

Athena Society



B R I E F I N G S

May, 2012

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ATHENA SOCIETY

P.O. Box 10813
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33679

Upcoming Meeting

- WHEN:** Thursday, May 3
11:55 a.m.
- WHERE:** Centre Club
Westshore at Kennedy
- PROGRAM:** The Big Balance:
Chief of Police, Family and the RNC
- SPEAKER:** Chief Jane Castor
Tampa Police Department
- COST:** Guests - \$25
- MENU:** **Blackened Salmon Salad**
(Veggie plate available on request when reserving)
- RSVP:** By April 30 – Call **Eleanor Hubbard**
(251-9172) or email ewhubbard@aol.com



OPEN MEETING – GUESTS WELCOME

Jane Castor will share her experience of “breaking through the glass ceiling” at TPD and preparing for the Republican Convention while maintaining a balance with family life.

Hers is not an easy task – on any level. Join us for what promises to be a fascinating look behind the scenes with the leader of “Tampa’s finest.”



President's Message

It is with excitement and enthusiasm that I look forward to the Athena Society's June 7 dinner and business meeting at the Palma Ceia Golf & Country Club. It will mark the close of an incredibly productive year and the beginning of what I'm certain will be an even better one to come. This year the committees have outdone themselves, organizing a fun-filled and relaxing retreat that would impress Athena herself, securing superb speakers for our monthly luncheons, developing educational and entertaining Bonus events, presenting a particularly inspiring Dr. **Sylvia Richardson** Young Women of Promise program¹ and keeping us apprized of current issues relevant to our members. At the same time the Board has worked diligently to implement Athena's long range plan and otherwise guide our organization through current challenges and into the future. I would like to highlight certain actions the Board is recommending for approval at the June meeting to insure Athena's continued health and sustainability, consistent with our long range plan.

Of greatest importance to Athena's financial health is the Board's recommendation that we discontinue the December dinner meeting, phase out printing hard copies of our membership directory and approve a modest dues increase. Notwithstanding our policies and procedures, which call for a "suggested increase of no less than five percent" in odd-numbered years, the Board has been able to extend the dues cycle and postpone a dues increase for an impressive four years. Unfortunately, but not surprising, the combined effect of a confluence of events precludes us from extending the dues cycle for a fifth year.

Due in large part to the economic downturn, the Board declined to increase dues as suggested in 2009 and 2011. During this same time frame, the Board approved requests to allow the Retreat, Bonus and YWP Committees to retain unused funds generated by or allocated to them in a given budget year and roll them over, thereby eliminating such unused funds as a source of money to cover cost overruns in other areas. Historically, such funds have been used to bridge the ever-increasing gap between the amounts budgeted for and the actual costs of our December and June dinner meetings and parties. The Board also established an "emerita" status, with a reduced dues rate, which a growing number of our members are entitled to and have claimed. What's more, once the economy began to show signs of improvement, the Centre Club raised its prices. The Board's recommendation is aimed at addressing the budget shortfall resulting from these events and securing Athena's financial status going forward.

The Board recommends that the December dinner be discontinued because December is a very busy time for our members, making attendance at both a dinner and a holiday party not only challenging but also unlikely for most. Further, attendance at the December dinner is typically low as compared with other like events. In addition, discontinuing the December dinner will help us to budget sufficient funds to actually pay for the June dinner and business meeting without having to cross our fingers and hold our collective breath that we can borrow from other line items to cover the costs of the June event. In sum, it makes more sense – financial and otherwise – to sponsor one event during the holiday season and to make that event our party.

The Board also recommends that we phase out printing hard copies of our membership directory because the printing costs are substantial, all of the data in the directory is now readily accessible on

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¹ I hope everyone saw Ernest Hooper's column in the *Tampa Bay Times* on the Sunday following the YWP luncheon. It was fabulous! If you missed it in the newspaper, check it out on Athena's website.



President's Message *continued*

our website and it is the “greener” way to proceed. In years past, we spent approximately \$3,500 each year for our directory, which included the bylaws, policies and procedures and other data. Last year we printed a mini version of the directory, which omitted the governance materials and saved approximately \$1,800. Next year we will print only a small insert to the mini directory with updates and changes at a cost of only a few hundred dollars. The website, which was funded entirely by non-restricted excess funds, did not impact our operating budget and thus had no impact on dues, will more than pay for itself within three years in the savings we will realize from being able to eliminate the directory. Moreover, the data on the website can and should be updated on a continuous basis, making it much more useful than a static hard-copy directory can ever be. In the event a member really wants a hard copy of the membership directory, we are working to make sure such data will be capable of easily being printed from the website.

