September 18, 2010

1:45-2:30 **Lynn Cullen**, formerly a children’s and YA author and now a historical novelist, on reinventing yourself as a writer

3:00-3:45 3:00-3:45 Bestselling novelist **Joshilyn Jackson** holds a Q&A free-for-all on the craft and business of writing

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As a college freshman I took an introductory course in philosophy. It was an academic experience that most first-year students share. From the first lecture we were introduced to the ongoing conversation that has spanned the centuries about the nature of humanity and God and virtue and the mysteries that define our reality. Of all the grand themes we covered that semester, I remember a discussion about a chair one crisp afternoon that changed the way I viewed the world. The purpose of the lecture was to explore a fundamental, ancient division between idealists who believe that objects do not exist apart from mind, and realists who believe that there is an intrinsic, external, absolute existence of objects apart from mind. It seemed a ridiculous distinction to me at the time. Then the professor, no doubt anticipating our objections, pointed to a chair in the lecture hall, and suggested that we consider its existence. In true Socratic fashion, he nudged us gently but firmly to think about the chair – how we knew it was there, if it existed apart from our perception of it, the implication of sense-impressions, the real reality of the observing mind. What seemed self-evident before the class, the existence of a common chair, became less so afterwards. By looking at a chair and thinking our thoughts through to logical conclusions, we were slowly being prepared to consider further lessons in epistemology, language and ontology. It was all a matter of perspective, I learned.

This lesson in perspective was not confined to my first philosophy class, but seemed to pop up in other classes as well, everything from the vantage of Baroque painters, to the paradox of Schrödinger’s cat in quantum physics, to the axiom in post-modern literary theory that the archaic constructs of “truth” and “meaning” are merely a matter of perspective. Wherever I turned, whatever book I picked up, it seemed like I was being pushed to consider the critical notion of perspective: the dramatic perspective of Shakespeare, the oppressed perspective of indigenous Third World populations, even the microscopic perspective on strands of DNA.

Now the writer must make decisions about perspective in her work, regardless of the genre. She must decide on point-of-view, on who tells the story, on whose eyes the reader gets to look through as the tale unfolds. It is a preliminary decision that has enormous consequences, and it is a choice that has been made in vastly different ways, from the bitter solipsism of the first-person narration of Dostoevsky’s Notes from Underground to the conflicting points-of-view of multiple narrators inspired by Kurosawa’s film “Rashomon.” From degrees of omniscience to rare second-person addresses, writers have made decisions about perspective to best present their tale, to enhance conflict, or uncover character, or spin narrative, or mislead, or hide, or reveal. It is a matter of craft, and it is the skillful writer who can use perspective to create a brilliant, memorable story.

(Continued on page 3)
However, before the reader sees the story, the characters must see the story. And before the characters see the story, the author must see the story. Prior to that conceptualization, that authorial perspective on the world of the story, the author must pay attention to the world of her experience. Before the magic of composition occurs, she must be a literary seer, a “see-er” of the life in which she is immersed and from which she draws inspiration and the raw materials for her work. She must pay attention.

In the lexicon of etymology that I consulted, I found that “attention” is related to the Modern French word that means “to expect, to wait for,” like the attendant to royalty, waiting for instructions, expecting to be commanded. It is also related to the Latin word that simply means “to stretch towards,” literally “to stretch one’s mind towards something.” In the convoluted history of language, it shares a root with the words for looms for weaving cloth and taut sinews. Considering both meanings, it seems that “paying attention” involves active expectation, not just sluggish, passive waiting, but sharp, focused anticipation of a word or experience of something new, something worth the wait.

With this in mind, I would encourage you this month to pay attention as a writer. Live in the Now. Use and make note of information from all of your senses, and then try different perspectives in the way you experience life and in the way you write. Imagine life as a migrant worker, or grey falcon. Consciously change variables in your point-of-view characters, like historical period, or body proportion, or social position, or gender, or ethnicity. If you really want to transport your readers to other worlds, or prompt them to see this one in a different way, experiment with perspective. First see the world in all its extraordinary variety – listen, see, taste, smell, touch everything as if for the first time. Fully, passionately, voraciously experience the present and then use your creative imagination to see not just how this world can be represented as it is, but how it could be different, how it could be better.

Imagination can change the world, and imagination starts with seeing clearly what is and then asking what could be. The writer’s calling is to be such an adventurer of the imagination, a dreamer of possibilities, an architect of worlds, a shaper of perspective. Recommit yourself to this task. See the world anew and translate that new perspective into words, words that blaze, words that illumine, words that change our world.
On September 18 in the Building NC auditorium at Georgia Perimeter College in Dunwoody, we’ll welcome a number of first-time visitors and new members who discovered us at the Decatur Book Festival, so it’s only right that we provide attendees with a new speaker who’s destined to become a favorite and a longtime AWC friend and literary star who just keeps getting better and better.

