



January 2006 Issue

An Appeal for the
Next Administration

Next Meeting: January 21, 2006

- **1:00 – 1:15** *Potluck Nosh*: Bring your favorite snack.
- **1:15 – 1:30** *Share Your Writing*: Read a short work of two minutes or less.
- **1:30 – 2:15** *Guest Speaker*: Peter Bowerman, freelance writer and marketing expert, will advise how to publicize your book.
- **2:15 – 2:30** *Club Business*: Fall Contest awards.
- **2:30 – 3:00** *Our Turn*: Mike Buchanan continues the discussion of promoting yourself and your book.

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.

NEW MEETING LOCATION: Sandy Springs Regional Library Meeting Room: 395 Mount Vernon Highway, Sandy Springs, GA 30328. (404) 303-6130. The library is one mile north of I-285 and west of GA 400. For detailed directions, look inside this issue, view our website, or go to <http://mapsonus.switchboard.com>

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.atlantawritersclub.org

2005-2006 Schedule of Saturday Club Meetings (1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.):

- **September 17, 2005** Patrice Dickey, motivational speaker on creativity
- **October 15, 2005** James A. Moore, horror writer
- **November 19, 2005** Jedwin Smith, journalist, nonfiction author, two-time Pulitzer Prize nominee
- **December 17, 2005** Shelia P. Moses, award-winning novelist and biographer
- **January 21, 2006** Peter Bowerman, freelance writer and motivational speaker
- **February 18, 2006** Laurie Abkemeier, nonfiction literary agent for DeFiore & Company
- **March 18, 2006** Spoken Magazine (members read their works) hosted by Kathleen Mainland
- **April 15, 2006** Maralys Wills, author in six genres, award-winning educator
- **May 20, 2006** Darnell Arnoult, poet and novelist

Deadline for February E-Quill submissions is January 25th

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

WRITE IT AS YOU SEE IT: “Oh, the Places You’ll Go”
by George Weinstein, President

I have some news to relate, of the good news/bad news variety. Since this is my second term, I have to step down in May. The bylaws require this. It’s bad news for the selfish reason that I love this job. But it’s good news for the club. The reasons for term limits are sensible. Fresh blood brings fresh ideas. Other members get a chance to apply their personal stamp on the organization. The club avoids becoming a cult of personality.

During this term and the past one, my officers and I have witnessed remarkable changes to the club. The revamped website has allowed many of you to find us for the first time. Our new meeting time and location have encouraged a large number of you to join, and our monthly programs hopefully give you enough useful information, entertainment, and fellowship that you’ll want to renew your membership.

I’m very excited about our future, and I’m looking for others who feel the same way. The first step toward electing the new administration that will begin in June is to form a Nominating Committee. I need three volunteers who will identify candidates for the positions of president, first vice-president (who secures guest speakers, interviews them for the newsletter, and introduces them at the meetings), contest vice-president, membership vice-president, publicity vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and newsletter editor. If you’d like to volunteer to be on the Nominating Committee, please see me at the January meeting or contact me at gjweinstein@yahoo.com or (770) 552-5887.

The Nominating Committee will canvas current members, searching for those who are willing to serve. No hard sells. No guilt trips. No shanghaiing. If you’ve ever witnessed a club where individuals have been goaded into leading, you know about the palpable lack of enthusiasm. Please don’t elect our replacement officers at gunpoint—volunteer. If you’d like to be considered for any of the officer positions, please let me know and I’ll pass on your name to the Nominating Committee as soon as they’ve assembled.

Volunteering for the Nominating Committee requires only a little time and enables your club to enjoy positive leadership for the upcoming term. Serving as an officer in The Atlanta Writers Club might boost your writing career. You can make sure that you and your fellow members meet the most interesting speakers, hear the latest information about the publishing industry, and experience the best network of fellow writers in the region. Best of all, you can note your leadership position on your query letters.

If you like what the club is doing now, you can ensure that we continue to move forward in positive directions. I hope I’m inundated with volunteers on January 21. See you then.

