



E-Quill

January 2007 Issue
New Leaders Needed for
New Year & New Home

Next Meeting: January 20, 2007

- 12:30 – 1:15 *Network & Nosh*: Enjoy club-provided snacks and make new friends.
- 1:15 – 1:30 *Share Your Writing*: Read a short work of two minutes or less.
- 1:30 – 1:45 *Club Business*: Announcements, new volunteer opportunities.
- 1:45 – 2:30 *Program #1*: Author & TV personality Robyn Spizman on self-promotion.
- 2:30 – 3:00 *Fall Contest Awards & Speaker Book Signing*.
- 3:00 – 3:45 *Program #2*: Novelist Walter Sorrells on making a living as a writer.
- 3:45 – 4:30 *Network, Book Signings & Cleanup*

The Atlanta Writers Club—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 contests for our members and host expert speakers from the worlds of writing, publishing, and entertainment.

NEW MEETING LOCATION:

2nd Floor of Student Building on Dunwoody Campus of Georgia Perimeter College: 2101 Womack Road, Dunwoody, GA 30338. Campus is a mile north of I-285 (northern arc). Detailed directions in this newsletter, on our website, or on <http://mapsonus.switchboard.com>

**FOR DIRECTIONS, CLUB INFORMATION
AND MORE—**

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.atlantawritersclub.org

2006 Schedule of Saturday Club Meetings (12:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.):

- **January 20, 2007** *Robyn Spizman*—seasoned author and TV/radio personality on self-promotion
Walter Sorrells—man of a thousand pen names (most of them female!)
- **February 17, 2007** *Mike Kavanaugh*—WSB “Money Matters” host and author on personal finance
Milam McGraw Propst—author of acclaimed Ocjee series of Southern novels.
- **March 17, 2007** *Terry Kay*—international best-selling novelist and screenwriter
Literary/Poetry Journal Panel—Marc Fitten, Megan Sexton, William Walsh
- **April 21, 2007** *Spoken Magazine*—members share their work
Deidre Knight—top literary agent and paranormal-romance author
- **May 19, 2007** TBA
- **June 16, 2007** *Annual Picnic*

WRITE IT AS YOU SEE IT: “To Those with New Ideas: Apply Here”

by George Weinstein, President

Many of our members have only been with the club since last fall, so they might not realize that I've been president since June of 2004. The club bylaws state that board members can only hold a given office for two years, so I've got parking tickets stacking up on my windshield.

Those who've been members awhile know that I've never let a rule, bylaw, or tradition stand in the way of common sense. Now, however, it's time for other radicals to step forward. The club needed stable leadership (sanity optional) during its many transitions since 2004, but my title is President, not King, and this is a club of individuals, not a cult of personality. For the sake of the AWC, 2007 will be my last year at the top.

Many of our other officers will be stepping aside this year also. Ginger Collins, our fabulous First VP, will be away from Atlanta quite a bit starting later this year. Adrian Drost—former President, current Treasurer, and perennial club historian and photographer—needs relief, as does Richard Anderson, whose roles as Contest VP, E-Quill editor, and club auditor are just a few of many he's ably filled over the years. That's not to say that we won't be available to give advice or lend a hand. But just as we've added so many new names to our membership roster in 2006, so too do we need new faces on the board.

For me, the best thing about holding a board position is getting the chance to know and work with so many fellow writers. By serving as Membership VP, Treasurer, and President over the years, I've also gained valuable experiences that I would've missed had I not volunteered. Also, serving on the board is a way of giving back. We all search for meaning in our lives—doing something that matters—and, to writers, what can be more meaningful than giving your peers the most effective forum for them to learn and grow and thrive? If you still need a “What's In It For Me?” here it is: you never know who's going to hold the key to your big breakthrough, be it an inspirational epiphany or a contact in the business.

Okay, it's also really cool to put on your query letters to agents and publishers that you hold an elected office in a major writing organization. And sometimes you get interviewed by the press: more cool points. Honestly, though, what I value most is making so many new friends who share a passion.

If you're interested in any of the officer positions below, please let me know. We're putting together a list of job duties for each role, so you'll understand what's involved. Don't worry, I won't try to shanghai anyone. I might ask you if you would like to step up, but if you aren't interested, I expect you to say “no.” However, if you are interested, the current board will give you lots of support. Elections will be held in the fall of 2007, so you have plenty of time to think about it; we'll accept apprentices immediately.