Guest Speaker: 1:45-2:30

Lynn Cullen was the author of seven middle-grade books and a picture book when she began her research for what would become a top young adult novel, I Am Rembrandt’s Daughter. During the creation of that hit book for teens, she became fascinated with the Renaissance, the Spanish court of the 1500s, and a female portraitist and student of Michelangelo named Sofonisba Anguissola. As Lynn studied this painter’s life, a story with subtle, mature themes—the ephemeral quality of reputation and truth, the opaqueness of motivations—took shape. Despite a solid reputation as a writer for children and teenagers, Lynn decided to make the leap to adult historical fiction with this new novel titled The Creation of Eve, published in 2010 by G.P. Putnam’s Sons.

Critics have expressed delight at Lynn’s ability to bring to vivid life an all-but-forgotten painter, and sales have been solid. It appears that her big risk switching tracks has paid off. At 1:45 on September 18, Lynn will discuss the process of reinventing yourself as a writer. Whether you’re trying a new genre, a different voice, or a fresh style, she’ll tell you how to keep the best and hone the rest. Read more about Lynn and her work at www.lynncullen.com.

Guest Speaker: 3:00-3:45

Joshilyn Jackson—veteran AWC speaker and workshop facilitator—has a new novel and new insights into how the writing game really works. Backseat Saints is her latest exploration of favorite themes: reconciling with the past, reworking the present, and trying to survive to discover the future. For inspiration, Joshilyn returns to the still-fertile ground of her first novel, the blockbuster gods in Alabama, to turn the spotlight on Rose Mae Lolley, a previously minor character who becomes as unforgettable as Joshilyn’s earlier heroines.

The editor of BookPage once wrote, “Every now and then…a remarkable writer comes along to reenergize American Fiction. So it is with Joshilyn Jackson.” Kathryn Stockett, author of The Help, blurbs, “Backseat Saints will pull you in and won’t let you out until the last page. I love reading about smart, flawed and ultimately wise women, like Rose Mae.” How does Joshilyn keep doing it—and how can you write books that make the critics and literati swoon? At 3 p.m., Joshilyn hosts a freewheeling Q&A on the craft and business of writing. Bring your toughest questions and go to school on her no-nonsense answers. For more about Joshilyn and her novels, please visit www.joshlynjackson.com.
Be a part of the excitement!
The Atlanta Writers Club will have a booth on Saturday and Sunday (September 4th and 5th) to tell fair goers about the Club.

We are looking for Club members who can share their passion for writing and the reasons why they joined the Atlanta Writers Club. For the AWC booth we have 2 hour shifts from 10A-6P on Saturday and 11A-5P on Sunday.

The AWC will also be supporting the Local Prose Stage at Twain's. This was a wonderful success last year. Local authors will be reading from their books and of course signing and selling, too.

Our job is to assist in monitoring the time for the readers and help with the book sales. I will provide details and more information. For the Local Prose Stage we have 2 hour shifts from 12Noon -6P on Saturday and 12Noon -5P on Sunday.

A volunteer from last year signed up again and shared her reason (Thank you Barbara C!):

“We always have a vibrant location that catches all visitors coming and going, plenty of membership aps and other supplies, water, and usually--when we're lucky--Clay's wife's delicious homemade cookies. It is the best place nearest to home for networking. You never know who you might meet, including authors who stop by after their gigs...”

The schedule for the featured lectures and signings from 300 national and local authors is posted at http://www.decaturbookfestival.com. I would greatly appreciate your help! Thank you for being a member and supporting the Atlanta Writers Club.

Neda Gayle

AWC VP of Operations
Want valuable comments on the structure, dialogue and plot line of your screenplay? The team of Tin Roof Films is giving a $.50/page discount to members of AWC. The usual price is $2.95/page, but our membership will pay only $2.45. You will receive notes, comments and suggestions on how to move your screenplay to the next level. Everything from title to final page is scrutinized.

Director Jason Winn and screenwriter Mike Buchanan held a successful workshop on filmmaking and screenwriting last fall for the club. Their latest movie, The Fat Boy Chronicles, has already played to sold-out screenings in Charlotte and Atlanta with more events planned throughout the nation as well as being featured in many film festivals. The film will be officially released this fall. Winn has directed national commercials along with the award-winning short film Last Bullet.

Buchanan and his co-author Diane Lang have written the scripts The Fat Boy Chronicles, Last Bullet, Treasure of the Four Lions, Ryan’s Heart, and Bait and Tackle. The writing team’s latest novel, The Fat Boy Chronicles, was published by Sleeping Bear Press in 2010. Their previous published works include Micah’s Child and short story Medea.

