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.

**Annual Picnic**
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Sandy Springs Recreation Center
On Hammond Drive
No Agenda - Just Good Food and Conversation

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**Agenda for — May 16, 2009**
In Context, by Clay Ramsey, President

Facing a blank screen or a pristine page is a terrifying and thrilling prospect for any writer. The almost Dickensian trio of ghosts of abandoned projects in the past, reminders of literary weaknesses in the present, and uncertainties of manuscript reception in the future all conspire to make the simple act of writing one word and then the next an all but insurmountable challenge. I have discovered that I find myself in a similar place as the new President of the Atlanta Writers Club. The legacy of 95 years of remarkable writers associated with this Club, the acknowledgement of my own inadequacies, and the prospect of assuming leadership for the immediate future have given me pause.

But what has helped me move past the initial paralysis is the realization that we are not starting with a tabula rasa, a blank slate. We are starting in medias res - right in the middle of the story. The AWC now has more members, more opportunities for personal growth and professional development, more people on the mailing list, more enthusiasm and energy, more critique groups, more talented volunteers, and more first-class speakers than it has had in almost a century of its existence. We are in an extraordinary position, one barely conceivable even just a few years ago. Marty, building on what George did before him, is largely responsible for this fact. He’s had some help, of course, but you should take a minute to thank him at the next event. He’s earned it.

With this in mind, whatever authorial anxiety I may have had quickly turns to exhilaration. You’ve picked a fantastic time to be a member of the AWC. And it will only get better, provided that two, mutually dependent things happen: if those in leadership continue to work to expand programs, balance the check book, schedule speakers, and work out the logistics so that we can stretch the boundaries of possibility to make us a nationally recognized literary organization and if everyone contributes ideas, connections, assistance, support, and an eagerness to cooperate to make the good, exceptional.

I appreciate the privilege of serving you as President. Let’s dream big dreams together; let’s take some risks; let’s push each other to be more daring, skilled, and inspired writers; and let’s move confidently into the future. I look forward to sharing this adventure with you.

Clay

The rest of the newsletter is full of events for you to consider. Pay particular attention to the Atlanta Writers Conference on May 8 & 9 at the Westin Atlanta Airport Hotel. If you are a participant in the Conference, you should have already received an email from George. If you aren’t a participant, still plan to come to the Mixer on Friday night, from 8 until 11 p.m. It should be a wonderful chance to meet successful agents in the book business and make some connections with your fellow writers.

The following Saturday, May 16, is our annual picnic at Hammond Park. Email Marty if you want to volunteer to help and put it on your calendar to be there. It should be fun – no program, just good food and great conversation. Hope to see you there.
Annual Picnic

Saturday, May 16th, 1-4 PM
Hammond Park
705 Hammond Drive
Hammond Dr. at Glenridge Dr.
Sandy Springs

Free!
To All AWC Members and Families
Covered Pavilion - so event will be held - Rain or Shine!

Email Marty if you wish to help - Set-up, Food Preparation, or Clean-up
Martyaga@gmail.com
AWC Member Book Announcement for eQuill


Unlocking Your Rubber Room is a book about hope in difficult times. Perry offers 44 hilarious lessons which emphasize that humor, passion, and compassion are the keys to unlocking our confining mindsets -- our figurative "rubber rooms." Perry's original stories, like "figure out if you are a 'touch wet paint' person," are distilled from years of painstaking trials and errors.

This book contains novel law tips, including how to get a lawyer to return your call, or which three items you must possess when dining out. And its provocative anecdotes -- when to start a street fight and when to lay low in the weeds -- motivate you to laugh, think, and act through everyday situations. Ultimately, Unlocking Your Rubber Room inspires you to be adventurous, take risks, and learn new things about yourself -- just as Perry confesses he discovered when writing this book.

Recent Book Reviews:
Office Arrow Book Club
http://www.officearrow.com/home/columns/oa_book_club/p2_articleid/1371/p142_id/1371/p142_dis/3
Perry's "heartfelt commencement address is perhaps one of the most moving pieces of writing I've read in some time."
Daily Report
http://www.perrybinder.com/lawyers.htm
GSU Signal
http://www.perrybinder.com/studentbookreview.htm

Summer Adult Creative Writing Workshops  Freelancing 101  
Instructor: Jennifer Taylor

Meets four weeks from 6-8pm; Mondays, July 6-27 on the third floor of the Margaret Mitchell House.  Cost: $150 AHC/MMH members; $175 Nonmembers

So you want to become a freelance writer? There are many reasons you might be interested in a freelance career - extra money, flexibility, or the chance to write about what you enjoy. During this four-week workshop, students will identify topics that target print, on-line publications and new media, such as blogging, then move to crafting a pitch, creating a relationship with editors and how to begin building a freelance base.


