



November 2004 Issue

Hie Thee to an Editor

Next Meeting: November 18, 2004

- **6:45 – 7:15 pm Potluck Nosh:**
Bring your favorite snack and a brief work you'd like to read.
- **7:15 – 8:15 pm Guest Speaker:**
Football legend and disabilities foundation leader Tommy Nobis on perseverance, pride, and dedication.
- **8:15 – 8:30 pm Club Business:**
Updates on outreach efforts.
- **8:30 – 8:50 pm Our Turn:**
George Weinstein will lead a discussion about query letters.

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 host expert speakers from the worlds of writing, publishing, and entertainment.

PLEASE NOTE:

PRE-MEETING NOSH: Potluck at Rock Spring Presbyterian Church's Loudermilk Activity Center, 6:45 - 7:15 pm. Bring your favorite snack and a brief reading to share with us.

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

MEETING LOCATION: Rock Spring Presbyterian Church (Loudermilk Activity Center in back): 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

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Deadline for the December E-Quill is November 25th!

Contact acting E-Quill Editor: George Weinstein, gjweinstein@yahoo.com, 770-552-5887

WRITE IT AS YOU SEE IT: “The Importance of Being Edited Earnestly”
by George Weinstein

“Writers cannot edit their own work,” an article once began. That assertion lacks precision. Of course you can edit your work. I edited this column ruthlessly, rewriting some sentences twenty times. The exact truth is that writers cannot edit their own work with an objective frame of mind. We err when we rely on our instincts alone. That’s why this newsletter has a copy editor, the insightful Richard Anderson. Our guest speaker in September, Michael Lucker, told us that he sets his screenplays aside for six months so he can review them with dispassion. He still gets someone else to do an edit, though, because the work remains too much a part of him.

Send your child off to a university and try to see her or him objectively at the end of a semester. Impossible. You don’t see a college student, you see your kid. As writers, we are blind to obvious faults in our work that others detect in an instant.

I finished my second novel in October. Was I ready to submit it to my agent? Not on your life! I gave the manuscript to my editor (and AWC Treasurer) Kathleen Craft Boehmig, who pointed out all the places where I’d connived to make drama triumph over logic—and failed. She noted awkward sentences and similes that didn’t ring true. I had to confront weaknesses in character arcs and improve how I showed motivation and conflict-resolution. I’d worked hard on my novel for almost a year. I edited “without ruth.” But I missed everything Kathleen pinpointed. I had given her a good novel, a story of powerful emotional depth. My editor made it better. How much better? I wince when I imagine submitting my work without her invaluable input.

Ask your writing peers to edit your work. Pay them to do it; you’ll expect their best job, and they’ll put forth that effort because of the respect you’ve shown them. Many professional editing services exist in the Atlanta area. You can expect to pay between \$2 and \$5 per page. If you want to get published, consider this a worthwhile investment.

Our speaker this month, will talk about showing pride in your work by doing the best you can. That effort includes working with others to help you do even better. Hie thee to an editor, dear writer. You will see your efforts improve a thousand-fold. And if you spot any mistakes here, blame Richard. *See you on November 18th.*

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

President: George Weinstein, 770-552-5887

Membership VP: OPEN

Publicity VP: Lu Ann Sodano, 770-739-4749

Contests VP: Adrian Drost, 770-998-7015

First VP: David Ryback, 404-377-3588

Treasurer: Kathleen Craft Boehmig, 678-393-9324

Secretary: Teresa Gernazian, 404-636-8447

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: David Ryback, 404-377-3588

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!!!

PRE-MEETING NOSH: DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO READ?

Members or guests who wish to read a brief work they've written may do so during our 6:45-7:15 pre-meeting social. Please bring your favorite snack to share.

NOVEMBER SPEAKER INTERVIEW: "Everybody's All-American"
by George Weinstein

How does a football titan follow up his stellar career in athletics? In the case of Tommy Nobis, he provides a legacy of leadership and service in the community.

After Tommy retired from professional football, he could have been satisfied to perform his front-office responsibilities for the Atlanta Falcons and spend the ensuing decades living on past glories. Instead, he chose to immerse himself in bettering the lives of disabled Atlanta residents. He founded the Tommy Nobis Center in Marietta in 1975 to provide comprehensive vocational services to people with disabilities and special needs.