For more information and to take advantage of this offer, send an e-mail to writing@tinrooffilms.com.

Buzz Bernard signed a contract at the end of July with BelleBooks for EYEWALL, his debut novel (but his sixth published book overall). EYEWALL will be released in May as a trade paperback and ebook.

His website is: http://www.buzzbernard.com/ Buzzs_Website/Home.html
Pulitzer Prize-winning non-fiction author Rick Bragg--one of best storytellers the South ever produced--and author/editor Sonny Brewer are teaming up and blowing in from 'Bama on Saturday, September 25. They'll grab hold of your attention all day with discussions about every kind of writing; the good, the bad, and the stupid worlds of publishing; and perils, adventures, and rewards of the writing life.

THE WORKSHOP:

These guys know STORY: what to put in, what to leave out, and how to write it with flair, or, as Rick puts it, "Writing with color." Whether you're working on memoirs, novels, poetry, essays, short stories, or articles—or just trying to make your blog, Facebook posts, and Tweets soar above the noise--Rick and Sonny will show you how.

Their skill with language and their unique perspectives gained from decades spent making a living with the written word will give you the insights you can't get from lesser writers or less-accomplished storytellers. They'll captivate you, guaranteed.

Rather than discussing the tools of writing, they plan to talk about why good writing works all of the time no matter the subject matter and why bad writing about even the most interesting topic falls flat. They'll also tell you the lessons they've learned from the writing life, the nightmares they've lived through with agents and publishers big and small, and the grace they've experienced from editors and readers alike. If you like your war stories served salty, Rick and Sonny will provide plenty of spice.

They will leave lots of time, though, to answer all your questions about every facet of the writing game. How many chances do you get to quiz a best-selling Pulitzer Prize winner and the editor/novelist who single-handedly turned Fairhope, Alabama into a literary hotspot?

THE SCHEDULE

Saturday, September 25, 2010:

- 9:30 a.m.: Arrival and check in at AWC registration desk
- 10:00 a.m. - 12 p.m.: Bragg and Brewer Workshop: Writing with Color
- 12 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.: Pizza and salad lunch and book-signing with the authors
- 12:45 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: Workshop continues, concluding with final Q&A
THE OPPORTUNITY:

Eagle Eye Book Shop will be on hand with Rick Bragg and Sonny Brewer's top titles for sale, from classics like *All Over but the Shoutin'* and *The Poet of Tolstoy Park* to their respective latest works, *The Most They Ever Had* and *The Widow and the Tree*. Bragg and Brewer will personalize their inscriptions, of course--perfect for those adding to their autographed collections or starting to check off their holiday gift lists!

THE PRESENTERS:

**Rick Bragg** is the author of seven critically acclaimed non-fiction books, including the best-selling *All Over but the Shoutin'*, *Ava's Man*, and *The Prince of Frogtown*. He won the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing as a national correspondent for the *New York Times* and collected more than 50 other writing awards in two decades, including a pair of American Society of Newspaper Editors Distinguished Writing Awards.

Rick now works as a writing professor at the University of Alabama's journalism program in its College of Communications and Information Sciences. The Alabama Scholastic Press Association, sponsored by The University of Alabama, has named a journalism prize in his honor: the Rick Bragg Award for Feature Writing.

In Rick’s own words: "My Grandfather on my daddy's side and my grandma on my momma’s side used to try and cuss their miseries away. They could out-cuss any damn body I have ever seen. I am only an amateur cusser at best, but I inherited other things from these people who grew up on the ridges and deep in the hollows of northeastern Alabama, the foothills of the Appalachians. They taught me, on a thousand front porch nights, as a million jugs passed from hand to hand, how to tell a story."

**Sonny Brewer** is the author of four novels: *The Poet of Tolstoy Park*, *A Sound Like Thunder*, *Cormac--The Tale of a Dog Gone Missing*, and *The Widow and the Tree*. He also edited the anthology series *Stories from the Blue Moon Cafe* as well as wrote and self-published three other books. Sonny founded Over the Transom Bookstore in Fairhope, AL and its annual literary conference, Southern Writers Reading. He also is founder of the non-profit Fairhope Center for Writing Arts.
From Sonny's website (www.overthetransom.com): "Sonny’s training as a writer began with his first real job at 15, where he flipped burgers as a short-order cook at Woody's Drive-In in Millport, Alabama. His story-telling education continued as service station attendant, pants folder, folk singer, used car salesman, sailor and electronics technician in the U.S. Navy, tugboat deckhand, traveling used tire salesman, carpenter, building contractor, real estate salesman, purveyor of collectible automobiles, magazine editor, newspaper columnist, teacher, lecturer, coffeehouse manager, bookseller, publisher, and, lately, novelist."

