



**August 2004 Issue**  
**Dog Days**

**No Meetings: June through August**

**Summer activities will include:**

- **Board meetings to determine goals and plans for the new year**
- **Encouragement of volunteers to help us realize those plans**
- **Putting everything in place for a stellar start in September.**

The Atlanta Writers Club was founded in 1914.

We are a social and educational club where local writers meet to discuss the craft and business of writing.

We also sponsor judged contests for our members and provide expert speakers from the worlds of writing, publishing, and entertainment.

**PRE-MEETING SUPPER at The Colonnade Restaurant resumes in September.**

AWC meets the **third Thursday** of each month, September through May.

**MEETING LOCATION: Rock Spring Presbyterian Church:** 1824 Piedmont Road NE 30324. This is south of the major intersection of Piedmont Road and Cheshire Bridge Road. For a detailed map: <http://mapsonus.switchboard.com>

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:**

**[www.atlantawritersclub.org](http://www.atlantawritersclub.org)**

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**Deadline for the September E-Quill is August 25th!**

Contact acting E-Quill Editor: George Weinstein, [gjweinstein@yahoo.com](mailto:gjweinstein@yahoo.com), 770-552-5887

Submit all Achievements & Accolades to Fran Stewart, [myownship@earthlink.net](mailto:myownship@earthlink.net), 770-682-7483

**WRITE IT LIKE YOU SEE IT: "Dog Days"**  
by George Weinstein

Stephen King (it always helps to start a column with this name; few authors evoke a more visceral response than Mr. King) writes that a muse is a cigar-smoking, beer-swilling, five-o'clock-shadow kind of guy for whom you must supply a habitat in your mind and do the grueling work—read a lot and write a lot—to make it a home so he'll have a comfortable place to burp and deliver the creative inspiration you seek. No fairy-dust scattering pixie is he. Rather, the muse is often surly and uncommunicative, blowing smoke rings when you want answers. If you still pay your respects to him with the hard work of writing, writing, writing, and rewriting, however, the muse will reward your obeisance with a gift from his bag of magic.

Perhaps.

My fount of inspiration is an eighteen-pound French bulldog named Ruby Slippers who lounges all day on a divan behind my writing desk. All bat-ears and wrinkles, so ugly that she's gorgeous, Ruby does have several other things in common with Mr. King's barfly-cum-muse. She snorts a lot while I type away, either in derision or due to a nasal obstruction. As I weep over an evocative bit of prose I just created, she sighs to remind me that it's melodramatic pabulum as subtle as a sad-clown painting. Like all good muses, she's an excellent critic, but she delivers her real magic when I'm not feeling particularly adept at my art. A scene I'm composing will seem meandering, pointless. My plotting is plodding. And then—

And then something happens: dialogue that rings true, a paragraph that shows more of life than some 90-minute movies, a character defined—absolutely nailed—with a single adjective. I'm off and running again. I glance back at Ruby and sometimes she looks my way but much more often she slumbers, her rapid breath matching the rhythm of my heartbeat. We are in sync. I return to the hard labor of writing and trust that Ruby will dip into her magic bag for me again if I stay true to my work ethic and myself.

Who or what gives you the inspiration for your art? Have you thanked your muse today?

**OFFICER LIST FOR THE ATLANTA WRITERS CLUB 2004-2005 Term:**

**President:** George Weinstein, 770-552-5887    **First VP:** David Ryback, 404-377-3588  
**Membership VP:** Sara Martin, 770-975-7980    **Treasurer:** Kathleen Craft Boehmig, 678-393-9324  
**Publicity VP:** Lu Ann Sodano, 770-739-4749    **Secretary:** Teresa Gernazian, 404-636-8447  
**Seasonal Contests VP:** Adrian Drost, 770-998-7015  
**Contest-du-Mois VP:** OPEN  
**Quill Editor:** OPEN

**OTHER CONTACTS:**

**Historian/Photographer/By-Laws:** Adrian Drost, 770-998-7015  
**Copy Editor:** Richard Anderson, 770-992-8332    **Poetry Editor:** Dorothy Worth, 404-636-1316  
**Speaker Interviews:** Polly Hunt Neal, 404-233-5174    **Achievements:** Fran Stewart, 770-682-7483

**!!!PLEASE NOTE THE OPEN POSITIONS AND CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING A SMALL AMOUNT OF YOUR TIME TO HELP YOUR CLUB AND YOUR PEERS!!!**

### **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The board will meet on Saturday, August 21, at 4 p.m. in the Loudermilk Activity Center behind Rock Spring Presbyterian Church. A recap of that meeting will appear in the September E-Quill.

