



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.

e Quill

Agenda for Next Meeting—May 17, 2008

- 12:00 – 12:45 Marc Fitten will discuss preparing submissions for agents. This is a follow-up to our Writers Conference
- 12:45 – 1:15 PM *Networking*: Make new friends and contacts.
- 1:15 – 1:30PM *Share your Writing*: Read a short work of two minutes or less
- 1:30 – 1:45 PM *Club Business*: Preview of Upcoming Events
- 1:45 – 2:30 PM *Man Martin*, first-time novelist and educator on techniques for writing humor in fiction
- 2:30 – 3:00 PM *Networking and Book Signing*
- 3:00 – 3:45 PM *Tina Ansa*, international best-selling author, on the lessons of working with large publishers and running her own small press.

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Passion for Words by Marty Aftewicz, President

Let's Spend Some Time Together

The approaching Social Gathering just prior to the first AWC Writers Conference provides you with the opportunity to mix and mingle with your fellow members, and possibly rub elbows with some New York agents. So I suggest you are careful about pushing a stranger off a barstool just to get better placement at the bar. This is also an opportunity to bring your spouse or significant other to a social setting where he or she may see for themselves that other individuals are indeed as obsessive about writing as you.

This gathering will all occur on Friday evening, May 9th, at 8:00 PM at the Highland Inn lounge, located in the hotel basement. We will provide each member of The Atlanta Writers Club with a coupon that is exchangeable for a beverage at the lounge that evening. We urge all of you to drink responsibly, which is another good reason to bring a spouse or significant other to accept the designated driver responsibilities. The AWC is providing the coupons to thank our members for making this event a success.

I am personally excited about this evening since I will be able to relax without checking the stopwatch for open microphone participations, worrying about a speaker's arrival time, or splitting my time between the guest and member registration tables. Hopefully, I will have a chance to really chat with a few members and get to know you all a bit better. Since our club has grown to over 400 members in such a short time, many have entered the membership ranks without so much as a personal greeting from the president.

This event is also an excellent time for you to practice those one-minute elevator pitches about your manuscript, and learn to casually converse about yourself and your project in this type of an environment.

So make plans to attend our social gathering at the Highland Inn on Friday, May 9th. Parking is available in their own lot adjacent to the hotel, with plenty of overflow parking available behind the theater on Ponce de Leon Avenue and N. Highland Avenue with access from N. Highland Avenue. There will also be entertainment in the ballroom adjacent to the lounge.

The Highland Inn is located at 644 N Highland Ave NE, Atlanta, GA, (404)874-5756.

Monthly Writing Contest (Not an AWC managed event)

- **Scratch**, the monthly writing contest itching to discover new talent.
- This contest seeks new short fiction and offers rotating guest judges who are authors, agents, editors and publishers.
- Help them discover new writing talent. Let them help you build publication credits.
- Small fee to enter, cash prizes and publication every month, plus annual anthology.

For more information and links to ENTER this month, go to

<http://www.scratchcontest.net/>

AWC Volunteers

We thank everyone for raising their hands to volunteer for the recent requests for volunteer assistance. If you have not yet been contacted about your assignment, it is most likely that we are scheduling to be most efficient with your time. Please be patient and the person responsible for your event will contact you soon. You may email questions or concerns to Marty@atlantawritersclub.org. Thank you and we hope you enjoy your participation.

April Speaker Summaries by Shyla Nambiar

At 1:45, Karen White, author of *The Memory of Water* and other novels on Southern life, spoke on writing and publishing women's fiction. In addition to reading an excerpt from her novel, she advised the audience on joining writers' groups, acquiring a critique partner who understands your writing, and reading extensively. She believes that you should "use your feelings" to create credible characters and that the major traits of a writer are "patience and persistence."

At 3:00, Melinda Long, children's book writer and author of *How I Became a Pirate*, discussed the evolution of her writing career and the use of humor in children's books. Her suggestion to children's book writers is to "start with a character or group of characters and put them into strange situations or situations that bring about giggles."

She focused on the elements of humor, such as wordplay, physical humor, artwork, and situational humor.



Darnell Arnoult instructs on how to use photos in fiction

Photos from recent workshop.



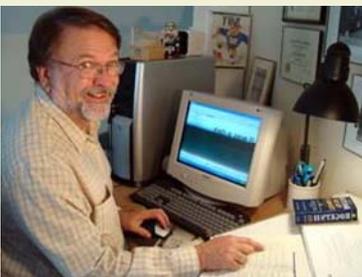
Students at Creativity Workshop

Accolades

Joe Christensen won First place, publication and \$150 for his short story entry "Liquor and Promise" as the March winner in the Scratch contest.

Ginger B. Collins, writer and published author, announces the publication of her works of short fiction and creative non-fiction. "When More Means Less" appears in THE SILVER BOOMER ANTHOLOGY released February 2008 by Silver Boomer Books. The true-life essay "Reason to Believe" appears in the "VOICES OF ALCOHOLISM," third in the VOICES OF . . . series, released in March, 2008 by LaChance Publishing. "Rain Fall" and "It's Only Furniture" will appear in FAMILY: THE POSSIBILITY FOR ENDEARMENT, an anthology of stories to be published in late spring 2008 by Pig Iron Press.

