...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.

Events in November:
3,4  Fall Writers Conference
3,4,5 North Georgia Reads (three different locations)
4    DYI Publishing workshop
18   AWC monthly meeting
18   Radney Foster book signing

Officers
President:  Ron Aiken
Officers Emeritus:  Michael Brown
             Valerie Connors
             George Weinstein
             Clay Ramsey
             Marty Aftewicz
Conference Director:  George Weinstein
Membership VP:  Yvonne Green
Programs VP:  Valerie Connors
Operations VP:  Jennifer Wiggins
Contests, Awards,  Scholarships VP:  Clay Ramsey
Social Media VP:  Gene Bowen
Secretary:  Bill Black
Treasurer:  Ron Aiken
Historian/By-Laws:  George Weinstein
eQuill Publisher:  Gene Bowen

Fall Writers Conference
November 3, 4

http://www.facebook.com/people/Atlanta-WritersClub/100000367043383
http://twitter.com/atlwritersclub
November 18th meeting

Linda Sands – Member Spotlight
Bobbie Christmas – 1st Guest Speaker
Mark Braught – 2nd Guest Speaker

In This Issue

4 President’s Message
5 November Speakers
6 Future Event
7 October meeting photos
8 Honoring Daren Wang
9 Wang Photos
10 2017 AWC Writers Conference
12 Member Q&A: Ed Gruber
17 Writer’s Luck
18 Buzz Bernard is a Terrible Writer
20 AWC Authors Score
21 Ladies of Southern Literature
22 Ageless Authors Contest
23 An Online Literarily Journal
24 Writers Workshop
25 DYI Publishing workshop
26 North Georgia Reads
27 Radney Foster event
28 Opportunities
29 Critique groups
30 Administrative matters
31 Membership info
32 Membership form
Sometimes, the things my characters say and do make me uncomfortable. Like the time a person reading my pages aloud at a workshop substituted “blank” every time they found an objectionable word. Later, when I told my wife about it, she said, “Why are you surprised some people react that way? You created Monte (my protagonist) and put him in situations that bring out the worst.” After agreeing with her, she said, “It’s a good thing that person didn’t read any of the last three pages.”

Last week, my wife and I saw the Alliance Theater’s production of the “black” comedy, “Hand of God,” at Dad’s Garage, which occupies an old church. The play was a Tony Award nominee in 2015, and the most produced show in regional theaters during the 2016/2017 season. From the Playbill of the Broadway production; “Hand to God explores the startlingly fragile nature of faith, morality, and the ties that bind us.”

I don't know about that description, but it was the most the most profane stage production I’d ever attended. It had it all. Strong language, sometimes gratuitous? Check. Violence? Check. Sexual content? Check. Puppets gone wild? Check. (A sock puppet can say and get away with things a performer can’t.) Although some people left at intermission, most stayed, and if the guarded, sometimes raucous laughter was an indicator, most people seemed to enjoy it. But I left wondering why Robert Askins, the playwright, could get away with it and, well, I couldn’t. Was it all about picking your audience? Or perhaps profane language is less offensive when it’s spoken.

Not too long ago, you wouldn't find profanity in a significant novel. In Norman Mailer’s debut novel “The Naked and the Dead,” published in 1948, fug was used for a particular sexually charged four-letter word so readers wouldn’t be offended (and slam the book closed). And with Mailer’s depiction of men at war, there was a whole lot of fuggin’ on the page. And early on, most of the authors I admired such as John Sanford, Nelson DeMille, and Thomas Gifford didn’t use profanity either. Today, most do (except Lee Child), and to me, often when Sanford, DeMille, and Gifford use profanity, it seems forced—as if they have a quota to meet—probably because they wrote so well without doing so.

In the 21st Century, the writer’s palette is rich with salacious words for their usage.

- Profanity
- Curses
- Swears
- Obscenities
- Vulgarisms

My characters have uttered a few of those words prompting a reviewer of my novel “Death Has Its Benefits,” to describe the dialogue as “sharp” ... “wiseass.”

My challenge? How to recognize when I’ve gone too far, or, not far enough.
Monthly Meetings

November Speakers

**Mark Braught** began his career as a graphic designer in 1975, and since has been an art director, production manager, and creative director at a number of design firms, publishing houses and advertising agencies.

In 1984, he struck out on his own and created Mark Braught Studios to focus primarily on graphic design and illustration. He has created numerous award-winning visual solutions for various corporations, design firms, advertising agencies and publishers in the United States and locations world-wide. The client list includes Newsweek, Warner Brothers, Richards Group, Churchill Downs, Proctor & Gamble, Citibank, Herman Miller, Oxford Publishing, Scholastic, Sleeping Bear Press, Creative Press, Grey Advertising, BBDO, Chiat Day, among numerous others. The work encompasses everything from corporate branding, package, exhibit, product and book design to posters, and children’s books.

He has taught at the University of Georgia, Portfolio Center, The Atlanta College of Art & Design, Creative Circus, Indiana University (IvyTech), and Hollins University, in addition to presentations & workshops across the country for various other universities, organizations, primary & secondary schools, and art institutions.

Additionally, he has been the president of the Indiana Art Directors Club, a board member of the Graphic Artist’s Guild, and a mentor for the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI), member of the Society of Illustrators and Society of Typographic arts.

Currently, Mark does his scribbling in Commerce, Georgia under the watchful eyes of his canine companions AnnaBelle & Bernie, with words of encouragement and guidance from Figlette the cat.

