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.

**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

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**Events in January**

20\textsuperscript{th} Monthly AWC Meeting

27\textsuperscript{th} Brad Taylor talk and book signing

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**Please note:** The January meeting will be held at our usual location at the Georgia State University, Dunwoody campus.

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**Between newsletters there’s FaceBook.**
January 20th meeting

Bobbi Kornblit - Member Spotlight
Brian Panowich - 1st Guest Speaker
Marilyn Baron and Linda Joyce – 2nd Guest Speakers

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Year in Review

2017

The Atlanta Writers Club’s objectives are to:

- Promote and sponsor creative educational activities for writers;
- Train members to write and develop to their full aesthetic creative capabilities;
- Present open forums for discussion on topics of importance to those interested in the advancement of the arts; and,
- Promote advancement of literary art throughout the region.

It’s informative to look at the AWC’s charter in evaluating our activities. Here’s a look at what the Atlanta Writers Club accomplished in 2017 and some of what is planned for 2018.

Yvonne Green—MEMBERSHIP

The core of the Atlanta Writers Club is its members. The AWC has almost 700 writers, (677 paid members and 20, lifetime members so honored because of their extraordinary service to the club) which is about the same membership level as last year. Our members have diverse writing backgrounds across every genre, with traditionally and self-published authors, those seeking first-time publication, and others who write just for the sheer pleasure of it. Some members are bestselling authors, have more than ten published books, short stories, or articles in major journals and publications; or have won local, state, or national awards. The AWC is proud of its members' accomplishments and looks forward to sharing in their further successes in 2018.

Michael K. Brown—COMMUNITY OUTREACH

For several years, the Atlanta Writers Club has partnered with the Gwinnett County Public Library in an effort to build and grow connections between the writing and reading community. In July, the GCPL and the AWC cohosted Michael Buchanan’s screenwriting workshop. The event attracted an over-flow crowd of more than 200 participants, making it one of our most heavily attended workshops. In December, GCPL and AWC cohosted acclaimed journalist and author Drew Jubera as the featured speaker at our annual Holiday Gathering. The GCPL is very supportive in other ways, as well, providing library facilities for our use when our regular meeting location at Georgia State University’s Dunwoody campus is unavailable. In turn, the AWC offers jointly sponsored events, free and open to the general public. The Atlanta Writers Club appreciates the Gwinnett County Public Library’s support and we will continue to pursue ways to enhance that relationship for the benefit of the community. If you know of other ways the AWC can become more visible to the writing and reading community, please send an email to:

michaelkbrown22@yahoo.com
Year in Review

2017

Yvonne Green—COMMUNITY OUTREACH
AWC community efforts include supporting and sponsoring the following organizations and events:

- Decatur Book Festival
- Georgia State University—Townsend Award and student scholarship
- Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta
- SCAD—a scholarship for a student to attend the writers conferences
- Milton Literary Festival
- Reforming Arts—provides arts and humanities higher education opportunities to women imprisoned in Georgia, empowering them to critically examine their experiences and develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviors to support successful reentry.

AWC will continue to seek outreach opportunities where we can promote advancement of literary art throughout the region.

George Weinstein—ATLANTA WRITERS CONFERENCES
In 2017, we held two Atlanta Writers Conferences, welcoming a total of 357 participants from across the U.S., as well as some international writers. At each conference, 12 literary agents and acquisition editors critiqued manuscript samples, responded to pitches, paired up to make query letters more impactful, and provided insightful responses during two Q&A panels. In parallel with the agent and editor activities, educational sessions focused on legal issues for writers, editing, building community, improving one’s writing craft, and gleaning wisdom from critiques. Agents and editors in May and November 2017 concurred that our Atlanta Writers Conference is "The gold standard of writing conferences."

The next Atlanta Writers Conference will be on May 4-5, 2018. Details about this conference are included elsewhere in the eQuill.

