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Phoenix Writers Club celebrates 100 years

By Chrissy Doern

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PWC members Deborah Partington, Cindi Reiss, Beth Liechti-Johnson and Navissa Kaiser.

Photo courtesy of Cindi Reiss

In 1926, a tenacious group of women journalists – unable to participate in an exclusive men’s journalism club – banded together to establish the Phoenix Writers Club (PWC). This pioneering initiative was born out of their shared determination to create a welcoming and supportive environment for writers. Over its illustrious history, PWC has evolved to embrace not only women and journalists but also a diverse array of individuals passionate about the art form.

This March, to commemorate Women’s History Month, PWC honors the indomitable spirit of its founding members who, a century ago, forged a haven for creativity amidst the challenges. These innovative women exemplified a remarkable ability to foster collaboration and connection, demonstrating resilience in their pursuit of artistic expression.

Today, the legacy of the Phoenix Writers Club is one of inclusiveness and community, as it continues to encourage relationships that celebrate the writing journey. Some of its members have become nationally known poets, journalists, and more.

President Cindi Reiss has lived in Phoenix for 48 years, but still considers herself a Jersey girl at heart. Her husband, three children, two sons-in-law, four grandchildren, and 120-pound grand-dog keep her grounded, bringing her insight as she continues her passion.

Reiss's journey has included writing skits and programs to entertain and educate during her career as a clown and actor; articles for newspapers and magazines; and writing life event poems.

Each monthly PWC meeting features a guest speaker who delves into topics affecting writing and publishing. The club, along with each speaker, hopes to build a supportive environment that encourages the development and improvement. In addition, PWC actively supports charities and educational programs, dedicating time and resources to inspire the next generation.

"As our club grows, so does our excitement to learn, share our writing, and enjoy the friendships. It's been wonderful to exchange experiences, advice, and tips along the way," Reiss said.

With an annual membership fee of \$40 running from October through September, the Phoenix Writers Club remains accessible to writers at every stage. Monthly meetings, held on the third Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon at the Devonshire Senior Center, include a guest speaker, light bites, and refreshments. Members contribute \$10 per meeting and guests pay \$15.

More than a century after its founding, the club continues to offer precisely what its creators envisioned in 1926: a place where writers come together to learn, share, and belong. As PWC celebrates its 100th year, it stands as a testament to the enduring power of writers helping writers – one story, one meeting, and one generation at a time.

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