---

**Linda Sands** is the award-winning author of four novels. Her short stories and essays have appeared in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The Walton Sun, Skirt! Magazine, Dogplotz, Moronic Ox*, a bunch of defunct lit mags and various anthologies. Most recent awards include Georgia Author of the Year for Mystery/Detective novels for *3 Women Walk Into a Bar* and two Killer Nashville Judge’s Choice Awards for Best Neo-noir and Best PI novel. Her new series featuring tenacious trucker Jojo Boudreaux debuts this spring with *GRAND THEFT CARGO*. Linda splits her writing time between the Gulf Coast of Florida, the Mountains of Georgia and the suburbs of Atlanta where she and her husband cheer on the competing colleges of their children. Stalk her online at [lindasands.com](http://lindasands.com).

---

**Bobbie Christmas** is an award-winning writer and a book editor with more than 40 years of writing and editing experience. In 1992 she founded Zebra Communications, a book-editing firm that is still going strong a quarter of a century later. As both concept editor and line editor—one who cures ailing manuscripts—she is called a book doctor. Her book on creative writing, *Write In Style*, won seven awards, including First Place in the How-To Category at the Florida Book Festival Awards, a bronze IPPY in the Writing and Publishing Category of the Independent Publishers Awards, Best in Division in the Georgia Author of the Year Awards, and First Place in the Royal Palm Literary Awards, to name a few. She has also written a book doctor’s desk reference for writers and editors titled *Purge Your Prose of Problems*. Her website is [www.ZebraEditor.com](http://www.ZebraEditor.com), and her email address is Bobbie@ZebraEditor.com.
Monthly Meetings

Future Guests & Events

2017

November 18th
Mixer at 12:30
Linda Sands - Member Minute
Bobbie Christmas - 1st Guest Speaker
Mark Braught - 2nd Guest Speaker

December 16th
Charlene Ball - Member Minute
Drew Jubera - Guest Speaker

Prior to our November 18th meeting, AWC will again host an informal gathering in the Building NC cafeteria from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. The mixer is catching on with more and more members attending to enjoy the fellowship of fellow writers and share their writings. I hope to see you there.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Ron
Monthly Meetings

Photos by Ron Aiken

Top Left - Roger Johns
Top Right - Dana Ridenaour
Left - Daren Wang
Like many of you, I learned about the Atlanta Writers Club at the Decatur Book Festival. And as many of you have heard me say over the years, the Atlanta Writers Club has changed the course of my life.

Daren came up with the idea for the festival in 2005. He recruited a core team of people who helped him bring the project to fruition, and on Labor Day weekend of 2006, the Decatur Book Festival was born. Held over three days, fifty thousand people attended that first festival. Sixty thousand the following year.

The Decatur Book Festival has become a significant annual event for our members, authors from all over the country, and the thousands of readers and writers who return year after year. This year, the 12th annual Decatur Book Festival hosted 600 authors on 18 stages and attracted more than 80,000 people.

The Atlanta Writers Club participated in that first festival, and in each one after that, and in 2014, Daren and his team decided to give the Atlanta Writers Club our DBF track, where each year our members have the opportunity to participate on author panels and share our work with readers.

Now, after building the largest independent book festival in the country, and the fifth largest anywhere on earth, Daren is retiring from his position as head of the Decatur Book Festival and turning his focus toward promoting his novel, The Hidden Light of Northern Fires, released in August of this year.

So today we want to recognize Daren for his significant contribution to the literary community, and for the role he has played in so many of our lives.
Monthly Meetings

Photos by Nedra Pezold Roberts & Ron Aiken

Top - Daren & Valerie
Right - Daren & Toni
Below - (left to right) Yvonne, Valerie, Bill, Daren, Clay, Mike, Ron
Register now to attend the November 3-4, 2017 Atlanta Writers Conference, at the Renaissance Concourse Atlanta Airport Hotel.

http://atlantawritersconference.com/about/

Whether you are...
- In search of an agent or publisher
- Working on a manuscript and seeking feedback
- A first-time writer who wants to increase your knowledge about the craft and the publishing business
- Already published and seeking more contacts and information

...this is your opportunity to take the next big step toward your writing goals.

Want to get published?

The November 3-4, 2017 Atlanta Writers Conference offers you access to a group of 12 editors and agents seeking manuscripts for every major fiction genre and nonfiction topic. Two dozen of our members have signed with agents or editors they met at our Conferences, and a number of those have scored major book deals. You could be next. Even if your work is not ready to submit, you'll benefit from the many educational sessions on the craft and business of writing.

Agents and editors at the Conference will:
- Critique a manuscript sample you submit in advance and possibly ask to see more to consider it for representation/acquisition
- Critique your query letter to improve it for the Conference pitches and future use
- Respond to your pitch and possibly ask to see your manuscript to consider it for representation/acquisition
- Provide hours of Q&A
- Select the best manuscript samples and pitches for our award ceremony--maybe they'll call your name!

- You'll also enjoy:
  - A workshop on contracts and legal issues for writers, back by popular demand
  - Presentations on writing craft, editing, and finding a supportive writing community
  - Networking with presenters and participants.

We've filled the two-day conference with great experiences:

Friday, November 3:
* Query letter critique panels that pair one editor and one agent who will help you get your query in shape for the Saturday pitches
* Workshop on contracts and legal issues for writers by 35-year veteran lawyer and
Conference, cont.

literary agent Paul Levine, with two hours of detailed information, lessons learned, and extensive Q&A. For years, participants have asked that Paul return to give this workshop again--we heard you!

