On February 18, Ellis Avery will talk to the Atlanta Writers Club about “Plot.”

February meeting at NA building, room 2200, Georgia Perimeter College, Dunwoody Campus.
...founded in 1914
We are a social and educational club where local writers meet to discuss the craft and business of writing. We also sponsor contests for our members and host expert speakers from the worlds of writing, publishing, and entertainment.

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It's time again to call on our members for support, and ask for volunteers to help out with some of the many exciting programs heading our way in the coming months.

We'll need check-in volunteers for each of our future monthly meetings. If you would like to volunteer for a specific meeting, please let VP of Operations Valerie Connors know which month you prefer. Or, if you would like to volunteer but are unsure about your availability until the time gets nearer, she will gladly include you in her list of volunteers to contact at a later date. Please respond to: valerie1105@comcast.net.

http://www.facebook.com/people/Atlanta-WritersClub/100000367043383
http://twitter.com/atlwritersclub
Procrastination. We all know what it means. Most of us have been guilty of it. More than likely we’ve indulged in its practice this very day. What this polysyllabic word represents is a dirty little secret that is kept by most writers and is undeniably a pervasive problem. When I googled the word, I found 14.5 million websites that talk about it. PubMed, the database that serves as a repository for medical publications, lists 210 articles written in scientific journals from 1939 to 2011 that deal with this topic. (Presumably there would have been more written in these journals, but other things got in the way.) Nevertheless, among those studies that made it into print, it’s fascinating to see how scientists have viewed timely action over the years. What about physicians who put off courses of treatment, or surgeons who fail to act at critical moments in a surgical procedure, or students who refuse to do assignments on time? -- all covered thoroughly. Google Scholar, a more inclusive catalog, lists 45,800 articles about the topic. Regardless of search engine employed, though, there is no dearth of articles that analyze, worry over and attempt to solve the problem of procrastination.

The word itself has an aura of erudition about it. Its root is formed by the conjoining of two small Latin words that together mean “for tomorrow.” But then most of you probably already knew that, or suspected it. The meaning is quite simple: it is the act of putting off a more important task for the sake of one of lesser importance. It is watching television when you should be writing. Or writing when you should be doing your taxes. Or doing your taxes when you should be planning for an unpleasant meeting with the CEO of your company. You get the idea. But it’s not about the use of time per se; it is essentially about goals and a subsequent ordering and arrangement of tasks in limited time to reach those goals. If your goals are poorly defined or if you are uncertain about the significance of these goals in your life, then you are more likely to be waylaid by procrastination. Little, enticing diversions come rushing in to fill a vacuum of time that should be spent on making definite, concrete steps in the direction of reaching your goals.

I suspect you joined the Atlanta Writers Club because you identify yourself as a writer or have the desire to become one. Perhaps you wrote precocious stories as a child and never stopped telling tales, or you developed a deep love of books and decided you wanted to write one of your own, or you saw a movie about a well-tanned author who lived in an Italian villa, wrote and sipped Chianti all day, and was surrounded by bags of gold and fascinating people. Never mind how you came to have such a goal. The point is, writing is something you aspire to do. Within this goal there are of course a number of sub-goals, often nested and interlocking within others. It is not simple to develop a successful writing career and personalized, all-encompassing advice for building such a career is beyond the scope of this short essay. I just want to provide some perspective and allow you the freedom to work out the details.

There are plenty of strategies, time management plans and psychological methods that have been developed to bring this widespread, self-defeating syndrome under control. Experts have emerged, books have been written, articles published, countless words produced to get people to define what should be important to them, and take actual steps to realize their aspirations. I may have personal experience of the phenomenon, but I am by no means a licensed expert and as such will not offer a magical system to solve this problem. I could echo Nike’s slogan and say Just Do It, but of course there is more to the issue than just the application of a bootstrap, can-do attitude. If it were as simple as that, it wouldn’t be the problem it is.

Instead, I want to come at the problem from a different direction. I want you to consider the idea of vanity and how it might illuminate the issue. The concept of vanity has come to mean excessive preoccupation with one’s appearance. The entire cosmetics industry and certain enhancement technologies have commercialized this desire for improving one’s personal look. However, the original Latin word, *vanitas*, had a different meaning. It meant “futility, emptiness, worthlessness, unreality.” It is the word St. Jerome used in the Vulgate, the Latin translation of the Bible, when he got to one of the themes of the book of Ecclesiastes. John Bunyan preserved the meaning in his seventeenth-century religious allegory *Pilgrim’s Progress* when the protagonist Christian finds himself in the carnival of Vanity Fair, filled with the visually appealing, but spiritually vacuous attractions that would distract him from the path to the Celestial City. William Makepeace Thackeray’s nineteenth-century novel In Context, by Clay Ramsey, President

(Continued on page 4)
Vanity Fair borrows the phrase from Bunyan and expands the concept to include the elaborate relationships and complex social interactions of Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley in Victorian society. The contemporary fashion and culture magazine retains the same name, and given the etymology of the term, it is an ironic choice.

Along the way, the word has evolved from meaning futility to a blameworthy pride. But I want to focus on the original meaning. The reason I mention this word and its history is that I believe there is a link between vanity and procrastination. To the ancients, to succumb to vanitas meant you were sidetracked from what was really important, that you chose the empty and ephemeral rather than the substantial and lasting. To the religious, it was a distraction from pursuing God. To the more secular, it was a diversion from other worthwhile pursuits. This is the core of procrastination. To Bunyan’s pilgrim, anything that kept him from his soul’s salvation was a vanity. To the writer, anything that keeps her from successful publication, for example, or platform-building, or whatever goal she may have as an author is vanity.