THE LOCATION:
Georgia Perimeter College - Dunwoody campus
2101 Womack Road
Dunwoody, GA 30338
Building NC, Room 1100 Auditorium

THE COST AND REGISTRATION:
The cost for the full-day workshop and lunch with these two brilliant writers and spellbinding storytellers is only $60 and is open to all 2010 members of the Atlanta Writers Club. If you are not a member but would like to attend this workshop, the cost is $100, which also includes membership in the club for the rest of 2010 and all of 2011.

To register, send an e-mail to John Sheffield at dacejohn@aol.com. John will reply with payment instructions.
3rd Annual Youth Creative Writing Camp

On August 2nd and 3rd, The Atlanta Writers Club and Georgia Perimeter College sponsored the third annual Youth Creative Writing Camp. Almost a hundred attendees, ages 8-17, converged on the GPC Clarkston Campus for two days of words, ideas and writing.

The day started off with Fiona Hobbs, a professional storyteller, speaker, and writer who has been blind for twenty-three years. In tandem with her spoken presentation, Fiona shared with attendees how technology allows her to write and explained how the loss of sight helps her create.

Marcia McFarland West presented Monday morning. This year songwriting was integrated into the curriculum and Ms. West used her songwriting experience to explain to the attendees the importance of lyrical word choice.

The AWC’s very own Clay Ramsey presented “Imagination, Story and the Classics” on Monday afternoon. Clay imparted his love for literature to the attendees when he used Robert Louise Stevenson’s Treasure Island as a template for plot, character, and story resolution. After the day ended, one of the attendees went straight to the library and checked out Treasure Island. Great job Clay!

Lynda Fitzgerald returned this year and took the attendees through one of the most daunting aspects of novel writing: Plot. Lynda discussed the hows and whys, as well as the element and structure of a plot and why plot is so important. She taught the attendees what makes up a plot, what moves it forward, and how to keep it alive.

Rob Jenkins, a current associate professor of English and Director of The Writers Institute at Georgia Perimeter College, closed the first day of the camp with “10 Things All Writers Should Know.” Rob, a non-fiction writer, brought a unique perspective to the camp when he introduced article writing and journalism.

Michael Varga was Tuesday’s first presenter and he offered his immense knowledge on how to be an effective presenter. He introduced to the attendees the importance of eye contact, projecting your voice and enunciation. The attendees took note and used the new information when reading their work at the Open Mic later in the day.

Emily Lupita Plum, writer, artists and world traveler, used her own photos from her travels to encourage the attendees to take note during their travels as well as during their daily lives to improve their writing. Ms. Plum shared with the attendees that color, sound as well as feelings can improve creative work, and then she had them do a writing activity using color and fun sound words like Whoot!

Adrienne and Dustin Cottrell, the husband and wife duo called Tortoise and Hair, presented songwriting and performing. Their songwriting expertise and distinct sound exposed the attendees to the world of professional music and another avenue for creativity.

This year we integrated mini-workshops into the curriculum. Professional writers and educators created hour long workshops that the attendees could choose from that allowed them to delve deeper into specific areas of writing. Adam Throne led Science
Fiction and Fantasy workshops on both Monday and Tuesday. Bill York’s, “Creativity and Business,” Evan Guilford-Blake’s playwriting and Lila Lane’s workshop, “Put Your Skull on the Page,” were all big hits. Lynda Fitzgerald taught, “Seeing With New Eyes” and Emily Lupita Plum used personal life maps to teach attendees to “Write Your Own Story.” Lita Hooper-Simarga led a poetry workshop and Zarle Williams’ workshop, “Beauty or Beast? Creating Memorable Characters,” helped attendees to develop stronger characters. Dee Doanes taught a poetry workshop and she generously donated a $100 prize for the winning poem created in her workshop. The winning poem, “9 Months,” by 12th grader Isolek Lugman, is included in this month’s eQuill.

The Writing Camp ended with an Open Mic. Two attendees performed their own songs and wowed the crowd. The Open Mic was followed by an Awards Ceremony where winning attendees were presented with Grand Prize trophies for fiction and poetry. First place, second place and honorable mention prizes were also awarded. Gift Certificates donated by Eagle Eye Bookstore were also given to those who placed in the contest; donated Tortoise and Hair CD’s were awarded to the winning songwriters. All attendees received a lovely participation award created by Emily Lupita Plum.

