



September 2023 Newsletter

Time for our ANNUAL Picnic... Do come!

Sunday September 17th 1:00 – ? Don't miss it!

Verona Beach State Park

6541 Lakeshore Road South Route 13 Verona Beach, NY 13162

It's located on the eastern shore of Oneida Lake in the Town of Verona, Oneida County, New York. The park is located on NY 13 northwest of the City of Oneida and south of Sylvan Beach and is easily reached from the Canastota Thruway exit. **Free Admission after Labor Day**

What to bring... a dish to share... your own meat to cook... plates, silverware etc... puppets to show... whatever else you want to show or share!

Part of Sharon's workshop asked about recalling an experience that impressed us with puppets. Everyone had such vivid memories about something fascinating. **So much so... that we suggest everyone bring some personal insights to our picnic!** Bring along a story of a performance that you found particularly striking... or a tale of when you had that moment where you realized you were going to be a puppeteer. **If you can't make the date, please send us your story for the newsletter or PGUNY scrapbook.** **Please read the last page about the future of PGUNY!**

The Day with Puppets was a wonderfully crafted event!



The day started with **Nancy Sander** putting up a display of some of her many creations as well as puppets from her extensive puppet collection.

Deb Poplaski from Stage Stuck puppets put up a display of marionettes she made for a high school production of James and the Giant Peach as well as her rod puppets for sale.

Pam and Iver Johnson brought 2 trunks of Folkmanis and other commercial puppets to sell.

More of Nancy's puppets!



Deb's marionettes for James and the Peach



Deb's puppets for sale



Pam and Iver's puppets for sale



Workshops

Sharon Peck PhD Climbing the Reading Response Ladder

Looking for a way to get kids to go back into books? Try tabletop puppetry with literature. Easy, fun, unlimited possibilities...

To begin, Sharon asked everyone to take a moment and recall a memorable experience with puppets. As each person shared, it revealed a meaningful experience and a powerful bond to the art form.

Sharon presented a PowerPoint Presentation on retelling children's book through table top puppetry. The table top theater can be as simple as the book itself with separate characters on sticks. Sharon uses controls from the top, giving the tip that McDonald's clear coffee stirrers make great controls. Tips for making backgrounds/theater backdrops, and even using computer screens or pop up sets, were shared.



Sharon illustrated the reading response ladder with six rungs:

- Rung one is retelling and reconnecting with the story.
- Rung two includes changes, either to events, conclusion, or characters. Stories shown were Monster Mama, Rainbow Fish, and Very Hungry Caterpillar.
- Rung three has the student inserting themselves into the story. Stories shown were the Snowy Day, the Rainy Day, Where the Wild Things Are, and 3 Billy Goats Gruff. Day, One Fine Day, 3 Little Pigs.
- Rung four expands the story, to other text or events. Good Night Moon, Mama Do You Love, Me? Abiyoyo.
- Rung five has puppets going beyond the characters, taking advantage of Puppet Theater potential.
- The last rung is using theater protocols, performance skills, rehearsals, and expanding materials.

Educational goals were discussed; increased connection to text, engagement and ownership, re-authoring through reenactment. She gave suggestions for getting started, selecting text, modeling, scaffolding skills as well as others.

It was exciting to see easy steps to get children involved with storytelling and beginning steps into puppetry. Incremental steps into creativity looked easy and enticing! She mentioned 'read it got to have it' books; Where is My Hat (Paul Messner received permission to perform it), The Day Crayons Quit, and Good Night Opus from Burk Breathed.



Nancy Sander Twenty Easy-to-Make Puppets to Enhance Your Story Hour

Designed for teachers and librarians. What more could you ask for?



This workshop was a riotous potpourri act of pulling one puppet after another from a magic bin! Nancy gave a demo with each, most notable of many notables was a performance of an opera singer tube puppet... who knew Nancy had such range! She gave tips like searching thrift shops for bargains on everyday materials for quick and easy construction. While many were simple they were stylish as well as effective. Nancy had surprises including a mop head turning into a sheep and a piece of cloth and a rubber band turning into a hand puppet. Mentioned were classics like *Crictor* (The Boa Constrictor) by Tomi Ungerer, Ed Young's *The Rooster's Horns*, shadow puppeteer David Washinski's *Worlds of Shadow: Teaching with Shadow Puppetry*, *Hailstones and Halibut Bones: Adventures in Poetry and Color* by Mary O'Neill and Edward Lear's *Owl and the Pussycat*.