Certainly life does not always cooperate with our efforts to reach our goals – the kids get sick, or the bills need to be paid, or a presentation is required by a supervisor, or (fill in the blank). And goals do change over time; what you want to achieve as a college student sometimes differs from what you want to achieve as you approach retirement. But the point is, as you set goals and define what is most important to you, as you think of what is achievable and what you have to do to get there, then anything that distracts, diverts or prevents you from reaching that goal is vanity and the result is procrastination, putting off the important things you need to do, you should do, for what is enticing at the moment, whether it takes the form of housecleaning, or Scrabble playing, or newspaper reading. They are all fine things to do – none of them are illegal or immoral – but if you do them not to relax for a moment, but to keep you from doing what is really important to you, then they are a toxic interruption.

The problem is that these little moments that seem so innocent – “it’ll just take a moment” – soon accumulate and before long they represent a huge hunk of your life. If you want to be a writer, do you really want to look back on your life in old age and be able to remember years of television episodes, but have no book to show for all your authorial aspirations?

As I said previously, I will not provide you with methods and strategies to confront the life-sapping problem of procrastination. There are plenty of resources for that sort of thing. All I want to encourage you to do early in the year is to sit down and write out your goals. Many of you do this for the year and have intricate five and ten and twenty-five year action plans for reaching your well-defined goals. For you organized people, I have only the greatest admiration. For the rest of us, this might be an unfamiliar task. I would encourage you to start with your writing goals. Do you want an agent by the end of the year? A completed novel manuscript? Whatever your goal, write it down and work backwards from the target date of completion to the present, identifying steps you should take over the coming months to reach your objective. And then pursue it systematically and relentlessly. We can help you set craft and business goals though the programs and resources of the AWC. We exist to help you reach your goals as a writer. As you set and achieve your objectives, I can guarantee you that the temptation to procrastinate will be less appealing and you can feel the supreme satisfaction of living the life you want, rather than the life that just happens as you stumble along without direction. Let’s all say No to procrastination this year and Yes to the best life has to offer.
On January 21, Jeffrey Stepakoff, author of The Orchard, spoke to AWC members & guests about “Classic Structure for the Popular Story.”
Speaker Profile for February Meeting

by Soniah Kamal, VP of Programs

Ellis Avery is the author of a memoir and two novels. Her memoir THE SMOKE WEEK, published by Gival Press in 2003, was an award-winning account of life in lower Manhattan after 9/11. Her debut novel THE TEAHOUSE FIRE, published by Riverhead in 2006, won the Lambda, Ohioana, and American Library Association Booksense Pick Awards, and had been translated into five languages. Her second novel THE LAST NUDE, published by Riverhead this year, has earned starred reviews in Booklist and Library Journal, where it was listed in their top 25 fiction titles from January 2012. THE LAST NUDE has also been praised in The Boston Globe, The San Francisco Chronicle, SF Weekly, Vogue, and O: The Oprah Magazine! Ellis had been named “The Best Writer You've Never Heard of But Should Go Read Right Now” by New York Press and one of “100 Women We Love” by GO magazine. She received a B.A. from Bryn Mawr College and an M.F.A. from Goddard College.

On February 18 Ellis will talk to the Atlanta Writers Club about Plot. Someone once said a novel is composed of "a beginning, a muddle, and an end." Ellis Avery likes to talk to writers about how the golden thread of desire--what a character wants--can lead writer, character, and reader alike through the labyrinth of the "muddle," and out to the ending of the novel. She will draw on the work of many writers, but particularly on Elizabeth Bowen's essay, "Notes on Writing a Novel."

Thank you, George!

Our deepest appreciation to George Weinstein for his service on the Board of Directors for the past 10 years. In recognition of his exceptional work for the AWC, he was recently named “Officer Emeritus” as he steps down from his position as VP of Programs. Rest assured, he'll still be involved in the plans and programs of the AWC in an advisory role. His investment of time, energy and effort over the past decade, in cooperation with others on our volunteer leadership team, has helped to make us a world-class writer's organization. Thank you, George!
Current Call for Writers: *Intimate Landscape*

Open to Interpretation is a juried book competition bringing together photographers and writers. Each book begins with a themed call for photographs. The selected images become the literary inspiration for the writers' submissions, from which two are chosen to accompany each image. The subsequent pairing of photographs and written pieces, culminates in the publication of a high-quality, fine art book.

The photographs have been selected and they are currently accepting poetry and prose for Open to Interpretation: Intimate Landscape

**Entries Due** March 29, 2012

**Submission Fees** $10 per entry

**Theme** Intimate Landscape. Landscapes conjure images of vast, sweeping scenes, but the details captured by a photograph can turn a seemingly impersonal setting into an intimate story. It’s up to the artist to define what constitutes an intimate landscape, be it representational, non-representational, urban, suburban or rural.

**Judge** Patrick Thomas is the editor and program manager at Milkweed Editions. As an editor, his work focuses on acquisitions that consider our relationship to the more-than-human world. As program manager, he works to find the best way to bring literary art to the widest possible audience. He lives in Minneapolis, MN.

**Awards** $300 Judge's Choice Award

View the [online gallery](#) for selected images chosen by Karen Irvine, Curator of Photographs at the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago.

For more information, visit the [Open to Interpretation](#) website, like them on [Facebook](#), and/or follow them on [Twitter](#). 

Clare O'Neill, Publisher   Tel: 651-312-0113   info@open2interpretation.com
Serious about writing or illustrating books for children and young adults?

Learn how to raise the level of your work and improve your chances of getting published. Meet editors and agents who are looking for new talent. Connect with other authors and illustrators of children's literature.

