



APRIL 2006 ISSUE

**Buy Your AWC T-Shirts
Today!**

Next Meeting: April 15, 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:** Cecil Murphey, author of more than 100 books and former AWC president, will discuss query letters & book proposals.
- ✂ **2:15 – 2:30 Club Business:** Details about special summer events & T-shirt sale.
- ✂ **2:30 – 3:00 Our Turn:** George Weinstein will lead a discussion about strategies to overcome discouragement and recharge your writing.

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, view our website, or go to <http://mapsonus.switchboard.com>

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.atlantawritersclub.org**

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

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	Cecil Murphey, former AWC President, best-selling author of over 100 books
May 20, 2006	Dana Wildsmith, poet, writing teacher, and essayist
June 10, 2006	Picnic at Polly & Henry Neal's home at noon
July 15, 2006	All-day (10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.) writing workshop led by author Brian Corrigan
August 19, 2006	Half-day (10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.) publicity workshop led by Peter Bowerman
Sept.-Dec.	TBA

Deadline for May E-Quill submissions is April 25th

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

WRITE IT AS YOU SEE IT: “Overcoming Discouragement”
by George Weinstein, President

How do you stay motivated as a writer intent on publication who can't seem to get that elusive contract? How do you retain your enthusiasm for editing—or worse, rewriting—the umpteenth revision of your manuscript? How do you find the energy to write yet another round of query letters to yet another batch of busy and apathetic agents?

Beats me. I can't tell you the best way to undertake these actions, only how I go about the business of dealing with the writer's worst enemy: discouragement. The problem is so pervasive, and its effects are so destructive, that we're devoting April's Our Turn segment to this topic.

As some of you know, I'm a novelist, a writer of so-called “up-market” fiction (that is, high concept, character-driven works on the ragged edge of receiving the cursed “literary” tag). These are the kind of books that win awards and get plugged by Oprah, or dwell forever in obscurity. There's no in-between for the up-market. Thus, selling an up-market novel as an unknown writer is something of a challenge. So far, I'm oh-for-three: three complete novels, no sales.

I wish I could write books that fall into a traditional genre, easy to label, easy to sell, but my inspirations don't fit such well-defined categories. I wish I could create short stories, poems, or articles, but small projects don't inspire me. I wish I could get drunk and forget, but I stopped drinking long ago, and I have a cruelly persistent memory.

So, what I have to do is run away from the self-doubt, the weariness, and the apathy that try to cling to me. I do this by getting lost in my story. Lost so completely that those demons can't get my attention for a single moment. I remember why I wanted to write my novel in the first place, what themes I wanted to explore, what message I wanted to bring to life.

When it's time to rewrite yet again, or put on my editor's green visor, I immerse myself in the delightful ways a few words can be organized to achieve very different affects and effects. I get so wrapped up in the craft that I shed whatever evil mood had made me so blasé beforehand.

When the novel feels ready and my editor has blessed it, I can't wait to submit it. With my first novel, that feeling had to sustain me through fifty-three rejections. An agent did accept me in July 2004. Almost two years later, I still don't have a sale, but some of the best in the business have told me, no thanks, but try again. And so, while my agent labors to find a home for my previous works, I try again with something new. I have to. I'm a writer. It's what I do.

I hope you'll share your ideas for overcoming discouragement at our April 15 meeting.

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

President: George Weinstein, 770-552-5887	First VP: Ginger Collins, 770-424-0757
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.

APRIL SPEAKER INTERVIEW

“More Than 100 Books Written, More Than a Million Lives Touched”

By George Weinstein

Cecil Murphey is among the rarest of writers: one who makes a very good living writing and talking about writing. He made his mark as a ghostwriter, and sold books under pseudonyms, but now he regularly sells his own stories. With 103 titles—over a million copies—in print, six books more under contract, and plenty in the works, this is a man who can tell The Atlanta Writers Club exactly what we need to know about finding an agent or publisher. He's also a man who's forever linked to our club, having been its president between 1996 and 1998.

Celebrating his twenty-second year as a fulltime writer, Cec can speak credibly about every facet of the writer's life. At the April 15 meeting, he plans to tell us about writing book proposals and query letters, since these initial communications with agents and publishers are so crucial to landing a book contract. But he speaks so well about so many writing topics, I'd like to use the remaining space for this column to give you a variety of his insights:

- ✍ His basic writing philosophy: learn the craft. Don't be afraid to do the hard work of rewriting draft after draft until you tell the story the best way it can be told.
- ✍ Use manuscript editing services and critique groups to help perfect your story—don't send your manuscript to agents or publishers until it's ready.
- ✍ Go to writers conferences to network and learn the business. Start with the smaller conferences like the Southeastern Writers Conference on St. Simons and Harriette Austin in Athens to avoid getting overwhelmed. While there, talk to agents and publishers to decide who's right for you before committing yourself with a query letter. Getting the wrong agent might be worse than not having an agent.
- ✍ Read, especially books on writing. Every six weeks or so, Cec reads another book about the craft. Even after getting more than 100 books published, he's still open to new lessons.
- ✍ Remember that writing is not a sprint; it's a marathon.