Valerie Connors—SPEAKERS
In 2017, the Atlanta Writers Club offered ten monthly meetings, three workshops, and as always, our annual June picnic. We had ten Member Minute talks, nineteen full-length speaker presentations, a critique workshop, a screenwriting workshop, and an editing workshop. Counting the panel discussion in April, we heard from thirty-five different voices. Presenters spoke about historical fiction, mysteries/thrillers, biography, science fiction, cartooning, literary fiction, screenwriting, and poetry. We learned something about public speaking, marketing, traditional publishing, self-publishing, and doing research. I hope that our 2017 programs provided inspiration, education, and entertainment.

Looking ahead to the 2018 calendar, we'll hear from speakers on a wide range of topics including: finding your story, writing a short anthology, using real-life people and events in fiction, and inviting diversity, just to name a few. At the spring workshop, we’ll learn how to write a non-fiction book proposal, something we haven’t touched on for a while. And that’s just the first half of the year! Watch the newsletter and website for updates on the rest of the 2018 program.
Clay Ramsey—WRITING COMPETITION
There were 47 competitors in the 2017 Atlanta Writers Club Annual Writing Contest. 8 members submitted work to be considered for the Rick Bragg Prize for Non-fiction, 11 for the Natasha Trethewey Prize for Poetry, and 28 for the Terry Kay Prize for Fiction. Patricia Martin Holt won the non-fiction prize for "Honoring Jesse." Stan Cohen's "An Urban 7:16 AM" won the poetry prize, and Jill Cobb's story "That Point in a Relationship" won the fiction prize. The first place winners were given a plaque, $300 in cash, and for the first time, publication in The Blue Mountain Review. The contest continues to be popular among our members as a challenge for their writing skills and an opportunity to enhance their writing credentials.

Jennifer Wiggins—VOLUNTEERS
Appreciate good people. They are hard to come by. Unknown
Atlanta Writers Club events wouldn’t run as smoothly without the support of its members, and a heartfelt thank you to all those who took the time to volunteer at the monthly meetings, the spring and fall writers conferences and the Decatur Book Festival. This year we had so many members volunteer for the book festival we had to turn some away because all spots were filled. Again, thank you to our members who realize it takes many hands to make the events we enjoy run well.

Wishing everyone a happy and successful New Year, and I hope to see you at AWC events.

Edited by Ron Aiken
Monthly Meetings

January Speakers

Bobbi Kornblit
Award-winning author Bobbi Kornblit's second novel, *Red Carpet Rivals*, launches on January 14 in time for the Hollywood awards season. The longtime AWC member penned a book that revolves around intriguing relationships in the glamorous world of the motion picture business. She walked down many red carpets with her husband who was a top movie executive.

Her debut novel, *Shelter from the Texas Heat*, set during the "Kennedy Camelot Years" to the present, received honors, including the NABE Best Book Women’s Fiction, Indie Excellence Award for Multicultural Fiction, the Georgia Author of the Year First Fiction finalist, and was endorsed by the American Library Association.

Bobbi holds a Master of Arts in Professional Writing degree from the Department of English at Kennesaw State University and graduated with a B.A. from The University of Texas at Austin. She currently teaches advanced grammar courses at universities and companies. She is a former journalist in Atlanta and previously worked in advertising agencies mainly in Los Angeles.

Bobbi Kornblit is a frequent speaker at book clubs and literary festivals. In 2016 she was inducted into the Georgia Writers Registry administered by the Georgia Council of the Arts. For more information, visit BobbiKornblit.com

Brian Panowich is an award winning author, a Georgia firefighter, and a father to four incredible children. His first novel, *BULL MOUNTAIN* (Putnam Books) topped the best thriller list of 2015 on Apple iBooks, placed in the top twenty best books of 2015 on Amazon, and went on to win the International Thriller Writers Award (2016) for Best First Novel, as well as the Pat Conroy Award (formally the SIBA Award) (2016) for Best Mystery. The book was also nominated for the Barry Award, the Anthony Award, The Georgia Townsend Book Prize, and was a finalist for the 2016 *LA Times Book Prize*. *BULL MOUNTAIN* was also recently selected for the coveted *BOOKS ALL GEORGIANS SHOULD READ* list by the Georgia Center of the Book, and has been the recipient of several foreign press awards.