The conference faculty includes:
- Kirby Larson, author of 10 books for young readers, including the 2007 Newbery Honor winner, *Hattie Big Sky*
- Greg Ferguson, editor and art director at Egmont USA
- Kristin Daly Rens, senior editor at Balzer & Bray / HarperCollins
- Mary Kole, associate agent with Andrea Brown Literary Agency
- Andy Runton, creator of OWLY graphic novels

**Looking for feedback on your work? Get it at Springmingle 2012.**

*Formal critiques*: $40. Manuscripts must be submitted by Jan. 21. Portfolio reviews must be prepaid but illustrations need not be sent in advance.

*Informal critiques* with other attendees: Free

*First Pages / First Looks*: Submit the first page of your manuscript, or an opening illustration, and it could be chosen for a free review by a panel of the conference faculty.

*Query letter critique*: Literary agent Mary Kole will review the first 25 query letters submitted.

*For novelists only!* Attend an intensive workshop with author Kirby Larson on Feb. 24. (Additional fee applies.)

Conference tuition is $190 for SCBWI members, $220 for non-members, or $200 for students. *Advance registration is required and spaces are limited.* Register by Jan. 21 and receive a $5 discount.

Not a member of SCBWI? Join for just $85 (annual renewal is $70). You’ll gain access to important industry updates, be eligible for contests and awards, and receive a bi-monthly magazine filled with useful information. And you’ll be part of the world’s largest organization for writers and illustrators of children’s books, with 22,000 members worldwide.

For more information and to register for Springmingle 2012, visit [https://southern-breeze.net/](https://southern-breeze.net/)
Looking for Writers

LiteraryJuice.com

An Online Literary Magazine

Do you have a passion for writing short stories and lively poetry? If so, then we want to hear from you! Literary Juice is a new online literary magazine dedicated to publishing creative works of fiction and poetry. We are currently seeking submissions from both experienced and budding authors from all backgrounds. If you are interested in submitting your short fiction or poem, please visit our website at www.literaryjuice.com.

Please note that at this time we cannot pay for any published submissions; however, if your story or poem should be selected for publication in our online magazine, it will be accompanied by your byline and a brief biography. Let’s make this webzine grow!

New Policy—Submission Guidelines

The Atlanta Writers Club wants to do all it can to advance the writing careers of its members, and as a privilege of membership we offer the opportunity to have announcements of book signings and first releases of books posted in the eQuill and in special mailings. Because of the number of members we have and the publishing successes they are increasingly enjoying, we must now have submission guidelines for announcements.

The deadline for submitting announcements both for the eQuill and special mailings will be the 15th of the month. For example, if you have a signing in March, then you need to tell us by February 15 to have it advertised. Likewise, if your book is going to be released in June, then you must inform us by May 15 to have a blurb placed in the eQuill. From now on, book publications will be featured in the eQuill and book signings and related events involving our members will be included in special mailings.

We think this new policy will consolidate the number of announcements made by the AWC and hopefully improve their effectiveness by decreasing the mailings from us in your inbox. We are proud of what you do and consider it a privilege to promote your achievements. Thank you for honoring the community of writers in the AWC with your accomplishments.
Three Homeschool Conventions for Kid’s Authors

Randi St. Denis, educational consultant/tutor and director of the Home Educators Encouragement Alliance, is in search of authors to participate in three well-established and well-attended homeschool conventions -- one in Atlanta, one in Montgomery, AL, and one near Chicago.

Thousands attend each convention where they view books and other educational materials and listen to workshops from a wide variety of speakers.

The expos also have two tracks created especially for children. KidsZone is for ages 4-12 and Worldview Teen Track is for ages 13-18. Currently, Ms. St. Denis is working on their 2013 conventions and is looking for presenters for these two tracks -- KidsZone and Worldview Teen Track.

Presenters engage children with hands-on activities, storytelling, or talks meant to promote a love for learning. They can use all kinds of speakers across a range of topics and teaching styles. This is a wonderful opportunity to create or expand your audience and to meet those who would be interested in purchasing your books. In addition to presentation time authors are given their own exhibitor booth (if desired). Some authors are also able to present workshops for adults in addition to their KidsZone or Teen Track presentations.

If interested, please contact:

Randi St. Denis
Educational Consultant/Tutor - Learning Concepts
Director: Home Educators Encouragement Alliance
SoutheastHomeschoolExpo.com
AlabamaHomeschoolExpo.com
ChicagoHomeschoolExpo.com
ExpoHEEA@aol.com
770-714-4313
Michael Buchanan, co-author of *The Fat Boy Chronicles* novel (*Sleeping Bear Press*) and co-screenwriter of *The Fat Boy Chronicles* movie, reported that the family-oriented movie was released on DVD on January 3, 2012 and is available through Redbox, Blockbuster, iTunes, and Wal-Mart

AWC member Fiona Page announces the publication of two books. *Bettina the Bold: A Blind Butterfly Discovers How to Make Friends* is a 32-page fully illustrated book about a Queen butterfly living in the woods of South Georgia that emerges from her chrysalis unable to see. Fiona’s second book, *My Nightlife Is 24/7: Turning Tragedy to Triumph*, is an inspiring account of how Fiona triumphed over a tragic surgical incident that rendered her totally blind when she was just forty-four years old.

As a speaker, master storyteller, radio show host, and writer, Fiona Page shares her perspective on living with a lighthearted view while her Southern charm shines through every word. Her storytelling style and use of colorful characters have had universal appeal. Fiona has won numerous awards and has received extensive honors through the years.

Her website is www.fionapage.com, which includes links to the books (also available on Amazon).

Screenwriting Weekend with Steven Arvanites is FULL.
THE ALMIGHTY PLATFORM—a free workshop

-why a writer with a manuscript and no platform is a tragic thing.

