



Library's Poetry Studio Evolves and Grows

Last fall, the LBI Library's Poet's Studio marked its first anniversary since its founder, Richard Morgan, left for his new home in North Carolina. While some things have changed, the energy and enthusiasm for the well-turned phrase and the appreciation of ideas "oft thought, but ne'er so well expressed" remain strong.

"We stuck pretty much to the format that Richard created," said Sue Cummings, now the leader of the Poet's Studio, which convenes at the library at 1 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month. "We still have formal instruction, followed by a reading of members' poems, but the instruction has been reduced from an hour to a half-hour, while the time for readings has been expanded from an hour to an hour and a half. Also, the instruction segment rotates among individual members.

"At the beginning of 2019, we developed guidelines for critiquing," she added. "It gave us the framework for an intense focus on our developing our talent. We're serious. It's not a social meeting, it's a work meeting."

"Sue has been a great leader," said Jeanne Sutton, a longtime member of the studio. "Often, when a leader leaves an organization that he or she had founded, the group disappears. Sue worked hard on the changeover. She is extremely well organized and communicates clearly and regularly."

Although the poetry group has held meetings that have drawn more than 15 people, Cummings is eager to welcome more members. This summer, after the annual Painted Poetry reception, a local couple, Aileen and Rick Reynolds joined the Poet's Studio. Their daughter, Bryce, had attended a poetry workshop with Richard Morgan, and, to quote Aileen, "fell in love with poetry." Though only a high-school senior, Bryce is already a published poet. When Bryce's Southern Regional schedule permits, she joins her parents at the studio.

Bryce's parents are now avid regulars. "I have been so impressed with the members," Aileen said. "This group is made up of so many brilliant, eloquent, insightful, and talented poets. I think creativity, in some form, should be a part of everyone's life, and the Poet's Studio came along at the perfect time for us."



Sue Cummings and Carol Freas with the companion book to 2019's Painted Poetry exhibit.

Surfman Lands at LBI Library

Thanks to strong rip tides, bathers on Long Beach Island last fall learned what many boaters have already learned. The surf can be a very dangerous place. In November, the Friends of the Island Library invited U.S. Coast Guard Officer Graham Sahli to talk about his experiences and training to become a surfman and become authorized to operate surf boats to rescue sailors under extreme weather and sea conditions.

Surfmen (and there are now women in this life-saving service) are a small group within the 46,000 active members of the Coast Guard. "There are about 140 active duty Surfmen in the 20 surf stations that utilize our services," Sahli said.

Sahli played a video of several Surfmen discussing

the qualities they must have to succeed. These include good judgment, patience and developing a lot of skills. Sahli confessed that he wasn't the strongest swimmer as a youngster, but worked hard to improve. He added, "I had a lot to learn, and I was on the boat as much as possible."

Sahli's team operates a 47-inch Motor Life Boat, the Coast Guard's standard life boat, that's designed to weather hurricane force winds. If it capsizes, it rights itself in 12 seconds.

Sahli noted that there were about 65 rescues from Barnegat Light in 2019. "These totals are declining each year, thanks to the efforts of boaters, particularly recreational boaters, to educate themselves on boat safety."

Project InVOLve

Monday, January 20. 3:30-6:00 p.m.

Are you retired, but still have a lot to give? Find the right volunteer opportunity for you at this volunteer fair being held in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. Sponsored by the Friends of the Island Library, several local nonprofit groups will make short presentations about the work they do and the kinds of help they need.

Quilts of Faith

Quilts come from many cultures – the Pennsylvania Dutch, Africans, African Americans, Swedes, Hawaiians, Asians, and Native Americans all have designed and created their own styles of quilts. Some of these kinds of quilts were featured in an October Friends program. In “Quilts of Faith,” professional storyteller, Michelle Washington Wilson recalled the book, “Hidden in Plain View: A Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad.” Written 20 years ago by Jacqueline L. Tobin and Raymond G. Dobard, PhD, the book put forth the first proof that quilts were designed as codes to guide slaves traveling on the Underground Railroad.



The Underground Railroad was a network of helpers.

Sometimes a seamstress on a farm or a safe house would be part of it, and would design a series of quilts. The drawing of a log cabin might mean a safe house; a sailboat could mean that a boat was waiting for you. Long stitches could indicate a day’s journey; the color blue often represented water. Ms Wilson said that songs were also used as codes, and sang several that could sound to the unsuspecting ear as innocent gospel songs, but were actually instructions to listen for a certain bird call, to come down to the river, or to follow the drinking gourd (the Big Dipper).

The use of quilts to tell a story was not new to the slaves who had been brought to America. African Kente cloth, brightly woven fabric, is used to record lineage, and the colors and weaves have various meanings. And, while some of the history on the use of codes in quilts is still in question, Ms Wilson said, “We have beliefs, and we have facts, and sometimes they get woven together.”

The Friends programs for National Friends of Libraries Week were dedicated to the memory of Rosemarie Wirth, who left a generous donation to the Friends of the Island Library in her will. ~ LHF

Egypt Program Slated



In 2018, Friends President Bernadette Callanan, Nazira Jacobsen and Geri Gallagher visited Egypt.

On Saturday, February 1, at 2 p.m., at the LBI Library, they will recount their experiences and compare the culture, governance and beliefs of the early Egyptian people in contrast with their present-day way of life. Egypt is engaged in never-ending excavations of these ancient sites to share with the world the marvels of its civilization.

Also, Egyptian born Jacobsen, who is fluent in Arabic, will share some of her experiences as a youngster and young adult in Egypt.

Please help the library by registering ahead for programs you will be attending. Call 609-494-2480. Thank you!

“Patagonia: A Journey to the End of the World”

On Tuesday, February 11 at 2 p.m., Rafael Morillo, the proprietor of MKT Eatery in Surf City, will speak about this fascinating area of South America and provide attendees with a sample of Patagonian baked goods.

Patagonia, a region of both Chile and Argentina and a starting point for trips to the South Pole, encompasses more than 400,000 square miles or one and a half times the area of Texas. With only two million people and more than half of those in its four major cities, it is one of the least inhabited areas of the world.

“There is plenty of space for a rich population of animals distributed in a varied geography with plenty of truly beautiful habitats,” Morillo said. He has visited Patagonia often in the past 30 years and considers it one of his favorite areas for fresh-water fishing.

Get in the Mood

Monday, February 3, 7:00 p.m.

Reminisce about those good old days with Dennis Linde and Michael Corliss, who will perform love songs made popular by Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, and other icons of the past. Sponsored by the Friends of the Island Library.

Don't Miss These Great Programs!

January

- 17 & 18: Friends of the Island Library's 2-Day Book Sale
- 20: Games with Friends, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- Project InVOLve, 3:30-6:00 p.m.
- 21: Adult Writers Group, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

February

- 1: Armchair Travel: Egypt, 2:00 p.m.
- 3: Games with Friends, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- Valentine Love Songs, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
- 4 & 18: Adult Writers Group, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- 6: Poet's Studio, 1:00-3:30 p.m.
- 11: Patagonia: Journey to the End of the World