



May 2006 Issue

**AWC Spring Contest
Awards Ceremony**

Next Meeting: May 20, 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 – 2:30** *Guest Speaker: Dana Wildsmith, poet, author, and teacher, discusses how to choose the best way to express your message.*
- **2:30 – 3:00** *Club Business: AWC Spring Contest awards, reminder about June 10 Picnic.*

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.

**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 12 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
- **September 16, 2006** Booksellers Roundtable—advice on how to maximize your sales
- **October 21, 2006** Darnell Arnoult, poet and novelist
- **November 18, 2006** TBA
- **December 16, 2006** Joe Bathanti, novelist and poet

Deadline for June E-Quill submissions is May 25th

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

WRITE IT AS YOU SEE IT: “Bound for BEA”**by George Weinstein, President**

Since mid-April, I've been preparing for an upcoming trip. During the week of May 16, the publishing world holds its huge annual conference in a gathering called Book Expo America (BEA), and I plan to be there. I'm ashamed to admit this, but I'll miss the AWC meeting; instead I'll be at the Washington DC Convention Center selfishly pitching my novels to anyone who'll listen. Since hundreds of publishers will have booths at BEA, I hope that more than a few will also have attentive ears and open minds.

Here's the idea behind “the pitch”: You encapsulate the contents of your book—every theme you explore, each nuance of character, and all the plot twists—into a thirty-second sound bite. That's all you get: half a minute. Less time than it's taken you to read my column up to this point. And your pitch needs a hook, a clever turn of phrase or a fascinating juxtaposition that catches your listeners off-guard and compels them to ask for more. If they have attentive ears and open minds, and if your initial delivery is a strike that grabs their attention, your reward is to . . . throw another pitch.

You slide gracefully into your one-minute pitch. This allows you to do something with your hands, because you will have prepared a “one-pager.” The one-pager consists of a synopsis and a why-you're-worthy-of-promotion-as-an author biographical summary on the front side, and the most riveting excerpt from your book that you can cram onto the back. You hand over the one-pager (printed on high quality, subtly distinctive paper) and have about sixty seconds to describe your book in its most important details, basically a summary of your synopsis. Again, if your listeners still express interest or—even better—ask questions, you get to . . . keep pitching.

Unless you're now answering questions about your story, you refer your audience to the other side of your one-pager and describe the most dramatic part of your novel. You act it out or at least express genuine enthusiasm for the scene. Hopefully, this will produce questions that demonstrate continued interest. If so, you continue to the fourth level of pitching, when you make sure you've addressed their questions and then, before you wear out your welcome, you ask one of your own: “May I send you the full manuscript or would you prefer a partial?”

Now it's time to scoot. Promise when you'll mail the pages, thank your listeners for their time, shake hands, and proceed to the next publisher of your genre. Start all over again.

Thus, on May 20 while you're enjoying Dana Wildsmith and applauding the contest award winners, I'll be pitching away. Did I mention that I have to do this for three novels? I'll tell you all about it in June, and then I'll help you get ready for BEA next year. Again, I'm sorry to miss the meeting. If it's any consolation, I plan to wear my AWC T-shirt (see page 7 for purchasing details), and I will let everyone at BEA know that we'll be there in force in 2007 and beyond—displaying the AWC logo and pitching nothing but strikes.

OFFICER LIST FOR THE ATLANTA WRITERS CLUB—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: Ginger Collins, 770-424-0757 **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.

MAY SPEAKER INTERVIEW

“Dana Wildsmith – Making Memorable Music with Words” by Ginger Collins, First VP

Dana Wildsmith loves the sound of words. “It’s the sound of a poem that people remember,” she says. “Words cling to each other and flow out of the mouth in a music that is memorable.”

Her love of words shows in the poetry she creates. Wildsmith’s work combines lush language and beautiful words to draw people into intimate and unforgettable conversations about the basic issues of life: how money (or the lack of it) shapes the choices we make, how to best love those around us, and how to allow our loved ones to exit from life when their time comes.

The grace with which she embraces these subjects may be the reason her poetry has proven so popular. The first printing of her debut chapbook, *Alchemy*, was sold out in months. Her subsequent poetry collections, *Annie* and *Our Bodies Remember*, as well as an audio collection, *Choices*, have also been well received. Her new collection, *One Good Hand*, is now available from Iris Press.

Her poems and essays have appeared in many journals and magazines, including *Yankee*, *The Kentucky Poetry Review*, *The Ashville Poetry Review*, *Calliope*, and *The Chattahoochee Review* and have compiled a long list of formal honors.

Dana teaches regionally at the Duke Writers Workshop and the John C. Campbell Folk School. She also teaches English Literacy to non-native English speakers near her home in Bethlehem, Georgia. She lives with two generations of her family, two dogs, and uncounted cats on a 120+ year-old family farm. Her life on this land is the focus of her current writing project.

On May 20th, Dana will join us to read from her existing works and share the challenges of her work in progress, a transition from poetry into a book of non-fiction. Why is one issue expressed best in an essay, and another subject more suited to poetry? How can you decide the best way to express your material? Come hear Dana Wildsmith address these topics, answer your questions, and sign copies of her books at our next meeting. To learn more about Dana Wildsmith, visit her website: www.danawildsmith.com.