Ana Raquel Ruiz, L.D. has one of her outstanding recipes published in the Spring 2008 issue of Flavors Magazine. Pick up a copy and go to page 79 to try Quesadilla Española.



Jim Quinn, now a resident of LaGrange, GA and a former Tidewater radio personality, will be visiting Hampton Roads for the staged reading of his original work, "Well I Guess I'm Back". According to Mr. Quinn, "*The play is fiction, but based on actual people I've known, throughout my time in Hampton Roads, or people I wish I'd known better when I had the chance.*"

Mr. Quinn, a Newport News native and former student of Dorothy Crane at Newport News High School, worked with the Peninsula Community Theatre in the sixties, and studied scene design at Virginia Commonwealth University. He spent countless hours at the Virginia Museum Theatre in Richmond and working at "The Lost Colony" in Manteo. More information at www.ironstreetproductions.com.

Reginald Beal's debut novel, *Zeus: The Avenger*, was recently featured on Authors-First, a one-hour prime time internet radio show with over 7 million listeners worldwide. A free download is available at <http://www.artistfirst.com/maxinethompson.htm>. Dr. Beal will also be featured at a book signing at Book Expo America in Los Angeles, CA on Friday, May 30, 2008 from 3:15-4:00 pm in Booth 846. *Zeus: The Avenger* poses two questions as relevant today as in 1968: Who assassinated Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and why? The novel, a work of historical fiction, probes Dr. King's assassination through the story of Rick Champion, a successful African-American entrepreneur, on a 30-year quest to avenge the murder and ultimately achieve world peace. Symbolized by the mythical traits of the Greek god Zeus, the novel is an emotionally and intellectually stimulating journey into a world of love and hate, violence and non-violence, conspiracies and counter-conspiracies, success and failure, the natural and the supernatural.

Reginald Beal is a retired, tenured university professor, author of several published scholarly articles, entrepreneur, astrologer, sports and fitness enthusiast. He earned an MBA from Washington University and a Ph.D. in Management Science from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Visit him at www.reginaldbeal.com. **Zeus: The Avenger is available wherever books are sold. ISBN: 978-0-9797261-0-1.**



AWC Spring Writing Contest

ELIGIBILITY:

1. The AWC Spring Writing Contest is open to all current, paid club members. (To join AWC, please contact the Membership VP.)
2. Submissions must be *original, unpublished, and un-awarded work*.

DEADLINE:

May 17, 2008. (Submissions received after this date will automatically be disqualified.)

AWARDS:

Three award levels in each category. (Presented during the June 2008 meeting.)

FIRST PLACE \$50 CASH PRIZE
 SECOND PLACE \$30 CASH PRIZE
 THIRD PLACE \$20 CASH PRIZE

CONTEST CATEGORIES:

Categories	Maximum	Specifications
Short Story	3000 words	Any subject, any genre
Spiritual/Religious/Self Help	2000 words	Nonfiction
Article	1000 words	News/Current Events/Opinion/Travel/Entertainment
Serious Poetry	60 lines	Any form, any subject

ENTRY FEE:

There is no fee to enter.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Failure to adhere to any of the guidelines will lead to disqualification.

1. You may enter all 5 categories if you choose, however only one entry per category
2. Adhere to the word count maximum established for each category
3. Use the AWC Standard Submission Form (SSF) for each entry (see below)
4. Submit one manuscript and one SSF per entry.
5. Electronic file or CD entries may be submitted via e-mail, postal mail or in person

Manuscript Format

- DO NOT place your name anywhere on the manuscript entry
- First page: Place full Title and Category in upper left corner
- Subsequent pages: title in upper left corner; page number in upper right corner
- Only Word files (no PDF, Power Point, Publisher, etc.) will be accepted
- Use 12 pt, Black, Times New Roman font; 1 inch margins; double spaced lines
- White background (no colors, photos, graphics or images); 8-1/2 x 11, Portrait layout

Standard Submission Form (SSF):

The SSF MUST be submitted as a separate file, document or attachment. DO NOT include the SSF on the same docu-

(Continued on page 6)



(Continued from page 5)

ment as your fiction or nonfiction entry. SSF should include:

Author's Name
Contest Category
Title of Entry
Word Count or Line Count

Entries may be submitted in one of the following ways:

- **E-mail Word files to:** Contact@TaraYCoyt.com.
Email submissions must include: Subject: AWC Spring 08 Contest; A brief note including Entry Name, Category, Author Name, Author Phone #
- **Postal Mail your CD to:** Tara Y. Coyt, P.O. Box 79426, Atlanta, GA 30357
Include a printed or handwritten note with the following: Entry Name, Category, Author Name, Author Phone #
- **Hand-deliver your CD to:** Tara Y. Coyt during an AWC member meeting
Include a printed or handwritten note with the following: Entry Name, Category, Author Name, Author Phone #

ABSOLUTELY NO PAPER ENTRIES. Manuscripts will not be returned. Be sure to retain a copy of your work.