A free workshop presented by Lauretta Hannon on April 14, 2012, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Book deals are often granted based on the strength of a writer's platform. Its importance is second only to the writing itself, yet many of us neglect it and wonder why we're not moving forward. This workshop eliminates the confusion surrounding the topic and shows you step-by-step how to define, create, grow, and sustain a platform that is right for you. Packed with hands-on exercises, this workshop will deliver lessons, specific strategies, and answers that will lay the foundation for a successful writing career.

The following is an outline of the April 14 workshop:

1-2pm

**Will Someone Please Explain What Platform Is?**
Is It Really That Critical?
How to Get Started
Writers With Stellar Platforms

2-3pm

*Defining Your Authentic Platform*
Why It's An Inside Job
Steer Clear of The Top 12 Platform Mistakes
Niche Development
Lessons From The Road

3-4:15pm

**Building Your Platform--Right Here, Right Now**
How to Develop Visibility
Establishing Authority & Trust
Creating Wise Partnerships
Audience Engagement
Charting Your Plan

4:15-5pm

**How to Approach Bookstores & Others About Selling Your Book**

The Role of Marketing Materials
What NOT to Do at a Book Signing or Reading
A Final Look at Your Platform Plan

**About the Instructor:**

Lauretta Hannon started her platform years before she wrote her book. As a result, *The Cracker Queen--A Memoir of a Jagged, Joyful Life*, became a bestseller three weeks after its release. In 2010 the Georgia Center for the Book named her work one of the Top Twenty-Five Books All Georgians Should Read, and *Southern Living* called her "the funniest woman in Georgia." In addition to her tenure as a commentator on National Public Radio, she has taught and encouraged writers for over twenty years. Today she presents seminars and one-on-one coaching through her Down Home Writing School. More info at [thecrackerqueen.com](http://thecrackerqueen.com).

**Location:**

Georgia Perimeter College-Dunwoody
2101 Womack Rd.
Dunwoody, GA 30338

Building NC auditorium

**Registration:**

Workshop is open to all paid 2012 AWC members.

Memberships expire at the end of each calendar year, so if you didn't pay your 2012 dues last fall, it's renewal time! To renew your membership or join the Atlanta Writers Club (still only $40, with student and family discounts), please go to our website to pay online or download the form to mail in with your check: [http://atlantawritersclub.org/membership/index.shtml](http://atlantawritersclub.org/membership/index.shtml)
New York Times bestselling author

LISA GARDNER

Lunch and Listen
presented by
Gwinnett County Public Library &
Garden Plaza of Lawrenceville

Buy your ticket to attend and enjoy lunch
and listen to Lisa discuss
her newest book on
Thursday, February 9, 2012
1:00 PM (doors open 12:30)
held at
Garden Plaza at Lawrenceville
230 Collins Industrial Way, Lawrenceville

$10 ticket may be purchased at the
branch, online, or by phone.
$15 ticket at the door, if available.
Books will be available for purchase.
Looking Ahead

February 18, 2012
1:45-2:45 Award-winning author and fiction and nonfiction workshop instructor Ellis Avery

March 17, 2012
1:45-2:45 Best-selling author Ann Hood: memoirist, novelist, essayist, and short story writer
3:15-4:00 Holly McClure, a principal of the Sullivan-Maxx Literary Agency, on finding and working with small, regional, and niche publishers. She and one of her local agents--Melissa Lee--will respond to 10-min. pitches that day (details TBA).

April 21, 2012
1:45-2:45 Award-winning Marina Buddhos: author of nonfiction and fiction for adults and younger audiences
3:15-4:15 AWC members Bobbi Kornblit, Walter Lawrence, and John Turman discuss their advice and lessons learned about self-publishing

May 19, 2012
1:45-2:45 Mystical thriller author and blogger Jeffrey Small on writing about religious and spirituality topics

June 16, 2012
1:00-4:00 Annual Picnic at Hammond Park in Sandy Springs

July 21, 2012 [Location TBD]
9:00-4:00 Debra Dixon, publisher of Bell Bridge Books, and Nancy Knight--author, editor, agent, and former AWC president--will present a free daylong workshop on the craft and business of writing fiction.

August 18, 2012 [Location TBD]
1:45-2:45 Joshua Corin, whose thriller series protagonist is a woman, will speak about writing from the perspective of the opposite sex
3:15-4:14 Janell Agyeman, agent for Marie Brown Assoc., will speak about writing from the perspective of a different race or culture

September 15, 2012
1:45-2:45 Nationally bestselling Random House author Meg Waite Clayton

October 20, 2012
1:45-2:45 Amy Waldman, international correspondent and author of The Submission

November 17, 2012
1:45-2:45 Author and public relations professional Mary Glickman

December 15, 2012
1:45-2:45 Nonfiction author and former Atlanta Magazine editor Rebecca Burns