In order to keep the Writing Camp free for the attendees, the camp relies on volunteers giving of their time. The general volunteers who showed up and helped make this year a success were commendable. Their energy, positive outlook and enthusiasm for the camp was more than I could have hoped for. I would like to thank RaQia Lowo, Keisa Garvin, Leslie Quigless, Saul Adler, Debra Riggs, Jean Adero, Ron, and Kevin. If I’ve missed anyone due to the excitement of the two days, please accept my sincerest thank you.

The AWC would also like to wish Annika Nilsson, a Youth Camp attendee and 2009 presenter, the best of luck as she leaves for college in Vermont. Annika is a talented writer and presenter—we wish her luck and hope she’ll come back to visit soon.

Recently I was asked what I get for doing the camp. The question temporarily left me speechless—How can you explain to someone the honor you feel when a young person hands you their writing with a shaking hand and asks you to read it and tell them if it’s any good? There are no words to describe the deep feeling of pride when a young person you’ve witnessed grow into a creatively-confident writer thanks you for believing in them. So the only answer I can find for what I get out of doing the camp is that I truly get a whole lot more than I give.

I hope to see everyone next year!

Best, Lisa Heidle

Lisa Heidle has published short stories and book reviews for numerous on-line sources including Pine Magazine, Rebecca’s Reads and the Atlanta Writers Club. She is currently working on her first novel.
9 MONTHS

9 months I held you.
I rocked you like the earth rocked when man first was born.
Life.
Through me God made you.
And I was chosen to carry out a task so divine.
Love.
I loved you. So beautiful, so tiny.
Little angel. My own Gabriel.
Pain brought me pleasure as my soul cried out
when you were ready for the world.
Joy.
In your eyes I saw every beauty. In my arms I cradled your fragile frame.
And I don’t even know your name.
But I knew you were all mine.
You breathed as if God himself had channeled a spirit of purity
in you as soon as you opened your little mouth.
Stopped.
I felt your body cold and lifeless in my warm hands.
Your eyes no longer gleamed with the beauty of the world.
Your heart beat once boomed with the drums of 1,000 Kenyan tribes.
9 months.
9 months and 9 minutes I held you.
I rocked you like the earth rocked when man was first born.
Life.
Through me God made you.
Death.
In my arms He took you.
At 1:45 p.m., Lisa Earle McLeod, self-help writer, nationally syndicated columnist, and author of nonfiction regaled the AWC audience with a humorous account of her career as a writer. Featured in publications such as the Huffington Post website, O Magazine and the New York Times, her topic centered on how writers can achieve commercial success without compromising creativity. She began her entertaining and lively presentation with an anecdote recounting how she began her writing career by dispatching satirical holiday letters to family and friends, which became a success. This translated into a desire to write a self-help book, which eventually became her first title, Forget Perfect. Ms. McLeod imparted to the audience some of the wisdom gleamed from her own experiences in marketing a book. She advised writers to create a strong proposal letter to garner interest in their work but confessed to making a major error in not understanding the business she had chosen to enter. She assumed, like most writers do, that a writer’s sole focus should be in writing the work, not promoting it. Consequently, she never attempted to sell her own book by lining up book signings or engaging in other marketing activities. While Ms. McLeod understood the trepidation writers have in publicizing their own books, she firmly believes that they should overcome their fears and proactively sell and publicize these books, something that she stated could be accomplished without losing authenticity. A professional sales and leadership coach, she utilized her own experience to further her career and stressed the importance of authors taking charge in selling their works.

At 3:00 p.m., novelist Tom Mullen, author of the acclaimed book The Last Town on Earth and two other novels, explained life from the writing trenches. While a well-known novelist now, as a college undergraduate, he failed to be admitted to his school’s creative writing program. Undeterred, he began writing fiction at age 23. Initially, he followed his desire to write contemporary fiction but kept getting rejected. When he couldn’t get his book on rock n’ roll published, he concentrated on an idea he had jotted down concerning writing a historical novel based on the 1918 flu pandemic and a fictional American town that tried to quarantine itself to avoid an outbreak. This was his breakthrough novel. Mr. Mullen epitomizes his own philosophy that “sometimes you need to try something new.” He asserted that historical fiction required more detachment than contemporary novels. To deal with the problem of researching history with an eye to writing fiction, Mr. Mullen interspersed his research with writing his book, revising as necessary to accommodate newfound information. He cautioned writers not to lose sight of telling a good story and emphasized the value for writers of showing their work to honest critics, listening to criticism, and getting the right kind of agent to represent the work. For writers wishing to write within a genre, he advised reading within the chosen genre to acquire an idea of what’s being currently published. Mr. Mullen contends that the demands of the writing life and the emotional rollercoaster of trying to get published can best be handled by “a combination of cockiness and modesty.”
All of the following events will take place at Georgia Perimeter College in Dunwoody in the C-1100 auditorium:

September 18, 2010
1:45-2:30 Lynn Cullen, formerly a children’s and YA author and now a historical novelist, on reinventing yourself as a writer
3:00-3:45 Bestselling novelist Joshilyn Jackson holds a Q&A free-for-all on the craft and business of writing

September 25, 2010
Rick Bragg and Sonny Brewer all-day workshop with lunch (details forthcoming)

October 16, 2010
1:45-2:30 Phillip DePoy, author, playwright, and director, on integrating the events of your life into the plot of your book
3:00-3:45 Phil Nutman, author and screenwriter, on writing horror and supernatural fiction

November 20, 2010
1:45-2:30 Intellectual property attorney Neil Goldstein answers your questions about copyright protection, contracts, and the business side of publishing.
3:00-3:45 Literary agent and novelist Zoe Fishman with a Q&A on getting an agent in an uncertain publishing environment

December 18, 2010
Poetry Day event emceed by award-winning poet and AWC member Jill Jennings
Saturday, October 9, 2010
11am-4pm with complimentary lunch included
Lessons and solutions for taking your project from inception to published work. You will leave with a concrete plan to complete the project you’ve longed to finish. Expect to be energized and inspired by this lively, interactive experience. This seminar is for writers working at any level and in any genre.
In this seminar you’ll learn:
- How to determine the best genre for your project (novel, essays, memoir, fantasy, young adult, etc.)
- How to start and stick to it no matter what
- Why you should listen to some folks and not others
- How to banish writing blocks forever
- Why you must set goals and timelines
- How marketing can catapult you to success even before your work is complete
- How to avoid the Top Ten Mistakes writers make when looking for an agent
- How to navigate the business of publishing: finding an agent, drafting the book proposal, and designing your career.

Cost: $89 for AWC Members
Location: Historic Dallas, Georgia, at The Ragsdale Inn.
Email Lauretta at hannonlauretta@gmail.com for more information or to register.

About the Instructor
Lauretta Hannon is a bestselling author and commentator on National Public Radio's All Things Considered. She has taught and encouraged writers for nearly twenty years. As a writer she has captured more than 100 national awards. Her memoir, The Cracker Queen—A Memoir of a Jagged, Joyful Life, was named one of the Top 25 Books All Georgians Should Read. This seminar is presented as part of her Down Home Writing School.

Don’t Wait for ‘Em to Die: The Memoir Workshop
Saturday, October 16, 2010
11am-4pm with complimentary refreshments included
Writing a memoir is a powerful, life-changing act, whether you ever publish it or not. This seminar addresses the issues and challenges specific to the memoir.
In this seminar you’ll learn:
How speaking your truth will set you free
How to handle painful subject matter
How to recognize the real F-word: FEAR—and put it in its place
How to deal with the opinions and reactions of family and friends
How to revive old memories and fill in the gaps
What The Zone is and why you have to go there regularly
Why authenticity matters more than anything else
How marketing can make all the difference
How to protect yourself legally

Cost: $89 for AWC Members
Location: Bailey’s Diner in Historic Powder Springs, GA
Register now. Space is limited. Email: hannonlauretta@gmail.com
Presented by the Down Home Writing School/more info at thecrackerqueen.com
When AWC author Jennie Helderman answered the phone as a volunteer at a crisis center, she didn’t realize that call would impact her life forever. It launched a career for her in community development, leadership and women’s issues which began with the first women’s shelter in Gadsden, Alabama, her hometown, and reached national levels.

Helderman’s latest book, *AS THE SYCAMORE GROWS*, originated from an assignment by critically acclaimed Pulitzer Prize winning author Rick Bragg to write a magazine article. A chance meeting with abuse survivor, Ginger McNeil – a woman who faced terror on a daily basis during her seventeen-year abusive marriage – became the basis for this book; which turned a two-week magazine assignment on poverty into a five year nonfiction narrative book about ending the legacy of abuse.

Imagine a cabin behind a padlocked gate, no power, no phone, just Revelation and a .38....a true story about abuse, loss, redemption and hope. Ginger escaped. Mike admits the abuse and has no remorse. Men know what the program is, he says. God made women to serve. It's their job.