OFFICER LIST FOR THE ATLANTA WRITERS CLUB—2005-2006 Term:

President: George Weinstein, 770-552-5887 **First VP:** Joan Harmon, 404-351-5691
Membership VP: Kathleen Craft Boehmig, 678-393-9324 **Treasurer:** Adrian Drost, 770-998-7015
Publicity VP: Lu Ann Sodano, 770-739-4749 **Secretary:** Angela Harvey, 404-578-2002
Contests VP: Richard Anderson, 770-830-6131 **Quill Editor:** George Weinstein, 770-552-5887

OTHER CONTACTS:

Historian/Photographer/By-Laws: Adrian Drost, 770-998-7015
Copy Editor: Richard Anderson, 770-830-6131 **Poetry Editor:** Dorothy Worth, 404-636-1316
Speaker Interviews: Joan Harmon, 404-351-5691 **Achievements:** Fran Stewart, 770-682-7483

NOSH & READ

Please bring your favorite snack to share during our pre-meeting social that begins at 1:00 p.m. At 1:15, members or guests can read a brief work they've written. Please limit your reading selection to two minutes or less.

JANUARY SPEAKER INTERVIEW

**“A Nice, Generous, Accessible Author”
by Joan F. Harmon, First VP**

The Well-Fed Writer, the award-winning Book-of-the-Month Club selection (2000), *The Well-Fed Writer, Back for Seconds* (2005), a Writer's Digest Book Club selection, and coming next year, *The Well-Fed Self-Publisher's How to Turn One Book into a Full-Time Living*, are the highly informative self-published books by Peter Bowerman, our speaker for January 21, 2006.

Peter says he started his freelance commercial writing career in 1993, with no writing background or previous paid writing experience. He had fifteen years of sales and marketing experience, but one of the first things he did before he self-published his first book was to hire a professional publishing consultant to help him through the process. “Writers need to be a creative force and a businessperson,” he says.

Peter has a reputation as being a nice, generous, and accessible author. Check out his web site, www.wellfedwriter.com. Along with his highly successful books, he offers seminars and coaching support. Testimonies from his many clients say “he is positive, insightful, and smart. Plus, he's downright fun to be with. He has a marvelous insight to the human side of business, and his ability to share that was essential for building my confidence.”

Along with sharing his marketing techniques, Peter will speak to us about keeping track of our experiences, writing about what we know, and most importantly, targeting our audience. Get ready for the new year with Peter (Power Man) Bowerman.

JANUARY OUR TURN

Award-winning teacher and longtime AWC member Mike Buchanan, along with his co-author Diane Lang, sold so many copies of their self-published novel *Micah's Child* that Dragonon, Inc. Publishers purchased the rights and is releasing it this spring. Dragonon is also helping them develop new projects for future publication. Continuing the discussion about marketing that Peter Bowerman began, Mike will describe some of the traditional and unorthodox means he and Diane have used to hand-sell their books and promote their way to a publishing contract.

NOVEMBER MEETING RECAP

by George Weinstein

Shelia P. Moses became a novelist in the young-adult genre quite by accident. She had written *The Legend of Buddy Bush* as adult historical fiction, but editors at Simon & Schuster saw an opportunity to fill a niche in their Children's Publishing Division. After a few arguments about appropriate language—voilà!—a novel for young adults began to garner attention and awards. Ms. Moses' spreading fame is no accident, however. Her talent as an orator, as well as a storyteller in prose, came across very clearly on December 17.

Shelia led off her discussion with a reading from *I, Dred Scott*, her children's novel also published by Simon & Schuster, about a man born into slavery who fights for his freedom through the courts for eleven years. The landmark Supreme Court decision of 1857 that bears his name should have dealt Scott and his family a final blow, but his life only became more fascinating after that.

In determining the voice of Dred Scott, she relied on her ancestors and other older people she grew up with in rural North Carolina. By capturing the way they talked, she knew she could give Scott's words authenticity. The editors at Simon & Schuster allowed her to choose Scott's vocabulary and didn't interfere with her decision to include a large number of facts in the book. By keeping the story in an engaging first-person narrative, even the relating of history remains accessible to her audience of ten-to-fourteen year olds.

As with writing Dick Gregory's biography, bringing to life Buddy Bush and Dred Scott obsessed her and dominated her life. The stories of these men left her drained, because she didn't content herself to use antiseptic historical accounts and yellowed newsprint to discover her subjects. As she noted, "I don't write from paper. I write from people."

The thirty-five people in attendance heard her loud and clear.

After Ms. Moses' book-signing, Buzz Bernard led us in a lively discussion about tips on writing a successful synopsis, that brief present-tense narrative that brings the main characters to life, describes the primary actions that take place, hooks the reader, and tells how it all ends. The key points: Be brief but specific. Pay attention to the agent's or editor's requirements. Capture the scope of your novel in the span of a poem. No problem!

FEBRUARY MEETING PREVIEW

Laurie Abkemeier, nonfiction literary agent for DeFiore & Company, will describe the nonfiction publishing landscape, provide tips for landing an agent, such as herself, and caution us about what dooms most book proposals. Please bring your questions about writing, publishing, and promoting nonfiction on February 18.