SAMPLE MANUSCRIPT

Title: My Short Story

Category: Short Story

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SAMPLE SSF

Jane Doe
Short Story
My Short Story
Word Count: 2,997



Catch the Arts in Georgia



Georgia Assembly of Community Arts Agencies Annual Conference

Dates: May 4-6, 2008

Atlanta/Cobb County

Mabel House Arts Center Complex

The arts in Georgia are a little fish in a big pond. Learn how to differentiate yourself from all the other fish at GACAA's annual arts conference this May. We'll translate what it means to take the hooks you have, or the bait you need, to catch a new fish or two.

Our guides have plumbed the depths of Georgia's artways to reel in ideas, answers and solutions for arts agencies.

This will be more than your ordinary fish tale.

You'll be taken in—hook, line and sinker.



Catch the Arts in Georgia, GACAA-Style

SAVE THE DATE: May 4-6, 2008



Critique Group News:

Current Openings:

Adult Fiction group in Decatur, meets Sunday at 3:00 PM. Interested members should contact Ricky Jacobs at rjacobs@townsquare.net.

Mixed Fiction group in Decatur, meets Saturdays at 9:30 AM. Interested members should contact Ricky Jacobs at rjacobs@townsquare.net.

Children's Young Adult group, fiction or nonfiction, meets Tuesdays at 9:30 AM. Interested members should contact Ricky Jacobs at rjacobs@townsquare.net.

Geographical Openings:

Midtown/Buckhead group previously directed by Patricia Patterson has dissolved. We are now seeking a new group leader to organize a new group in this area. Interested members should contact Marty@atlantawritersclub.org.

Conyers group previously directed by Bernie Blanton has dissolved. We are now seeking a new group leader to organize a new group in this area. Interested members should contact Marty@atlantawritersclub.org.

Time and Day Clarification:

Poetry Group – Meets on the first Sunday of each month at 2:00 PM at the Atlanta Bread Company on Highway 92/Crossville Rd at Woodstock Rd. intersection (Kohl's shopping center). Interested members should contact Jill Jennings at magistra_jennings@yahoo.com or call her at 770-516-2482.

2nd Annual Chattahoochee Valley Writers' Conference Announced

COLUMBUS, GA—Plans have been finalized for the 2nd Annual Chattahoochee Valley Writers' Conference (CVWC), which will be held Saturday-Sunday, September 27-28, 2008, at the Columbus Public Library, 3000 Macon Road. A kick-off get-together of faculty, participants, and CVWC steering committee members will be held on Friday, September 26, 2008 at the Columbus Museum. This conference is sponsored by the CVWC Steering Committee, along with the Columbus State University, the Columbus Public Library and the Muscogee County Friends of Libraries. Details and registration are located at the CVWC website at www.chattwriters.org.

New to this year's conference is a general writing contest open to all individuals, locally and nationally. Contest categories are: (1) Fiction; (2) Non-fiction/Essay; and (3) Poetry. Monetary prizes will be awarded. A \$15.00 entry fee for each submission is required; there is no limit to the number of entries one may submit. Contest guidelines can be found at (<http://www.chattwriters.org/CVWCContests.htm>).

Early registrants receive a discount. For those who register by August 31, 2008, the two-day conference fee is \$60. To attend one day only (either Saturday or Sunday), the fee is \$45. On September 1, 2008 or after, fees increase to \$80 for both days and to \$60 for either Saturday or Sunday. For additional information, or to register, visit the conference CVWC website at <http://www.chattwriters.org> or call John Frandsen, Conference Coordinator (334-821-2036) or Linda Ames (706-323-4014) or email chattwriter@charter.net.

HELP WANTED

Writer for Cartoon Strip

Illustrator/Cartoonist seeking local Atlanta Writer to collaborate on a comic strip, designed to be a daily with an on-going storyline. The Strip will be in the vein of a Fantasy/Adventure/Satire – similar to Barbarella meets Doonesbury in Dante's Inferno – but it's still quite embryonic at this pre-production stage.

The ideal writer might be a combination of J.R.R. Tolkien, Lenny Bruce and Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

I'm an experienced illustrator who has worked with The New York Times, Business Week, Forbes, National Lampoon, Fortune and numerous Publishers and Advertising Agencies.

Please feel free to contact me by e-mail or phone.

Stephen Sweny, s.sweny@mindspring.com 404-299-7535

This web address goes with the help wanted ad for the cartoonist searching for a writer.
www.donnarosenartists.com

Internet Writer – Art, Antiques & Collectibles

WorthPoint (www.worthpoint.com) is a new entrepreneurial company that is changing the world of art, antiques, and collectibles. We are looking for English language writers who are able to write, and write well (!), on a variety of topics related to art, antiques, and collectibles. This is a position writing for our website and newsletters. Content types required include news summaries, editorials, blogs, research articles, and "how to use the WorthPoint web site" guides. Additional tasks may include editing previously posted content, answering questions in the Help & Support area and then turning the answers into Wiki entries, testing web site beta features, and participating in offsite collectible groups and blogs and singing the praises of WorthPoint. Good spelling and grammar is very important, and writers are expected to write at a reasonable pace. The reference materials for topics will be provided, and only occasionally will writers be asked to perform any significant amount of research.