“Helderman has taken a heart-breaking issue and boiled it down to human beings, of flesh and blood and lost days and fearful nights. It opens the door on a too-common human story, and closes you in with it.” -Rick Bragg

"This story grabs hold of your heart and squeezes it dry...." -Jedwin Smith

*AS THE SYCAMORE GROWS* launches September 29, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Eagle Eye Bookstore in Decatur, just in time for the recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. You are cordially invited to join her for the launch and celebrate her achievement.
The Annual Conference of the Public Library Division of the Georgia Library Association will be held in Athens, GA, in October 2010, and is sponsored by associations for Public Librarians, School Media Specialists, and Academic Librarians. During the Conference, there will be an Authors’ Reception in which authors are invited to sell their books, promote their books, or just talk to more than 200 librarians from throughout Georgia. If the authors do not want to bring their own supply of books, Barnes and Noble will be on site with books from the authors attending. A table will be provided for each author, however there is no reimbursement for any expenses or honorariums. Last year the conference was in Columbus, Georgia, and 29 authors attended the reception. They’ve had as many as 60 authors for one conference.

This is a great opportunity for librarians to find interesting books from Georgia authors for their library collections, and a great chance for authors to network and promote their works.

If you need any information about this please contact:

**Diana J. Very**, Director of LSTA, Statistics and Research, Georgia Public Library Service, 1800 Century Place, Suite 150, Atlanta, GA 30345-4304
dvery@georgialibraries.org
404-235-7156
www.georgialibraries.org

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**Quarterly Writing Contest**

(Not an AWC managed event)

- **Scratch**, the quarterly 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/)
Ten Days of Silence

This past July, I voluntarily took part in a ten-day meditation course at the Southeastern Vipassana Center in Jessup GA. Check-in time was on a Wednesday afternoon. From 6 p.m. that day until Friday of the following week we remained in absolute silence: no talking, no reading (gasp!), no writing (double-gasp!), no hand signals, no phones, no computers, no electronic gadgets of any type whatsoever, and no eye contact (wheeze!).

I came close to bailing out the evening of the third day.

When I’d told friends of my plans to take the course, the third most common reaction was “No reading? There’s no way I could do that!” The second most common reply I got, mostly from my writing colleagues who, like me, live with a pen in hand, was “No writing? How will you survive?” And, of course, the most frequent comment was “There is NO WAY I could go for ten days without talking.”

I had my own doubts, too, but since I seem lately to be in a period of major expansion, I committed myself to the process. Vipassana (pronounced vih-pah-shna) meditation is taught gently in a series of baby steps.

The second time I almost left was after the sixth day.

All the things I’d thought would be a real challenge—the early wake-up gong, the vegetarian meals, the ban on reading and writing—turned out to be non-issues. Instead, I saw meteors (something that doesn’t happen in the Atlanta area); I watched a hummingbird, day after day, sitting on her nest outside the dining hall; I took morning walks along the women’s nature path and watched spiders spinning their webs; I learned the deep connection that can develop between people when they are stripped of their normal means of communication and become, instead, aware of each other in a new way, a way I had not anticipated.

I’m glad I stayed, for I discovered something about myself on the ninth day that has altered, at a primal level, the way I respond to stressful situations. I feel twenty pounds lighter now.

Ten days of silence. Do you think you could do it? Would you like to try?

Fran lives, sometimes in silence, sometimes not, beside a creek on the backside of Hog Mountain where she feeds the birds and lives ecologically, as much as she can. FROM THE TIP OF MY PEN: A WORKBOOK FOR WRITERS is her latest book. Follow the exercises in it, and polish your own writing. Autographed copies are available through her website http://www.franstewart.com/order.htm
AWC critique groups cover the Atlanta metro area like the dew. Check the list below to find a group that fits your needs. If you don’t find one and would like to start a new group, contact Jennie Helderman at jmhelderman@comcast.net. The AWC may soon offer additional and alternative opportunities for feedback and sharing of information among club members, such as online groups or genre groups such as historical fiction or mystery writing.

**Critique Groups Face-to-Face and Cyberspace**

Whether online or in-person-neighborhood-groups, the Atlanta Writers Club offers a variety of critique groups as a service for its members. If your writing is ready for a critique group—meaning you’re ready to hear what others think and offer constructive criticism in return—then search the directory below. Pick a group and contact its leader to see if this is the best group for you. Some of the groups are at capacity and have wait lists; others are eagerly seeking new members. The critique groups are a service of AWC and thus open to *dues-paying members.*

**Online Groups**

AWC-NF-Critique@yahoogroups.com is a nonfiction group led by Terre Spencer at terrespencer@me.com.

**Fiction Critique Group 1** is led by Derek Koehl at Derek@nonhappyendings.com.

**Fiction Critique Group 2** posts its rules at its website. Please read carefully before applying. Writing samples are not required now but will be after the number reaches twenty. Critiques are private, not shared with group at present time. Facilitator is Evan Guilford-Blake at ejbplaywright@yahoo.com.