Upcoming workshops, author dinners, and other special events exclusively for current AWC members.
(All venues subject to change.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Time/ Loc.</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Michael Varga</td>
<td><a href="mailto:henry7516@bellsouth.net">henry7516@bellsouth.net</a></td>
<td>Forming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avondale Estates</td>
<td>Nonfiction</td>
<td>Tues, 7-9 p.m. @ Urban Grounds</td>
<td>Rebecca Ewing</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rebeccaewing@earthlink.net">rebeccaewing@earthlink.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Buckhead/Midtown</td>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>4th Sat @11 a.m.</td>
<td>Karen Holmes</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kpaulholmes@gmail.com">kpaulholmes@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Near capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buckhead/Midtown</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
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<td>Hiatus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conyers</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Every other Tues, 6:30 @ Whistle Post Tavern</td>
<td>Nancy Fletcher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ncfletcher50@gmail.com">ncfletcher50@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>Adult/YA fiction</td>
<td>Every other Tues, 6:30</td>
<td>Ricky Jacobs</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rickyjacobs@mac.com">rickyjacobs@mac.com</a></td>
<td>Wait list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>Children's and YA fiction</td>
<td>Every other Tues, 10 a.m. – 12:15 Java Monkey</td>
<td>Ricky Jacobs</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rickyjacobs@mac.com">rickyjacobs@mac.com</a></td>
<td>Wait list</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>Adult/YA fiction groups</td>
<td>Every 3rd Wed @ 7 p.m. @ Java Monkey</td>
<td>Ron Aiken</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ron@hraiken.com">ron@hraiken.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Decatur</td>
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<td>Every other Sat, 10 a.m.-12:30 @ Java Monkey</td>
<td>Ricky Jacobs</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rickyjacobs@mac.com">rickyjacobs@mac.com</a></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Every other Wed, 6:30 pm @ ChocoLate, Clairmont/ North Decatur Road.</td>
<td>Ruth Gresh</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hrgresh@hotmail.com">hrgresh@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dunwoody</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st and 3rd Fri,1-3 p.m. @ Georgia Perimeter College Library Building, Rm 3100</td>
<td>Gelia Dolcimascolo</td>
<td>770-274-5246</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunwoody</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Every other Tue, 3:00pm, Perimeter Mall area</td>
<td>Richard Perreault</td>
<td><a href="mailto:perreaultrpm@gmail.com">perreaultrpm@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawrenceville</td>
<td>Novel &amp; short story</td>
<td>Every other Thursday, 10 a.m.- 12 @ Applewood Towers</td>
<td>Barbara Connor</td>
<td>678-226-1483 <a href="mailto:imayaya@charter.net">imayaya@charter.net</a></td>
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<td>Lawrenceville/Snellville</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st Saturday @ 9:30 a.m. noon @ member’s home</td>
<td>Ken Schmanski</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kschmanski@yahoo.com">kschmanski@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<td>Marietta</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st and 3rd Tues, 7-9 p.m.</td>
<td>Linda Sullivan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lindasullivan3@gmail.com">lindasullivan3@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Wait list</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>2nd and 4th Tues 6:45 - 8:45 p.m. member’s home</td>
<td>George Weinstein</td>
<td>770-552-5887 <a href="mailto:gjweinstein@yahoo.com">gjweinstein@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres women's</td>
<td>2nd and 4th Wed, 7 to 9 p.m.</td>
<td>Jemille Williams</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jemille@bellsouth.net">jemille@bellsouth.net</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandy Springs</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Twice monthly, Mon, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. @ Roswell Library.</td>
<td>Lynn Wesch</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lewesch@me.com">lewesch@me.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td>Online</td>
<td>Nonfiction</td>
<td>Terre Spencer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:terrespencer@me.com">terrespencer@me.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Jane Spalding</td>
<td><a href="mailto:liannesimon@yahoo.com">liannesimon@yahoo.com</a></td>
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Membership Information – The Atlanta Writers Club

Regular membership dues are $40 per year per person. Students can join for $30 per year. Family members of active AWC members can join for $20 per year.

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
Membership Dues good through December 2012 • Donations • Contact Information

❑ Renewal through 12/31/12—please provide your name and any changes to your contact information
❑ New Member through 12/31/12—please complete the information below
❑ Family Member—please complete the information below

First Name: ______________________________________ Last Name: ______________________________________
Please register your last name accurately—this is how your AWC membership will be filed
If you are a family member, who is the Primary Member? ____________________________________________
Primary Phone: __________________________ Secondary Phone: __________________________
Email: ______________________________________
Secondary Email: ______________________________________
Website: ______________________________________ (if you want this listed on the AWC website)
LinkedIn Profile: ______________________________________ (if you want AWC to link to you)
Facebook Name: ______________________________________ (if you want AWC to friend you)
Ways you want to contribute to the Atlanta Writers Club (e.g., volunteering at meetings or events):
______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________

AWC Membership Dues

$40 Membership through 12/31/2012 $___________

Add any family member for $20 each $___________
(Please supply family members’ contact information using a separate form)

$30 Student Membership through 12/31/2012 $___________

Tax Deductible Donation in the amount of $___________

Total $___________

Please mail with checks payable to: Atlanta Writers Club
Mail to: Kim Ciamarra • Atlanta Writers Club • 10285 Rillridge Court • Alpharetta, GA 30022

The Atlanta Writers Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible.
Please keep this portion as your receipt.

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.
**New Atlanta Writers Conference**

- **Do you want the chance to earn a contract with a literary agent, leading to the publication of your book?**
- **Do you want an agent to tell you what you’re doing wrong and doing right in your manuscript?**
- **Would you like to discuss your writing project with an agent to see if there’s any interest in the marketplace?**

**If you answer, “Yes,” to any or all of these questions, then the Atlanta Writers Club has a conference designed for you:**

On Saturday, May 5, 2012 the Atlanta Writers Club will present its sixth Atlanta Writers Conference. The goal of this conference is to give you access to six top literary agents (never any repeats from previous conferences--always an all-new lineup!) who will respond to your pitches, critique the work you submit in advance, and educate you about the current environment of the publishing industry and the changing roles of agents and their clients. You could be offered a contract based on the materials you’ve submitted: several AWC members have signed with conference agents or continue to work with them preparing their books for representation. You might be asked to send additional pages or an entire manuscript for their review. You certainly will know more about how your work is perceived by industry professionals, and you’ll gain valuable experience interacting one-on-one with them.