AWC BOOK DRIVE

Please bring new or gently used books to the May meeting, for donation to libraries along the gulf coast. This is part of AWC’s ongoing book drive to assist Katrina-ravaged public libraries in replenishing their inventories. We’ve collected approximately one hundred books since September. Thank you for your generosity!

APRIL MEETING RECAP

by Kathleen Craft Boehmig, Membership VP

Cecil Murphey, AWC past-president and renowned co-author of *90 Minutes in Heaven*—one of over 100 titles he's written—spoke to forty-five attendees during our April meeting. Cec packed nuggets on many aspects of the writing life into his presentation on signing with agents and composing query letters. Thank you, Cec, for honoring us with an informative and entertaining discussion!

Club announcements included information on our upcoming summer barbeque at Polly Neal's home and two writing seminars (see details on page 5), sales of our new AWC T-shirts, and a plea to bring new or gently-used books to the May meeting as part of our ongoing book drive to help replenish inventories of storm-ravaged libraries along the gulf coast.

Last but not least, our illustrious prez George Weinstein led a lively "Our Turn" discussion on overcoming discouragement:

- Write, and keep writing!
- Honor your passion.
- Network with other writers. (It's truly worthwhile, as illustrated by member Dave Shearer, who drove all the way from Charlotte to attend the meeting!)
- Remember Bill Cosby's maxim, as quoted by George: "I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is to try to please everybody."

Thanks for the tips, George! Remember, writers: write your passion—not to please others, but as your best and purest form of self-expression.

TWO CLUB-SPONSORED CRITIQUE GROUPS NOW IN OPERATION!

Wednesdays, May 10 and 24: 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 May 10 and 24. All members and guests are welcome. This group focuses solely on critiquing one another's work. Please bring up to five pages of your work and six copies to share so we can give you written feedback.

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.

Thursdays, May 11 and 25: Our new critique group meets at the Chapter 11 in Ansley Mall from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. All members and guests are welcome. Please bring up to five pages of your work and six copies to share so we can give you written feedback.

Directions: from Buckhead, take Piedmont Road south. Cross over Monroe and the mall will be on your right.

ACHIEVEMENTS & ACCOLADES

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

Richard Anderson wrote an article, "Horton's Books and Gifts," in Carrollton, Georgia about the state's oldest bookstore, to be published in *ByLine Magazine*.

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

“Inspiration” by Fran Stewart

“Take a breath, dear,” is excellent advice for writers. The whole idea of breathing, of oxygenating the cells, is that our cells work better when they are aerated. And brain cells are particularly prone to a need for oxygen. Inspiration, therefore, is more than simply reading or listening to other fine writers and learning from them, being inspired by them. It’s a matter of that big inhalation that says, “Wow; I can learn from this.”

At our last meeting, George asked us, “What do you do to overcome discouragement?” I felt a little silly saying, “I breathe.” So I didn’t say it. I should have, though. That is what I do. I take a few very deep breaths. And then I take a few more. “Breathing sure beats the alternative.” Who said that? When I am discouraged, though, I tend to stop breathing or to breathe in a shallow, non-productive manner. Three deep slow breaths, though, will often turn my crummy attitude around.

When I’m breathing I can write. And as long as I’m writing—look out world, magic is on the way.

PICK A LITTLE, PECK A LITTLE

by Richard Anderson, Contest VP

During my career as a research scientist I learned that the only failed experiments were not those that did not yield the desired result, but those from which nothing could be learned because of bad design or technical flaws. The results of our spring contests renewed and reinforced this concept as it applies to writing.

Our judges take their task and commitment very seriously. Their only rewards are our sincere thanks and the opportunity to apply their extensive literary skills and knowledge to helping aspiring writers. And they are devout nit-pickers. They have to be. It makes life just a little easier for them.

One entry in the “Fibonacci Fiction” contest that could have earned a cash award was disqualified for lack of one word to comply with the requirements of the form. The writing was excellent; the nit-pickin’ count was bad. In the “Inspirational” category, simple errors in punctuation and grammar took an otherwise well-written piece out of contention for an award. Grammatical errors and failure to read or comprehend the rules marred one of the “360” entries. In every case, careful self-editing could have saved the piece.

In the form poetry contest the judge’s awards went to poems that not merely followed the formal requirements but leveraged the structure to enhance the meaning and effect of the poetry. That’s what it’s all about! The advice of the judge that “. . . reading the best contemporary formal poets is invaluable” can really be applied to any form of writing.

The value of our contests (beyond cash in hand) is immeasurably enhanced by the generous comments and critiques of our judges. I will attempt to supply these comments to the individual writers who entered their work. The only losers in this round of writing are those who do not learn from the experience.

So, pick at your words, your grammar, your plot, your characters, your structure. Then go back to the keyboard and peck out more, improved writing.

Congratulations to all who entered the spring contests. Winners will be presented their awards at our meeting on May 20th.

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 that begins at 12 noon. As before, each family that attends will bring a dish or beverages for everyone to enjoy. Please sign up at the May meeting. With almost double the membership of the previous year, we should have quite a feast, with plenty of doggy bags and sweet memories.