- Free talks by Paul Levine on the process of turning your book into a movie and turning self-published work into a traditionally published book
- Q&A panel with our six guest editors
- Social mixer with all twelve editors and agents

Saturday, November 4:
- One-on-one manuscript critique sessions with your choice of editors and agents
- Pitch sessions with your choice of editors and agents
- Q&A panel with our six guest agents
- Free talks on editing, networking, and story craft
- Award ceremony

Registration is now open!

For full details about Conference activities:
http://atlantawritersconference.com/the-conference

For pricing options:
http://atlantawritersconference.com/the-cost

Learn about our guest editors and agents:
http://atlantawritersconference.com/the-editors-and-agents

After you've read all the Conference details on the website--including the deadlines and refund policy--use the registration tab to secure your place at the Fall 2017 Atlanta Writers Conference.

As past Conference participants will tell you, the spots fill up fast, so don't delay.

The Atlanta Writers Conference is presented exclusively for members of the Atlanta Writers Club. If you are not a current member or your membership will lapse prior to November 5, 2017, you can join/renew as part of your Conference registration--you don't need to do this as a two-step process.

We hope you'll be able to join us! Please click through the Conference website pages for all the details: http://atlantawritersconference.com/about/
I first met Ed Gruber as a regular attendee of the monthly Atlanta Writers Club meetings. We became more acquainted when we shared a book-signing table in the Deeds Publishing booth at the 2016 Decatur Book Festival. Later, he helped me write a scene set in the Korean War for one of my novels. Ed’s life has been full of fascinating experiences built around his love for writing and his ability to effectively communicate through the written word. Recently, I met with him to hear more about those experiences. Following are a few excerpts from that meeting that only hint at the true depth of Ed’s writing career.

**Tell me a little about your formative years.**

I was born in the Bronx in New York City and lived there until I joined the Navy at age twenty. Even though I was a “street kid” I liked to write rhymes and stories as a youth. Also, I was an avid reader and faithfully walked a couple miles to the library twice a week to lose myself in the words of great writers like Hemingway, Steinbeck, Twain, Dickens, Ayn Rand, Pearl Buck, etc. Growing up in the Bronx was interesting, and early on there were celebrities in my life. One of my neighbors, Roberta Peters, became a famous opera star and a fellow high school student, Stanley Kubrick, went on to fame as a Hollywood film director.

**When did you become interested in making a career as a writer?**

In a blue-collar family no one thought you could make a living as a writer. But one of my high school English teachers encouraged me. He said, “You have a definite talent for writing and you should think about it.” That was a big boost to my confidence. After high school, I had no real idea of what I wanted to do with the rest of my life, so I enrolled in a new school called the Fashion Institute of Technology – to pass time and figure things out. It was a two-year college established for New York’s garment industry. Among the subjects were marketing and advertising that seemed to complement my talent for writing. Today FIT is a large, prestigious school in New York offering degrees in many subjects. During the summer months I worked in resorts in upstate New York as a bellhop, busboy, and waiter, where I learned a lot about people and life.

**After graduating from FIT, what did you do?**

I still didn’t know what I wanted to do with my life. The government decided for me, since draft was on. I didn’t want to go into the Army and wind up in a foxhole, so I joined the Navy. That was in 1948. At that time, I decided I wanted to accomplish four things in the service: (1) travel, (2) meet interesting people, (3) decide what to do with my life, and (4) as a “street smart NY kid, I was audacious enough to think I could beat the system. In other words, hustle my way through. Generally, I accomplished all four.
My first assignment was as a personnel clerk at Alameda Naval Air Station in California, near San Francisco. One day I read an article in a Navy magazine about the U.S. Navy School of Journalism in Great Lakes, Illinois, where they trained Navy combat journalists. So, I applied, passed the test, and was accepted.

It was an intense program; ten hours a day, six days a week, for three months. Afterward, I was sent to Pearl Harbor in Hawaii to work at the Pacific Fleet Public Information Office. I wrote speeches for the admiral, press releases, interviews with celebrities and VIPs, and general interest pieces. I also hosted Navy guests on tours of the USS Arizona. And even though I’m not a big guy, I was on the Pacific Fleet basketball team, a sport I had learned to play back in New York. While still at Pearl Harbor, I received an assignment to cover a Navy expedition to Pt. Barrow, Alaska – to write press releases and the fleet newsletter. I was in San Diego preparing for the trip to Alaska when the Korean War broke out. That was on June 25th, 1950. After the brief duty in Alaska I was sent back to Pearl Harbor and began writing and producing a radio show called “Across the Blue Pacific.” The show was sent to radio stations all over America. It included skits about heroic Naval and Marine actions that I wrote and directed. Often they included appearances by famous stars and I was host to many of them; John Wayne, James Arness, Walter Brennan, and others.