You also will have fun, learn more about the publishing business, and get a chance to chat informally with these agents and your peers. In addition to one-on-one time with agents to receive a critique and pitch your project, we offer a two-hour workshop delivered by Conference guest speakers Jeff Herman (author of the famed *Jeff Herman's Guide to Book Editors, Publishers & Literary Agents*) and Deborah Herman (agent and spiritual author), both of whom also will give four hour-long presentations during the critique and pitch sessions.

To kick things off, on Friday, May 4 in the evening, we’ll host a social event that we’re compelling the agents to attend as part of their Conference obligations. There is no charge for this mixer, which provides another chance for you to network with your peers and hear war stories and advice from the publishing trenches. Complete details about the Conference follow:
THE CONFERENCE

The conference on May 5 will consist of four parts and you may participate in one, two, three, or all of these events:

1. One-on-one critique sessions where the agents share their evaluations with those who have submitted 20 pages of work in advance
2. Pitch sessions so you can verbally present your project to an agent
3. Panel discussion on the publishing industry with Q&A

Workshop with Conference guest speakers Jeff and Deborah Herman

1. THE CRITIQUE:
   If you want a critique of your project on May 5, you will submit the following at least one (1) month in advance: (a) the first 20 manuscript pages of either your novel or nonfiction work, (b) a 1-paragraph summary of your book, and (c) a 1-paragraph biography that focuses on your writing experience and marketability (i.e., your “platform”).

   On May 5, you will have about 15 minutes for a one-on-one exchange with the agent about your work. The agent also will give you a written critique, which could consist of an overall review of the project (what worked and what didn’t), the quality of the writing, character and story development, and marketability. The agent will not copy-edit your work (they shouldn’t have to; always make sure your work is free of grammatical errors before you submit it), but they will provide you a written summary of their comments. During the critique session, the agent may choose to request more pages or the entire manuscript from you, perhaps leading to a contract for representation to work toward an eventual publishing deal.

2. THE PITCH:
   During the afternoon of May 5, you will have the opportunity to discuss your project for about 10 minutes with an agent of your choosing: give a basic synopsis of your book, talk about your writing and what you want for your future, and be prepared to ask the agent questions. This will be a verbal exchange, but in advance you will submit a 1-paragraph summary of your book and a 1-paragraph biography that focuses on your writing experience and marketability. If the agent is interested, you will be asked to send a query, a number of pages, or even the whole manuscript for consideration.
If you also want a critique (see above), pitching will give you the chance to introduce a second agent to your work. Do not choose the same individual for critiquing and pitching. It’s much smarter to double your chances.

3. THE PANEL:
A candid, freewheeling, hour-long discussion with all six agents commenting on the changing role of the agent and the author, the current state of the publishing industry, advice about working with agents and publishers, and expectations about marketing one’s work. Also get your questions answered about everything from queries and contracts to publicity and social media.

4. THE WORKSHOP:
This is a two-hour workshop on Saturday, May 5 (4:30-6:30 p.m.) by Atlanta Writers Conference guest speakers Jeff and Deborah Herman. The Jeff Herman Literary Agency has sold over 600 titles to publishers and is one of the most dynamic and innovative agencies in the business. Jeff’s own books include *Jeff Herman's Guide to Book Editors, Publishers & Literary Agents* (more than 400,000 copies sold), and *Write the Perfect Book Proposal: 10 Proposals That Sold & Why!* (co-authored with Deborah Levine Herman). These are universally considered to be among the best tools available for writers. Deborah Herman is a foremost expert on spiritual writing and publishing. A twenty-year veteran literary agent, Deborah also wrote the book *Spiritual Writing from Inspiration to Publication* in the year 2000, helping to spur the mind/body nonfiction genre. The Hermans’ agency website is [www.jeffherman.com](http://www.jeffherman.com).

At 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 5, they will provide the two-hour workshop PROMOTING YOUR WORK IN THE DIGITAL AGE. This interactive seminar focuses on how you can take an active role in promoting your work before and after publication, utilizing the Internet, and includes the pros and cons of self-publishing. This is not a technical class per se. The goal of the class is for you to leave with new confidence about making the best use of the Internet to market your book(s).

**BONUS:**
Our Conference guest speakers Jeff and Deborah Herman will give four separate talks of 60-75 minutes apiece while the critiques and pitches are occurring during the morning and afternoon, respectively, on May 5, to educate and entertain Conference attendees. Their topics include: Write the Perfect Book Proposal from Idea to Deal, Write the Perfect Query Letter,
Insider Tricks to Getting an Agent & How to Get an Editor without Having an Agent, and Spiritual Writing from Inspiration to Publication. These discussions are free for anyone participating in the critique, pitch, panel, or workshop.

THE LOCATION

Westin Atlanta Airport
4736 Best Road
Atlanta, GA 30337
404-762-7676
www.westin.com

A free shuttle runs between the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport and the hotel every 20 minutes, so you can take MARTA to the airport and hop the free shuttle to the hotel, which saves you money and the hassle of driving, and provides an environmentally friendly option. If you do choose to drive, plenty of parking exists in the hotel lot. Note: the hotel charges a parking fee.

On the evening of Friday, May 4, from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., we invite you to gather at the Westin lounge area for informal conversations with the agents and to network with your peers. As a condition of participation in the Conference, the agents are being asked to attend this mixer, so you WILL see them there, and Conference guest speakers Jeff and Deborah Herman will attend as well! If you choose to stay at the Westin on Friday night so you’ll be fresh and well rested the next day, we’ve negotiated an Atlanta Writers Conference discount ($89/night+tax) for a block of rooms.

