

January 2018
Winter Issue



The Guild Gab



Linda Peterson
President 2017 - 2019

Special Interest Articles:

- Meet Our Members 2
- 2017 Home Tour Wrap Up 3
- Next Annual Meeting 4



Eden Garcia-Balis, LMFT
AMCS Executive Director

Highlights:

- Fundraisers 4
- Calendar 5
- Membership 5



The Prez Sez

Happy New Year!

We hope one of your new year's resolutions is to renew your membership in the **Westchester Mental Health Guild**, as our annual membership drive starts this month. 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 **Airport Marina Counseling Service**, which helps to provide critical support to local people with group, family and individual therapy, as well as outreach to schools and community groups like the Boys & Girls Clubs. In addition, AMCS is one of the best places in the area for training mental health therapists. We need all our members to renew their support for these vital activities.

Eden's Epistle

Airport Marina Counseling Service's (AMCS) 13th annual **'Spring into Well-Being' Celebration** will be held on **Thursday, April 19, 2018**, from 6-9 p.m. at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott Ballroom. Join us as we celebrate the success of our **Champion of Mental Health, NBC4 Weathercaster, Fritz Coleman** and **Community Builder Stephanie Davis, Publisher, HomeTown News**. These individuals have been instrumental in helping AMCS become an indispensable part of the county's mental health care safety net.

In addition to providing financial support for AMCS, our Guild plays a role in improving the mental health and community spirit of our members with a variety of enjoyable tours and sociable meetings. We've been busy during the past six months. In August, we toured Homeboy Industries, the impressive organization started downtown by Father Gregory Boyle, to help thousands of troubled young gang members learn to lead productive lives that contribute to society, followed by a delicious lunch at the Homegirl Café and a tour of the Fashion Institute of Design. In November, we hosted our 35th annual Holiday Home Tour, a lovely community event that introduces neighbors to each other in a festive atmosphere.

We plan to attract more than 300 key local community and business leaders, with our goal of raising more than \$250,000 to help continue providing much-needed affordable, community-based mental health services and to support the training of our more than 50 mental health therapists per year.

Today, one in four individuals will suffer during their lifetime from some form of mental illness. Depression and anxiety are the leading cause of lost work time. AMCS' doors are open seven

We have great things to look forward to as well. Plan to join us March 15 for a fun fashion show at Talbots in Manhattan Beach, where you can follow it up with lunch at California Pizza Kitchen, which will donate part of the proceeds to the Guild.

We also are planning a spring tea on April 14, which you won't want to miss. Be sure to mark your calendar for our Annual Meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, May 16. Both our recent and upcoming events are detailed elsewhere in these pages.

We hope to see you soon at one of our events! Thank you for your support.

Linda Peterson
President 2017-2019

days a week and our agency offers on-site, low cost counseling and off-site services at local schools and a youth center. AMCS provides thousands of counseling sessions a year to children, teenagers, families, couples and individuals to help develop skills for a healthier and more productive life.

If you have questions or would like more information, please call us at (310) 670-1410 or email ebalis@airportmarina.org.





Meet a Member – Janie Guthrie



Janie Guthrie and her husband, Mark Skjervem, were approached by Becky Bednar to include their home on the 2016 Holiday Home Tour. After learning about WMHG and AMCS operations, they were thoroughly impressed with all aspects of the organizations and were happy to volunteer their home. The experience was fabulous, and they thoroughly enjoyed working with all the volunteers and Guild members. Then, board member Nancy Edwards approached Janie to join the board and she jumped at this wonderful opportunity.

Janie has over 20 years of experience in the aviation industry, with the majority on the management team at Reagan Washington National Airport. After leaving the airport, her family spent time in Abu Dhabi, UAE and Doha, Qatar for Mark’s job, then landed in Playa Del Rey, which they just love.

When Janie is not volunteering, she stays busy watching her two adult sons plan their futures, keeping up with her many home renovation projects, aviation consulting, and watching sports of all kinds, especially hockey, football and NASCAR.

She is hopeful her aviation management experience, her leadership and community building skills developed from the Leadership Arlington Program, and serving as a member on the Arlington Virginia Red Cross Board will allow her to provide change, new ideas, and profitable opportunity to the Guild. She considers it her privilege to be involved with those who continue to support the viability of providing affordable mental health care for the community.

We welcome Janie to the board with her enthusiasm and innovative ideas.