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 by going on-line to our website: www.atlantawritersclub.org/events, and click Summer Events and then the PayPal button, or you can write a \$20 check payable to The Atlanta Writers Club, and send it 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 entitled **The Well-Fed Book Promoter: *Get Your Book on the Map & In the Money!***

Got a book in you—or one already out? Wondering if self-publishing makes sense for you? Struggling with the best ways to let the world know about your masterpiece? Join nationally-renowned self-publishing and book marketing pro, Peter Bowerman for an information-packed half-day seminar. You'll follow the author's firsthand experience as you learn how to:

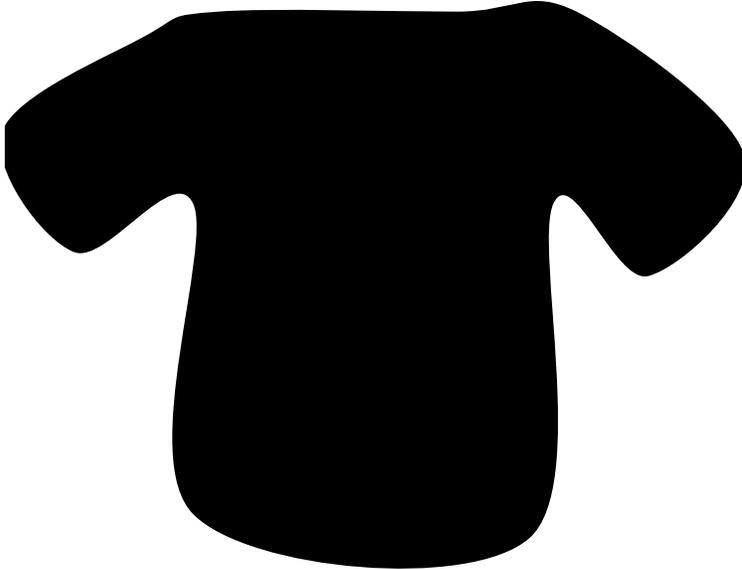
- Develop a “marketing mindset” – minus the anxiety!
- Create a book that turns heads and grabs eyeballs
- Find tons of reviewers anxious to publicize your book
- Get the bookstore chains to come looking for you
- Build a cash-generating web site that works 24/7
- Minimize your dependence on fickle mainstream media
- Parlay one book into multiple income streams
- Separate the “Print-on-Demand” hype from reality

Most importantly, you'll learn a radical new approach to book promotion – one that keeps *you* in control. The result: less anxiety, higher profits, and more fun!

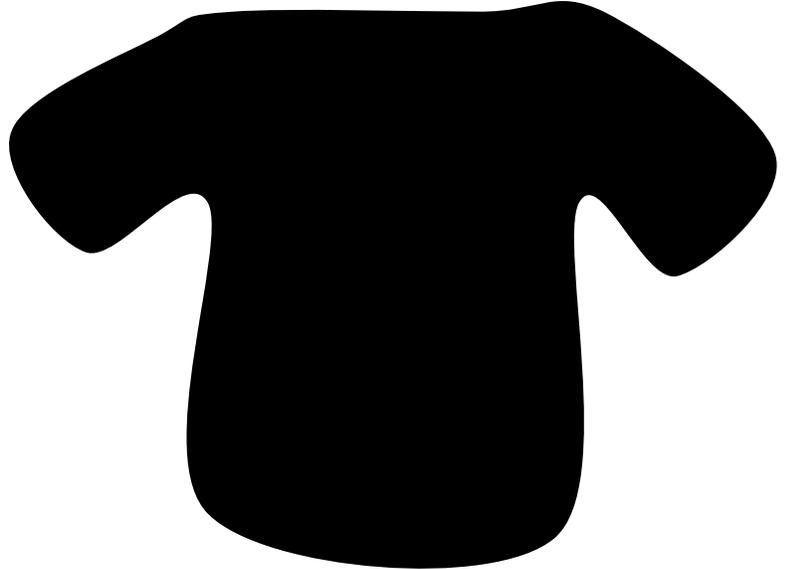
For more details and registration info visit <http://www.wellfedwriter.com/SeminarDates.shtml> or you can reserve your spot by going on-line to our website: www.atlantawritersclub.org/events, click Summer Events and the PayPal button, or you can write a \$67 check payable to The Atlanta Writers Club, and send it to George Weinstein, 1285 Willeo Creek Drive, Roswell, GA 30075.

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

FRONT



BACK



FRONT



BACK



Each shirt is a bargain at \$10 apiece, or buy two for \$18 (or three for \$27, four for \$36, etc.). There's a bonus discount if you order them on-line at www.atlantawritersclub.org/merchandise, or order by check, payable to *The Atlanta Writers Club*, by contacting George Weinstein at gjweinstein@yahoo.com or (770) 552-5887. 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 or you will pick it up. They will be available for pickup and for sale at every meeting. If you want mail delivery, add \$7 for the first shirt and \$3 for additional ones for packaging and shipping charges.

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

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: ____/____/____