The only way the club will maintain its current momentum is for you to volunteer some of your time and creativity to guide us. Do you have some ideas? Apply here.

OFFICER LIST FOR THE ATLANTA WRITERS CLUB—2006-2007 Term:

President: George Weinstein
Membership VP: Kate Copsey
Publicity VP: Jim Stevens
Contests VP: Richard Anderson

First VP: Ginger Collins
Treasurer: Adrian Drost
Operations VP: Clay Ramsey
Quill Editor: George Weinstein

OTHER CONTACTS:

Historian//By-Laws: Adrian Drost
Copy Editor: Richard Anderson

Photographers: Adrian Drost, Mike Buchanan
Achievements: Fran Stewart

JANUARY SPEAKER INTERVIEWS

by Ginger B. Collins, First VP & Program Chair

“Think Like an Author—Make a Living as a Writer”

If your resolution for 2007 was to quit the day job and forge a fulltime writing career, our January 20th program will give you the tools and motivation to move closer to your goal.

Robyn Spizman, media personality, consumer advocate, and author, kicks it off at 1:45pm, sharing must-have advice from her AUTHOR 101 book series. While she authored and co-authored dozens of non-fiction books including THE GIFTIONARY, WHEN WORDS MATTER MOST, and the WOMEN FOR HIRE series, Robyn collected a wealth of information on writing, book marketing, and publicity. Seeing an opportunity to share this valuable material with fellow writers, Robyn wrote the book on writing the book. She pegged publicity guru Rick Frishman as her co-author, and developed the Author 101 Series, including a book on BESTSELLING BOOK PROPOSALS, BOOK PUBLICITY, SECRETS FROM TOP AGENTS, and BESTSELLING NON-FICTION. Be prepared for a fast-paced, crash course from this well-known authority. Find out how you can get published when you “think like an author.”

Our 3pm speaker is Walter Sorrells, author of young adult novels under his own name, and mysteries under the pseudonyms of both Ruth Cunningham and Lynn Abercrombie. What’s his secret to a successful life as a fulltime writer? “It’s a Rubik’s cube,” he says. “Family life, economics, willpower...all the pieces have to fit.”

As the son of a writer, Walter knew it was possible to write fulltime. He found his niche with genre work, creating the kind of engaging characters and page-turning plots that had publishers calling for more. This resulted in a steady stream of published work that has established Walter as a career author.

During his presentation, Walter will discuss sources for material, character development, and other elements of the craft, as well as the external factors of money, agents, and the management of time. Bring a notebook and your questions for this frank discussion on the writing life.

Chapter 11 will have a selection of books from our speakers for sale, and both Robyn and Walter will be available after their presentations for signings and networking with the audience. Don’t miss it!

FALL CONTEST AWARDS TO BE PRESENTED ON JANUARY 20

During the break between speaker programs, from 2:30 to 3 pm, Contest VP Richard Anderson will present the awards for our Fall Contest categories Nonfiction, Short Story, Juvenile Story, Serious Poetry, and Light Verse (humor). Our Spring Contest categories will be announced in the February issue of the E-Quill.

NEW MEETING LOCATION AS OF JANUARY 20

The Atlanta Writers Club has a huge new conference space in which to meet each month, on the second floor of the Student Building on the Dunwoody campus of Georgia Perimeter College.

Directions to the Dunwoody Campus of Georgia Perimeter College:

From I-285 (Northern Arc), take Exit 30 (N. Peachtree Rd./N. Shallowford Rd./Chamblee Dunwoody Rd.) and go north on N. Peachtree Rd. Turn left on Tilly Mill Rd. and then left on Womack Rd. Turn left into GPC.

From GA-400 South, take Exit 6, Northridge Rd., turn right at top of ramp, and turn right on Roberts Dr. (**If heading north on GA-400**, take Exit 6 and go straight through the light onto Roberts Dr.). From Roberts Dr., stay on it as it turns into Chamblee Dunwoody Rd and then take a left on Womack Rd. GPC will be about two miles down, on the right.

From Highway 9/Roswell Rd. in Sandy Springs, go east on Mount Vernon Rd. Turn right on Chamblee Dunwoody Rd and left on Womack Rd. GPC will be about two miles down, on the right.

