



# The PELICAN

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## October 26, 2012 Feature Stories

### [Phyllis Neuberger to sign and discuss her book, China Dahl at Doreen Gauthier Lighthouse Point Library, Oct. 30 author's reception](#)

By Anne Siren

Pelican staff

No one is expecting my byline on this page, but today, I walk boldly into Phyllis J. Neuberger's space.

She built this page nearly 19 years ago when she arrived at *The Pelican* with an idea to write every week about volunteers who "Made a Difference."

My first thought was "How could she find a volunteer every week?" This column could not last very long.

She hasn't missed a week. The woman is not to be underestimated.

A few weeks ago, we all learned that Phyllis had written and published her first novel, *China Dahl*.

The story follows China Dahlstrom, a successful Manhattan model who switches careers to become a successful business executive.

China enters the story as a child who arrives in the United States from Vietnam. But this orphan doesn't fall into the arms of a warm, loving aunt, her only living relative. Rather her first impression of this country is one of a cold and aloof relationship.

When she reaches 18, China heads for Manhattan to pursue her education and a career. Her eventual entrance into the world of modeling via an agency, Beautiful Girls, leads her to success.

The owners, a couple, profit from her talents as a model, and they also draw her into their lives with love and friendship. Shielded by her austere life with her aunt, China has little experience with romance until it slams into her life without brakes.

We here at *The Pelican* found her book a page-turner. And Phyllis says the characters she created and now loves feel like old friends. We asked Phyllis how this leap from journalism to fiction worked for her. "China Dahl is, as the cliché says, 'a figment of my imagination.' I started writing it at least eight years ago, and got really serious about completing the book four years ago.

As a journalist and a 17-year member of the Tuesday Writers' Group, hosted by the Doreen Gauthier Lighthouse Point Library, I finally found the courage to take a crack at writing fiction and found it to be a fascinating challenge. Slowly my characters came to life and it almost seemed as though they helped me plot and create the story of their tangled loves and lives. In retrospect, writing fiction was exciting."

Phyllis will be at the Doreen Gauthier Lighthouse Point Library, 2200 NE 38 St., Lighthouse Point on Tuesday, Oct. 30 at 12:30 p.m.

The public is invited to chat with the author and join in the at the question and answer session.

Paperback copies of *China Dahl* will be available for \$15. For further information, call the library at 954-946-6398

*China Dahl* is also available on line as an E-book, paperback and hard cover. Order at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com) and [www.xlibris.com](http://www.xlibris.com).