

July 2018  
Summer Issue



# The Guild Gab



Linda Peterson  
President 2017 - 2019

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Eden Garcia-Balis, LMFT  
Chief Executive Officer  
AMCS

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## The Prez Sez

I hope you are having a delightful summer. We at the Guild had a busy spring, and now are getting ready for an even busier fall. As you see above, we recently adopted a new logo for the Guild, and we have a new one for the Holiday Home Tour, too. We hope you like them. Inside, you'll find a story about the wonderful students who created our new logos.

The Guild continues to need your help. If you haven't yet paid your 2018 dues, please be sure to do so right away, by contacting Gail Ruhlen and sending your check to her. Membership, only \$35 per calendar year, is a very

easy way to support our goal of furthering good mental health in our community. Second, we need your participation as a docent at one of the homes or as a volunteer at the reception for our Holiday Home Tour, Sunday, November 4. If you can help, please contact me at my e-mail address : lspeterson7053@ca.rr.com.

In addition, we have teamed up with Amazon Smile, so that your on-line purchases support our work. If you haven't already done so, please go to smile.amazon.com from your web browser, type in "Westchester Mental Health

Guild" in the box below Amazon's suggested national charities, where it tells you to "pick your own charitable organization." The Guild will receive donations of 0.5% of your purchase price every time you make an eligible purchase. You continue to use the same account on AmazonSmile as you always have on Amazon.com.

Finally, we need your help with new ideas to raise funds for AMCS. We are open to your suggestions of fun, new ways for us to generate revenue, so if you have any ideas, please let me know. Meanwhile, have a wonderful summer!

## Eden's Epistle

Living in a diverse community is a stark reminder that mental health conditions do not discriminate based on race, color, gender or identity. Anyone can experience the challenges of mental illness regardless of their background. However, culture, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation can make access to mental health treatment much more difficult.

July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month and a good time to focus on the special difficulties many

minorities have when trying to access treatment including:

- Language barriers
- A culturally insensitive system
- Lower chance of health care coverage
- Stigma

At AMCS, we are keenly aware of these issues and we strive to be a culturally competent provider, integrating the beliefs and values of each client into our treatment. While we pay special attention to minority mental health this month, I

am proud to say that AMCS continues to fulfill our mission in a very simple way - we help.

That is why I am also proud of our newly designed website at [www.AMCShelps.com](http://www.AMCShelps.com). Please visit and take a look at the many ways in which AMCS is helping our community. You can also sign up to receive our regular e-newsletter on the site. We know we don't do it alone, so please accept our undying gratitude for all that the Guild does to help us achieve our goals.



**Meet a Member – Annika Backman**



**Annika Backman** was born in Sweden and worked as a medical secretary at the Pediatric Department. When Annika came to the United States 33 years ago and settled in Los Angeles, she had various jobs. She worked at the School of Dentistry at UCLA in finance for 19 years. After she retired, she was approached by

Marlene Obrietan, her neighbor and a longtime Guild Board Member, to volunteer at the Guilded Cage. Annika helped at the Guilded Cage for 5 years helping the customers and doing some of the bookkeeping work. Annika said the WMHG gave her a wonderful opportunity to make great friends. The friendships she made at the

Guilded Cage continue with the formation of the Guild Crafters group which meets once a month to make crafts for the Guild events. In her spare time, she enjoys quilting, reading and traveling to Sweden to visit her family. Annika is very creative and we are delighted to have her as a Guild member.



**Meet a Member – Myra Kriwanek**



**Myra Kriwanek** grew up in Orange County where her father, born in the Philippines, worked as an Electronic Engineer in the aerospace industry. Myra's mother is Chinese born in Jamaica. After attending college at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, Myra married Rick whose family owned La Brea Heating & Air Conditioning Company in Los Angeles. While living and raising her family in

Westchester since 1980, Myra has been deeply involved in the schools and community. She has been a member of WMHG for over 30 years when her house was featured on one of the early Home Tours. Myra has served on the Boards of the Westchester Rotary Club, Westchester Neighborhood Council and WMHG which has been her favorite organization. She enjoys participating in the

fundraising events supporting AMCS and has a quote to share: "The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love."  
-Hubert Humphrey  
Myra devotes a lot of time to the Holiday Home Tour. She prepares the home tour directions for the booklet and helps create the most beautiful gift baskets for our raffle drawings at the Reception.