JUDGEMENT DAY AT THE ATLANTA WRITERS CLUB

by **Richard Anderson, Contests VP**

When the literary masterpieces we enter into contests fail to win top place—or second or third or even a kind word—we may be tempted to rate the contest judge as one of the lower forms of life, devoid of humanity and incapable of understanding fine literature.

Thus, let me assure you that all of our judges are accomplished writers, and many are professionally involved with writing, teaching of writing, editing, or publishing. Of our fall contest judges, one has had many magazine articles and short stories published, written two novels, and “doctored” others’ books. Another has advanced degrees in writing and literature, has published both nonfiction and poetry, and has taught writing and communications. Others are publishers or editors or involved in other ways with writing as a profession. Their homes range from far northern US to the Deep South and West. All have years of writing experience. We are fortunate that we can avail their expertise.

Some of our members will be delighted and some may be dismayed when the Fall Contest Awards are given out at our meeting on January 21st. Still, if we shuffled the judges and entries the results would likely come in differently. Each judge has his or her own style and preferences that influence his or her perception of a given piece—but they all know what good writing is. You may take pride in receiving a favorable judgment. You should not be discouraged if you do not. In either case, learn from the experience and write and write and write some more. Our spring writing contests will be here before the azaleas bloom. Watch for the rules in the February Quill.

CLUB-SPONSORED CRITIQUE GROUP CONTINUES

The Atlanta Writers Club sponsors a critique group at the Village Veranda coffee shop in Alpharetta on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. The next meetings are January 11 and 25. All members and guests are welcome. This group focuses solely on critiquing one another’s work. The only rules are as follows:

- 1) Limit of 500 words for the piece to be critiqued
- 2) Bring at least ten copies so others can read along and provide written comments
- 3) Arrive on time and sign up, since only eight people can share their work on a given night

The Village Veranda (678-240-9202) is located at 52-B North Main St. (Hwy. 9) in Alpharetta, on the same block as the Welcome Center. Heading north on N. Main St., turn left onto Church St. and then make an immediate left to access the Village Veranda parking lot. We meet upstairs.

FROM THE TIP OF MY PEN – A Writer’s Tip of the Month:

“Knitted with Love” by Fran Stewart

For the past several months I’ve been knitting helmet-liners out of 100% wool yarn. This is part of a nation-wide project for knitters to help the troops stay warmer overseas in the winter. The problem these are meant to solve is that the polyester helmet-liners provided by the government simply don’t keep *anything* warm.

There’s probably nothing wrong with synthetic fibers other than the fact that they’re made with petroleum, aren’t they? And they don’t stop the cold. And they don’t feel particularly comforting. And they’re not made with love by those machines that sew them.

What does this have to do with writers? Lots. Let’s be sure that when we knit our stories, our poems, our essays, we do it with love and with the very best materials we can lay our hands on. Why settle for polyester words when we have dictionaries, thesauruses, great workshops, and a legacy of English teachers at our disposal? Why settle for synthetic, poorly knit plots when with a little extra care (okay – a *lot* of extra care) we can weave, knit, or crochet the very best creations we are capable of? Why let our readers freeze their way through an unsatisfactory story line, when, with 100% commitment, we can warm their hearts and fire their imaginations?

Let’s decide to write only with 100% wool for the whole rest of the year. Or in the summer, we can switch to 100% silk. It’s the 100% that matters. As long as it’s not 100% polyester.

ACHIEVEMENTS & ACCOLADES

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

Jeanne Osborne Shaw’s poem "Learning My ABC's" was printed in a new volume of poetry put out by the Georgia Poetry Society. She read her poem "The Gift-Bearer" at the *Sound of the Seasons Concert* at Druid Hills Baptist Church in Atlanta.

Sara Hines Martin has been included in the 2005 edition of the Dictionary of International Biography published by the International Biographical Centre, Cambridge, England.

Membership Dues, Donations and Information Update

Please make checks payable to The Atlanta Writers Club:

2005-2006 Membership Dues: \$30 per member \$ _____

Note: Students, ages 25 and under, pay only \$20 year-round

Donation in the amount of \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Please mail with checks payable to *The Atlanta Writers Club* to
Adrian Drost, 500 Periwinkle Drive, Roswell, GA 30075

- Unpaid members will be removed from *The E-Quill* mailing list.
- 2005 Membership Year runs from 9/1/05 through 8/31/06

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

Name _____

Address _____ City & Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

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: ____/____/____