



Diamond State Branch December 2020 Newsletter

President's Message

The last meeting of 2020 of our Diamond State Branch took place at Karen Kuhrt's home on Tuesday, December 8th. Karen's home was adorned with many wonderful Christmas decorations which made for a festive atmosphere. We wore our masks and had ample room to spread out yet enjoy each other's company. We had a wonderful dining table full of luncheon items which and ended with our cookie exchange.



Proposed Amendment Discussed

We discussed at length the Proposed Amendment to add men to our membership. Not all of you responded to my request for feedback, but from the ones who did take the time to weigh in, the consensus was NO, not at this time. The feeling expressed in many of the emails that I received, and the sentiment of those of us attending this meeting, was that we have a special connection, a

sisterhood of women in our Branch. Adding men into the mix would change our chemistry. There are various other organizations for creative people in our area which include men, so they are not at a disadvantage. We have always opened our meeting to the public, men, and women alike. We have both male and female presenters and rely on men at times to help us out, but we would prefer to remain an Organization for Creative Women. From the feedback I have received from other Branch Presidents, all but one Branch voted NO to the Proposal, primarily because they are aging out and need members. It is unlikely that this Proposal will go much further.



Our Letters and Artists Joint Long-Term Project

Those of us attending this last meeting discussed how our joint project with writers and artists should be set up. The artists brought a painting, Sandra Michel, our only writer in attendance, brought

poems which she read. We talked about how difficult it was to select which painting or piece of writing to bring. Which piece would be inspiring and be chosen by someone else? It is not as easy as one would think. I have invited Carol Mangano, a prospective member who attended the meeting to participate in this event.



We do not want everyone choosing the same piece, so it was suggested that we limit the number of members using that one piece. Once the jpgs and the written pieces are up on our Diamond State Branch website, **there will be 2 slots for each painting and 2 slots for each written piece. Once the two slots are filled, you will have to choose another piece from which to work. I will label each slot with a member's name.**

Writers - can submit 3 short poems, or short pieces, or 1 longer piece to be used by the artist to inspire a painting.

Please send me you written piece as an attachment to your email



Artists - can submit two paintings (jpgs) to be used by the writers to inspire a written piece.

Please send me the jpgs as an attachment to your email (not imbedded)

If you are both an Art and Letters member, you can choose to do a piece of writing from a painting and a painting from another member's written work.



I am putting Dean to work in setting up our Diamond State Branch website to have the images and writing posted there once I have received them all from all of those who would like to participate.

If you would like to participate, please send me your jpgs and written work as attachments in an email with the subject of the email as **Pen Women Project**.

I am getting excited about this. Let's Get Started !!

Please send in your Rehoboth Beach Deposit for next September

Betsy Greer has asked me to remind you that she needs to send into Crawley Realty our deposit for the rental in Rehoboth Beach. To date, only 5 people have given her their \$200 deposit. That is not enough to reserve that week. If you are planning to be a part of our group next September, please send Betsy the \$200 deposit asap.

Scholastic Writing Competition Update

Betsy Greer has been remarkably busy this month processing our regional writing entries for the 2020 Scholastic National Student Writing and Art Competition. Now that the work is submitted, Tara Lee Morgan will begin getting all these entries judged for awards. This year there are 300 students from the Region who

have entered proximately 440 entries. The total number is down from last year, however there are 12 – 14 portfolios submitted which is remarkably more than prior years. It appears that some students have used their time during Covid restrictions productively. Unfortunately, because of Covid and gathering restrictions in Delaware, the Regional Awards Celebration usually held at Delaware State University in Dover in February will be virtual this year. There will be no art and writing on exhibit in the Gallery. Award certificates and teacher pins will be mailed out directly from Scholastic to the participating student winners and their teachers. Although this means much less work for us, it is disappointing to those of us who work on our outreach project not to have the opportunity to see these young winners with their parents and teachers in Dover this year.

Our Next Diamond State Branch Meeting will be on ZOOM.

Our next Diamond State Branch Meeting will be a ZOOM event on Saturday, January 23, 2021. The **Board** will meet at **10AM** via Zoom. **Diamond State Branch members and guests** can join our Zoom meeting at **11 AM.** **I will send out a reminder and the link a week before the meeting.**

We can discuss our Writers and Artists joint project and hear what members are doing from them directly.

Members News

Tracey Landmann November is National Novel Writing Month and Tracey completed the challenge of writing a 50k word novel on November 28th. She has been busy this month with planning a series of cognitive development mural video workshops to fulfill her Mature Women Pen Women Grant she received in 2019. She hopes that in-person workshops and related activities will follow when it is safe to do so.

Karen Kuhrt Karen Kuhrt has recently won a First Place in the Tish Silver and Gold Art Show at the Tish Fine Art Plus Company Gallery in Chesterfield, Maryland. Prospective member, Carol Mangano was also in this Show and won



third place for her piece. Prize money was awarded along with Certificates. To make the event even more special, both paintings SOLD. The Show runs through January 3rd.



Congratulations to Karen and Carol.

Year End Summary

The year of 2020 has been a challenging one. The year started off very well with seven Diamond State Branch Art members having their artwork juried into the 50th NLAPW Biennial Art Show in Washington, D.C. Karen Kuhrt won the Purchase Prize Award in that Competition. We welcomed new Branch members and continued our Outreach work with the Scholastic Writing Competition in the spring. However, Covid 19 restrictions took over after March preventing us from gathering as a group. DuPont CC was closed as well as Community Clubhouse at the Village of Brandywine where we had our meetings. We were off for the summer keeping busy with our individual projects. Zoom became the mode of choice for group meetings. Billie Travalini was able to have her Writers Workshop and Maria Keane did a presentation via Zoom for the Delaware Art Museum. Conditions had improved enough in September to allow our group to go to Rehoboth Beach where we enjoyed each other's company while painting or writing. We had our first Board meeting while at the Beach and made some tentative plans for the rest of 2020. We ended our Beach week with the Opening

of our Diamond State Branch Board Show at the Station Gallery in Greenville. Here it is, December and we are back to more restrictions, so our next meeting will be a ZOOM meeting. What does this all mean? It means we are flexible and capable of finding new ways to accomplish tasks and stay connected. We are responsible in practicing measures to stay safe and healthy. Hopefully, health conditions will begin to improve in 2021 now that there is a vaccine available. One can only hope.

Until next year, enjoy your holiday and the people around you even if it is on Zoom. Stay safe and healthy.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