HOUR-BY-HOUR CONFERENCE DETAILS

Note: all activities take place at the Westin Atlanta Airport

Friday, May 4

8:00-11:00 p.m. Free social event in the Westin lounge area for club members. No RSVP necessary. Even if you cannot participate in the Conference on May 5, we invite you to join us on the evening of the 4th for casual chats about books and the people who write them, sell them, publish them, and buy them. As part of their conference obligations, the agents are compelled to participate, and Conference guest speakers Jeff and Deborah Herman will be there as well.
Saturday, May 5

8:00-9:00 a.m. Check in at the College Park Ballroom on the second floor of the Westin Atlanta Airport conference area.

9:00-10:00 a.m. Panel and Q&A with all six agents.

10:00-10:15 a.m. Set up Boardrooms 1-6 for Critique Sessions.

10:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m. One-on-one meetings for about 15 minutes each between the agents and those who submitted their work for critique. Meanwhile, Conference guest speakers Jeff and Deborah Herman give two talks with Q&A in the College Park Ballroom.

1:00-2:00 p.m. Break (go to lunch at Palio’s restaurant at the Westin, retreat to the lounge, practice your pitch with friends).

2:05-4:30 p.m. Participants pitch an agent one-on-one for about ten minutes each, while Jeff and Deborah Herman give two talks with Q&A in the College Park Ballroom.

4:30-6:30 p.m. Conference guest speakers Jeff and Deborah Herman present their workshop PROMOTING YOUR WORK IN THE DIGITAL AGE, with extensive Q&A.

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THE AGENTS

The agents below have provided their backgrounds and what genres they are seeking to acquire. Besides reading this information, you also should review their websites, do an Internet search for interviews with them and/or what other agents and authors have written about them, and make sure you’re a good fit for their tastes and attitudes.

**Bernadette Baker-Baughman, Victoria Sanders & Associates LLC**
([www.victoriasanders.com](http://www.victoriasanders.com))

Bernadette Baker-Baughman has a MS in Professional Writing and has worked on both the editorial and marketing sides of publishing. As the Marketing Coordinator for Beyond Words Publishing/Atria Books, she headed up campaigns for two New York Times best-selling titles. In 2005 Bernadette co-founded Baker’s Mark Literary Agency where she discovered talent such as Farel Dalrymple, Faith Erin Hicks, Paul Guinan & Anina Bennett, Dan Elconin, David Axe, Carson Morton, and Zack Giallongo, among others. In 2010 Bernadette joined Victoria Sanders & Associates.
She looks for edgy, fresh, exciting, amazing, luxurious, enticing, passionate, experimental, meaningful, substantial, and freakin’ awesome literary entertainment. Bernadette is currently interested in representing commercial adult, YA, and middle grade fiction, nonfiction, and graphic novels. In fiction she gravitates towards books with a wide audience access point—specifically books with cultural or contemporary touchstones (reimaginings, historical fiction, fiction based on legend or myth, fiction with fantastical elements that are part of the cultural collective imagination, Steampunk, etc). In nonfiction she is looking for image rich books, pop culture, art, quirky gift books, light sociology, and narrative nonfiction. In graphic novels she is seeking beautifully illustrated works of nonfiction, memoir, young adult or children’s fiction, high fantasy, funny character driven stories, and graphic literature. Bernadette is also willing to talk to writers who do not have art attached to their comic concept or illustrators willing to work with other authors.

Brandi Bowles, Foundry Literary+Media  (www.foundrymedia.com)

Brandi Bowles joined Foundry Literary in 2010, after working as an agent at Morhaim Literary and an assistant editor at Crown/Three Rivers Press. She does mostly nonfiction, including narrative nonfiction, science, humor, music, pop culture, food, and memoir. Her expanding fiction interests include commercial women’s fiction, high-concept literary fiction, middle grade, and young adult.

Paul Lucas, Janklow & Nesbit Associates  (www.janklowandnesbit.com)

Paul joined Janklow & Nesbit Associates in 2007 and began representing authors in 2010. He is interested in a wide variety of commercial and literary fiction, as well as specific non-fiction. In fiction, he enjoys both character- and plot-driven novels but it’s important to him for the storytelling to be clear and accessible. In genre fiction, he is looking for thrillers, spy, science fiction, and fantasy genre writing, as well as literary novels. He appreciates a literary bent, subverting genre, and darker, conflicted characters. Nothing helps a story move along than a compelling anti-hero. Finally, he loves historical fiction and war novels. For non-fiction, he is interested in representing popular science books and narrative histories.
He does not represent romance, westerns, women’s fiction, memoir, humor, self-help, children’s or picture books.

Laurie McLean, Larsen-Pomada Literary Agency (www.larsenpomada.com)

At Larsen-Pomada Literary Agents in San Francisco, Northern California’s oldest literary agency founded in 1972, Laurie represents adult genre fiction (romance, fantasy, science fiction, horror, mysteries, suspense, thrillers, etc.) as well as middle-grade and young-adult books. She looks for great writing, first and foremost, followed by memorable characters, a searing storyline, and solid world building.

For more than 20 years Laurie ran a multi-million dollar eponymous public relations agency in California's Silicon Valley. She is passionate about marketing, publicity, negotiating, editing and a host of other business-critical areas. She is also a novelist herself, so she can empathize with the author's journey to and through publication. In addition, Laurie is the dean of the new San Francisco Writers University at www.SFWritersU.com and on the management team of the San Francisco Writers Conference.

BJ Robbins, BJ Robbins Literary Agency (www.publishersmarketplace.com/members/bjrobbins)

BJ’s tastes are very eclectic and range from deeply serious to laugh-out-loud funny. In fiction she’s drawn to the more literary side, whether it be contemporary, historical, multicultural, mystery, or thriller--she’s looking for an emotional pull as well as great storytelling. She doesn’t handle any straight-out genre fiction, such as romance, westerns, sci-fi, or fantasy.