**Online Poetry Group**—is there interest in starting this group? If so, reply to Jennie Helderman at jmhelderman@comcast.net

**Austell**

An **all-genre** group meets in the café area of Borders in Austell on the first and third Sundays at 6 p.m. Contact Marjorie Gore at 770-317-4061. People not on the email distribution list should call Marjorie Gore to confirm the time.

**Buckhead/Midtown**

**Poetry group.** The Buckhead/Midtown poetry group meets on the fourth Saturday of each month at 11 a.m. Group is nearing capacity. To be included on the distribution list for meeting details, please email Karen Holmes at karen.holmes@comcast.net and give a brief description of your writing experience.

The Buckhead **Novel/Fiction Critique Group** meets every other Tuesday evening at 7PM at the Starbucks in Lindbergh Plaza. The group is closed. Contact Patricia at pepatterson@bellsouth.net to be placed on a wait list.

**Decatur**

A **fiction** group 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 rickyjacobs@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.

An **adult/YA fiction** group meets every other Sunday, 3 p.m.-5:45 at the Indie Book Shop on Ponce de Leon near the post office. The group is full at present. Phone Ricky Jacobs at 404-378-7365 or write rickyjacobs@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.

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 rickyjacobs@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.

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 rickyjacobs@mac.com to be put on a wait list.

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 rickyjacobs@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.

A nonfiction group meets Thursdays 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Urban Grounds in Avondale Estates. Contact Jane Howe at janeonline@bellsouth.net or 404-299-5193.

A nonfiction group meets Tuesdays 7-9 p.m. at Urban Grounds in Avondale Estates. Email Rebecca Ewing at rebeccaewing@earthlink.net.

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 Chocolatte Coffee located in a shopping center at the intersection of Clairmont and North Decatur Road. The group is full and closed. Contact Ruth Gresh at hrgresh@hotmail.com to be added to a waiting list.

Lawrenceville
The novel/short story group Fiction Crafters meets every other Wednesday 10 to 12 at Applewood Towers. The group is full. Contact Barbara Connor at 678-226-1483 or ima‐yaya@charter.net to be put on a wait list.

Lawrenceville/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@aol.com for location and to get on his distribution list.

Marietta
An all genre group meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from 7-9 p.m. at the Main Library on Roswell St. The group is full and closed. Contact Linda Sullivan at lindasullivan3@gmail.com.

Roswell
An all genre group meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 6:45 -8:45 p.m. at the Atlanta Bread Company near the corner of Hwy 92 and Woodstock Rd. Contact George Weinstein at 770-552-5887 or giweinstein@yahoo.com to get on his distribution list.

Sandy Springs
An all genre group meets twice monthly on Mondays, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Roswell Library. Contact Lynn Wesch at lew‐esch@me.com to get on her distribution list.

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.
The Atlanta Writers Club Board

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<td>eQuill Publisher: Gene Bowen</td>
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<td>First VP</td>
<td>George Weinstein</td>
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<td>Marketing/PR VP</td>
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<td>Social Director</td>
<td>Cindy Wiedenbeck</td>
<td>Lending Library: Open</td>
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<td>Community Outreach VP</td>
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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 next page. 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 online 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
2011 Membership Dues • Donations • Contact Information

☐ Renewal—please update us with changes only  ☐ New Member—welcome, your membership is through 12/31/2011
☐ Family Member—additional contact information only

First Name: ___________________________ ☐ Primary Member: ___________________________
Last Name: ___________________________

Please register your last name accurately—this is how your AWC membership will be filed
Street Address: ___________________________
City: ______________________ State: _______ ZIP _______
Primary Phone: ___________________________
Secondary Phone: ___________________________
Email: ___________________________
Website: ___________________________ ☐ List my website on the AWC website
LinkedIn Profile: ___________________________ ☐ Link to me
Facebook name: ___________________________ ☐ Friend me
Writing genre(s): ___________________________

Ways you might contribute to your club:
________________________________________

2011 AWC Membership Dues
(covers remainder of 2010 and through entire year of 2011)

$40 Membership through 12/31/2011 $__________

Add any family member for $20 each $__________
(Please supply family members’ contact information using a separate form)
Students, ages 25 and under, pay only $30 year-round $__________

Tax Deductible Donation in the amount of $__________

Total $__________

Please mail with checks payable to: The Atlanta Writers Club
Mail to: Kimberly Clamara • The Atlanta Writers Club • 10256 Rillridge Court • Alpharetta, GA 30022
(Please note—this is a new address as of August, 2010)

Date: ___________________________
Name: ___________________________ has donated $__________ to the Atlanta Writers Club.

This amount is not associated with any services provided in exchange or related to this contribution.

Please retain this lower portion as your donation receipt.