Brian also placed second for the 2016 Georgia Author of the Year Award in the Best Debut Category. His second novel, *LIKE LIONS*, is slated for a 2018 release followed by *YEAR OF THE ROOSTER* due in 2019.
Marilyn Baron writes in a variety of genres, from women’s fiction to historical romantic thrillers and romantic suspense to paranormal/fantasy. Her latest book, *The Siege: A Novel*, a mainstream women’s novel set in Italy and Greece, was released January 8, 2018, is her 14th novel with *The Wild Rose Press, Inc.* and her 23rd work of fiction. Amazon Encore republished her psychic suspense novel *Sixth Sense* in 2015. She is also one of six authors of *Love Around the Table*, a short story anthology published November 1, 2017. She’s published five short stories with TWB Press.

Marilyn’s received writing awards in Single Title, Suspense Romance, Novel With Strong Romantic Elements and Paranormal/Fantasy Romance. She is The 2017 Finalist for the Georgia Author of the Year Awards in the Romance Category for *Stumble Stones: A Novel*.

A public relations consultant in Atlanta, Marilyn graduated with a BS in Journalism (Public Relations) and a minor in English (Creative Writing) from the University of Florida. She worked in Public Relations for AT&T in Atlanta for 13 years before starting her own PR firm.

She serves on the 2017-2018 Roswell Reads Steering Committee and the Atlanta Authors committee and she sat on an Atlanta Writers Club panel at the 2017 AJC-Decatur Book Festival.

Read more about Marilyn’s books, short stories, and other works of fiction at [www.marilynbaron.com](http://www.marilynbaron.com).

Amazon Best Selling author and four-time RONE Award Finalist Linda Joyce writes women’s fiction and romance with 10 books to her name since 2013. She’s published through *The Wild Rose Press* and *Word Works Press*. Also, you’ll also find her poetry and short memoirs within the pages of a few different anthologies.

Linda believes in service and volunteering. She received the Service Award from the Heartland Romance Authors and was the newsletter editor for the Missouri Writers Guild. She served as Vice President of Whispering Prairie Press and the Creative Director of Kansas City Voices literary and art magazine. In Georgia, Linda served on the board of Southeastern Writers Association. Currently, she is the Hospitality Chairperson for Georgia Romance Writers.

A big fan of jazz and blues, Linda attributes her love of those musical genres to her Southern roots, which run deep in Louisiana. She’s lived coast to coast courtesy of her father’s Air Force career. She wrote her first manuscript when she was twelve while living in Japan. In addition to being a book addict, Linda’s a foodie, an RVer, loves to kayak, and movies. She lives in Atlanta with her husband and General Beauregard, their four-legged boy, who believes Linda is his pet.
Monthly Meetings

Please Note: The January 20th meeting will be held at the Georgia State, Dunwoody Campus.

The pre-meeting mixer will be from 12:30 to 1:30, and it will feature a one-sentence story competition (maximum of 40 words).

A keyword will be provided and it must be used in the sentence. The winner will receive a $25 gift certificate from a local independent book seller.

Future Guests & Events
2018

January 20th
Bobbi Kornblit - Member Minute
Brian Panowich – 1st Guest Speaker
Marilyn Baron and Linda Joyce – 2nd Guest Speakers

February 17th
Marsha Cornelius – Member Minute
Christopher Swann – 1st Guest Speaker
Marion L. Thomas – 2nd Guest Speaker

March 17th
T.M. (Mike Brown) - Member Spotlight
Sansanee and David Fulmer – 1st Guest Speakers
Kim Wright Wiley – 2nd Guest Speaker
Monthly Meetings
December Photos by Ron Aiken

Top left: Charlene Ball
Top right: Drew Jubera
Bottom: Crowd
Register now to attend the May 4-5, 2018 Atlanta Writers Conference, at the Westin Atlanta Airport Hotel.

http://atlantawritersconference.com/about/

Whether you are...

