



# FOCAL points ~ ~



VOL. XXVII

FALL 2005

FRIENDS OF CHILDREN AND LITERATURE – CENTRAL LIBRARY

## FOCAL AWARD LUNCHEON

By Edythe McGovern

It was my intention – honestly – to telephone our honoree, Brenda Woods, and find out when it would be convenient for her to spend some time advising me of some facts of her life. Instead of setting up a future time for our “interview,” Ms. Woods and I spoke for more than an hour, nonstop. Still, nothing I can write can communicate the warmth and vivacity of this woman.

I can recite the facts, but you will have to meet Ms. Woods to really appreciate her. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, the second oldest of seven children, Ms. Woods came to Los Angeles in 1958 and spent her childhood in the Los Angeles area. Her major in college was Public Health, followed by graduate work as a physical therapist. She still works five days a week at this profession and after 27 years finds it challenging. One would think that with her writing (she is on her third book now), she could not find time for additional activities. However, as a divorced mother of two sons, she became expert at multi-tasking, so it’s not surprising that she is painting the outside of her home, agreeing only to have help with the upper area.



Her mother is a retired Los Angeles school teacher who is also a dynamo, returning to university at age 48, after being a key-punch operator (some of our more mature readers will remember this pre-computer skill), while her eldest daughter, Brenda, acted as chief baby-sitter for the younger five children. At this time, Ms. Woods’ older son is married and has an eight-months-old daughter, Alexandra, affectionately known as “the dumpling.” We have invited Ms. Woods to include this young lady and her parents as guests at the Award luncheon, so that Alexandra is made aware of her grandmother’s achievements.

## ESSAY CONTEST

Contest entries have begun to arrive, and we urge you to make The Red Rose Box available to young people in grades three to eight, so they can come to know the two sisters, Leah and Ruth, who live in a one-horse town in rural Louisiana. Their lives are changed forever after their Aunt Olivia sends Leah the red rose box which contains among many other gifts train tickets to a new, wider world in non-segregated Southern California.

## WATTS TOWER EXHIBIT

By Diane Arias

On Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, at the Watts Tower Arts Center, a reception was presented by the Italian Oral History Institute to welcome the new exhibit, “Leo Politi, Artist of the Angels”—a retrospective of this artist’s remarkable 50 year legacy here in Los Angeles as an illustrator and author/illustrator. Dignitaries, family members, and friends were treated to speeches remembering and honoring the warmth, generosity and talent that Leo Politi displayed throughout his life.

The highlight of the afternoon, however, was a talk by Ann Stalcup, one of the curators of the exhibit, as well as the author of the recent biography, *Leo Politi: Artist of the Angels*. In her talk she described first meeting Leo Politi in 1979 at an Olvera street event—the Blessing of the Animals. From time to time, over their long friendship they would meet for dinner at Phillippe’s Restaurant, Politi always ordering the beef stew. She recalled the long wait it took to get a book autographed—there had to be an illustration with each signature! It was recollections like these that made Ann’s talk so memorable. When Politi died in 1996, Ann felt she had to write his biography. We thank Ann for persevering with her task so that we may all become acquainted with Leo Politi’s touching life story.

For those who were unable to attend the reception, the exhibit will continue through December 4<sup>th</sup> at Watts Tower Arts Center, 1727 East 107<sup>th</sup> Street in Los Angeles.

Ann will speak at the FOCAL Award luncheon on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Copies will be available for purchase and autographing.

**TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL FOCAL AWARD LUNCHEON  
and  
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

HONORING

**The 2005 FOCAL Award Winner**

**The Red Rose Box**

by  
**Brenda Woods**

Saturday, December 3, 2005

at

McCormick & Schmick's

633 West 5th Street, 4th Level, Los Angeles

Validated parking • See directions on reverse side of flyer

11:00 A.M. Social Hour (No Host Bar)

12:00 P.M. Luncheon

With special guest Ann Stalcup  
Author of *Leo Politi: Artist of the Angels*

TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL FOCAL AWARD LUNCHEON

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

No.	Reservations	Total
	Lunch for FOCAL Members @ \$35.00 ea.	
	Lunch for Non-Members @ \$38.00 ea.	
	Lunch + 2006 Basic Membership @ \$45.00 ea.	
	<b>TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED</b>	

Vegetarian Lunch Available

Membership Options

Basic	\$10.00	Sustaining	\$100.00
Associate	\$25.00	Lifetime	\$1,000.00
Contributing	\$50.00		

Please send checks, made payable to FOCAL, to: Edythe McGovern  
11917 Westminister Pl.  
Los Angeles CA 90066

For more information, telephone Edythe McGovern at (310) 397-4840.  
Please send reservations on or before Monday, November 28. Tickets will be held at the door.  
Make checks payable to FOCAL.

## LOCATION AND PARKING FOR DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup> AWARD LUNCHEON

The Central Library is located at  
630 West Fifth Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90071

The Library Garage is at 5th & Flower

---

### √ RECOMMENDED PARKING

Parking is available at the Central Library across the street from McCormick & Schmick's. You may park in the West Lawn Garage on Flower Street for \$1.00 with library validation, which requires an LAPL library card. Validate at Information Desk on the main floor.

### ADDITIONAL PARKING

McCormick & Schmick's offers partial validation for lunch at \$3.75 for two hours in the First Interstate World Center Parking Garage. After two hours, it is \$3.00 for every 20 minutes, maximum rate \$29.00. To get to the restaurant from the World Center Parking Garage, take garage elevators to Lobby. Enter building. Take shuttle elevators to the 4th floor office building entrance.

---

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Dinner with Avi, author of Newbery award winner, *Crispin*, and Newbery Honors for *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* and *Nothing But the Truth*. FOCAL members and Children's Librarians are invited to this special event on November 9<sup>th</sup> at the Odyssey Restaurant.

## SUNDAYS AT CENTRAL

### **Sunday, November 13 – 2 p.m. Lisa Yee**

Author Lisa Yee wrote *Millicent Min*, *Girl Genius*, which won the Sid Fleischman Humor Award. Her latest book, *Stanford Wong Flunks Big-Time*, will be published soon.

### **Sunday, December 11 – 2 p.m. Caroline Arnold**

The award-winning author has written over 100 books on almost any subject you can imagine. Listen to her adventures as she learns facts for her latest book.

### **Sunday, January 6 – 2 p.m. Kathryn Hewitt**

Picture book about three clever dogs who wear clothes in order to visit favorite places.

# Writing Contest



Sponsored by FOCAL  
Friends of Children and Literature, Los Angeles Public Library

The contest is open to students in grades 3 through 8.  
Each winner will receive two free tickets to the luncheon honoring  
this year's winner of the FOCAL award,  
a signed copy of the winning book and a chance  
to meet the author at the awards luncheon.

TO ENTER THIS CONTEST,  
write an essay of 100 to 150 words to this year's FOCAL Award winner,

Brenda Woods author of  
"The Red Rose Box"

describing why you enjoyed the book AND why you would like to meet her

Mail entries to: Edythe McGovern, 11917 Westminster Place, Los Angeles, Ca 90066  
POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 19TH, 2005

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
                    First  Middle Initial  Last

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED  
entry forms also available at [http://www.lapl.org/kidspath/focal\\_entry](http://www.lapl.org/kidspath/focal_entry)