### **PROPOSITION: CRITIQUE GROUP**

Two members thus far have expressed interest in forming a critique group that would meet in the midtown area, perhaps at or near Rock Spring Presbyterian Church, on a regular basis. The purpose would be to share your work with your peers and receive beneficial feedback in a positive environment. If any of you are interested in creating such a group, please contact George Weinstein at [gjweinstein@yahoo.com](mailto:gjweinstein@yahoo.com) or 770-552-5887. Tell him:

1. How often you'd like to meet
2. Which days of the week are best
3. Which time periods are best (figure on a two-hour meeting)
4. Whether you'd want to meet before or after our regular meetings (i.e., third Thursdays)
5. What location you recommend for the critique group

### **CALLS FOR VOLUNTEERS**

- Volunteers needed to help George Weinstein and Kathleen Craft Boehmig draft the outreach seminar we'll use to educate writers in our community and to attract new members. Contact information for George and Kathleen is on page 2.
- Volunteers needed for our Calling Committee to remind members about upcoming meetings. Please contact George Weinstein to help us get the word out each month.
- A volunteer is needed to administer the monthly writing contest (Contest-du-Mois), which has been suspended until someone accepts this challenge.

### **CREATIVITY CONTESTS- SUBMISSION TIME EXTENDED**

- The board decided that we needed to update our logo (currently ) to reflect a more modern, progressive club. This may entail changing the name of the newsletter too. Go for it! Please send your artwork and name-change suggestions, if applicable, to George Weinstein at [gjweinstein@yahoo.com](mailto:gjweinstein@yahoo.com) or mail to 1285 Willeo Creek Drive, Roswell, GA 30075. Deadline for entries is September 1. Entries will be published anonymously in the next Quill for your vote.
- The board also thought that we might have a "7<sup>th</sup> inning stretch" after the main speaker each month. We need a sing-along to go with our stretch—"Take Me Out to the Writers Club" or something fun and appropriate. Please send your suggestions for lyrics and either original or "to-be-sung-to-the-tune-of" melody to George Weinstein via the means detailed above.

### ACHIEVEMENTS & ACCOLADES

**Ava Chambers'** novel *Dundury, The Secret* went on sale on July 28 through Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com and other outlets.

**George Weinstein** signed a contract with the Nancy Ellis Literary Agency to represent his manuscripts in sales to publishers.

### FROM THE TIP OF MY PEN – A Writer's Tip of the Month: "Hot Topics" by Fran Stewart

A writer can greatly enhance a fictional story and make it seem much more believable by inserting references to actual events of the time period about which one is writing. This is easier to do in historical fiction, since we know what events have lasted in the public memory. We know, for instance, that most readers will understand what we're referring to when we mention the signing of the Constitution or the use of the guillotine by French revolutionaries.

The waters become more hazardous, though, when we write fiction about more contemporary times. It may be tempting to set the stage by throwing in comments about the latest music craze or a raging political argument. Your story will seem richer to future readers if those situations eventually become common cultural knowledge. If, however, they are simply passing fancies, readers even a decade from now won't be as likely to understand what you were talking about. Instead of building a rich background for your story, you may simply be rendering it outdated or confusing. What seems a hot topic for today simply may not stand the test of time.

How do you make the choice, then? It's a matter of judgment. I don't know of a definitive way to tell what will last and what will fade. If you choose to pepper your contemporary fiction with current events, you might want to explain them. Instead of simply giving the name of a rock band, for instance, show your main character reacting to the music. Is it loud, dreamy, obnoxious, R-rated, ear-shattering, crooning, politically-motivated, sensual, or heavy on the electric guitar? Have your character comment or cringe or yelp or coo or go into a trance. That way you will inform readers, current and future, just what is going on in this hot topic of the time.

### DON'T FORGET TO PROMOTE YOUR CLUB

- Remember: whenever you do interviews or speak in public, please mention your membership in The Atlanta Writers Club. This is yet another way for us all to promote the club and attract new members.
- Kathleen Boehmig has created a flyer promoting the club that we will distribute to all members at the September 16 meeting. We will ask you to leave copies at your local libraries, coffee shops, bookstores, and wherever else you know that writers congregate.

## Membership Dues, Donations and Information Update

Please make checks payable to The Atlanta Writers Club (AWC):

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| 2004-2005 one year Membership Dues: \$30 per member<br>( \$25 if paid by 9/18/2004 ) | \$ _____ |
| Donation in the amount of  | \$ _____ |
| Total  | \$ _____ |

Please mail with checks payable to *The Atlanta Writers Club* to  
Sara Martin, 4946 Holborn Way, Acworth, GA 30101

- Dues must be paid no later than November 30, 2004 to remain active.
- Non-active members will be removed from *The Quill* mailing list.
- Current membership year runs from 9/1/04 through 8/31/05

**Member Information:** (Please complete this section in full to update our files.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date (MM/DD) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Tell us about yourself:**

1. Please circle your three primary interests
 

|             |                 |               |         |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------|---------|
| novel/      | poetry/         | short-story / | humor/  |
| nonfiction/ | fiction/        | juvenile/     | travel/ |
| drama/      | screen-writing/ | other         |         |
2. Please identify you experience level
 

|           |           |      |
|-----------|-----------|------|
| published | submitted | none |
|-----------|-----------|------|
3. Please tell us how long you have been writing
 

|        |     |     |    |     |
|--------|-----|-----|----|-----|
| <5 yrs | <10 | <20 | or | >20 |
|--------|-----|-----|----|-----|
4. Please tell us what you expect from the club \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_