One of the greatest things that happened to me was when Bob Hope came to Honolulu to do one of his regular radio shows before a military audience. I went to Hickam Field to interview him and it was like Grand Central Station with all the reporters gathered there. Forcing my way through the crowd and shouting, “Make way for the little guy,” I reached Hope as he was deplaning. He looked down at me, laughed, and said, “Hey kid, if you want a great interview, meet me at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel at three o’clock this afternoon.” I did, and had a terrific interview. During our conversation, he asked, “Do you know any young American sailor with radio experience?” I said, “Yeah, me.” He showed me a script for a skit on his show, which included a young sailor. I read the lines, got the part, and showed up for rehearsal the next day. Then, in the car going to the theater - it was just Hope and me and we talked about baseball for a while. I was a big Yankees fan and he had part interest in the Cleveland Indians at the time. Suddenly he turned serious and asked, “Tell me the truth, Ed. Do you think they’ll like me?” That’s when I learned about the insecurities that many actors and celebrities have.
A couple of months later I got a call from Hope himself. He was coming to Hawaii for a USO Show and asked if I would like to be his emcee. Of course, I agreed. The show was performed before an audience of 10,000 servicemen and women and they loved it.

**What was your combat experience in the Korean War?**

My commanding officer at Pearl Harbor was Lieutenant Commander William Lederer, who later co-authored *The Ugly American*. I convinced him I was ready to be a “real” combat journalist. From Japan I flew in the gun turret of an old WW II vintage torpedo bomber and landed on an aircraft carrier for the first time. That was “interesting.” Then I took my first “high line” to another ship. That’s a cage on a cable suspended between the two ships. Eventually I wound up on a destroyer in Wonsan Harbor that was firing salvos at the Chinese Communists on the mainland, who returned fire with heavy artillery. This warship had been hit the year before. But this time they missed. After a few days I joined the Marines on an island in the harbor where we were bombarded by mortars from the mainland – very close, but no damage. That was a wake-up call that I was in a real war.

Later, from another aircraft carrier, I took off for Seoul where, driving northward through the city to join up with the First Marine Division on the Main Line of Resistance near Panmunjom, I was stunned to see all that remained of a once vibrant city. Another wake-up call. Finally, with the Marines, a Lieutenant asked me if I could handle a rifle. I said “sure.” Then he asked if I wanted to see what the Marines in action really went through. I should have said “no,” but I couldn’t, and that night I accompanied a patrol to set up an ambush. When we reached our destination we found that the communications line we were stringing had been cut. That meant the enemy was real close and knew where we were. The Sergeant turned to me and whispered, “Ed, pass the word—fix bayonets.” Suddenly, I got a very bad taste in my mouth. I was armed with a carbine, pistol, and lots of grenades, but I hadn’t given thought to hand-to-hand combat. This was not what I expected when I joined the Navy. While nothing happened that night, first thing in the morning they lobbed a few mortar shells at us, but no one was hurt. The Sergeant told me later, “Ed, you can go on patrol with us anytime. You bring us good luck.” I did go on several other patrols and lost some good friends. I don’t talk or write about these experiences. But the Marines took good care of me and I came through with only some hearing loss, and basically unharmed – a little older, a little wiser.

There was also a time in the war when President Truman was to meet on Wake Island with General MacArthur with whom he often disagreed. The General was very headstrong and wanted to drop bombs in China to stop Communist troop reinforcements to the North Koreans. I did get to meet the President on his Pearl Harbor stopover. Afterward, the world would be shocked to learn that Truman had
fired MacArthur in a showdown of authority.

What did you do after the Navy?
I thought about trying to break into the movie business as a writer, but after spending time in L.A. and Hollywood, I decided that wasn’t for me. So I went back to New York and applied to major advertising agencies as a copywriter. They all said they didn’t hire “novices.” Eventually, I went to work for a big agency as a typist, just to get a foot in the door. After a year, the Copy Chief offered me an opportunity to work on the Ford Motor account. Of course, getting my first ad published was a dream come true. After that, I moved to another agency and worked on the Jeep account. The Jeep management had long focused on the industrial, farming and commercial markets and wanted to break into the recreational and general consumer markets. I wrote their first ad for that campaign and it appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, a popular magazine with enormous distribution. That gave me entry to more accounts—Ronson lighters, a cigar company, and some others.

An ad agency in Detroit noticed my work and offered me a job on the Chevrolet account. I accepted and moved to Detroit, still in my twenties and unmarried. Here I met my amazingly beautiful and talented wife. A year later, I joined another agency and created a General Motors magazine for their dealers and what eventually became the Mr. Goodwrench program. After ten years there, I was contacted by an agency for GM in Canada about a high level position. I took a job with them as Vice President and Creative Director and moved with my wife and two kids to Toronto. After some internal disagreements, I left that company and went freelance for sixteen years working with GM, IBM, Xerox, and others. Tragically, we lost our eighteen year-old son to an accident and my wife wanted to return to Michigan where I would become partner in a small marketing communications company. After ten years, I went freelance, again serving a variety of clients.

In 2008, my wife became ill and I became a full time caregiver. That’s when I began writing novels to satisfy my creative urge.

When did you come to Atlanta?
After my wife passed away in 2013, I moved to Atlanta to be near my brother who lives in Roswell. I settled in Woodstock and almost immediately joined the Atlanta Writers Club.

Have you had any books published?
Yes. Two novels by Deeds Publishing. I call my writing “faction” because I draw from actual events. My first novel, *Tony the Knee Breaker*, is set in New York and is based upon my father’s and my uncle’s experience running a trucking company.
and dealing with the Mafia every day. I also had some bizarre encounters with the Mafia myself. My second novel, *Seeking Intimacy*, is based upon my personal testing of online dating. It wasn’t a good experience for me and I discovered a lot of things on the Internet I didn’t want to know.