Writers are expected to meet the following requirements:

- * Write on a predictable schedule for a minimum of ten hours a week
- * Be familiar with a word processing program with spelling and grammar checkers
- * Work at a location of their choosing, and have their own computer and internet access
- * Be able to be online and using Skype chat and VoIP when working
- * Have a passion for writing on various topics related to art, antiques, and collectibles
- * Be dependable and able to manage their own time
- * Have experience blogging
- * Participate in social networking sites - Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, etc

WorthPoint is seeking passionate, hard-working people who want to help us change the way the world values and appreciates art, antiques, and collectibles. We are not interested in professional writers with years of experience. Interested in writing for WorthPoint? First, make sure that you meet the criteria above. Then email your resume, writing samples, compensation requirements, and cover letter to jobs@worthpoint.com with a subject line of "Writer". In your cover letter please tell us why you think you are a fit and for each bullet point in the "Requirements" list (above), explain how you meet the requirement.

EAGLE EYE BOOK SHOP
Announces

May 2nd, 3rd & 4th



Eagle Eye Book Shop in Decatur, GA is proud to announce the first annual Atlanta Thriller Book Fest, May 2nd through May 4th. Headlining the event will be **Ridley Pearson**, author of over 25 adult and young adult thriller novels. He also co-authors the *Peter and the Starcatchers* series with Dave Barry.

The Atlanta Thriller Book Fest, a.k.a. "Killer Weekend", is being staged at three locations around the greater Atlanta area and includes the following nationally known authors:

Sallie Bissell, David Fulmer, Robert Greer, Jeff Long, Gregg Loomis, Philip Nutman, James Sheehan, Walter Sorrells, Patricia Sprinkle, Jaclyn Weldon White.

The **Opening Night** event will be on Friday, May 2nd at 6:00 PM in the C-1100 auditorium on the Dunwoody campus of Georgia Perimeter College. Free and open to the public and being co-hosted by the *Atlanta Writers Club* and the *Georgia Perimeter College Writer's Institute*.



Jeff Long, author of numerous bestselling novels, is the keynote speaker and will be introduced by Pulitzer nominee and author, Jedwin Smith. Mr. Long's address will be followed by an auction of donated, signed books from international best-selling authors. 100% of the proceeds from the auction will go to *Wind Horse Power* charity, which is building and supplying orphanages, schools and libraries in Tibet. A book signing and book sales will follow. May 3rd, Eagle Eye Book Shop in Decatur and the Collins Hill Branch of the Gwinnett Public Libraries will present free author talks and book signings. Books will be available for sale and the event is free and open to the public. Sunday, May 4th, the Atlanta Writers Club and Eagle Eye Book Shop will co-sponsor a luncheon

in Roswell with the Thriller Fest authors, including Jedwin Smith, Jeff Long, Mitchell Graham, Sallie Bissell, David Fulmer, Philip Nutman, and Gregg Loomis.

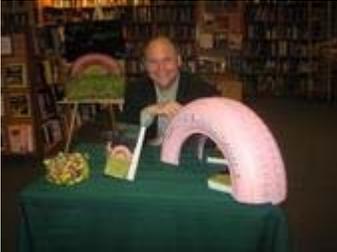
To register, AWC members should email George at gjweinstein@yahoo.com and indicate the number that will attend. Bring payment of \$20 with you.

Non-AWC member cost is \$40. Call Eagle Eye at 404-486-0307 for more information.

Eagle Eye-Decatur Location	SATURDAY	Collins Hill Library	SATURDAY
11:30 to 1:00	Robert Greer	12:30 to 1:30	Sallie Bissell
	David Fulmer		Jaclyn White
1:00 to 2:00	Gregg Loomis	2:00 to 3:00	Jeff Long
	James Sheehan		Jedwin Smith
	Walter Sorrells		Philip Nutman
	Patricia Sprinkle		Mitchell Graham
2:00 to 3:30	Ridley Pearson	3:00 to 4:00	Robert Greer
4:30 to 5:30	Philip Nutman		David Fulmer
	Mitchell Graham		James Sheehan
6:30 to 7:30	Sallie Bissell		Gregg Loomis
	Jeff Long	4:30 to 6:00	Ridley Pearson
	Jedwin Smith		

May Interviews by George Weinstein, Program Chair & 1st VP

May Interviews by George Weinstein, Program Chair & 1st VP



Our 1:45 p.m. speaker on May 17 is **Man Martin**. He is the author of *Days of the Endless Corvette*, a debut novel about love for one another, love for the relic of a 1953 Corvette (“If you've ever sat in one, it's like a red velvet cake”), and love for the work you do. *Publishers Weekly* called it, “A grand charmer.” Man is also a teacher, a cartoonist, and creator of the syndicated comic strip “Sibling Rivalry.” Learn more about Man at www.manmartin.net.