- In search of an agent or a publisher
- Working on a manuscript and in need of feedback
- Seeking to learn more about the writing craft and/or publishing business
- Working on a screenplay
- Trying to build your network of industry contacts

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

Want to get published?

The May 4-5, 2018 Atlanta Writers Conference offers you access to a group of 12 editors and agents seeking manuscripts for every major fiction genre and nonfiction topic, as well as graphic novels and poetry and short-story collections. More than 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. We'll even help you learn how to turn your book into a screenplay.

NEW for this Conference: to help you get your work ready for the manuscript critique—or just get detailed feedback on the start of your book to help in its development—you can now submit your materials in February 2018 to a professional freelancer editor of your choice and receive detailed editorial feedback (line-by-line, content, and developmental editing). This "prep critique" is free to those who register for the Conference All-Activities Package deal.

Agents and editors at the May 4-5, 2018 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 new workshop on turning your book into a screenplay, presented by Emmy-nominated screenwriter, producer, and educator Patricia Meyer
* Presentations on the craft and business of writing from local best-selling authors
* Networking with presenters and participants
* Prize giveaways for free manuscript and query letters critiques, pitches, and more

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

**Friday, May 4:**
* Query letter critique panels that pair one editor and one agent who will help you get your query in shape for the Saturday pitches
* Screenwriting workshop by Emmy-nominated writer, producer, and educator Patricia Meyer, to give you the tools to turn your book into a screenplay
* Free talks by Patricia Meyer on creating three-dimensional characters and the art of rewriting
* Q&A panel with our six guest editors
* Social mixer with all twelve editors and agents and our workshop presenter

**Saturday, May 5:**
* 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 by best-selling local authors Emily Carpenter and Buzz Bernard on writing craft, working with publicists, lessons learned about traditional publishing with large, mid-size, and small presses, and the tools you'll need to be a successful author in the current environment
* Award ceremony and prize giveaways

Registration is now open!

For full details about Conference activities:  
[http://atlantawritersconference.com/the-conference](http://atlantawritersconference.com/the-conference)

For pricing options:  
[http://atlantawritersconference.com/the-cost](http://atlantawritersconference.com/the-cost)

Learn about our guest 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 May 4-5, 2018 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 May 6, 2018, you can join/renew as part of your Conference registration—you do not need to do this as a two-step process.
AWC 2018 Writing Contest

Guidelines

ELIGIBILITY:
1. The AWC 2018 Writing Contest is open to: All current, paid club members. Please check your membership status before submitting your entry. (To join AWC, please contact the Membership VP, Yvonne Green, at ytgreen@bellsouth.net.)
2. Submissions must be original, unpublished, and previously un-awarded work.
3. Entrants may submit only one piece to only one category per contest year.

DEADLINE:
Midnight, March 17, 2018. Submissions received after this date will automatically be ineligible.

AWARDS:
Each award carries a $300 cash prize, a plaque, and publication in The Blue Mountain Review. Winners will be announced at our club meeting on April 21, 2018.

CONTEST CATEGORIES:
Terry Kay Prize for Fiction (Maximum, 3000 words)
Rick Bragg Prize for Nonfiction (Maximum, 3000 words)
Natasha Trethewey Prize for Poetry (Maximum, 90 lines)

CONTEST GUIDELINES:
Manuscript Format. Failure to adhere to the following format will result in disqualification.
- DO NOT place your name anywhere on the manuscript entry
- Only Word files (.docx) will be accepted.
- Font: 12 pt, Black, Times New Roman
- Margins: 1 inch
- Line spacing: double – yes, even for poetry.
- White background (no colors, photos, graphics or images)
- Page size & layout: 8-1/2 x 11; Portrait
- First page: Title and Prize Category should appear in the upper left corner

PAPER ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.
Guidelines, cont.