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 founded this idea for the club, but is currently on a leave of absence. We thank her for this idea and implementing the concept, and appreciate Lisa Heidle temporarily assisting us with this administration.
Speaker Summaries
By
Shyla Nambiar

At 1:45, Robyn Freedman Spizman, a New York Times best-selling author of 80 books, addressed the audience on publishing options, citing three methods of publishing: self-publishing, collaborative publishing, and traditional publishing. She spoke on her own experiences in the publishing world and emphasized the business aspect of writing, reminding the audience that “you can take control of your career.”

At 3:00, Dr. Daniel Black, scholar, Clark Atlanta University professor, and author of two novels, spoke on the revival of Southern rural literature. He discussed his belief that Southerners are master story tellers and talked of the religious component in Southern fiction. Dr. Black treated the audience to a humorous rendition of excerpts from his books and a recounting of his childhood experiences.

"Passing of the President's Cup
from George Weinstein to Marty Aftewicz"
Johns Creek Poetry Group

WORDS ON POETRY: “It is possible for the poet to be better than himself in the poem he writes.” —Seamus Heaney

Future Opportunities for Poets:


Georgia Poetry Society Quarterly Meetings: **July 25**, Kennesaw State University. See [www.georgiapoetrysociety.org](http://www.georgiapoetrysociety.org)

C. Georgia Poetry Society Membership fee of $30 due for calendar 2009. Send to GPS, P.O. Box 2184, Columbus, GA 31902.

For directions: [www.northeast-spruill-oaks-regional-library](http://www.northeast-spruill-oaks-regional-library)

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The Atlanta Writers Club meets each month, a mile north of I-285 (northern arc) in the small auditorium of Building C 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](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.

For GPC’s street and campus maps, click: [http://www.gpc.edu/Campus_Maps/Dunwoody.html](http://www.gpc.edu/Campus_Maps/Dunwoody.html)
So you want to be an author? Well, Jedwin Smith and Eagle Eye Book Shop in Decatur want to help make your New Year's resolution come true!

Join critically acclaimed author Jedwin Smith for an 8-week fiction/nonfiction writer's workshop, hosted by Eagle Eye Book Shop (2076 N. Decatur Road, Decatur, GA 30033). The 8-week writer's workshop, beginning **May 7 through June 25** (7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Thursday nights) at Eagle Eye Book Shop in Decatur. Same deal as before: $250 for the course; $230 for Atlanta Writer's Club members.

Jedwin, recipient of 59 major writing awards, including two Pulitzer Prize nominations, will use his vast newspaper experience—29 years as a sports writer, columnist, feature writer, and war correspondent—plus the knowledge he's gained on the literary front, to help lead aspiring authors through the book publishing minefield.

Some of the issues Jedwin will cover at length include: Do you have the "write" stuff; finding and protecting your voice; structuring your book from start to finish; the secrets of story pacing; every book needs a rough outline; the end game: knowing when enough is enough; handling criticism & who to listen to; you're never done making mistakes.

To secure a workshop slot, contact Jedwin at: [jedwin46@bellsouth.net](mailto:jedwin46@bellsouth.net)
From the Tip of My Pen - A Writer’s Tip of the Month – May 2009
by Fran Stewart

(Writing + 2 + Formula) = (Curse +/- Blessing)?

Recently on my internet radio show, Mystery Matters: Where Murder is an Open Book, I spoke with Claire Matturro, author of the Lilly Belle Cleary mysteries, and asked her if she had any advice for would-be mystery writers. Now, keep in mind that anyone can write a mystery. The trick is to write one that’s publishable. Claire suggested that one read good, successful mysteries. “Study the plot lines,” she said, “and figure out what the formula is.”

Formula? Aargh! Isn’t that a dirty word? Well, no, according to Claire. Let’s think about that. We disparage an author who “writes to formula.” What do we mean by that? Well, the plot line gets so blinkin’ predictable and the dialogue so stilted that each successive book in the series is, quite frankly, boring. That can happen after one’s written fifteen books with the same characters – or it can occur in the first book.