Another in a series of great tips was using bendy straws for shadow puppet controls which can be reinforced with skewers. It gives a flexible joint that allows you to control the puppet from different angles. Nancy also showed us overhead projector slides made from report covers. Her humanette was a big hit as well! From "I Know And Old Lady Who Swallowed A Fly" to "Caps for Sale" she told stories illustrating their use and impact on students. This workshop was a whirlwind of fun and practical illustrations of the power of puppets to capture attention and spur learning!



Nancy Hardy had prepped her make and take workshop but by the time for it approached some participants had to leave and others were late getting back from lunch so the workshop was postponed to a later date. Sorry about that Nancy!

Nancy Sander The Fun of Brer Rabbit in Love!

Are you ready for a puppet show?! Nancy Sander performed her *Brer Rabbit in Love* hand puppet show. What can be said about a professional still at her peak after 50 years? A show with a handsome set of characters: Brer Rabbit, Fox, Wolf, Terry Pan (a turtle), a Magic Bunny, Alligator and 14 young bunnies... oh, and a Bobcat. All with great personalities and voicing, a classic script which includes audience participation. Guaranteed to elicit squeals of delight. After you have seen it, just try to say the title without an accent! We think we've seen this show 4 or 5 times over the years and we'd like to see it 5 more!



The future of PGUNY or... We no longer have a home in Sylvan Beach

We have called our Sylvan Beach home an experiment that has not met our expectations. The public has not turned out in numbers which would support our efforts for presenting shows. Additionally Nancy Sander is selling her summer home in Sylvan Beach and expects to move back to Ohio shortly, coming back for a visit one month each summer. Although our attendance numbers in Sylvan Beach meetings has been lack luster, we still hear there is interest in keeping the Guild active. We don't need a home base at OLAH to continue, and thank Linda Williams at the Oneida Lake Art and Heritage Center for joining us in our rekindling efforts over the last year.

A number of us have come up with a proposal to meet five times a year, with newsletters scheduled before each meeting with flyers whenever appropriate. We could arrange meetings around the state with hosts in different places... perhaps Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, Ithaca to name a few... and even back to Sylvan Beach if Nancy S. holidays in a rental property.

The annual picnic at Verona Beach State Park is coming up. This picnic has traditionally been a popular event, our best attended. We would like to have this new idea for meetings considered and discussed informally with each other at the picnic, hear from folks by phone, email or even zoom. We have seen many familiar faces at the PGUNY meetings during the past year and members seem interested in the guild, even if not regular attendees. While a standard meeting place and time worked really well in the past, picking different locations and times for special events may make attendance easier within the different areas of our region. There are such large distances to cover.

The thoughts of our memberships are requested on this new plan! [If you are receiving newsletters we have considered you members for this year's experiment in Sylvan Beach.](#) Help us design a viable plan for getting and staying connected. Puppeteers are an amazing group!

Our report card: Nancy S. made most meetings along with Nancy H., Jai, Chuck and Kernian, as well as Pam, Iver and Jeffrey. It was also wonderful to see John Koethen, David and Jean McDonough, J.P. Crangle, Geoffrey Navias, Deb Poplaski, Robert Rogers, Sharon Peck and Melaine Zimmer this year! We have had interest from some new potential members who have yet to make a meeting. We would like to create a flyer for our guild members to offer to the public. We are still trying to track down past members, does the PofA keep old lists? Iver just ran into one, Elizabeth Dominique, a few days ago and told her about the rekindle.

The rekindling of PGUNY has been fantastic for us (Pam and Iver)! We left a life dedicated to puppets for over 12 years to spend thirty some years in teaching. Puppetry was not lost, only scaled down and focused solely on young children. Now in retirement we can revisit this passion. A current goal is to pass on a fire for puppetry. Even though it has been decades since working with adults, it is still remarkable to start again and share experiences with other puppeteers. The guild represents the special connections that exists between builders, performers, and the magic of the art form.

Thanks to each of you!