APRIL OUR TURN

George Weinstein will lead a discussion about overcoming discouragement and strategies for recharging our writing batteries. Do you return to a favorite book for inspiration? Do you start a new project, short story, poem, or article? Do you get away from writing altogether so you can come back refreshed? Bring your advice and share your stories—help us all stay on course.

UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS—GET READY FOR SUMMER!

June 10 – Annual Club Picnic

Former AWC President Polly Neal and her husband Henry once again have offered to share their lovely house, landscaped grounds, and Polly's breathtaking artwork with us for a June 10 picnic. As before, each family that attends will bring a dish or beverages for everyone to enjoy. Please sign up at the April and May meetings. With almost double the membership of the previous year, we should have quite a feast, with plenty of doggy bags and sweet memories.

Directions to Polly & Henry Neal's house:

- From I-85, take North Druid Hills Exit Northbound. Thus, if heading on I-85 North, you'll go under the bridge, come around the loop to the top, and turn right at the light.
- Cross over Buford Highway and get into the left lane.
- At fork, continue straight on E. Roxboro Rd. (North Druid Hills veers off to the right).
- At next light (only about 50 feet from the fork), turn left onto Goodwin Rd.
- Polly's is the second house on the right: 1242 Goodwin Rd.
- Park in the street or her driveway and proceed into the backyard.
- If you get lost, please call Polly at 404-233-5174.
- In case of rain, we'll hold the picnic on Saturday, June 17.

July 15 – All-day Writing Workshop at the Sandy Springs Library

Brian Jay Corrigan, AWC member and author of the widely and highly acclaimed novel *The Poet of Loch Ness*, will lead a daylong seminar (10:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.) that embodies the goal of this club: to discuss the craft and business of writing, for both non-fiction and fiction (be it short story or novel). The morning discussion will focus on the magic of putting the right words together the right way, and he'll devote the afternoon to the ways and means of getting published. Brian has offered to review query letters in advance and will provide written feedback. The workshop price is \$20. You can reserve your spot with a \$20 check payable to The Atlanta Writers Club, sent to George Weinstein, 1285 Willeo Creek Drive, Roswell, GA 30075. In response, you'll receive instructions on how to submit your query letter for Brian's review.

August 19 – Half-day Publicity Workshop at the Sandy Springs Library

Back by popular demand, marketing guru Peter Bowerman will present a half-day workshop (10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.) on publicity and book promotion. He'll expand on some of the topics mentioned during his January talk, and he'll reveal many more secrets about the forbidding world of S&M: the sales and marketing of your book. The price is \$67. You can reserve your spot with a \$67 check payable to The Atlanta Writers Club, sent to George Weinstein, 1285 Willeo Creek Drive, Roswell, GA 30075.

GET WELL, JOAN, AND THANK YOU, GINGER

Due to Joan Harmon's illness, Ginger Collins has agreed to take on the role of First VP for the club. Ginger signed up our May speaker—poet, writing teacher, and essayist Dana Wildsmith—and is already working on the lineup for the fall. We wish Joan a speedy recovery and thank Ginger for her enthusiasm and initiative!

THE ATLANTA WRITERS CLUB T-SHIRTS—2 STYLES ON SALE NOW

FRONT



BACK



FRONT



BACK



By popular demand, you can purchase the tee in black, white, or get both!

Each shirt is a bargain at \$10 apiece, or buy two for \$18 (or three for \$27, four for \$36, etc.). Make your check payable to *The Atlanta Writers Club*. Contact George Weinstein at gjweinstein@yahoo.com or (770) 552-5887 and tell him:

- 1) Whether you want black, white, or both styles of T-shirt
- 2) Which size(s) for each color: Adult S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL, XXXXL; and/or Child L
- 3) What quantity of each size
- 4) Whether you want the shirt(s) mailed to you (they will be available for pickup and for sale at every meeting, starting in April). If so, add \$4 per shirt for packaging and shipping charges.

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

“Twilight” by Fran Stewart

I’ve always wanted to use the word *crepuscular* in one of my books, but I’ve never written any book for which that word would be appropriate. That’s part of the problem of being a word collector. There are a lot more words than there are places to use them.

Or, perhaps, part of the problem of too many words is the dearth (there’s another good one) of vocabularic expectations in our schools, in advertising, in the media. I doubt *vocabularic* would pass any sort of dictionary search, but you can see what I mean, can’t you? Pull out a copy of any book by Dickens; flip through *Moby Dick*; haul out Austen or Alcott or Emerson or practically anything written before 1950, and compare it to *USA Today*, the evening news, or the latest issue of almost any other magazine.