In conjunction with these cost-saving measures, the Board recommends a modest dues increase of four percent (\$15) for regular members and nine percent (\$45) for emerita members. (Had dues been increased as suggested in both 2009 and 2011, the percentage increase would have reached a total of 15 percent with this budget.) The difference in the percentage increases responds to the significant and unsustainable (given the increasing number of emerita members) gap between the dues amounts currently paid by regular members as distinguished from emerita members, when the dues revenue is used to pay for meals, programs and administrative costs that benefit the entire membership. The proposed dues structure still confers an appropriate discount on emerita members who will pay \$325 rather than \$375 and will generate the operating funds needed to sustain our organization's operations.

As prescribed by our bylaws, the proposed budget will be circulated no later than April 30. I encourage you to review it and direct any questions or comments you may have to the Board through Treasurer **Kim DeBosier** or **Eleanor Hubbard**.

Athena Housekeeping

Excitement is mounting in anticipation of our retreat weekend (July 20-22) at the Longboat Key Club & Resort in Sarasota. To get a sneak peek of the luxury you'll be enjoying, check out the website: www.longboatkeyclub.com. Registration materials will be distributed tomorrow and if you pay your registration fee (\$230) by noon on May 3, you'll be eligible for the drawing of a \$100 LBKC gift card.

Members, this is a reminder that the newsletter is your bullhorn: If you have a function you wish to publicize (whether it's an internal or external event), you may submit the news by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the newsletter or by noon the day before our luncheon meetings for inclusion with the announcements. Following this procedure will eliminate the need for additional email alerts.

At the May meeting a ballot will be presented for the election of the 2012-13 Nominating Committee. This is a preliminary ballot for the selection of 12 members, six of whom will be selected at the June meeting. To be eligible for nomination, you must have been a member for a minimum of two years. No member of the committee is eligible for nomination to any position which the committee recommends for election or appointment. If you wish to be removed from this ballot, please contact **Eleanor Hubbard** prior to April 25.



Bonus On the “High Seas”

Calling all adventurous Athena members....If you enjoy being on the water and you're up for a very different experience, reserve June 1-3 for “Fisherman's Paradise Luxury Barge”. Fishing is a big attraction on this anchored luxury hotel but you can also get massages, manicures, pedicures, facials, etc. or just kick back and enjoy the beautiful pool, sunsets and each other. Cost is \$425 for a double room (\$212 per person) for two nights including transport to the barge from Clearwater Marina; food and spa treatments not included. For more information or to reserve, contact **Paddy Moses** at pkmoses1@verizon.net.

News About Members

Sigrid Tidmore has been selected for a solo art show featuring 40 of her estuary paintings at the Rookery Bay Nature Preserve Gallery in Naples. The show will run May 7 to Sept. 7 with a grand opening June 6 at which Sigrid is the guest speaker. Among her other works will be her new series from the Galapagos. To view some of her “Images to Awaken the Mind,” see her website at www.sigridtidmore.com.

After more than 40 years in higher education, **Anne Gormly** is retiring. She leaves her post as Dean of the College of Social Sciences, Mathematics & Education at the University of Tampa on May 15. A reception honoring Anne will be held at UT's Fletcher Hall on April 23 from 4 to 6 p.m.; Athena members are invited to attend. After serving as Academic Vice President for Georgia College & State University, Anne came to Tampa to be closer to her first grandchild. Now, with two more in Virginia, she'll divide her time between grandchildren, service on a number of Tampa non-profit boards and spending time at her home in the Caribbean. She will probably have to fight to regain access to the kitchen from her husband John, but she may come to her senses and just enjoy retirement!

SiliconIndia.com - a news source for, by and about Indians from around the world - has named former Athena member **Renu Khator** one of the five most influential Indian women in the U.S. (Others include Pepsi's CEO and South Carolina's governor.) Renu left Tampa in 2007 to fill the dual position of University of Houston president and University of Houston System chancellor. She is also the first Indian-origin woman heading a prominent research university in U.S.

Calendar

- June 1-3: Bonus – On the High Seas
- June 7: Installation dinner/new member introductions
- June 16: New member party, 5-7 p.m.
- July 20-22: Retreat – Longboat Key Club, Sarasota