That boring predictability, though, is not what Claire was talking about. Think back to a college term paper or a physics experiment. State the problem; state what you’re going to do about it; state how you did it; state how the action led to the final result; wrap it up. Is that a formula? Yes. Now think about a mystery—any mystery. Introduce problem (like a dead body); show characters (preferably through dialogue and action rather than through description); show relationship between characters, ideally as they work through the problem; introduce a bigger problem that besets the main character (may be self-induced or come from an outside source); resolve the problem as the solution is revealed. Is that a formula? Yes.

One thing I’ve seen, though, as I’ve read two to five books a week preparing for the Friday morning live interviews, is that the formula works, and the infinite variety of ways in which the formula can be manipulated to fit each author’s particular voice is fascinating. I never thought I’d recommend writing to formula, but now that Claire opened my eyes to a new way of looking at it, I’ll say, “Go for it.” Use that formula, but use it well. I’d love to read the result.

Claire Matturro’s interview, by the way, was pre-recorded, and is due to air August 28th. In the meantime, I hope you’ll listen to my live show on Friday mornings (10:00 eastern) or pull up the archives. www.tinyurl.com/o2f3s6 Lots of good writers on there. I’ll know you’ll get some inspiration from them. www.franstewart.com
Member Profiles

Donna Block
Midland, MI

I’m a Southerner, though not of the deep variety--- does Missouri-uh count? I’m intrigued and beguiled with Southern writing. During an opportunity to visit Atlanta this winter, I enjoyed the hospitality, the language, and just the general ambience that I’ve long missed here in the Hinterland. Through googling, I found the Atlanta Writer’s Club, as well as a couple of other organizations I’ve joined as well.

The bulk of my writing is penned in my work as a school principal. However, my passion for writing lies beyond grants, school newsletters, and suspension notices. I have several fiction projects brewing, with some percolating to completion. While distance limits my regular involvement in the club directly, I look forward to attending a gathering on occasion.

(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/](http://www.scratchcontest.net/)
Membership Information – The Atlanta Writers Club

Membership dues are $40 per year. Also, we now have our family memberships, where each additional family member can join for $20 and earn full membership benefits. We will gladly accept your cash or checks at any AWC event, or you can mail your payment to the address on the membership form on the last page of this newsletter. You may also renew via PayPal at www.atlantawritersclub.org.

We are one of the best literary bargains in town. 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 Clay Ramsey at clay@atlantawritersclub.org.
The Atlanta Writers Club Board

President: Clay Ramsey
First VP: George Weinstein
Membership VP: Marty Aftewicz
Secretary: Bill Black
Treasurer: John Sheffield
Publicity VP: Patricia Patterson
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Photographer: Jennie Helderman
eQuill Copy Editor: Gene Bowen
Emcee of open Mic: Alicia Plant
T-Shirt Sales: Terre Spencer
Critique Groups: Jennie Helderman
Lending Library: Lisa Heidle

Upcoming Schedule of Saturday Club Meetings

May 16, 2009—
PICNIC— SATURDAY, MAY 16 - 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

June 20, 2009—
12:00 - 1:00  Lauretta Hannon, Cracker Queen author, free workshop: “Marketing: Will It Make You or Break You?”
1:45 –2:30  Philip Lee Williams, novelist, poet, essayist, composer, and UGA creative writing professor, on writing about people on the fringes of society.
3:00-3:45  Marc Fitten, first-time novelist, editor of Chattahoochee Review, on the 2009 Atlanta Writers Conference and lessons in perseverance.

July 18, 2009—
TBA
We are pleased to announce that Jennie Helderman has accepted the position of Critique Group Coordinator. She will become the focal point for maintaining an up to date and accurate listing of critique groups. She will also keep a list of individuals that are interested in a group in a particular geographical area. More news will come from her regarding critique groups.

So, if you are interested in joining a critique group that is yet to exist, or if wish to become a critique group leader, please e-mail Jennie at jmhelderman@comcast.net.

Buckhead/Midtown: Poetry group. Contact Karen Holmes at karen.holmes@comcast.net to be put on the distribution list and notified of future meeting dates.

Conyers: We are in search of a leader to reorganize this group. Anyone interested should contact Jennie Helderman at jmhelderman@comcast.net.