**What advice would you give to writers who are just beginning their “writer’s journey?”**

Write. Write. Write. That’s the only way to get better. And go to AWC meetings to learn from other writers. If you really want to have success in selling your book, talk to authors who have shown results in marketing their books. Don’t expect the agent or publisher, even large publishing houses, to do any real marketing. These days, it seems to be the author’s job. Finally, develop a hard shell because there will be a lot of rejections, and even editing of your precious words. That’s the way it is, but at the end of a day of writing, it’s worth it!

As you can tell, Ed Gruber’s life has been enriched by his love of words and the power in which they have enriched, not only his world, but also the world of others. Michael K. Brown
Extra

Writer’s Luck

At the Atlanta Writers Club’s June picnic, Kathy Nichols won a drawing for a 50-page critique from New York Times best-selling author, Joshilyn Jackson. Here is Kathy’s account of her interaction with Joshilyn.

Other than a banquet center piece that wilted before I got it home and a ten-dollar scratch-off card I spent before I got out of the store, I haven’t won a lot of prizes in my life. Until, that is, I began attending the Atlanta Writers Club picnics. At my first one in the summer of 2016, I walked away with a cash prize. I was thrilled and carried that money in my wallet for months. But at this year’s event, I won the gift that keeps on giving: a fifty-page manuscript critique from Joshilyn Jackson, best-selling author of Almost Sisters. (Gods in Alabama, The Girl Who Stopped Swimming, The Opposite of Everyone and Someone Else’s Love Story)

Ms. Jackson and I emailed to coordinate the best time for me to send her my work. She explained that the prize included a phone conference to go over her comments, but that she preferred an in-person discussion if that worked for me. If that worked for me? It definitely worked for me.

Several weeks later, we met at a coffee shop near her home in Decatur. She immediately put me at ease with her gentle humor and offered suggestions that helped me see new possibilities in my characters and story line.

Without realizing it, I had made my protagonist less sympathetic than intended. I hadn’t made her motivations clear enough for the reader to understand her emotions. I loved my narrator so much, I assumed everyone else did. The tweaks Joshilyn recommended eliminated some of the ambiguity I had been too close to see. By developing my character more in the beginning, I found it easier to move ahead with my intended plotline. Joshilyn’s comments on the effectiveness of specific lines and phrases gave me much-needed confidence. Her advice to trust my reader more—to know when to provide additional details and when not to “over-explain”—is something that will help me not only with my current novel, but will also guide me in the future. These insights alone would have made my prize invaluable. But an even greater gift was the way she treated our meeting as a collaboration between writers.

Not everyone can be as lucky as I was to receive encouragement from such an excellent writer and lovely person as Joshilyn Jackson. But if you want to be part of a community of people who understand the process and the pain of being a writer, you don’t need luck. You just need to join the Atlanta Writers Club—and maybe go to a picnic or two.
The first time I received a negative review of one of my novels I felt as if I’d been gut-punched.

A tiny wave of nausea surged through me. That was over six years and five novels ago. Since then, I’ve learned to roll with the punches. Thumbs-down evaluations of my works, I’ve come to understand, are part of the business. As the cliché goes, they come with the territory.

Happily, my more recent books get a lot fewer boos and hisses than my earlier efforts, but I’ve also learned that no matter how much I’d like to be awarded nothing but attaboys, it ain’t gonna happen. Even the finest authors/storytellers at the top of their games get one-star body slams from time to time: James Lee Burke, Daniel Silva, Reed Farrel Coleman—writers I consider among the best in the business.

Even Daniel James Brown, who wrote The Boys in the Boat, one of the best, if not the best, books I’ve read in the past several years, managed to get a few one-star zingers for his effort. This, despite the fact the book received a gazillion five-star ratings on Amazon.

Here’s the thing. Everyone uses a different measuring stick when they read. For instance, there have been a couple of mega bestsellers with great reviews that I just couldn’t get through. I like to be pulled into a tale quickly. Neither book, despite superb writing, did that. After fifty or so pages I was still wondering Where is this going? What’s the story? Why hasn’t something happened? Many other readers were obviously more patient than I. Different measuring sticks.
Another problem is that different readers have different expectations. Folks shouldn’t pick up a Buzz Bernard novel expecting John Steinbeck. I’m a “beach reads” writer. I like to create novels that are fun, factual, and fast-moving but with believable characters. (It’s always the characters, not the story, that carry a novel.) As NYT best-selling author Reed Farrel Coleman reminded me earlier this year, “We’re in the entertainment business.”

Here’s another example of disparate expectations, or maybe merely a reflection of what readers like. One gentleman said of Cascadia he “was hoping for a story about survival,” in other words, a sort of post-apocalyptic tale. I don’t do those. Sweeping disaster dramas don’t appeal to me. Instead, I prefer to focus my storytelling on how just a few individuals get through a really bad day.

The worst review I ever got? Well, it began, “The best thing about this book was its cover.” You know it’s going to be downhill from there. Kind of like having a 60 Minutes crew show up at your front door.

Then there was the one-star rating one of my novels got that ended with the reviewer stating: “Very likable and I enjoyed it.” Huh? How does that work? Did the reader think we rate novels like golf, low score wins?

Finally, apparently there are some readers who just don’t like me. One recent review started off, “Full disclosure here: Buzz Bernard is a terrible writer.” Then she gave the book three stars. So what would a one-star slap-in-the-face have read like? “Full disclosure here: Buzz Bernard probably couldn’t carve Cro-Magnon pictographs on the wall of cave”.

Onward and downward.
*Reposted, with Buzz’s permission, from his blog.*
Steven Cooper’s novel, *Desert Remains*, was just released by Seventh Street Books.

