



## January 2005 Issue

Resolve to Attend a  
Writers Conference

### Next Meeting: January 20, 2005

- **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:**  
Best-selling author Ken Foskett will discuss *Judging Thomas* and writing about history-makers.
- **8:15 – 8:30 pm Club Business:**  
Updates on club changes.
- **8:30 – 8:50 pm Our Turn:**  
Adrian Drost will present Fall Contest award checks and certificates.

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

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**Deadline for the February E-Quill is January 25th!**

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

**WRITE IT AS YOU SEE IT: “Writers Conferences”****by George Weinstein**

As we reflect on our writing accomplishments of 2004 and what we would like to achieve in the new year, I recommend attending one or more writers conferences to help you. Conferences abound in all parts of the US and the world. There are cruises, retreats, weeklong seminars, and intensive workshops: opportunities for all budgets, categories, and needs.

Many conferences offer a venue for pitching your work to editors and literary agents; skilled writers often land contracts on the spot for publication or representation. You will also have an opportunity to network with best-selling authors and talented peers. Finally, the leaders of conference workshops—accomplished writers or publishing professionals—can give you valuable insights about your work and the writing process.

One of the best ways to learn about writers conferences is to ask your peers. I can personally recommend the Harriette Austin Writers Conference in Athens, GA, and the Iowa Summer Writing Festival in Iowa City. In addition, please consult publications such as *Poets & Writers Magazine*, *The Writer*, and *Writer’s Digest* to learn details of upcoming conferences so you can pick the one(s) that will be right for you.

Over the past few months, I’ve written to you about the importance of seeking critiques and editing others’ work. Conferences provide opportunities to do both. You’ll have a chance to make friends with writers from around the world while you make your writing better. Stay local or plan your next vacation around a writers conference, but please do take advantage of this wonderful chance to grow in 2005.

See you on January 20.

**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:** Angela Harvey, 404-578-2002      **Treasurer:** Kathleen Craft Boehmig, 678-393-9324  
**Publicity VP:** Lu Ann Sodano, 770-739-4749      **Secretary:** Teresa Gernazian, 404-636-8447  
**Contests VP:** Adrian Drost, 770-998-7015      **Quill Editor:** George Weinstein (acting)

**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

**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.

**JANUARY SPEAKER INTERVIEW: "Ken Foskett Judges Thomas"**  
**by David Ryback**

Handsome and self-confident veteran reporter for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Ken Foskett, could easily be cast in a Hollywood film as a character doing what he does in real life. Ken wrote for the *Yale Daily News* during his college years, spent three years helping Save the Children get its start in Zambia, and then worked for five years as a Washington correspondent before coming to Atlanta.

After he wrote a profile article on Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, a publisher encouraged him to write a book on the complex judge. Mr. Foskett took a year off to apply his investigative skills, conduct scores of interviews, and write the seminal biography of Thomas. Six publishers competed for his work at auction. HarperCollins won and the rest is literary history. *Judging Thomas: The Life and Times of Clarence Thomas* came out a few months ago to rave reviews and quickly rose up the bestseller list. Clarence Thomas' wife declared that his book was the most complete and authentic portrait of her husband she had ever read.

Mr. Foskett believes that books can be much more satisfying than news articles, both to read as well as to write, because books can overcome the simplistic assumptions necessary to make briefer articles work. He will share with us his passion for writing that explores a vein of history that piques national interest. He will also answer all of the questions you have about a subject who is so captivating.

**JANUARY OUR TURN: FALL CONTEST AWARDS**

Adrian Drost will present Fall Contest award checks and certificates, and provide any written feedback supplied by the judges. Winners will not be announced in print until the February issue, so come to the January meeting to share in the excitement!

**ACHIEVEMENTS & ACCOLADES**

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

**Jean Osborne Shaw** won first honorable mention in the *Traditional Poetry* Contest of the Georgia Poetry Society for her poem "Sandscapes." She also read some of her poems at the Sounds of the Season Christmas Concert at Druid Hills Baptist Church.

**Mary Stripling** read her comic story "Honeymoon Ham" at the Village Writer's Holiday Reading. Her Christmas carol "Here He Is" was published in the Briarcliff Baptist Church Christmas Caroling Program and sung on that evening.

### MEETING RECAP: DECEMBER 16, 2004

by Kathleen Craft Boehmig

Did you know you may be eligible for Lifetime Learning Credits under the current tax laws if you go back to school? That's just one of many nuggets of information shared by our December guest speaker, Frances Ely, CPA, of Rector & Moffitt, P.C.

On December 16<sup>th</sup>, nine AWC members and four guests enjoyed an informative Q & A session led by Ms. Ely regarding writers' tax returns. Ms. Ely stressed the importance of filing promptly, keeping good records and organized receipts, and using available resources like the IRS.gov website for FAQ's and form downloads. If you would like to contact Ms. Ely at Rector & Moffitt regarding your tax return needs, call her at 770-879-8411. Her office is located in the Stone Mountain area.

Past President Sara Martin led our post session, "Painting Word Pictures", to remind us to "show, not tell" in our descriptive writing. Even seasoned writers benefited from Sara's review of literary devices like similes and metaphors. Sara also reminded us to turn nouns into verbs ("the town was tinselled with sleet"). She read excerpts from *The Trembling Earth* by Kim Siegelson, inspiring us to lift pen to paper, like brush to canvas, and paint pictures of our own.

Thank you to Frances Ely and to Sara Martin for a valuable and informative evening!