Decatur: A fiction group (all kinds) meets Saturday mornings 9:30-12 at the Indie Book Store on Ponce de Leon near the post office. The group is full at present. Phone Ricky Jacobs at 404-378-7365 or write rickyjacs@mac.com to be put on a wait list. You will be asked to submit about five pages of your writing and a brief bio.

Decatur: A children’s and YA fiction group meets every other Tuesday, 10 a.m.-12:15 at the Java Monkey on Church Street almost opposite the Decatur Marta Station. The group is full at present. Phone Ricky Jacobs at 404-378-7365 or write rickyjacs@mac.com to be put on a wait list. You will be asked to submit about five pages of your writing and a brief bio.

Decatur: An adult and YA fiction group meets on Thursdays 7-9 p.m. at the Dr. Bombay Coffee Shop, 1645 McLendon Ave. The group is full at present. Phone Ricky Jacobs at 404-378-7365 or write rickyjacs@mac.com to be put on a wait list.

Decatur: An adult/YA fiction group meets Thursdays 7 p.m.-9 at the Chocolatte Café on Clairmont and Church Streets. The group is full at present. Phone Ricky Jacobs at 404-378-7365 or write rickyjacs@mac.com to be put on a wait list. You will be asked to submit about five pages of your writing and a brief bio.

Decatur: A nonfiction group meets Tuesdays 7-9 p.m. at Urban Grounds in Avondale Estates. Email Rebecca Ewing at rebeccaewing@earthlink.net to get on her distribution list.

Dunwoody: Georgia Perimeter College’s Learning and Tutoring Center sponsors Writers’ Circle, an ongoing group of students and community members who enjoy the writing process and seek the support and insight of other writers. Meets 1st and 3rd Fridays, 1-3 p.m. in LTC Dunwoody campus, LRC (Library Building), Rm 3100. During school breaks, the group meets at Borders Bookstore. Contact Gelia Dolcimascolo at 770-274-5246 for further information.

Emory: A fiction group meets every other Wednesday at 6:30 at Panera’s in the shopping area on North Decatur Road opposite the main entrance to the Emory campus. E-mail Ruth Gresh at
hrgres@bellsouth.net for date of the next meeting.

**Lawrenceville:** The novel/short story group which meets every other Thursday 10 a.m. to noon is full. Contact Barbara Connor at 678-226-1483 or ima-yaya@charter.net to be put on a wait list; or contact Jennie Helderman at jmhelderman@comcast.net.

**Lawrence/Snellville:** An all genre group meets on the first Saturday of every month 10 a.m. to noon at a member’s home. Contact Ken Schmanski at 770-377-1771 or kschnanski@yahoo.com for location and to get on his distribution list.

**Marietta/Austell:** We are in search of a leader to reorganize this group. Anyone interested should contact Jennie Helderman at jmhelderman@comcast.net.

**Smyrna:** Contact Jenean Brown at shauntebrown@bellsouth.net for date and location of this group.

**Woodstock:** Anyone interested in a critique group in Woodstock please contact Jennie Helderman at jmhelderman@comcast.net.

**Woodstock:** A poetry group meets but with no set time. Contact Jill Jennings at 770-516-2482 or magistra_jennings@yahoo.com for more information.

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**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](http://www.gpc.edu/~duniss/WritersCircle.htm).

Contact: Nancy McDaniel at 770-274-5243 or facilitator Gelia Dolcimascolo.
THE ATLANTA WRITERS CLUB

Membership Dues, Donations and Contact Information

Please make checks payable to “The Atlanta Writers Club”:

NEW

RENEWAL

2009 Membership Dues (covers remainder of 2009):

- $30 - Membership is valid through 12/31/2009
  $__________

- Add any family member for $20 each
  (Please supply their contact information using the form below or a separate form)
  $__________

- Students, ages 25 and under, pay only $30 year-round
  $__________

Donation in the amount of

$__________

Total

$__________

Please mail with checks payable to The Atlanta Writers Club to
Marty Aftewicz, 115 Ashford Cir, Dunwoody, GA 30338

- 2009 Membership Year runs from payment date through 12/31/09
If you are renewing, please indicate only your name below unless other contact info has changed

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

Name ________________________________________________________________

Address ________________________________________________________________

City __________________________ Zip __________________________

Home __________________________ Work/Cell __________________________

Phone __________________________ Phone __________________________

E-mail address __________________________________________________________

Today’s Date: _____/_____/_____
