

The WIM News



SUMMER 2007

President's Message

by Ann Epner

It's been a long time between newsletters. My apologies. We all seem to be busier each year. But Writers in the Mountains' classes and other activities have been ongoing and successful for the most part. Coming up are several events: an annual pot-luck lunch in a new setting – Kirkside Park - , a group of WIM poets reading at Word Thursdays in Treadwell, costumed WIMites selling peanuts at the Preserve America festivities in Roxbury over 4th of July weekend, and, of course, the annual pie social in Kirkside Park. WIM writers will also be found at The Cauliflower Festival in Margaretville in September writing poems on demand. More information about all these events can be found elsewhere in these pages, and we hope to see you all at one or more of these events.

We've welcomed **Frank Carbone** and **Wilma Mazo** to our Board of Directors. Each of them brings valuable experience and skills that are much needed.

WIM received a grant of \$1,500 from the Community Arts Funding Program, funded by The New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization program and administered in Delaware County by The Roxbury Arts Group. The funds were to offer an expanded playwriting program and to produce resulting plays in full productions in the fall in the Stamford Performing Arts Center. Five plays were given an initial reading recently, and on October 13th and 14th they will be mounted in Stamford.

Classes have been going well, but we've run into a new and irksome problem. For quite a few of our announced workshops, people have signed up and then been no-shows. This pre-

sents a number of problems. Sometimes a class seems to be full and people are told there is nothing available but a place on a waiting list. Sometimes a program appears to be full, but only a few people turn up for the first class. We set limits on enrollment for each class in order to ensure that all the participants get a chance to present their work and receive good feedback. But a class with too few participants not only represents a financial loss for WIM, but also means that participants don't benefit from balanced input and critiquing from their peers – a key component of all WIM classes.

WIM is an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff. Keeping track of registrants and notifying instructors about class compositions should be a simple task – and for the most part, it is. But if we then have to follow-up with each registrant to see if he or she actually intends to come to class, the task becomes irksome and time-consuming. We have reluctantly decided that, when a new season of classes is announced, we will require registrants to send a check for the full amount in order to hold a place in any upcoming class. This seems to be one of those inevitable changes that become necessary as an organization grows. In the meantime, we are thrilled that in almost every recent class there has been a new face or two. We welcome new and experienced writers from all over, and hope to be offering an expanded list of workshops and seminars.

I wish you all a happy and busy summer and, again, hope to see you at some or all of our upcoming events.

Calendar of Workshops and Events

July 25—August 29

**Poems From Draft to
Publication**

With Lynn Domina

Wednesdays

6—8 PM

Andes Library, Andes, NY

Six sessions for \$75

August 19

Picnic In The Park

Public is invited to participate in this reading. WIM will provide coffee, bring a bag lunch if you like.

August 23—September 27

Writing Fiction

with Jennifer Kabat

Thursdays 6—8 PM

Roxbury Arts Group Office

Roxbury, NY

Six sessions for \$75

Sunday, September 2

Turn of The Century Days in Roxbury where WIM will be selling Pies again! Great fun, great food, great family event.

Kirkside Park, Roxbury, NY

October 13 & 14

Ten Minute Plays

Five Plays written in the Ten Minute Play Workshops will be fully staged at the Stamford Performing Arts Center

Saturday at 8 PM

Sunday at 2 PM

Admission \$10 at the door

October 15—November 19

In The Midst of Winter

with Carol Little

Mondays 6—8 PM

Andes Library in Andes, NY

Six sessions for \$75

Writers Digest Book Writer's Conference

By Marleen Gagnon

On May 30th Jill Ribich and I attended the BEA/Writer's Digest Books Writers Conference at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, in New York City.

Jodi Picoult, the keynote speaker held the audience with her enthusiasm. Her message was, if you don't know about something research it. Don't be afraid to contact a specialist in the field because everyone likes to talk about what they do. And don't give up.

The first session I attended was Get Known Before the Book Deal with author, Christina Katz. She spoke about having a *platform*, a plan to get noticed. The internet seems to be the first choice whether it be a blog or your own website. Other suggestions were to send newsletters or get your name out through a network of family and friends, join a group, or visit radio talk shows.

In my second session G. Miki Hayden, a bestselling author and teacher for Writer's Digest workshops, told how You Can Write and Sell a Mystery. Miki talked about basics of writing mysteries, from start in the middle of the action and plant the murder/

crime in the first 50 pages, to explaining genres of Crime thrillers, Trade mysteries, and Romantic suspense.

Jill and I attended Ask the Agents, a panel of five agents and the editor of *Guide to Literary Agents*. They answered questions from the audience such as; How can you tell if an agent is reputable? *Check the AAR (Association of Author's Representatives) to see if they are a member.* Should a query letter and synopsis be on one page or separate? *Check with the agent requesting the information. If it isn't clear contact the agent through e-mail or call to clarify.*

The last two hours was the Pitch-Slam where the attendees have 3 minutes to pitch their book to an agent and receive a reply back. Out of the sixty-two agents there; two agents wanted to see a synopsis and first chapter of my book, one couldn't believe anyone would want it, and two others who do not represent my genre gave me websites of those who might.

We met agent Cricket Freeman of The August Agency, LLC

who is interested in giving a seminar for WIM. When asked about agents who might speak at WIM, Greg Hartfield from Writer's Digest suggested we send him an e-mail.

Suggestions for attending a writer's conference: Don't take a portfolio thinking the agents will want to see your writing while there. Learn as much about the agents as possible before going. Have your pitch well prepared. Have a notepad and pens for notes. Take a bag with a shoulder strap to carry hand-outs, bottled water, snacks, etc.