Mr. Nobis has led activities in the Atlanta area for more than twenty-five years to promote awareness and to open doors for the disadvantaged. His work with Special Olympics and his own non-profit foundation, which has assisted more than 11,000 individuals to date, has inspired others and given Tommy daily inspiration. He will share some of those lessons with The Atlanta Writers Club on November 18.

Certainly, we will also talk about football. You may want to hear stories about playing both defense and offense while leading the University of Texas to the 1963 National Championship, receiving the National Football League Rookie of the Year honors, and getting named to the Pro Bowl five times in eleven seasons. "Mr. Falcon" will accommodate you. His tales of gridiron glory underscore the lessons he's learned during the most recent thirty years of his life: perseverance against formidable obstacles, dedication to difficult but achievable goals, pride in doing your very best.

Do these sound like the qualities of a successful writer? Please join us on November 18 and discover wisdom that we can apply to our professional and personal lives.

NOVEMBER OUR TURN: "An Inquiry into Queries"

Following our guest speaker's presentation and a brief summary of club business, George Weinstein will lead a discussion on what you should put in and leave out of a query letter to agents and publishers. Please bring your examples of what's worked for you and what hasn't.

MEMBERSHIP DUES PLEA #1

Your membership will lapse if you have not paid your annual \$30 by November 30. Please use the attached membership form on page 7 and mail your dues to Kathleen Boehmig today!

MEETING RECAP: OCTOBER 21, 2004

by Kathleen Craft Boehmig

Our guest speaker was Tony Grooms, professor at Kennesaw State University. Approximately 25 attendees, comprising eight KSU students, fourteen AWC members and three at-large guests, listened as Mr. Grooms shared his knowledge of creative writing.

Mr. Grooms asserted that “writing is realized when the imagination is put through a disciplined artistic process.” He emphasized the importance of discipline, and of writing not only what you know but what you can well-imagine, involving diligent research. How many of us realized that when Stephen Crane wrote The Red Badge of Courage, he had never been to war?

We enjoyed hearing an excerpt from Mr. Grooms’ fictional account of the Civil Rights movement, as told through the eyes of the protagonist in his novel *Bombingham* (Ballantine). Thank you, Mr. Grooms, for sharing your time and expertise with us. Thanks also to the KSU students who attended our meeting. You’re all welcome at AWC anytime!

After club business, Dorothy Worth led us in a limerick-writing session. Several of our writers came up with poems in about five minutes. Quick thinking, guys! One humorous limerick Dorothy shared with us goes like this:

“I sat with the Duchess at tea;
It was just as I feared it would be.
Her rumblings abdominal
Were simply abominable,
And everyone thought it was me!”

Thank you, Dorothy, for an entertaining post-session.

MEMBERSHIP DUES PLEA #2

Your membership will lapse if you have not paid your annual \$30 by November 30. Please use the attached membership form on page 7 and mail your dues to Kathleen Boehmig today!

ACHIEVEMENTS & ACCOLADES

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

Mike Buchanan had a letter to the editor published in the October 24 edition of *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

Teresa Gernazian had a letter to the editor published in the September 26 edition of *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

George Weinstein received an Honorable Mention award in the 2004 Writer’s Digest Writing Competition.

DECEMBER MEETING PREVIEW

With tax-time looming, our December guest speaker will be Frances Ely of Rector and Moffitt, Certified Public Accountants. She will tell us every (legal) thing writers can do to maximize our tax returns. Leave your receipts and 1040 forms at home, but please bring your questions!

FROM THE TIP OF MY PEN – A Writer’s Tip of the Month: “Points of View (A and B)”
by Fran Stewart

“I don’t much like Thanksgiving,” said the turkey.
The lioness dragged the antelope past the sleeping male. *King of the jungle?* she thought. *Ha!*
“Hurray! It’s a new record!” Timmy Turtle cheered as his best friend crossed the finish line.