Meet a Member – Gail Ruhlen



Gail Ruhlen, our membership chair, is a native Angeleno and a long time resident of Westchester, where she and her husband, John, raised their 2 sons. She earned degrees in Christian Education while attending San Jose Bible College, San Jose State, and Pepperdine. She is employed on the staff of University Christian Church, serving in the areas of children’s, family,

and care ministries. She taught for many years at Covenant Presbyterian Nursery School and, on occasion, she still is pleased to see the parents of children she has taught as she goes about her activities in the area. Gail volunteers as a docent at the Ballona Wetlands where she is able to share her love of nature with the children who visit. You may see her at the Y

or Bay Club, working to keep herself in shape! She plays a supportive role in her husband’s many Westchester projects which serve to benefit and beautify our great community. She especially enjoys cooking, entertaining, travel and family gatherings.

Gail’s easy-going personality makes it a pleasure to work with her on the Guild’s events.



Meet a Member – Susan Zolla



Susan Zolla grew up in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia.

She graduated from Bucknell University with a major in history and psychology. Susan received her Master’s Degree from USC in School Administration and worked as both a history teacher and school administrator in a large school district. Married to Ed Zolla for 35 years, she and Ed have three adult daughters. Currently, she is president of

Horizon Buildings, an apartment, office and industrial space management company started with her husband, Ed over 40 years ago. She is also the owner of Channel Road Inn in Santa Monica and the Inn at Playa del Rey in Playa del Rey which were started by Susan. Susan is active in the community and has served as a member and then treasurer of the board of directors at the AMCS for 12 years. She is also an executive advisory board member of the UCLA Women’s

Health Center and is a supporter of various other community groups, mostly those that help provide college access to inner city students. As a member of the Westchester Mental Health Guild, she supports all the various fundraising events and donates a one night stay at the Inn at Playa del Rey for the grand prize drawing for our Holiday Home Tour.

Thank you, Susan, for your community spirit and generous contributions.

35th Annual Home Tour

Our 35th annual **Holiday Home Tour**, held on November 5th, 2017, was a very successful fundraiser. The 2017 home tour brought in more money than last year's tour and it was enjoyed by many people.

The home tour featured five wonderful houses in the community, each decorated for a particular holiday, but all differing in size, architecture and features. A lovely house in Playa del Rey was decorated for 'Christmas in a Castle' while another Playa house, filled with art, was decorated for 'A Gallery Thanksgiving.' A one-story Westchester house featured 'A Mid-Century Modern Halloween,' while another Westchester home reflected 'Autumn Tranquility.' Our fifth home rang in 'New Year's Entertaining.' In each home, arrangements from Flowers by Felicia enhanced the holiday theme. Pictures from this year's home tour can be viewed on our website, at www.westchestermhg.org.

As part of the home tour, guests enjoyed refreshments at a festive reception, and had the chance to do some holiday shopping at our holiday marketplace. The marketplace featured a variety of vendors selling a wide range of products including jewelry, pillows, Christmas ornaments, plants, handmade wooden bowls, cutting boards and baked goods. This included a table of Guild volunteers whose popular handcrafted products formerly were sold at **The Guided Cage**.

We are so grateful to all of the people who helped put this event together, including the homeowners, the realtor sponsors, the advertisers, the docents and home coordinators, the marketplace vendors, and all the volunteers who worked so many hours to make the event a huge success.

Please mark your calendar for next year's **Holiday Home Tour**, which will be held on Sunday, **November 4th**. If you have a home you think should be on the home tour, please let the home tour committee know as soon as possible. In the meantime, please use your home tour program booklet as a local business directory throughout the year to support those who support our cause by advertising with us.



2017 Home Tour Chair Ylla De Leon, Councilman Mike Bonin and AMCS Executive Director Eden Garcia-Balis



Guild President Linda Peterson with Congresswoman Maxine Waters



Hawaiian vacation prize winner!

Kudos...

Congratulations to Guild members **Jane St. John** and **Mary Ellen Cassman** for being named **2017 Neighborhood Heroes** by Councilman Mike Bonin, and to Guild crafter volunteer **Laurette Bibeau** for being honored by Pope Francis with the Catholic Church's Benemerenti Medal for her exemplary service to St. Anastasia Catholic Church in Westchester. Very well deserved honors!



Bus to Fun

Armed with snacks and anticipation, Guild members and friends gathered for the **annual bus trip/fundraiser** on August 24, 2017.



First stop: **Homeboy Industries** in downtown Los Angeles. Homeboy staff shared compelling backstories of their lives before the award-winning gang-intervention outreach provided them redemption. A tour of the facility highlighted its numerous businesses, services, and programs. **Homegirl Café and Bakery** provided delicious farm-to-table choices for lunch, lively conversation, and optional baked treats to go.