Q: What secrets are you willing to share with the club about humor writing?

It might sound bad or reductionist to say I use certain devices to create humor, but I do, and as I've looked at other humorists, I find they do, too. Maybe these aren't such "secrets." These devices take practice until they become second nature, but I believe any writer can employ them and every writer can benefit from them.

Q: When writing prose, do you create scenes that have comic possibilities and explore them or are you setting up punch lines as in a comic strip?

I'm attracted to stories that have comic possibilities in the first place. I can't imagine writing anything that had no wisp of humor in it. I never have written anything that was utterly without humor. When I've set out to write such a piece, I've bogged down and quit. This sounds corny as all hell, but laughter is such an integral part of the way I respond to life, I can't work without it.

Q: Who or what was the inspiration for *Days of the Endless Corvette*?

There are many sources for the story, but the Corvette itself was inspired when I noticed that every time I repaired something around the house, there were always leftover pieces. It struck me as amusing that if I saved the pieces each time I took apart and rebuilt something, I might find I had an infinite supply. Trying to prove that concept was amusing to other people led me to write the book.

Q: Why is it sometimes easier to express passion for one's work—and/or one's car—than for the people around us?

We love whatever we give ourselves to. Giving yourself is love. The bottom line is, you have to give yourself to something be it a car, your work, your appetites, or another human being. Cars—especially some cars—require us to give something to them. I don't think it's bad so many people love classic cars; anything of beauty is a wonderful thing, and if you've seen some of these cars, you can't doubt their beauty.

Tina McElroy Ansa, our 3 p.m. speaker on May 17, is a novelist, publisher, filmmaker, teacher and journalist. But above all, she is a storyteller. She calls herself “part of a long and honored writing tradition, one of those little Southern girls who always knew she wanted to be a writer.” She grew up in Macon, GA, in the 1950s hearing her grandfather's stories on the porch of her family home and strangers' stories about her father's juke joint. These have inspired *Mulberry, Georgia*, the mythical world of her four novels, *Baby of the Family*, *Ugly Ways*, *The Hand I Fan With*, and *You Know Better*.

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)



In March 2007, Ms. Ansa launched an independent publishing company, DownSouth Press, with its focus on African-American literature—fiction and nonfiction. Her fifth novel, *Taking After Mudear*, a sequel to her bestselling *Ugly Ways*, will be the lead title on DownSouth Press's first list in May 2008. Please visit her website at <http://www.tinamcelroyansa.com/>.

Q: How have the themes and topics of your writing evolved since your first novel, *Baby of the Family*?

I was an early writer but a late publisher—I was 40 when *Baby of the Family* was published. I knew I was going to write about families, mothers and daughters, and African-Americans in the South, and that hasn't changed. But when I chose this small town of Mulberry, GA, for *Baby of the Family*, I didn't realize I'd spend my whole writing career there. It turned out to be rich soil for a writer, because the town has evolved as I've evolved. I'm a mother now, and my own mother's older. My writing has gotten richer and I think I'm taking more chances in my work.

Q: What lessons have your readers taught you about your work and writing in general?

They've taught me that literature is a safe place to talk about things you care about. I've also learned that the more specific you are, the more universal your words become and the more they resonate with people. I'd go on book tours for *Ugly Ways* and readers would lean down and tell me secrets about their upbringing, their mothers, things they said they never told anyone else about—the book opened up confessions and allowed them to begin healing. Literature allows us to do that. People get together in book clubs and start talking about characters in the books and end up talking about themselves.

Q: What lessons learned from the publishing game over the past 20 years will affect how you run your new company?

DownSouth Press was founded as a haven for solid, rich, meaningful literature, a place for authors and American literature to be honored, and for readers to be honored as well. Authors know their audiences better than anyone, but when I'd approach people at my publishers—Harourt, Doubleday, William Morrow, the conglomerates—with ideas for reaching my audience, they didn't understand. They'd say, "That's a good idea, but that's not how we're set up." They've got their template and that's all they do. At DownSouth, we're able to turn on a dime. If some marketing doesn't work, we try something else. Ingenuity, sweat equity, and trying new things balances our smallness and limited budget. People have given me their frequent flier miles so I could travel around the country on a prepublication tour for *Taking After Mudear*. Our website, www.downsouthpress.com, has a PayPal link so people can make donations. My staff works on reciprocity—I edit their manuscripts in return for their work growing the business. Another thing we're able to do is give our authors one-on-one time, to polish their work. Mainstream publishers are cranking out books before any care has been given to them. I think we can bring back the quality of yesterday's literature.

Q: What would you like to talk to the Atlanta Writers Club about?

I would like to talk about the craft of writing and lessons from twenty years in publishing as an author and now a publisher myself.