### GETTING TO KNOW YOUR NEW MEMBERSHIP VP

by Angie Harvey

When I was eight years old, I ripped a handful of pages out of a notebook, bound them together with pieces of twine, and grabbed a pencil to write and illustrate my first book. I called it "The Planet of the O's." I think I'd had Cheerios for breakfast that morning.

Since then, stories and essays have swirled in my head and flowed from my fingertips almost constantly. I write for magazines and newsletters, which I enjoy because I love to express my opinion, but I'm also an aspiring screenwriter. I'm excited to be part of The Atlanta Writers Club.

### FEBRUARY MEETING PREVIEW

Lois Reitzes is an executive producer and host on local National Public Radio affiliate WABE FM 90.1. Among the programs she oversees is Valerie Jackson's "Between the Lines," in which Ms. Jackson interviews nationally known authors. Expect Ms. Reitzes to discuss the literary scene in Atlanta, the importance of our work as creators and communicators, and more: all delivered in her famous warm-as-brandy voice. I know many members who would show up even if she merely planned to read aloud from the New York Stock Exchange composite transactions.

### MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

Humpus Bumpus Books in Cumming, GA, has a website on which owner Paul Cossman will list Georgia authors and their books in print. Please visit <http://www.humpusbumpus.com/> and send an e-mail to Mr. Cossman at [paul@humpusbumpus.com](mailto:paul@humpusbumpus.com) with your name, book title, ISBN, and, if available, your website. You may also call the bookstore with this information at (770) 781-9705.

**FROM THE TIP OF MY PEN – A Writer’s Tip of the Month:**  
**“Snow Storms and Avalanches” by Fran Stewart**

I have a friend, blessedly unnamed for this column, who peppers his writings with a veritable blizzard of adjectives. Three potential side effects of blizzards—I know this because I lived in Vermont for twenty-six years—are as follows:

1. People get lost in blizzards.
2. Blizzards make people feel cold.
3. Too much snow at one time turns into an avalanche.

Too many adjectives (that is to say, more than one per sentence) imply that the writer believes in a certain stupidity on the part of the reader. I don’t write for dense people. My target audience is well read. If I shower them with flurries of excess words, they will not feel well-informed so much as bored silly. Where is the adventure in reading if the author has spelled it all out in excruciating detail?

Let’s look at this example:

Marjorie, feeling bored and lonely, turned her long-lashed emerald-green eyes downward. She inspected the curve of her long, bright red, tapered fingernails. One had a wide heavy scratch that crossed the nail as if a big angry tiger had taken a vicious swat at her. She ignored the domineering and somewhat intimidating Arthur, even though he continued to pace like a hungry lion in front of her chair. He no longer had any hold on her empty and devastated heart.

Now let’s try it without any adjectives at all:

Marjorie turned her eyes downward. She inspected the curve of her fingernails. One had a scratch that crossed the nail as if a tiger had taken a swat at her. She ignored Arthur, even though he continued to pace like a lion in front of her chair. He no longer had any hold on her heart.

I would probably put back in the word *hungry*, but that is the only adjective necessary in this paragraph. You might choose to put in *emerald* or *long*. This is where good editing, which simply means good choosing, comes into play. While I doubt you got lost in the blizzard of the first example, I’d bet that you found it hard to care what the heck Marjorie thought about anything. There was simply too much nit-picky information about her. In the second section, though, a reader has a chance to ask, “Why is she looking downward? Don’t hopeful people generally look upward?”

Do you recall the first lines of Edwin Markham’s poem *The Man with the Hoe*? He talks about a man *bowed with the weight of centuries* who leans on his hoe and gazes at the ground. This is not the picture of a happy guy doing a little recreational yard work. Would we have learned more about the man if Markham had said he was discouraged, illiterate, tired, worn-out, exhausted? Markham goes on to use a number of adjectives—it *is* poetry after all. But that first word-picture of him looking down sets the premise of the poem.

An essential element of good prose is the careful choice of the exact detail that is necessary to further the action of the chapter, the story, the novel. Even poetry can be over-adjectified. Before you write another line, toss all your adjectives onto a compost heap of words. Once they’ve cooked down a bit, you can pull what’s left out one at a time. Remember to use no more than one simple little lonely adjective per fascinating, scintillating sentence. Whoops! I mean *one adjective per sentence, please*.

**SPRING WRITING CONTESTS****Categories:**

Humor (prose or poetry)	Maximum 1000 words
Flash Fiction	Maximum 250 words
Dialogue	Maximum 1000 words
Inspirational	Maximum 1500 words

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

**Eligibility:**

Paid members may submit one entry per category.  
Work must be original, non-published, 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 (REVISED):**

Must be typewritten on letter-size white paper in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.  
Prose must be double-spaced. Poetry may be single-spaced.  
Submit only one copy; retain one copy for your own files.  
Place *Title, Category, and Word Count* in the upper left corner of the first page and number subsequent pages.  
Place *Title* in upper left corner of all pages  
No personal name on the manuscript!  
If mailing your entry, include a 3x5 card with: *author's name, title, and category.*  
**Any deviation from the rules will result in disqualification.**

**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 received by Adrian Drost no later than **March 17, 2005**.  
No time extensions are allowed.

**E-mail to:** [addrst@msn.com](mailto:addrst@msn.com)

**Mail to:** Adrian Drost, 500 Periwinkle Drive, Roswell, GA 30075-4328

Entries can also be handed to Adrian at the March meeting.

## 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: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_