**Meet a Member – Erika Puzik**



Erika Puzik, the current board chair of the Airport Marina Counseling Service (AMCS), was born and raised in Westchester. She graduated from LMU and started her financial planning business with Ameriprise Financial in 1999. She moved her office close to home in the Howard Hughes Center in 2001 where she has been helping clients plan for a

confident retirement. This year she will be honored with the Diamond Ring Award at Ameriprise's National Conference in San Francisco, an award given for years of exceptional service to her clients. She is married and has 2 young boys, 9 and 4. She began serving on the board of AMCS five years ago when she was approached by Sandy Luboviski, a

longtime family friend. Although she is very busy running her business and raising two boys, she finds time to serve and support AMCS and the WMHG because she feels the work they do is so important and she enjoys giving back to her community. We are very grateful for Erika's generous time and fundraising support to help AMCS.

### Our 2018 Annual Meeting

The Westchester Mental Health Guild's **Annual Spring Meeting** was held on May 16 at Covenant Presbyterian Church's Westminster Hall. The hall tables were beautifully decorated, lunch provided by Cantalini's Salerno Beach was scrumptious and the desserts donated by Guild members were alluring and delicious.

Our guest speaker, **Dr. Ashley Covington** spoke on her experience with tragedy and how she not only overcame but found her calling in helping others turn "Tragedy into Triumph." Dr. Covington has interests in holistic and integrative medicine and believes in approaching mental health treatment with a strong emphasis on the mind-body connection and interdisciplinary care coordination.

Congratulations to the 2018 award recipients whose dedication and support make the WMHG such a success. We couldn't do it without you! Thank you!!



### 2017 – 2019 Executive Board



HEART OF Gold

**Heart of Gold:**  
Ylla De Leon



**Certificate of Merit:**  
 Marc Collins  
 Palace Barber Shop  
 Ian Gittins  
 Tanner's Vacuum  
 Tony and Joanne Seruto  
 Tower Pizza  
 Brent Whitlock  
 State Farm Insurance



**Belles of the Guild:**

Mary Gluck

Nancy Edwards

**Certificate of Appreciation:**

Janie Guthrie

Laurette Bibeau





## 2018 Home Tour – Save the Date

Preparations are underway for our 36<sup>th</sup> annual **Holiday Home Tour**, which will be held on **Sunday, November 4**. Not only is this a very enjoyable community event that helps neighbors get to know neighbors, it also raises substantial funds for the Airport Marina Counseling Service (AMCS). Last year we were able to donate \$50,000 to AMCS from the proceeds of the Holiday Home Tour. This year we hope to do even better.

We are excited about this year’s tour, which will feature five distinctive houses in Westchester and Playa del Rey, each decorated for a particular holiday. After the tour, guests can enjoy refreshments at a festive reception at the Elks Lodge and will have the chance to do some holiday shopping at our special one-day holiday marketplace, featuring a variety of vendors.

**We need your help** to make the Holiday Home Tour, our largest fundraiser of the year, a successful event. Members of the Guild are needed as docents on the day of the tour to help our guests view the homes. Volunteers also can help with the reception or holiday marketplace. If you can help as a docent or at the reception, please contact Linda Peterson, [lspeterson7053@ca.rr.com](mailto:lspeterson7053@ca.rr.com).



## Tour Homes Sneak Peek



## \$ Upcoming FUNdraisers \$

**Tony P’s Dockside Grill FUNdraiser**  
Marina del Rey  
Bring your coupon.  
**August 12 – 16, 2018**  
Tony P’s will donate 20% of the bill excluding tax and tip to the WMHG.