Linda Sands



Ian Ferguson (new member)



Josie Najjar



Susan Crawford



Dorothy Worth

Open Mic
Participants at
April Meeting

From the Tip of My Pen



Fran Stewart

Author, Editor, & Speaker

From the Tip of My Pen - A Writer's Tip of the Month – May 2008
by Fran Stewart

Spiders and Ants

Arachnophobia is not a problem of mine. I like spiders. I like ants, also. Did you ever think about the common ground that spiders and ants share in the animal kingdom? They both go to uncommon lengths to achieve results that often—due to wind, rain, someone's head, a hiker's boots—are destroyed before a tasty bug is caught in the web or before the baby ants hatch from their white rice-shaped larval bodies.

Now what does this have to do with the craft of writing? Oh come now, we meet deadlines as industriously as many an ant. We spin our spider webs of words with diligence. For those of us who are self-employed, our next meal may very well depend on that spinning. People who've made the study of spiders their life work tell me that baby spiders have to learn the art of web-spinning. They may know instinctively how to extrude their silken web material, just as humans seem to have a built-in drive to use language, but turning that initial instinct into a shining web is the learning of a lifetime.

One humid morning a number of years ago, I walked outside at dawn and saw the *spirea* bushes covered in a white haze of miniscule spider webs. Each web spanned only the inch or so between arching branches of the full shrub. The spiders were too tiny for my eyes, although I could detect a tiny swelling in the center of each web. I can only assume that the spider was there, waiting for prey that lived at some microscopic scale. Each single web was almost too small for notice, but the thousands of them that connected the *spirea* sprays sparkled as the rising sun caught the moisture that coated each strand of web. Dew is too solid a word for that form of water. It was almost as though Mother Earth thought "damp," and the wetness appeared. As much as I have looked for it, I never again saw that magical combination of just the right humidity, just the right slant of sun, and just that plenitude of tiny webs.

I feel a similar astonishment when I read a truly magical book, one in which the characters walk off the page and into my heart. The writer spins an exact blend of plot elements, with beauty of structure, absence of "formula," and expert weaving of words, to capture the tasty bug of my imagination. I wonder if baby spiders watch their elders at work and learn from them how to craft their webs, just as I read books by established authors, take writing workshops, and listen to my wonderful editor. Noting my tendency to overuse passive verbs in the most recent draft of my fifth mystery, Nanette Littlestone—editor extraordinaire—recently wrote, ". . . with so many words in the English language, Fran, you could avail yourself of the many possibilities." *Ouch!* My inner baby spider started to work on my next web/draft much chagrined and much inspired.

During the rewriting process, I often trudge, like a single ant in a long line. I cart one simile or metaphor at a time to the anthill of my novel, feeding the narrative, tending the people who live in my brain 24/7/365 (or 366 this particular year). I am both the ant and the anthill. I am the leaf segment and the cricket wing. I am predator, prey, and vegetation alike. Like the ant, I defend my boundaries, respect those of other ants, carry my part of the load, and share my bits of leaf with family, friends, and colleagues. Ants as a group are mostly beneficial to humans. Their tunneling mixes and aerates the soil. Writers are, or of right ought to be, beneficial as well. We tunnel through mounds of information and create fertile soil from a mixture of air, sand, water, words, and magic.

We writers spill the silk of our lifeblood onto the very pages of our books. We dig deep within ourselves to people our stories, our poems. We spin or trudge every day. We pay attention to the world we experience, and we extrude those sights and sounds, smells, tastes, and textures into webs that inform or entrance. Writers do not only entertain; they inspire; they move mountains.

What leaf will you carry? What will you spin today?

Fran Stewart writes quietly from her house beside a creek on the backside of Hog Mountain, Georgia, where she shares her home with a variety of rescued cats.

www.FranStewart.com

Carole Aguirre

I was born with a pen in my hand. I've been writing since I learned to read and write. Aside from school newspapers and college term papers, I was first published at age 23 in the Marietta Daily Journal while living in Japan. My mother, a writer, sent my letters home to the editor and he published them as a weekly column.

Years later, I would be a regular contributor and guest columnist for the Marietta paper as well as the Atlanta Journal. Was a public relations writer and editor of Rollins Today magazine and Public Relations director of Kennestone Hospital.

Free-lanced for years in markets too numerous to list. Home Life, Mature Living, Parents, New York Times. I sold about 90% of everything I submitted over the transom, then I began to get assignments, most recently from Home Office Computing and Black Enterprise.

I finally found time to write my first novel and screenplay which I am now trying to market while I am working on several other books.

I enjoyed being a member of AWC in the past and enjoy the friendship and the valuable information gathered, but in my case, I find that the best thing I get is INSPIRATION!

Membership Information – The Atlanta Writers Club

Effective May 1, we have introduced Partial-Year Membership Rates. For those joining after May 1, membership is only \$20 for the remainder of 2008. This allows you access to full membership benefits that are outlined below. So join now and become part of one of the fastest growing writers clubs in the United States.

The Atlanta Writers Club is simply a group of writers that work together to help each other improve their skills and attain their writing goals.