Park in the large student lot on the left. We meet on the 2nd floor of the Student Building (labeled “NB”), which is located at the top of the circular drive. Walk around the left side of the building and up the ramp to the side entrance.

For GPC’s street and campus maps, click: http://www.gpc.edu/Campus_Maps/Dunwoody.html

CRITIQUE GROUP OPPORTUNITY AT GPC

The Writers’ Circle critique group has met at Georgia Perimeter College’s Dunwoody Campus for 18 years. They meet on the first and third Friday of each month from 2-4 in room NLRC 3100 on the second floor of the library. Participants may read up to 3 pages, (12 pts., double-spaced, 8 copies) or may simply discuss a writing project. All levels and genres are welcome, and meetings are FREE. Check the websites at www.gpc.edu/~WritersCircle.htm or www.homestead.com. Contact: Nancy McDaniel at 770-274-5243 or facilitator Gelia Dolcimascolo at 770-274-5246. The Writers’ Circle is also a pod of Georgia Writers, Inc.

DISCOUNT SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE CHATTAHOOCHEE REVIEW

The nationally recognized literary magazine *Chattahoochee Review* has agreed to be the official literary magazine of The Atlanta Writers Club. Club members who subscribe to the *Review* will get the opportunity to attend special events sponsored by the magazine—such as an invitation-only party at the Association of Writers & Writing Programs annual conference in March—and meet famous authors, editors, and agents.

To subscribe, click www.gpc.edu/~gpccr/subscriptions.php, scroll to the bottom (E-Subscriptions), click “Buy Now From CCNow,” and be sure to note that you’re an Atlanta Writers Club member under Special Instructions. You’ll get four printed issues for only \$9!

MEMBER PROFILES—IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Lee George

Lee's a software engineer, instructor, and technical writer for a "major defense contractor." Two years ago, he embarked on a new venture: to write a science fiction novel. Thirty characters, three hundred pages, and countless Jelly Bellies later, he surprised even himself with a completed story; but he had no idea whether anyone, other than his wife, would care to read it. With the help and encouragement of the AWC, he's now learning the craft of commercial writing, polishing his story, and guiding his manuscript through the challenging publication process—in search of the elusive reader.

Dr. Charles Skillas

Dr. Skillas is a National Guild of Hypnotists Board Certified Hypnotherapist practicing in Atlanta GA. He earned a Doctorate of Divinity (DD) in Spiritual Healing Arts, has practiced Energy Medicine and Hypnotherapy since 1981, is a member of the Business and Metaphysical Teaching Faculty of St. Johns University, and is a Faculty Member of The National Board of Hypnotherapy and Hypnotic Anesthesiology. Dr. Skillas has also earned a Ph.D. in Engineering and has many years of experience in the Aerospace/Defense Industry. His business background helps him deal with working people who are under stress. He has published a book *Defeat the Enemy Within* available through IUniverse or his website at www.drskillas.com.

THE DAHLONEGA LITERARY FESTIVAL & WRITERS CONFERENCE

The 4th Annual Dahlonega Literary Festival and 1st Annual Writers Conference will be held on February 16-18. The festival begins Friday evening with a reception and winds up Sunday afternoon, while the Writers Conference will be held on Saturday from 9 am – 6 pm. Its chairman, Brian Jay Corrigan, has invited The Atlanta Writers Club to set up an area to provide club information to the public, conduct readings, and do book signings. See www.literaryfestival.org for festival details. The Writers Conference schedule is as follows:

9 am	Understanding the Trade	Brian Jay Corrigan
10	Preparing to Write	Cassandra King, Mary Kay Andrews, Diana Gabaldon
11	Character & Dialogue	Brian Jay Corrigan
12 pm	LUNCH	
1	"Jewel in the Crown" panel, the Holly Theatre, with Andrews, King, & Gabaldon	
2	Setting & Plot	Brian Jay Corrigan
3	Writing the Memoir	Jackie Cooper
4	Structure, Editing, Pace	Brian Jay Corrigan
5	The Query Letter & How to Find an Agent	Brian Jay Corrigan

Participants will also receive an advance copy of Corrigan's book *The Shape of Words*. The conference will be held at North Georgia College and State University in Dahlonega.