The book might never have come to publication had I not attended the Atlanta Writers Conferences. That’s where, on my second conference, I found my agent, Ann Collette. In her capable hands, the novel sold in a two-book deal to Seventh Street.


Living Springs Publishers, LLP is proud to announce the completion of our *Stories Through the Ages Baby Boomers Plus 2017* anthology (November 2017 Edition).

The book features creative fiction and non-fiction written by authors who were born 1964 and earlier. The stories were chosen from entries submitted to our Baby Boomers Plus contest. We received submissions from all across the United States, as well as Canada, Sweden and France.

Two Atlanta Writers Club authors:

**Richard Perreault** with his story *Holding Hands with the Clock*

**Alexandra Rochman** with her story *Identification Please* are featured in the book.
Ladies of Southern Literature

From Gothic terror to twisted humor, these Southern ladies turn the idea of the Southern Belle upside down. In this course, we will study the short studies of four of the greatest female American writers of the 20th century—Flannery O’Connor and Carson McCullers from Georgia, Eudora Welty from Mississippi, and Katherine Anne Porter from Texas. While all four share a common cultural heritage, each is remarkably different in style and themes. Join us as we read and discuss some of the greatest works of these wonderful southern female writers.

Instructor Biography: George Mengert
Opportunity

AgelessAuthors Contest

Ageless Authors celebrates creative senior writers; entries accepted now for unique contest: Ageless Authors, the first publishing project exclusively for writers age 65 and older, is now accepting submissions for this year’s edition of their nationwide writing contest.

Professional and amateur writers can submit short stories, essays, and poetry based on any of three topics – Military Memories; Dang I Wish I Hadn’t Done That; and Parents, For Better or Worse. To learn more or submit your work, go to agelessauthors.com/current-contests.

Cash prizes will be awarded in each category; $100 for first place, $50 for second place, and $25 for third place. Winners and other outstanding entries will also be published in the second edition of Ageless Authors Anthology. Each submission requires an entry fee of $20 and the deadline for submissions is December 15.

The first Ageless Authors anthology, with almost 52 outstanding entries, will be released this fall. The book will be available on the website, at Amazon.com and from other booksellers.

“We want to showcase the talent of older writers and artists,” says Dallas novelist and poet Ginnie Siena Bivona, one of the founders of Ageless Authors. “Now we are free to enjoy our creativity and a life full of the experiences that make good writing possible.”

Ms. Bivona, 86, started writing when she was in her early 50s. She has written a novel adapted into a Hallmark TV movie, four other books, and the script for a TV series. She offers publishing services to writers of all ages, helping them publish their life story, as well as other works. Her most prolific client is 91 years old.

Co-founder Larry Upshaw, 70, is a Dallas-based writer and marketing executive who has published a dozen books in law, medicine and business. He has also written for many national and regional publications.

“Many of the people I grew up with wanted to become musicians, writers and artists, but their parents insisted they get a job and make a living,” Upshaw says. “Now at retirement they are returning to what gave them pleasure. There is a lot of talent out there among the Baby Boomers and The Greatest Generation.”

For more information, contact Larry Upshaw info@agelessauthors.com

Between newsletters there’s FaceBook.

Atlanta Writers Club
The Masters Review is pleased to announce the launch of CRAFT (www.craftliterary.com), an online literary journal from the editors of The Masters Review.

Recognizing the vital role literary magazines play in nurturing writers, CRAFT’s entire platform is centered on exploring the art of fiction and offering educational content about how stories work.

Publishing fiction by some of today’s best writers, our site launches with forthcoming contributions from Michael Sheehan, Alice Elliott Dark, Elizabeth Gaffney, Patrick Ryan, Melissa Yancy, Hannah Tinti, and a host of others. What makes CRAFT unique among other publications is our in-depth look at the craft elements of fiction. We want to explore exactly what makes a story successful. By focusing on craft, the site is educational to new writers and serves as a valuable voice for the established literary community.

Our first story, published on Friday, Oct 6, is Alice Elliott Dark’s, A Slim Blade of Air. The piece is accompanied by an Author’s Note, offering insight into the story from the writer’s perspective. In Dark’s note she writes:
What happens afterward?
What will life be like after the present drama?
These questions feel so basic to the project of fiction. A satisfying side effect of creating a character, whether by thought or intuition, is that she becomes so knowable that it is possible to foresee her future—in contrast to one’s own.
We are so pleased to offer this feature, which accompanies each piece we publish.

Craft essays, exercises, interviews, and an educational look at stories, will all be part of CRAFT’s platform. We invite you to explore our website for information on the publication, including a list of forthcoming stories, submission guidelines, and pay rates for authors. At present we pay $0.10/word up to $200 for works of fiction and a flat rate of $150 for flash fiction and essays.

Thank you for taking the time to familiarize yourself with this new and essential part of the literary community.

Kim Winternheimer and Laura Spence-Ash
Facebook: facebook.com/CRAFTliterary/
Twitter: twitter.com/CraftLiterary
Gwinnett County Public Library & Atlanta Writers Club Present

WRITER’S WORKSHOP

WITH JOURNALIST DREW JUBERA

Lilburn Branch
Meeting Room
4817 Church Street
Lilburn, GA 30047

December 16th
1:30 pm

Drew Jubera is a five-time Pulitzer-nominated journalist who has written for The New York Times, ESPN The Magazine, Esquire, Texas Monthly, CNN.com and many other major publications.