Anyone can join, with no prior publication requirements. Here are a just a few membership benefits:

- Monthly meetings. On the third Saturday of each month, approximately 100 of our members gather to listen and learn from two guest speakers from varied areas of the literary world. Please refer to our list of upcoming guest speakers in this newsletter.
- Workshops. Your membership provides access to outstanding writing workshops, and some are free with membership. Watch for announcements for upcoming workshops.
- Critique Groups. We now have approximately twenty (20) different critique groups available to members. Scattered about the Atlanta metro area, these critique groups meet regularly to work with each other to read each other's writings and recommend modifications.
- Dinner with Authors. I routinely attend many author book signings so I wondered how I could spend just a few minutes with some of these authors to ask them an impromptu question, or just learn more of their successful habits. In the past several months, our members have had that experience, with authors Nathan McCall, Jedwin Smith, Carol O'Dell, James O. Born and others. We are currently working to schedule others, and there is no admission fee to these special dinners. Members are only required to pay for their own consumption at the restaurant. The Atlanta Writers Club pays for the author and their guests.

I could continue with additional benefits, but alas, this is only a newsletter. You may join The Atlanta Writers Club at any of our events or meetings. Or pay on line at our website, using PayPal at <http://www.atlantawritersclub.org/membership.html>.

If you have additional questions, contact AWC president Marty Aftewicz at Marty@atlantawritersclub.org or our Membership Vice President David McCoy at David@atlantawritersclub.org.



David Fulmer completes the final segment of his fiction workshop



Karen White signs books for her many fans



Karen White addresses the AWC



Melinda Long informs members about challenges with children's novels.



Melinda Long signs "How I Became A Pirate"

Speakers at April Meeting

Margaret Mitchell House



The club has a membership plan with the Margaret Mitchell House (<http://www.gwtw.org/>), enabling 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:

May 1 Free Teen Event with Sarah Dessen at the Decatur Library

May 8 Mary Higgins Clark and Carol Higgins Clark at the Atlanta History Center. Pre-payment required: \$5 for MMH and AHC members; \$10 for nonmembers. Call: 770-578-3502.

May 14 Tony Horwitz - A Voyage Long and Strange

May 20 Ellen Gilchrist - A Dangerous Age

May 22 Alexandra Fuller - The Legend of Colton H. Bryant

Check Out the AWC Lending Library

The AWC has a large membership with many published authors. Through those authors' generosity, we are establishing the new AWC Lending Library. AWC members will now be able to read donated works free of charge. Before each AWC meeting, a volunteer member will staff a table on which will be displayed the novels available to our "readers". These books can be checked out for a period of one month—from one meeting to the next.

It's easy to see what's in it for the member: an opportunity to read this diverse body of work without spending a dime. What's in it for the contributing author? A chance to connect with a broader readership from among our members. So if you're a published author, please consider donating one copy of each of your published works to our new lending library. If you're a member, please feel free to stop by and check out the books available. And if you like what you read, spread the word. There's no better publicity than word of mouth.

To donate a book to the AWC lending library, please contact Lisa Heidle at Lheidle@yahoo.com. Of course, since this is a new concept for the club, we need books. Please contribute.

Note: Lynda Fitzgerald and Dee Gardner founded this idea for the club, but are currently on a leave of absence. We thank them both for this idea and implementing the concept, and appreciate Lisa Heidle temporarily assisting us with this administration.

We thank Lynda Fitzgerald and Dee Gardner for their assistance with this activity.



The Atlanta Writers Club Board

President	Marty Aftewicz	eQuill Publisher	Gene Bowen
First VP	George Weinstein		
Membership VP	David McCoy	Other Volunteers	
Treasurer	John Sheffield	Historian/By-Laws	Adrian Drost
Publicity VP	Patricia Patterson	Photographer	Gene Bowen
Operations VP	Clay Ramsey	PR/Open Mic	Patricia Patterson
Contests VP	Tara Coyt	eQuill Copy Editor	Gene Bowen
Marketing VP	Sarah Dollacker		
Social Director	Janean Brown		

Upcoming Schedule of Saturday Club Meetings (12:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

May 17, 2008 —

12:00 – 12:45 Marc Fitten will discuss preparing submissions for agents. This is a follow-up to our Writers Conference

1:45-2:30 Man Martin, first-time novelist and educator on techniques for writing humor in fiction.

3:00-3:45 Tina Ansa, international best-selling author, on the lessons of working with large publishers and running her own small press.

June 21, 2008 —

1:00 PM Annual Club Picnic – dine and mingle with authors that have addressed the club in the past year. We will also use this occasion to honor Terry Kay with a special Atlanta Writers Club award.