There are fewer than 100 seats remaining! Reserve your spot today by e-mailing Brian Corrigan at bcorrigan@ngcsu.edu with "Writers Conference" in the subject line, and then follow up with a \$75 check or money order, made payable to The Dahlonega Literary Festival and mailed to:

Professor Brian Jay Corrigan
 Department of English, 319B Dunlap Hall
 North Georgia College and State University
 100 College Drive
 Dahlonega, GA 30597

SPRING BOOK SHOW & AUTHOR-PUBLISHER SEMINAR

You're invited to the Spring Book Show seminar *The Power of Positive Publishing: Writing a Book Is the Easy Part - Getting It Published and Marketing It Is What's Hard*. The two-day seminar for authors and publishers will be held March 23-24, 2007, at the World Congress Center, and features three AWC members: Bobbie Christmas, Dr. David Ryback, and Fran Stewart. The seminar is being held in conjunction with the Spring Book Show, the largest book show in the Southeast, with more than 50,000 titles featured. For a complete description of the seminar presenters and topics, and to register, please visit:

http://www.anvilpub.net/author-publisher_seminar_2007.htm

MASTER CLASS INSTRUCTORS NEEDED

Melanie Eisenhart, newly appointed Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Contest coordinator for the state of Georgia, is looking for "master class instructors" for each of the 20+ Georgia public and private high schools participating in this program. Poetry Out Loud (POL) is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and is an opportunity for students to master public-speaking skills and build self-confidence. Students will compete on three levels:

classroom competitions, a school-wide competition, and a statewide competition whose winner will receive a trip to Washington D.C. in May for the national contest and a chance to win a \$20,000 scholarship.

Master class instructors are needed to help students understand the nuances of successful poetry recitation (i.e., gestures, eye contact, and voice inflection) through lecture or discussion with an assembly of POL participating students. Melanie encourages master class instructors to exhibit poetry recitation through reading of the written word—one of your own would be ideal—and discussing not only the choices you made in the poem's recitation, but how the poem works figuratively, thematically, rhythmically, etc. **Schools will hold master class instruction from late-Jan to mid-Feb**, with school-wide competitions following. As each school hosts their school-wide competition, she will also be in need of an experienced judge at each school competition (most of which will take place in the evenings or on weekends). Master class instructors and competition judges will be paid a stipend for each session taught/judged. You are welcome, of course, to teach/judge more than one session. For details, go to www.poetryoutloud.org or contact Melanie at 404-814-2063.

PARTNERING WITH THE MARGARET MITCHELL HOUSE

The club has purchased a membership plan with the Margaret Mitchell House (www.gwtw.org), enabling up to four club members to attend events (free unless otherwise noted) hosted by the Center for Southern Literature. Please contact George Weinstein at 770-552-5887 or gjweinstein@yahoo.com if you would like to attend any of the following appearances, author talks, and book signings:

- Mireille Guilano – *French Women for All Seasons*, January 11, 6 pm.
- Alice Hoffman – *Skylight Confessions*, January 24, 6 pm. (\$8 for MMH Members/\$15 General Admission)
- Ross King – *The Judgment of Paris*, January 30, 6 pm

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

“Was / Had Been / Is – the Evolution of English” by Fran Stewart

American English has changed without our being aware of it. Language always evolves, with the additions of new words as new technologies come into their own, as musical forms or pop cultural icons rise or wane in popularity.

This change, though, seems more basic to me than the simple addition of words. We seem to have forgotten what it was to remember the past. I’d noticed the change in newspaper quotations, in magazine interviews, and in the conversations of people around me. But it all came to an explosive awareness recently when I heard a Public Radio commentator—that’s right, National Public Radio, that bastion of proper speech and erudite ideas—say, “So here I am walking down the street yesterday, and . . .”

Whatever happened to past tense? *There I was yesterday, walking down the street.* The street experience happened yesterday, so wouldn’t past tense be appropriate in reporting it? Apparently not. Perhaps it’s a generational thang, as they say in country music. More and more, I find that people tend to think in present tense, speak in present tense, and write in that same tense. The use of the present tense is so ubiquitous now, that I’ve experimented with mentioning it to writers with whom I’ve been speaking, calling their attention to their own use of the present tense, only to be met with incredulous denials. “I don’t do that,” they’ve said. “Do I?”