**Tony P’s DOCKSIDE GRILL**  
4445 Admiralty Way • Marina del Rey  
(310) 823-4534 Fax: (310) 822-4901  
**Dockside Dollars Fundraiser**  
**WESTCHESTER MENTAL HEALTH GUILD**  
**AUGUST 12-16, 2018**  
Present this coupon to your server and Tony P’s will donate 20% to your organization!  
*Not valid with any other promotions*

**Invite family and friends!** Parties of 10+ require reservations.  
Additional coupons available on our website  
[www.westchestermhg.org](http://www.westchestermhg.org)

**Margarita Monday**  
**September 24, 2018**

5:30 - 8:30pm  
\$20 gets you FUN,  
a taco bar and 2 margaritas.

Don’t wait to reserve your spot.  
Space is limited. **Join us!!!**  
Contact Ylla 310-650-3222 or  
[ylladeleon16@yahoo.com](mailto:ylladeleon16@yahoo.com) for details.



★ WMHG proudly presents Eden with a big check for AMCS at the Annual Meeting.

### Spring Tea Highlights

April 14, 2018 was a sunny day and the flowers were blooming, all in all, a perfect day for our **Spring Tea**. 100 women attended the tea held at the Covenant Presbyterian Church. The tables were individually decorated, by our hostesses, with their beautiful tea sets, anchored by flower centerpieces. The women dined on scones, fruit salad, tea sandwiches, a variety of desserts, and of course, tea. Then, many of the women participated in a **Hat Contest**. The women marched around the room in a **Conga line**, voting ensued. Winners were chosen and prizes given for the



*Most Unique, Most Elegant* and the *Most Creative* hats. The afternoon ended with the announcement of the winners of the **Raffle**, which included a variety of gift baskets and a quilt made by member and co-chair of the tea, Annika Backman. A good time was had by all.



### LOGO Contest Winners



We have two new logos! As you can see from this newsletter, the Guild has a new logo. We also adopted a new logo for our 36<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday Home Tour.

The new logos were created by very talented art students at the **Westside Neighborhood School (WNS)**, in a contest supervised by WNS art teachers Laurie Zachman and Erin Wolf. The contest was intended initially to create a new logo for the Guild to use to advertise our Holiday Home Tour, but the results were so impressive that we decided to have two logos.

The Guild awarded a **Guild First Prize** for one entry to be used as a new logo (bottom right), not for the Home Tour, but for the organization itself. That logo will be used in the future for all communications about the Guild, such as our website and flyers. Another entry, the **Home Tour First Prize** (seen on page 4), will be used to promote the Holiday Home Tour, the Guild's largest fundraiser of the year, on the flyers, tickets and tour booklet.

Alex Tamura, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, won the **Guild First Prize**, while 6<sup>th</sup> grader Austen Connors won the **Home Tour First Prize**. Each of them received a cash prize of \$200 from the Guild. Hope Craig, a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student, was awarded a \$100 cash prize as the runner-up.

We are delighted with our new logos and want to thank these impressive students!



Logo Contest Artists



**Westchester  
Mental Health Guild**

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

\* \* \*

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



Visit our website  
[www.westchestermhg.org](http://www.westchestermhg.org)

Contact Us  
[info@westchestermhg.org](mailto:info@westchestermhg.org)

## Calendar

**Monday - Thursday  
August 12 - 16  
Tony P's Dockside Grill**

**Monday, September 24  
Margarita Monday**

**Sunday, November 4  
36<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Holiday Home Tour**

*All event details on page 4*

“All we’re ever asked to do  
in this life is to treat our  
neighbor—*especially our  
neighbor who is in need*—  
exactly as we would hope to  
be treated ourselves. That’s  
our ultimate responsibility.”

-Fred Rogers

★ **Join Us  
Recruit a Friend**

## New Members



**WMHG welcomes**  
new members

**Bob & Anna London** (pictured),  
as well as Gayle Love,  
Linda King, Daryl Keighley,  
Roselyn Zakheim, Janet Hansen,  
and Sandra & Sam Butler.



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

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c/o AMCS  
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