SUBMISSION RULES:

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

Send ONE ENTRY and the corresponding Standard Submission Form (SSF) to chramse@gmail.com.

There is no template for the SSF; you create the document yourself (see below) and send it as a separate attachment. The entry and SSF both must be sent as attached Word documents (.docx). The SSF is used for identification purposes by Clay Ramsey only. Judges never know the identity of any author; they see only the blind entry document.

IMPORTANT: Name the documents by title, i.e. Title.docx and SSF-Title.docx

Example: if the entry title is Moon Fire, the document should be named Moon Fire.docx (this is the document that will be sent to the judges) and the SSF should be named SSF-Moon Fire.docx (this is the document that will be seen only by Clay Ramsey).

Standard Submission Form (SSF):

The SSF must include the following information:

- Author’s Name
- Prize Category
- Title of Entry
- Word Count (Line Count for poetry)
- Named the document: SSF-Title.docx

Attach the entry document and your SSF document to an email addressed to Clay at chramse@gmail.com. Your EMAIL MESSAGE MUST INCLUDE:

Subject Line: AWC 2018 Writing Contest

Your name, phone number, prize category, title

Example:

Dear Clay,

I have attached [Title] for the [Prize Category] and the corresponding SSF.

Thank you,

[Your name]
[Your phone number]
When I asked if you’d do a Q&A for the eQuill, you sheepishly told me you weren’t even the best writer in your family. Your mother was. Was she an influence?

In a roundabout way, yes. When I was younger, I couldn’t watch TV during the week and I would literally devour books instead. We’d would go to the public library every weekend, and my mother would take out books and I would always try to emulate her reading habits. My mom is a professor at Spelman, and she writes so elegantly, motivating me to step up my game. But honestly, I got into writing because it was therapeutic. I was in a very dark, lonely place at one point and a friend recommended I keep a journal, put my thoughts on the page as a kind of therapy. I did, but was uncomfortable expressing my most personal, intimate thoughts in that manner. So in order to facilitate the process, I created fictional characters and had them tackle experiences similar to the ones I was dealing with and let them flesh it out. That’s how I got started writing—looking for relief through therapy. Creating fictional characters that were able to deal with similar experiences. And stories grew from that.

At what point in your life was that? Were you a teenager?

No, I was in my early 20s. I was in a PhD program at the University of Georgia studying psychology when I got into some legal trouble, and was sent to federal prison for cybercrimes. At that point, I needed to figure out how to channel my energy to deal with the issues that led me to breaking the law.

How did you find the Atlanta Writers and how did we help you?

I didn’t have a lot of friends who were passionate about writing, so when I was released, I needed to find a group to support and grow my rekindled love for writing and books. First I joined YouTube, corresponding with likeminded people, but I really needed to meet local people I could see, touch, feel and joke around with and talk books. That’s when I learned about the Atlanta Writers Club. The picnic this past summer was the first event I attended and I just had an awesome time; met a lot of great people. I was still trying to figure out whether to self-publish first or travel the traditional route to publishing, and I got a lot of great insight from some of the members. They mentioned the Club’s benefits—the workshops, speakers offering insight into craft and publishing industry. I just attended my first workshop at the writers conference in November, and man it was .....I mean I took pages and pages of notes. I learned so much about the industry and importantly to me, how self-published authors are looked at from traditional authors. The challenges I should expect to encounter as a professional author. So it was invaluable.

Is your manuscript completed?

It is. I published it December 9th.

Congratulations.
Thank you so much.
What’s the name of your novel?
Maxed Out.