Club-Sponsored Critique Groups

- Conyers:** An **all-genre** group meets **Sundays, 6-8 pm** at Bernie Blanton's home. E-mail Ms. Blanton at brblanton@earthlink.net or call her at 770-602-1567 to get on her distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.
- Decatur:** A **fiction** group (all kinds) meets **Saturday mornings 9:30 - 12** at the Atlanta Bread Company, corner of Ponce de Leon and Church streets. There are presently two openings. If interested, e-mail Ricky Jacobs at rjacobs@townsquare.net or call him at 404-378-7365. You will be asked to submit (as an attachment) about five pages of your writing plus a brief bio.
- Decatur:** An **adult fiction** group meets **Sundays, 3 pm - 5:45** at the Indie Bookstore on W. Ponce de Leon, near the Decatur Post Office. There are presently two openings. If interested, e-mail Ricky Jacobs at rjacobs@townsquare.net or call him at 404-378-7365. You will be asked to submit (as an attachment) about five pages of your writing plus a brief bio.
- Decatur:** A **children's and YA fiction** group meets **every other Tuesday, 10 am - 12:15**, currently at the Java Monkey on Church Street, almost opposite the Decatur MARTA station. This group is now full. If you are interested in being considered for future openings, e-mail Ricky Jacobs at rjacobs@townsquare.net or call him at 404-378-7365.
- Decatur:** A **fiction** group (all kinds) meets **Thursday evenings 7:15 - 9:45** at the Atlanta Bread Company, corner of Ponce de Leon and Church streets. This group is now full. If you are interested in being considered for future openings, e-mail Ricky Jacobs at rjacobs@townsquare.net or call him at 404-378-7365.
- Decatur:** a **non-fiction** group meets **Tuesdays, 7-9 pm** at Decatur Renaissance Condos on east Ponce de Leon. 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 Crogan Street on the historic village square. 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 on the first Saturday of every month at **10 am - noon** at a member's home. E-mail Ken Schmanski at kschmanski@yahoo.com or call him at 770-377-1771 to get on his 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.
- Marietta:** Katie Ryle hosts an **all genre** group at Cool Beans Café on the square in Marietta, next to the Welcome Center. This group meets on the **3rd Monday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM**. For more information, please email Katieryle@yahoo.com.
- Midtown:** a **fiction** group meets every other Wednesday. For additional information, please email Jennifer Taylor at jrtaylor1@mac.com.
- Midtown/Buckhead:** Midtown/Buckhead group previously directed by Patricia Patterson has dissolved. We are now seeking a new group leader to organize a new group in this area. Interested members should contact Marty@atlantawritersclub.org.
- Roswell:** An **all-genre** group meets on **2nd and 4th Wednesdays**, 6-8 pm at The Atlanta Bread Company near corner of Hwy 92 and Woodstock Rd. 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 **Mondays, 10:30 am - 12:30** at the Roswell Library. E-mail Lynn Wesch at lewesch@bellsouth.net. Please e-mail her to get on her distribution list and find out the date of the next meeting.
- Snellville :** Angie Cush hosts an **all genre** group at Barnes & Noble in Snellville that meet **each Sunday evening, 6-8pm**. Contact Angie for more details at angcush@aol.com.
- Woodstock :** An **all-genre** group meets every other **Wednesday evening from 7-9 PM** at the Foxtale Books just off Main St near the Gazebo. Interested participants should contact Cindy Morrow at cindy.morrow@gmail.com.
- Poetry:** Poetry Group – Meets on the first Sunday of each month at 2:00 PM at the Atlanta Bread Company on Highway 92/Crossville Rd at Woodstock Rd. intersection (Kohl's shopping center). Interested members should contact Jill Jennings at magistra_jennings@yahoo.com or call her at 770-516-2482.



Directions to Our Monthly Meeting Location

The Atlanta Writers Club has a huge new conference space in which to meet each month, a mile north of I-285 (northern arc) on the second floor of the Student Building on the Dunwoody campus of Georgia Perimeter College, 2101 Womack Road, Dunwoody, GA 30338.

Detailed directions also on our website:
or on <http://mapsonus.switchboard.com>

***Non-members are always welcome to visit the first meeting free;
to promote membership, we charge visitors \$10 each time thereafter.***

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 (Lot #10) on the left. You do NOT need to stop at Security to get a visitor sticker. 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 1-3 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.

Visit <http://www.gpc.edu/~duniss/WritersCircle.htm>.

Contact: Nancy McDaniel at 770-274-5243 or facilitator Gelia Dolcimascolo

THE ATLANTA WRITERS CLUB
Membership and Information Update

Today's date: ____/____/2008 New: ____ Renewal: ____

Annual Membership Fee is \$40 (Applies to memberships paid from January 1 through April 30.)

Discounted Membership Fee \$20 (Applies to memberships paid on or after May 1.)

Student Membership Fee \$20 (Anytime during the calendar year; no discounts.)

Make a donation to the Atlanta Writers Club. \$ _____

Total amount of payment. \$ _____

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

John Sheffield, 1070 Rome Drive, Roswell, GA 30075

Member Information:

If you are **renewing**, please indicate only your name below unless other contact info has changed.

Name _____

Address _____ City & Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work/Cell Phone _____

E-mail address _____

Event attended today: _____

Tell us about yourself:

Please circle your primary interests	fiction	nonfiction	poetry	freelancing
Have you published?	Yes	No		
How long you have been writing?	< 5 yrs	5 or more years		
Would you like to join a local critique group?	Yes	No		