Now, I’m not one to go around bad-mouthing the media. We—meaning the general public as reflected in print—seem to want the easy word more than the precise word. We have, as a nation, been willing to give up precision in our language. That distresses me, until I discover that I’ve been comparing the apples of books to the oranges of magazines. Maybe we need the dessert-like lightness, the jazzy contemporaneous simple prose of magazines. But, please, let’s keep writing books that give our readers some meat to chew on. Even if not one single *crepuscular* moment shows up in any of them.

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 April 12 and 26. 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.

ACHIEVEMENTS & ACCOLADES

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

Bernie Blanton wrote a Lenten Reflection for the Oakhurst Baptist Church booklet.

Mike Buchanan’s novel *Micah’s Child*, co-written with Diane Lang, will be published in April by Dragonon Press under the pseudonym Lang Buchanan. Visit www.langbuchanan.com.

Brian Corrigan will be appearing on St. John Flynn's show, Cover to Cover, on Georgia Public Broadcasting radio, April 30 at 8 p.m.

Bill Jackson’s novel *Crackajack Love*, published by ThomasMax, is now available. Visit www.crackajacklove.com.

THE DAHLONEGA LITERARY FESTIVAL PRIZE IN LITERATURE

The DLF Prize in Literature seeks to recognize and reward emerging works of exceptional quality. Because the festival is a celebration of the written word, writers are invited to submit all forms of novel: category fiction, experimental, mainstream, literary, *et cetera*.

DESCRIPTION:

TYPE: Annual prize in novel-length, unpublished fiction

GENRE: Any (including experimental)

LENGTH: 50,000-150,000 words

FEE: \$35.00 (payable to THE DAHLONEGA LITERARY FESTIVAL)

SUBMISSION WINDOW: **1 March-31 July** (the contest window closes earlier if 200 submissions are received before 31 July)

PRIZES: **First Prize:** \$500 and recommendation to a top New York agency (if appropriate)
Second Prize: \$300
Third Prize: \$200
Fourth and Fifth Prizes: awarded where indicated and will consist of a certificate of merit.

RULES and SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Please visit The DLF website at www.literaryfestival.org.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING:

- Distinctive voice
- Engaging Character and Character Development
- Sense of Atmosphere
- Crafting of the written word to advantageous effect
- General storytelling ability

MAIL TO:

DLF FICTION CONTEST
420 Wal-Mart Way, Box 514
Dahlonega, GA 30533

QUESTIONS:

Questions should be directed through the Festival website at www.literaryfestival.org or directly to brianjaycorrigan@yahoo.com

THE DUKE UNIVERSITY WRITERS' WORKSHOP

May 7-11, 2006

Kanuga Conference Center near Hendersonville, NC

The Duke University Writers' Workshop is an intensive, small-group learning experience designed to stretch participants' creative capacities and knowledge in a supportive and noncompetitive environment.

Instructors are chosen not only for their distinguished professional credentials, but also for their skill in building a learning community where the joy of new discovery is primary.

The mission of the Duke Writers' Workshop is:

- ✍ To provide a generous, supportive environment for adult writers at all levels of experience to reflect on the challenges and rewards of writing and to focus on improving their craft.
- ✍ To offer first-rate instruction across genres with an emphasis on identifying, shaping, and polishing each participant's distinctive voice and material.
- ✍ To foster a spirit of community where all participants may receive an honest and sensitive appraisal of their works in progress.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.learnmore.duke.edu/summeracademy/about.htm>

THE HUB CITY WRITERS PROJECT

June 16-18, 2006

Wofford College in Spartanburg, SC

Sixth annual "Writing in Place" creative writing conference. Registration is now open. Keynote speaker to open the conference will be Rebecca McClanahan, author of eight books, an award-winning poet, essayist, fiction writer and educator.

Other faculty members include novelists Mindy Friddle of Greenville and Mark Powell of Mountain Rest. Poetry instructors are Barbara Presnell of Lexington, N.C., and Deno Trakas of Spartanburg. Essayist John Lane of Spartanburg will teach creative nonfiction.

The Hub City conference is a hands-on, intensive writing experience, designed to help both beginners and professionals develop the craft of creative writing. The conference is limited to 60 people, and registrants must sign up for one of three tracks: poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction.

Additional sessions will be offered in writing dialogue, developing secondary characters, ekphrastic poetry, songwriting, publishing without a publisher and more. There are faculty readings, open mic sessions, and a Saturday night barbecue.

The cost of the conference is \$155. Lodging is available at Wofford College for \$15 a night. For more information, call 864-577-9349 or visit www.hubcity.org.

Membership Dues, Donations and Information Update

Please make checks payable to **The Atlanta Writers Club**:

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 30075-4328

Unpaid members will be removed from *The E-Quill* mailing list.
2006 Membership Year runs from 1/1/06 through 12/31/06

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: ____/____/____