He has been on the staff of newspapers and magazines around the country and is the author of Must Win: A Season of Survival for a Town and Its Team and is the creator of “Last Chance U,” a sports documentary series on Netflix.

Free and Open to the Public. Please RSVP to events@gwinnettpl.org.
Workshop

DIY Tools, Tips, and Tricks of the Trade Publishing

If you’ve been considering the do-it-yourself publishing route, then this workshop is for you!

You’ll get the tools you need to break into the highly accessible indie publishing world from agent and author Sally Apokedak.

Her workshop will focus on self-publishing for the novel writer, with tips for the picture book writer, too.

November 4 from 1 to 3:30 pm

Five Forks Branch
2780 Five Forks Trickum Road
Lawrenceville, GA 30044

This program is free and open to the public. Bring your questions about self-publishing and a short query or pitch. If time permits, Sally will give feedback on queries/pitches.
North Georgia Reads

Featuring New York Times Bestselling Author

Sharyn McCrumb

Friday, November 3rd
at 6:30 pm
Hall County Library System & Piedmont Regional Library System
6488 Spout Springs Road
Flowery Branch, GA 30542

Saturday, November 4th
at 6:00 pm
Cobb County Public Library
Switzer Branch
266 Roswell Street NE
Marietta, GA 30060

Sunday, November 5th
at 3:00 pm
Gwinnett County Public Library
Norcross Cultural Arts & Community Center
10 College Street
Norcross, GA 30071

Sharyn McCrumb is best known for her Appalachian “Ballad” novels, including the New York Times best sellers The Ballad of Tom Dooley, The Ballad of Frankie Silver, and Ghost Riders, which won the Wilma Dykeman Award for Literature from the East Tennessee Historical Society and the national Audie Award for Best Recorded Book.

Her latest novel, The Unquiet Grave, takes place in 19th century West Virginia and is based on the true story of one of the strangest murder trials in American history — the case of the Greenbrier Ghost.

All programs are FREE and open to the public. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

For more information, call 770-978-5154 or email events@gwinnettpl.org.

North Georgia Reads is a collaborative partnership between neighboring library systems that brings bestselling authors to a community of 46 libraries in the region.
Event

Presented by Gwinnett County Public Library & Eddie Owen Presents

Radney Foster
Book & CD Release Party

Saturday, November 18th at 8 pm

Eddie Owen Presents at the Red Clay Music Foundry
3116 Main Street | Duluth, GA 30096

Radney Foster is a profound songwriter. When he hasn't been delivering his own vocals to songs he's written, he's been offering his prolific writing chops to some of the biggest names in Nashville and Texas. Foster has had thirteen songs on the Billboard Hot Country Songs charts, including the Top ten hits ‘Just Call Me Lonesome’ (#10, 1992) and “Nobody Wins” (#2, 1993).

Foster’s newest work is For You to See the Stars published by Working Title Farm. He is releasing both an album and a book of the same name. They’ve inspired each other, and Foster says it’s up to you to decide which art form inspired the other first.

Books and CDs will be available for purchase.

Visit eddieowenpresents.com to purchase tickets.

Use promo code GwinnetLibrary to receive $5 off your ticket purchase.

We depend 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 Jennifer Wiggins 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: jennifer.wiggins1@aol.com.

Fiction Critique Group

Online

If you have difficulty in finding a critique group that meets at a convenient location and fits your schedule then you might consider the Atlanta Writers Club Fiction Online Critique Group. This group encompasses all genres of fiction writing from flash fiction to short story to novella to novels. All subject areas are welcome, although content warnings are appreciated. Group members are also encouraged to exchange information on any aspect of writing or publication, including query letters and self-publishing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Genre(s)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Mike Brown</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michaelkbrown22@yahoo.com">michaelkbrown22@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpharetta</td>
<td>All Genres</td>
<td>(starting Nov. 19th) Barnes &amp; Noble on North Point Parkway in Alpharetta on the 3rd Thursday of every month at 7p.m</td>
<td>Susan McBready</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sjmcb816@gmail.com">sjmcb816@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candler Park</td>
<td>Non-Fiction: Creative, Narrative, &amp; Memoir</td>
<td>Tues, 4-6p.m. @San Francisco Coffee 1660 Dekalb Avenue</td>
<td>Tara Coyt</td>
<td><a href="mailto:contact@taracoyt.com">contact@taracoyt.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckhead/ Midtown</td>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>4th Sat @11a.m.</td>
<td>Karen Holmes</td>
<td>k <a href="mailto:paulholmes@gmail.com">paulholmes@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conyers</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Every other Tues, 6:00 @ Mandarin Garden</td>
<td>Nancy Fletcher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ncflitcher50@gmail.com">ncflitcher50@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Every other Thursday at Choco Late, 2094 North Decatur Rd.</td>
<td>Jonathan Grant</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jandjgrant@bellsouth.net">jandjgrant@bellsouth.net</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>Adult &amp; YA Fiction</td>
<td>Sunday, 1:00PM, monthly</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>Adult, YA Fiction &amp; Memoirs</td>
<td>Sunday 10am, fortnightly</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>Fiction</td>
<td>2nd &amp; 4th Wed, 6:30 pm @ Athens Pizza, 1341 Clairmont Road</td>
<td>Ruth Gresh</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hrgresh@hotmail.com">hrgresh@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunwoody</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st and 3rd Fri, 1-3 p.m. @ Georgia Perimeter College Library Building, Rm3100</td>
<td>Gelia Dolcimascolo</td>
<td>770-274-5246</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrenceville/Snellville</td>
<td>Novel, Short Story &amp; Memoir</td>
<td>1st Saturday 9:30AM - noon @ Member's Home</td>
<td>Kerry Denney</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kerryssii@bellsouth.net">kerryssii@bellsouth.net</a></td>
<td>Wait List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loganville</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>1st Saturday of each month at 9:30AM</td>
<td>Mike Brown</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michaelkbrown22@yahoo.com">michaelkbrown22@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marietta</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st &amp; 3rd Tues. 6:30-8:00PM</td>
<td>Linda Sullivan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lindasullivan3@gmail.com">lindasullivan3@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Wait List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poncey-Highlands</td>
<td>All genera</td>
<td>2nd &amp; 4th Monday Manuel’s Tavern email John for time</td>
<td>John Whittemore</td>
<td><a href="mailto:thegridbook@gmail.com">thegridbook@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st &amp; 3rd Thursdays @ The Heron House</td>
<td>Carolyn Graham</td>
<td><a href="mailto:majesty.journey@gmail.com">majesty.journey@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Every Tues 6:45 - 9:00PM @ Member’s Home</td>
<td>George Weinstein</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gjweinstein@yahoo.com">gjweinstein@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Twice monthly, Mon, 10:30AM - 12:30Pm @ Roswell Library</td>
<td>Jeremy Logan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jeremylogan.author@gmail.com">jeremylogan.author@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Membership Renewal—What to Expect