For decades, I’ve had a personal vendetta against the Smurfs, who taught an entire generation that the use of an exact word was never necessary when one could simply use *smurf* as a verb, a noun, any part of speech. Now, I don’t consider this move to expressing oneself almost exclusively in present tense to be nearly as insidious as the dumbing-down of our language by the little blue critters (or rather, by their scriptwriters). It does give me pause, though, to wonder whatever will happen to a handy little word like *had*. As every writer knows, or should know, when we write in past tense, if we have to go even further back in time, we stick in a *had* (or two) to make the timing clear. After that, we can dispense with the auxiliary word. Here’s an example:

Gladiola Grim played the piano at every social function. We hated it. Her sense of rhythm had always been atrocious, but the last time I heard her play, just before she was murdered, she exceeded our lowest expectations when she executed her variations on *Moonlight Sonata*. I use the term *executed* judiciously, of course, since poor Beethoven would have gleefully strangled her if the stranger wearing a black cape hadn’t obliged shortly after the musical fiasco.

There is no need, as you can see, to put another *had* before the word *exceeded*. The timing is perfectly clear. Without the past tenses and past perfects, though, the chronology becomes harder to follow:

Gladiola Grim plays the piano at every social function. We hate it. Her sense of rhythm is atrocious, but the last time I’m listening to her play, just before she’s murdered, she exceeds our lowest expectations when she executes her variations on *Moonlight Sonata*. I use the term *executes* judiciously, of course. Poor Beethoven misses out on strangling her because the stranger wearing a black cape beats him to it.

I would like to keep *had* in the running. If English has to evolve—and what language doesn’t?—I’d vote for clarity rather than what I see as a lazy approach to tenses.

CLUB-SPONSORED CRITIQUE GROUPS

Conyers: an **all-genre** group meets **Sundays, 6-8 pm** at the Starbucks inside Target. E-mail Jack Thomas at editor@rewriteright.com or call him at 770-464-3561 to get on his distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

Decatur: a **fiction** group meets **Saturdays, 10 am – noon**, currently at the Atlanta Bread Company on Ponce de Leon, near the Decatur Library. E-mail Ricky Jacobs at rjacobs@townsquare.net or call him at 404-378-7365 to get on his distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

Decatur: a **non-fiction** group meets **Thursdays, 7-9 pm** at The Java Monkey. E-mail Cynthia Blakeley at cdblakeley@aol.com or call her at 404-377-1170 to get on her distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

Lawrenceville: an **all-genre**, non-AWC-affiliated group meets **Fridays, 10 am – 12:30 pm** at the Crafty Confection Sweet Shop on the square the East-West Connector in Austell. E-mail AWC member Barbara Connor at imayaya@charter.net or call her at 678-226-1483 to get on her distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

Lawrenceville/Snellville: an **all-genre** group meets **Saturdays, 10 am - noon** at Borders on Scenic Highway in Snellville. E-mail Margaret Holden at mholdit@hotmail.com to get on her distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

Marietta/Austell: an **all-genre** group meets **Tuesdays, 7-9 pm** at Borders on the East-West Connector in Austell. E-mail Janean Brown at shauntebrown@bellsouth.net or call her at 678-627-9979 to get on her distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

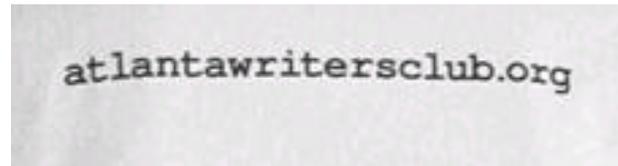
Midtown: a **fiction** group meets **Sundays, 3-5 pm** at Borders near City Hall East. E-mail Heather Newton at hfnewton@yahoo.com or call her at 404-642-8855 to get on her distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

Midtown/Buckhead: an **all-genre** group meets **Thursdays, 6:30-8:30 pm** at Chapter 11 at the Ansley Mall. E-mail Patricia Patterson at p.e.patterson@att.net or call her at 404-842-0824 to get on her distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

Roswell: an **all-genre group** meets on **Wednesdays, 6-8 pm** at Nirvana Café on Hwy 92. E-mail George Weinstein at gjweinstein@yahoo.com or call him at 770-552-5887 to get on his distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

Sandy Springs: an **all-genre group** meets on **Tuesdays, 10 am- noon** at the Sandy Springs Library. E-mail Pat Wells at ptwells@comcast.net or call her at 678-731-9797 to get on her distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.

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



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. You may also 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.