November is the month when we concentrate, presumably, on gratitude. Writers have many reasons to be grateful. We can, after all, do what we love (write) at our own pace (midnight to 2:30 anyone?) wherever we happen to be (now where did I put that scrap of paper?). It would behoove us though—I always wanted to use that word—to consider spicing up our prose or our poetry by using unusual points of view. Thanksgiving, for instance, from the viewpoint of the turkey.

Remember that the key phrase for a writer is *What if*. . . What if the lioness, who does all the hunting, refused to feed the male? What if the turtles applied to the Olympics? The people in your stories, books, or poems often will gain interest when they are not predictable. They can still be believable without being conventional. This is not to say that you should have little old ladies routinely joining circuses. But, why not have *one* little old lady do so?

There is another aspect of *point of view* that a writer should keep in mind. I once wrote what I considered to be a delightful little paragraph telling what a bird would have seen if she had been looking at the human character I was describing. “The little finch sitting on the tree overlooking the pathway,” I wrote, “could have made twelve nests in the pockets of the utilitarian vest the hiker wore . . .” and so on. It sounded perfectly fine to me. My editor thought otherwise. “No, no, no,” she red-inked, “you may not think like a bird when you are describing like a person.” How could I have used the image without distorting the point of view? *He tried to reach into one of the dozen or so pockets that covered his hiker’s vest. “Drat!” he muttered. “These pockets aren’t big enough to make a finch nest in.”* Okay, I admit this is not great writing, but do you get the idea?

When we jump from one point of view to another, we must give the reader a clue as to what we are doing. This is usually done by inserting a break in the text, but it is considerably more effective if we re-write to a consistent point of view. While we are speaking of Melinda’s thoughts as she stands in line, we cannot switch to telling what the salesclerk is thinking. We might, however, mention that Melinda could see a furrow forming between the eyebrows of the harried clerk. This is still from Melinda’s point of view, yet it gives information about the clerk – or rather about Melinda’s interpretation of what she saw.

It can be enlightening to take a piece of your own prose and mark up the margins with *Tammy’s point of view*, *Miranda’s POV*, *Tom’s Vantage Point*, *This is the blinkin’ BIRD talking!* It can also be a humbling experience.

MEMBERSHIP DUES PLEA #3

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FALL WRITING CONTESTS**Categories:**

Non-Fiction	maximum 1500 words
Short Story	maximum 3500 words
Juvenile Story	maximum 1500 words
Serious Poetry	maximum 42 lines
Light Verse	maximum 42 lines

Objectives: Provide encouragement, challenge and value to promote writing.

Eligibility:

Paid members may submit one entry per category.
Work must be original, non-published, and never have won a cash prize or award at any organization.
Contests are open to current paid members with strict adherence to submission procedures.

Submission Procedures:

Must be typewritten on letter-size white paper in standard font size and character.
Prose must be double-spaced. Poetry may be single-spaced.
Submit only one copy; retain a copy for your own files.
Place Title, Category, and Word Count in the upper left corner of the first page and number sequential pages with title in upper left corner.
No Personal Name on the manuscripts.
Manuscripts will be disposed of after judging and will not be returned.
Email submissions are preferred; send to addrrost@msn.com in Word format only.

Awards:

First place	\$50
Second Place	\$30
Third Place	\$20

Honorable mention cited at the discretion of the judges.
If fewer than 3 entries per category are submitted, the board reserves the right to modify the awards.

Deadline:

Entries must be in the hands of the Contest Committee by **November 18, 2004**.
No time extensions are allowed.

E-Mail to: addrrost@msn.com

Or mail to: Adrian D. Drost, 500 Periwinkle Drive, Roswell, GA 30075-4328
Entries can also be handed to Adrian at or before the November dinner meeting.

E-mail entries are preferred to speed the handling process.

All electronic entries will be acknowledged via e-mail. If you mail your entry, please include SASE (self-addressed stamped envelope) to receive acknowledgement.

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 \$ _____

Donation in the amount of \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Please mail with checks payable to *The Atlanta Writers Club* to
Kathleen Boehmig, 740 Gable Ridge Rd., Roswell, GA 30076

- Dues must be paid no later than November 30, 2004 to remain active.
- Non-active members will be removed from *The E-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: ____/____/____