The AWC has an automated system for tracking memberships and alerting members when it's time to renew. You will receive an e-mail from the system (showing Officer Emeritus George Weinstein’s e-mail address george@atlantawritersclub.org) one month before your membership expiration date. If you haven't renewed within a week, you will receive another e-mail every seven days, with a final e-mail one week from expiration. If the expiration date for your membership passes without renewal, the system will mark your membership as expired. It is a good e-mail practice to check your spam/junk folder to see if any legitimate e-mail has been misfiled there, possibly including the email you'll receive from george@atlantawritersclub.org prior to the expiration of your membership.

We appreciate your continued support of the Atlanta Writers Club. Your membership dues make it possible to bring fabulous speakers to our meetings, provide generous cash awards for our annual writing contest, and sponsor scholarships, literary prizes, and local writing festivals.
Membership Information – The Atlanta Writers Club

Regular membership dues are $50 per year per person. Students can join for $40 per year. Family members of active AWC members can join for $25 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, our members gather to listen and learn from two guest speakers who cover a broad range of topics and genres, and come to us from many facets of the literary world. Our speakers include published authors, literary agents, editors, playwrights and poets, just to name a few. Please refer to our list of upcoming guest speakers in this newsletter.

- **Workshops.** Your membership provides access to outstanding writing workshops. Some are free with membership and others are provided at a discounted price. Watch for announcements about upcoming workshops.

- **Twice-Yearly Writers Conferences.** This is your opportunity to spend time face to face with a literary agent or editor and have the chance to pitch your work. Conferences include agent Q & A panels, writing workshops, and a social gathering where you’ll get to meet and talk with the agents and editors in a more informal setting.

- **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 read each other’s writings and recommend modifications.

- **Writing Contests With Cash Prizes.** At least one contest is held each year with a variety of formats and topics.

- **Monthly Newsletter.** Our monthly newsletter, the eQuill, provides the opportunity for our members to advertise their book launches and book signings to a wide reaching mailing list. And, it will keep you up to date with news about writing opportunities and literary events across the Southeast and beyond.

- **Decatur Book Festival Participation.** The Atlanta Writers Club has a tent at the Decatur Book Festival each year, that’s staffed by member volunteers. It’s a great way to get involved in the largest book festival in the area.

Potential members are invited to attend a first meeting as our guest. After that, we’re sure you will want to become a member and take advantage of all the benefits that come with it. You may join The Atlanta Writers Club at any of our events or meetings, or pay on line at our website using PayPal at http://www.atlantawritersclub.org/membership.html.

If you have additional questions, contact AWC President Ron Aiken at ron@atlantawritersclub.org
Membership Form

? New Membership [Individual] [Family]

? Renewal [Individual] [Family]

If this is a Renewal, please update your information?

First Name: __________________________ Last Name: __________________________
Cell Phone: __________________________ Other Phone: __________________________
Email: ______________________________ Alternate Email: ______________________

First Name: __________________________ Last Name: __________________________
Cell Phone: __________________________ Other Phone: __________________________
Email: ______________________________ Alternate Email: ______________________

? For additional family members, please use additional forms?

I would like to become involved with the AWC as a: ? Meeting Volunteer ? Conference Volunteer
? Decatur Book Festival Volunteer ? Other (please specify):

AWC MEMBERSHIP DUES

Individual [$50.00]: $___________
Family [add family members for $25.00 each]: $___________

Membership is for ONE YEAR

Student [$40.00]: $___________

Make checks payable to: Atlanta Writers Club

Tax Deductible Donation: $___________

Total: $___________

Mail check and form to: Atlanta Writers Club
C/O Ron Aiken, Treasurer
155 Glen Eagle Way
McDonough, GA 30253

The Atlanta Writers Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.

Name: ____________________________ donated $ __________ to the Atlanta Writers Club.

Date: ____________________________

No goods or services were provided in exchange for or in association with this donation.

? Please keep this portion of the form as you receipt?