women Writing the West annual conference at Tucson's Loew's Ventana Canyon Resort. Carolyn Niethammer and APW member Jan Cleere are conference co-chairs with Susan Cummins Miller serving as book chair. Info: Jan@JanCleere.com, 520-909-2299.



2018

Sept. 2018: NFPW National Conference, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.