

Riverside Women's ASSOCIATION

*Empowering Women,
Making a Difference*

December 2009

Start Your Holidays at Breakfast with Santa

The weather outside may not be a Winter Wonderland yet, but you can still start your holiday season in a joyful way at the annual RWA Breakfast with Santa this Saturday, December 5th at the St. Thomas Parish Hall from 9 am to 11 am. Bring your little ones and enjoy a buffet breakfast, crafts and a visit from the Jolly Old Elf himself -- SANTA CLAUS! Mrs. Claus will even join us this year. Each child will have the opportunity to have their photo taken with Santa. There is no charge for photos with Santa. We hope to have these printed in time for the January meeting. A donation of \$2 per child and a small, unwrapped stocking stuffer to be given to RCAC is all that it takes to enjoy this fun event. Although the RSVP date has passed, you can still attend by e-mailing Amanda Allis mail to: ilovepsu01@hotmail.com .

Natalie Kurzawa, Darcie-Mae Johnson and Aleta Conroy at last year's Breakfast with Santa.



President's Message

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving with family and friends! These lovely last warm days of fall have made it difficult to catch the spirit of the season! I am so looking forward to seeing all of you at our Annual Holiday Party on Monday, December 7th! I hope you will make a point of attending! The food is fabulous and the gift exchange will have you laughing out loud! Our thanks to Membership chairs Christen Bovienzo and Sue Frazier for organizing the night!

The first RWA sponsored Gingerbread House Decorating Contest was a great success due to the creative efforts and enthusiasm of Activities chairs Kimberley Parfitt and Christine Long! I hope you were able to stop by the Oakmont Carnegie Library to see the charming houses that were created by local families and groups!

Please bring your little ones to our Third Annual Breakfast with Santa this Saturday. Thanks to Amanda Allis and the Activities Committee for planning this festive and popular event for our little people!

How fortunate we are to have all of these events to attend and reasons to celebrate! I know we will all be ready to turn our attention and energy to The Snow Ball in January. Whether you help decorate, arrange auction baskets, solicit donations or attend, this is our chance to give back.

Cheers!

Catherine



Holiday Spirits Set to Soar at RWA Holiday Party!

Grab your holiday sweater, wrap your exchange gift, and bring your pot luck dish! It is once again time for the RWA's annual Holiday Party! Join your fellow members for this fun evening on Monday, December 7th at 6:00 pm at the St. Thomas Parish Hall. We will all enjoy the delicious array of food and drinks provided by our members along with the ever-entertaining Gift Exchange (and stealing)! As a reminder, gift exchange items should be around \$15 and wrapped. Additionally, there will NOT be babysitting for this event and the kitchen will not be available, so plan ahead!

Gingerbread and Holiday Ideas - Activities Committee

Amidst the gala and joyfulness of the holiday season, Christine and I would like to congratulate everyone who entered a gingerbread creation in our 1st Annual Gingerbread House Contest. Also a huge Thank You to Mrs. Tumulty for her expertise and time in judging the participants. We had 12 entries and the creativity in each was absolutely heartwarming. I hope that all of the participants had a wonderful time creating!

I would like to announce our winners! 1st Place went to the Acierno family with their Stained Glass Window Home. 2nd Place was awarded to the Patsy family for the



Camp. All of the houses were thoroughly enjoyed by many visitors to the library and the smells of sweetness that filled the air were just incredible! We are grateful to the library for their cooperation with the contest.

I would like to apologize for the library not being open on Light Up Night. We did not learn of the early closing at the library until the day before the houses were being submitted. So, next year we will be looking for a different place to display the submissions so the community can enjoy them during the festivities of Light Up Night.

Three Little Pigs. 3rd Place went to the Williams family for their Gingerbread Neighborhood and an Honorable Mention went to the Girl Scout Troop # 54354 for their depiction of a Girl Scout Gingerbread

Since there was such a great response, we are also planning on having more categories for next year such as Adult Amateur, Teen, Youth, Adult/Child, and Group, which should offer a delightful array of creations.