Next stop: the **Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) Museum & Galleries**. Costumes from television, cable, and streaming productions, including Emmy Award-nominated shows such as *The Crown*, *This is Us*, and *The Handmaid's Tale* were on exhibit. Our day concluded with a stop in FIDM's charming gift shop before the journey home.

www.homeboyindustries.org
fidmmuseum.org

Annual Spring Meeting

This year's Westchester Mental Health Guild **Annual Spring Meeting** is scheduled for **May 16, 2018 at 11:30am** at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Our guest speaker is **Dr. Ashley Covington**, the newest member of the Airport Marina Counseling Service.

Dr. Covington's topic is compelling as she discusses her journey and motivation for pursuing a career in psychiatry which began with the loss of a loved one to suicide during her adolescence. This experience led to an ever-growing appreciation for the rippling effects of untreated mental illness. More importantly, it taught her the invaluable mindset and healing power of finding meaning in suffering to achieve self-empowerment. It is this concept of empowerment that she aims to foster and harness in each and every one of her patients. It's also one of the many reasons she feels truly fortunate to do the work that she does.

As **May is National Mental Health Month**, we are truly grateful to have Dr. Covington share her experience with us and we hope you'll join us for what promises to be a well-timed topic and discussion. A light lunch will be served preceding the speaker. There is no fee to attend the annual meeting.



2018 Fundraisers



CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN Thursday, March 15

The Guild invites you to enjoy a California Pizza Kitchen fundraiser on **March 15, 2018 from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.** Come enjoy a meal at CPK, 3280 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.
March 15, 2018
11am – 10pm



Additional coupons available on our website
www.westchestermhg.org

TALBOTS FASHION SHOW Thursday, March 15

The Guild will be hosting a fashion show fundraiser at Talbots Store located at 3200 North Sepulveda Boulevard, Manhattan Beach on **March 15, 2018 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

Membership Renewal Time

Yes, it is that time again! Every January gives you an opportunity to renew your membership in the **Westchester Mental Health Guild** or to join for the first time. Your **annual dues of \$35** for an individual/family membership go toward our fundraising efforts on behalf of the **Airport Marina Counseling Service** and the important work it does in our community, providing mental health services to those who might otherwise not be able to benefit from them.

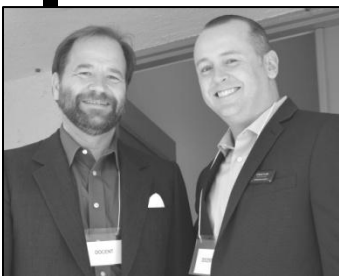
You don't need to attend meetings or volunteer to serve in any way. However, there are many opportunities to do so if you would like. You will be kept informed about special events, excursions, fashion shows, fundraising activities, and service opportunities.

Serving on the board of WMHG and helping provide direction to our activities is open to members of the Guild.

Please use the enclosed envelope to return your dues for 2018. **Thank you for your generous support which benefits many in our community.**



Holiday Home Tour and Reception Memories



CALENDAR

Thursday, March 15th
California Pizza Kitchen

Thursday, March 15th
Talbots Fashion Show

Saturday, April 14th
Spring Tea

Thursday, April 19th
AMCS *Spring into Well Being* Celebration

Wednesday, May 16th
11:30 am Annual Meeting

Sunday, November 4
36th Annual Home Tour

check www.westchestermhg.org for updates



Westchester
Mental Health Guild

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

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



Visit our website
www.westchestermhg.org

Contact Us
info@westchestermhg.org

Tributes

Remember to purchase Tribute Cards to honor family and friends, acknowledge birthdays, anniversaries, special occasions, accomplishments, or in memory of someone dear. **Tribute Forms** are available on our website.

Thank You

WMHG wishes its members, families, friends, supporters, sponsors, volunteers, and benefactors a most blessed and happy new year 2018. We look forward to our 56th year of working together in support of AMCS.

Amazon Smile

Amazon shoppers! Remember to designate Westchester Mental Health Guild as your charitable organization and use *smile.amazon.com* exactly as you use Amazon to shop so WMHG receives 0.5% of your purchases.

❄️ **Join Us** ❄️

“VOLUNTEERS

don't get paid,

not because

they're worthless,

but because they're

PRICELESS.”

-Sherry Anderson-

Recruit a Friend



<https://www.facebook.com/westchestermentalhealthGuild>

Westchester Mental Health Guild
c/o AMCS
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