On the nonfiction side she’s looking for authoritative and lively voices in history, biography, memoir, psychology, women's issues, popular science, health/medicine, and travel/adventure. She’s open to self-help but the writer needs to have expertise in the subject on a professional level. In all of these categories it's the writing that attracts her; subject matter comes second. She doesn't handle cookbooks (though she'd love a great book about food), or books on dating or religion.
Ken Sherman, Ken Sherman & Associates (www.kenshermanassociates.com)

Ken Sherman is the President of Ken Sherman and Associates, a Los Angeles-based literary agency. An agent for more than twenty years, Ken represents screen, television, and book writers, and also sells film and television rights to books as well as life rights.

A few of Ken's clients include David Guterson, author of Snow Falling on Cedars; Tawni O'Dell, whose first novel, Back Roads, became an international bestseller and Oprah Book Club selection; Starhawk, considered the best-known witch in the world; Anne Perry, the world's best-known Victorian murder mystery writer and author of 60 books; and the estates of Luis Buñuel, John Hersey, and Simon Wiesenthal.

Ken is very open to almost any fiction or non-fiction new project. He considers them individually and tries to decide if he can potentially sell them. For fiction, he is seeking everything except children's books and religious fiction. For non-fiction, he is totally open to everything except cookbooks.

THE COST

Because some might want to take advantage of only one event, while others will do it all, we offer the following ala carte pricing:

- Critique: $135
- Pitch: $45
- Panel: $25
- Workshop: $45
- Atlanta Writers Conference package deal (all four activities): $220

You must be a 2012 Atlanta Writers Club member to register for the conference. If you would like to join the club or renew your membership so you can participate, please add $40 to your total to cover club dues; your membership will be valid all the way through the end of 2012.
Contact AWC Conference Director George Weinstein at gjweinstein@yahoo.com and tell him the following:

1. Which event(s) you’re registering for:
   a. Critique
   b. Pitch
   c. Panel
   d. Workshop
   e. All 4

2. If you want the critique and/or pitch, tell him your rank-ordered preference for agents for each activity, with the most preferred at the top (list at least three, if possible). Choose different individuals for the critique and the pitch to maximize the number of professionals you introduce to your work. If your first pick has no spots remaining, George will try to assign you to your second choice. If that person’s spots also are filled, he will go to your third pick, etc. If all spots for all your agents are full, you will be put on standby for the individual you chose with the fewest on standby ahead of you. Before and during every conference at least a few spots open up as people withdraw or fail to show up, so hopefully you’ll still get the opportunity to participate. Again, the agents are:

   Bernadette Baker-Baughman, Victoria Sanders & Associates LLC
   Brandi Bowles, Foundry Literary+Media
   Paul Lucas, Janklow & Nesbit Associates
   Laurie McLean, Larsen-Pomada Literary Agency
   BJ Robbins, BJ Robbins Literary Agency
   Ken Sherman, Ken Sherman & Associates

   * If you do not want a specific agent, do not put that person on your rank-order of preferences.

   * If you want to receive a critique AND do a pitch, remember to give George your rank-ordered agent preference list for each activity.

NOTE: So that we can accommodate the maximum number of club members,
you may only register for one critique and one pitch.

3. **Indicate if you intend to stay at the Westin Atlanta Airport on Friday, May 4.** The hotel is holding a block of rooms at the special price of $89/night+tax. George will provide reservation details so you get the conference discount price.

In summary, reply with:
- Which activity or activities you want to do
- If applicable, which agent you want for a critique and/or which one you want to pitch
- Indicate if you want to stay at the Westin on May 4

George will respond to your e-mail with the cost due, confirm which agent has been assigned to you for critique and/or pitch if applicable, and give you payment instructions. Upon receipt of your payment, he will send you formatting instructions for the materials you need to provide to him and the due date for these items, if you selected the critique and/or pitch. Also for the pitch, he’ll give you some recommendations and resources for pitching an agent.

In late April, you will receive the conference schedule, with your time assignment for the critique and/or pitch if you have registered for these.

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**DEADLINES**

Spots for the critique and pitch will fill completely during the first few weeks of enrollment, so if you want to participate in those activities especially, **respond now!** The deadline to register for a critique and submit your work for evaluation is April 4. The deadline to register for a pitch is April 28, assuming spots remain unfilled. You may register and pay for the workshop and/or the hour-long panel discussion up until May 1. **After you send your request to register to George and receive his instructions, you will have two weeks to send in your payment. If you fail to do so, you will be removed from the registration list so that others can fill those spots.**

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**REFUND POLICY**

To offset Atlanta Writers Club costs incurred for providing refunds, $25 will be
withheld for any refunds given. If you paid for a critique but cannot make it to the May 5 event, you will receive a $110 refund if you notify George at gjweinstein@yahoo.com no later than April 4. If you already submitted your materials for critique, you will not receive a refund but the agent’s written comments will be sent to you. If you paid for a pitch but cannot make it to the May 5 event, you will receive a $20 refund if you notify George at gjweinstein@yahoo.com no later than April 28. If you paid the workshop fee, you will receive a $20 refund if you notify George at gjweinstein@yahoo.com no later than May 1. No refund will be given for the panel discussion.

Finally, if an agent has to withdraw from the conference, we will consult your rank ordering to connect you with the next pick on your list. If time permits, we’ll enlist another agent to fill that opening and we’ll confirm if that individual will suit you. If your top pick withdraws and all spots are full for the others you indicated, you will be put on standby for all of these remaining agents and be given a spot for whichever one opens first. If no openings occur, you will receive a full refund regardless of the deadlines.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact George Weinstein at gjweinstein@yahoo.com.