The Cauliflower Festival

On Saturday September 29th WIM will have a booth at the 5th Annual Cauliflower Festival in Margaretville. Come by to have one of our board members make a fun rhyme of your name or the subject of your choice. The festival will be held at the Margaretville Village Park. There will be lots of food and fun for the whole family. We hope to see you there!

Visit to Delahanna Writers

by Ev Ellsworth

On Friday, May 25th, Ev Ellsworth and Enda Nolan were guests at the monthly meeting of the Delahanna Writers. We were welcomed to the stone patio in the yard of Diane Nixon at her lovely home outside of Delhi. The Delahanna writers present were invited to read their pieces and fellow members offered comments and encouragement according to the the group's agreed-upon guidelines.

In 1999 several members of the Delhi Arts Group (DAG) began

meeting independently of DAG as the Delahanna Writers' Group. The name comes from the Delaware and Susquehanna rivers, which flow through the rural areas in upstate New York where the members reside.

Meetings are held monthly at the homes of members. The writing is diverse: screen plays, poetry, short stories, memoirs, plays and novels. The focus is on reacting to each other's work in a helpful manner.

Refreshments followed and discussion continued, to the accompaniment of the brook rushing by, and those present from both Delahanna Writers and Writers in the Mountains agreed that the rewards of belonging to a writers' group are many and satisfying. We hope to connect again in the future. For more information about the Delahanna Writers' guidelines and meetings, contact Jane Carr at jcarr3@stny.rr.com

News and Notes

WIM participants will be busy this summer: **Barbara Apoian** has been invited to perform an edition of her "*Among my Souvenirs*" at the new Foothills Performing Arts Center in Oneonta on Sunday, August 12 at 2.00 p.m. **Ellen Stewart** will give a lunchtime Lecture on the life of the artist Willem de Kooning at the Coffeehouse of the Stamford Performing Arts Center on July 10 from 12-2. **Wilma Mazo's** play *Risk Factors: One, Two, Three* will be given a rehearsed reading on August 5 at 7 pm at The Stamford Performing Arts Center.

PRIMOFF WINS POETRY PRIZES

Frequent WIM student Jody Primoff entered some of her poems in the annual poetry contest put on by The Arts Groups of Four Counties in

Maryland. The contest culminates in a reading and award presentation at the O'Neill Literary House at Washington College in Chestertown, where popular workshop instructor Melora Wolff was at one time the director. This past April Jody received the first and second prizes in her division. The first prize poem was one she wrote in a recent WIM workshop given by Lynn Domina.

BRIGHT HILL PRESS READINGS

On August 9, four Writers in the Mountains' poets will be featured at Word Thursdays, the reading series now celebrating its fifteenth year at Bright Hill Center, Treadwell. Poets Susan Hoover, Woodstock, and her accompanist, cellist Sara Smolen, Ithaca will also

be on the program. The WIM poets are Jodi Primoff, Suzan Pratt, Buffy Calvert and Ann Epner. All four have been honing their poetic skills in Lynn Domina's poetry workshops, sponsored by WIM.

WIM PICNIC IN KIRK-SIDE PARK

The date is August 19th, the time is 4 to 7 P.M. and the place is lovely Kirkside Park in Roxbury. Come and bring a short piece to read, as we will have a microphone. You can park behind the Gould Church, and come to the island. We will provide paper goods and coffee—bring whatever else you want to drink. You can brown bag it or bring picnic fare to share. You might also want to bring a blanket and/or chairs. If the weather is uncooperative, we can move to Roxbury Arts Group.

Missing

There will be a staged reading of three short plays written by Ann Epner, under the collective title "Missing" at the Stamford Performing Arts Center on Sunday, July 15 at 3 pm. They are being presented as part of Stamford PAC "mini-

Chautauqua" series. The plays are being directed by Sharone Stacy and performed by Wilma Mazo, Joyce St. George, Marge Helenchild, Jill Ribich, and Kent Brown. Some of you have seen versions of the three plays in vari-

ous stages, but Ann is working toward making a cohesive longer work from the material, and your feedback would be enormously helpful to her. Please come and please spread the word. Admission is \$8.

Plea For Pies

Labor Day weekend is the annual Turn Of The Century Days where the entire town of Roxbury steps back to the early 1900's in dress, festivities, and baseball. It is also the time that Writers In The Mountains hosts the vintage pie social to raise money to support WIM projects like this newsletter and public readings. Our pie booth is one of the highlights of the festivities and each year we put out a plea for pies, pies, and more pies! The rules are sim-

ple; nothing that needs refrigeration like cream pies, custards, or meat pies. Our mainstays are apple and peach, but we would like to offer a greater variety this year. If you have blueberries, raspberries or other fruit that would make a delicious pie, please save some for us or better yet, bake us a couple of pies and drop them off at the pie booth on Sunday, September 2nd.

We also need volunteers to

roll dough, cut fruit, and meet at the Carriage at Kirkside Park on Saturday morning to bake pies. This fundraiser is one of WIM's main sources of revenue each year so if you have ever taken a WIM workshop, attended a public reading, or tasted our pie at the Turn of The Century Days, please participate with us this year! If you can help call Jill Ribich at 607-326-7547.

Visit our Website at
www.writersinthemountains.org

Writers In The Mountains
PO BOX 474
Roxbury, NY 12474



Ten Minute Plays on Stage

Saturday, October 13 at 8 p.m

Sunday, October 14 at 2 p.m.

Stamford Performing Arts Center Carriage House

Five outstanding plays written in the Ten Minute Play Writing workshop lead by Frank Canavan will receive full staged production this fall. The plays have been critiqued by three professional playwrights and reworked to meet high professional standards. These plays cover comedy, tragedy, drama, and farce for an evening sure to entertain. Admission \$10 at the door.

This project has been funded in part by a grant from the New York State Council on the Art's Decentralization Program administered in Delaware County by The Roxbury Arts Group.