Holiday Ideas (cont'd)



I would also like to take a moment to offer some ideas that you may find helpful for the holiday season regarding the speakers we've had for our previous meetings. Mara Kaplan, CEO of Let Kids Play, can design a play space, play ground, and provide personal shopping expertise for the special children in your life. You can also access her ideas at www.letkidsplay.blogspot.com for Mara's top toy recommendations in the 2009 Holiday Toy Review.



Third Place



Honorable Mention

Additionally, David Gasiorowski, the Chef who entertained us and filled our bellies with lovely Ricotta Gnocchi that were so fluffy and light that many of us enjoyed quite a few samplings, can provide private cooking lessons. Lessons would make a beautiful gift for someone special! He can also cater a gathering that you may be planning over the holiday season. Chef David can be reached at either the Fox Chapel Golf Club at (412) 447-4427 or his cell at (412) 818-9889.

Christine and I hope that your holidays are warm, cozy, filled with wonder, fascination, and the most beautiful memories to carry you through the New Year.

With gratitude~

Kimberley Parfitt



Local Musician/Author to Play at Library

When you receive an Elvis record for your sixth birthday and your first guitar a few years later, you're probably going to grow up thinking about becoming a musician. That's what local singer, songwriter and author Bill Deasy did.

As a young boy, Bill was obsessed with Elvis and music in general. He formed the band the Gathering Field, whose hit *Lost in America* was a regional favorite and the impetus for a record deal with Atlantic Records. "It just clicked with Pittsburgh," according to Bill. Later, Bill came into his own as a solo artist and was asked to write and perform the theme song for Good Morning America. His song opened the nationally televised morning show from 2001 through 2004. His current album, *Being Normal*, recently hit the shelves with a full compliment of stirring, beautifully written songs.

But, there is more to this musician than just beautiful songs. In the mid 90's, Bill began outlining his first novel, *Ransom Seaborn*, which was published in 2006. "I've always written literary songs and been an avid reader," says Bill. The jump from songwriting to novels may have been logical, but wasn't always easy. "I was intimidated by writing novels. Now, I have more confidence." He says his second, current novel, *Traveling Clothes*, is longer and he was "more comfortable" writing it.

This latest novel is set in fictional "Fairmont." "It's called Fairmont in the book, but it's really Oakmont." Bill lived in Oakmont in the early 90's and recently moved back with his family. The memory of Oakmont played a strong role in shaping the fictional "Fairmont". Bill even added a few of Oakmont's best known shops to "Fairmont," like the Mystery Lovers Book Shop. When asked about moving back to Oakmont, he commented, "It sort of feels like you're in the book...like you're moving into the book."

As with his music, there are common themes of loss and redemption in his novels. The recurring dichotomies of pain and joy, light and darkness



occur. "There is the discovery that everything is OK in the end," says Bill.

Bill Deasy will perform selections from *Being Normal* and read passages from *Traveling Clothes* at a free performance being held at the Oakmont Library on Thursday, December 10, at 6:30 pm. Everyone is invited to attend. Copies of both the album and the book will be available for sale. Additionally, *Traveling Clothes* can be purchased at Café Vita and Mystery Lovers Book Shop.

You can visit www.billdeasy.com for tour dates, book synopsis, biographical information and more.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

Saturday, December 5 - Breakfast with Santa
St. Thomas Memorial Church Parish Hall

Monday, December 7 - Holiday Banquet
St. Thomas Memorial Church
6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall

Monday, January 4 - Meeting
St. Thomas Memorial Church
7:00 p.m. Parish Hall

Monday, February 1 - Meeting
St. Thomas Memorial Church
7:00 p.m. Parish Hall

Saturday, February 20 - Snow Ball
Oakmont Country Club



Got News?



Newsletter Submissions can be made by the 25th of the month for inclusion in the following month's issue. Articles may be submitted in .doc format, Arial font. Please submit photographs in .jpg format. E-mail all submissions to Catherine Hornsby at dhornsby01@earthlink.net.