Based on the characters you created to hide your inner turmoil?
Yes! Spread over multiple characters. I was going through a lot. The protagonists are a college couple about the age I was when I had my difficulties, and man it was therapeutic to get some of that stuff out, and the book itself, just writing was a benefit to me. That was the real joy, the real present was writing the book, and it’ll be an added bonus if others can take something from it and see value in it and relate to it and understand that they are not alone in some of these things that we go through. I think people always make it seem their situations are unique, and no one can relate when they’re the same except packaged differently. So hopefully when people read the book they can say man, I remember going through the same thing, or I am going through this now and see how my characters play it out—the good decisions and the bad.

Why did you choose to self-publish instead of going the traditional route to publishing?
I’m very hands-on; independent. I really value creative control, and I didn’t want my story to be chopped up to the point where it lost the spirit and soul I put into it. I’m finishing my MBA next year so I’m very much a savvy young guy, the millennial generation, the internet, social media, and I just started piecing things together. One of my mentors is traditionally published and he was telling me how the landscape has drastically changed from where you had to get by a few gatekeepers and now the gate is less guarded, more open. You write your stories well, couple that with strong marketing and eventually readers will find you.

What are your marketing efforts?
I have a website, calwrites.com, and I’ve established a great readership where I have an email list of beta readers. I sent them some early chapters and got invaluable critiques from them on what worked, what didn’t. I’m very active on social media; Instagram, Facebook. I believe you have to have digital and social media presence to let readers know that you’re around. I just had an article in “The Atlanta Voice’s” December 15th edition. I sent them a press kit, followed up with a few phone calls. This is the kind of legwork self-published authors have to do ...

That goes for traditionally published authors as well.
I agree. Either route you take, you have to have a marketing plan.

So, is “Maxed Out” a standalone novel or the first book of a series? What do you have in the works now?
“Maxed Out” is part of a series called “The Brick Road Series.” The Series revolves around a community and a deviant, nefarious website. I got the idea from “Silk Road”
that was a website where you could buy illegal stuff from credit cards to drugs. Brick Road is like that but it’s also the name of an Atlanta neighborhood. And so the series will tell the stories of neighborhood people tapping into this online web site for whatever kind of deviousness they want to plan on.

**Sounds exciting. I assume the setting is in Atlanta.**
Yes, it is very much so. It’s said you should write what you know, especially a new writer learning the craft. At the November workshop, Paul Levine said the south and other regions outside New York City are largely forgotten by the big publishing houses. That’s too bad, because I believe we have such a vibrant culture down here, and I want to highlight the things I enjoy about Atlanta and the things I see here I don’t find in other places I’ve been to.

**Has your Mother read your book?**
She has (laughter).
What does she think? Five stars?
She hasn’t rated me, but I will say I’m already hard at work on my second novel, and she said that she’s seen my progression as a writer. And that is what I tell people, a lot of initial efforts are going to challenge your skill, but get it on paper. That’s how you’re going to improve as a writer. I’m already starting to see the fruits of that. You get better.

**I am looking forward to reading Maxed Out, Cal, and thanks for spending time with me to talk about it.**
“I don’t really remember much about my mom.”
That’s the beginning of Amien Hicks’ short story – and I think it’s a grabber. Amien is a student at KIPP STRIVE Academy in Atlanta. I was his mentor last spring in a writing program called Scribes.

Fourteen middle school students wrote short pieces of historical fiction on inventors of color, and Amien was assigned George Washington Carver. He started with Carver’s childhood, when slave raiders stole his mother, and moved through his struggles to obtain an education. Carver overcame racism at every step to become an inventor, college professor, and the most famous African-American of his time. Other Scribes wrote about Garrett Morgan, inventor of the traffic signal, and Charles Drew, who pioneered methods for storing blood plasma for transfusion.

This was the fifth student I’ve mentored, and every time has been an eye opener. Not all the stories are historical fiction. With an agriculture theme, my Scribe wrote about a budding peach tree that blossomed despite being bullied by other trees. When the subject was Atlanta institutions, my student wrote about a CNN reporter who turns back an alien attack on New York City. Yes, their imaginations know no limits.

The Wren’s Nest, the Joel Chandler Harris residence that’s now a museum in West End Atlanta, created and sponsors the Scribes program. Harris, author of the Uncle Remus tales, lived in the Queen Anne style home until his death in 1908.

The mentoring program pairs writing professionals, or adults who simply love to write, with middle school students. The mentor spends around an hour a week for a dozen weeks working with the student in a writing lab at KIPP STRIVE Academy or Brown Middle School – both Atlanta public schools in West End. Mentors have been teachers, journalists, college students majoring in English or journalism, social media managers for corporations and public broadcast writers.

How deeply involved does a mentor become? That depends on the student. Kalin Thomas, the program director, provides daily goals for each session, so nobody goes off track. My last Scribe is a confident writer, so mainly I helped with...
looking for mentors, cont.

the online research and made minor grammar fixes. Some of my other charges procrastinated, tried to play computer games or agonized over every phrase. Sound familiar? Mentors see a lot of themselves in these young writers.

A few months after my mentoring duties ended, I saw Amien again at the Decatur Book Festival. The Scribes’ stories had been bound together into a soft-cover book titled “Bright Ideas,” and a launch party was held in a hotel ballroom. The Scribes sat down at a long table and their parents and friends lined up to get books autographed. These middle school students had achieved something special. They were published authors. It was a proud moment for the Scribes – and for me. Being a mentor is not without sacrifice, and not every student is easy. But every session has been gratifying. The Wren’s Nest always needs mentors, so if you’re interested, contact Kalin Thomas at kalin@wrensnest.org. If you’d like to hear more about my experiences, send a message to rvance52@hotmail.com.
Events

THE WREN’S NEST invites you to the debut of

BEYOND BOOKS
A monthly literary series, profiling the stories of published & unpublished writers.

Wednesday, January 10 / New Year, New Mayor
Mark Pendergrast:
City on the Verge

Wednesday, February 14 / Black History Month
Jim Auchmuty:
Class of ’65

Wednesday, March 14 / Women’s History Month
Tina McElroy Ansa:
Taking After Mudear

Wednesday, April 4 / Honoring the 50th Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s death
Jessica Handler:
Invisible Sisters

All events are 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. and are FREE to the public.
The Wren’s Nest is at 1050 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd., Atlanta 30310.

Stay connected for the Beyond Books calendar for the rest of 2018: www.wrensnest.org, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. Or contact Kalin Thomas, Program Director - kalin@wrensnest.org, 404-753-7735.
Events

Gwinnett County Public Library Presents

AJ Tata
Author, Retired
Brigadier General &
Political Commentator

January 6, 2018 at 7:00 pm
Prototype Prime
147 Technology Parkway #100 in Peachtree Corners

“The high-octane action scenes make this a must read for military thriller fans.”
- Publishers Weekly (Starred Review)

General Anthony J. Tata has more than three decades of public service as a military officer and in leadership roles at the county and state level. His last combat tour was as the Deputy Commanding General of the 10th Mountain Division and the Joint Task Force in Afghanistan, commanding nearly 25,000 troops.

Tata is the National Security Expert for One America News Network, appearing every Tuesday with Liz Wheeler on Tipping Point. He has also appeared as a regular guest on Fox News, NBC’s Today Show, and The CBS Early Show.

He is also an acclaimed novelist with nine fiction novels, including national bestsellers Foreign and Domestic, Three Minutes to Midnight, and Besieged.

Free and open to the public. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

GWINNETT COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

North Georgia Kids Read Presents

Carmen Deedy
New York Times Bestselling Author

John McCutcheon
Grammy Award Nominee

January 20 at 10:00 am
Cobb County Public Library System
Sewell Mill Library & Cultural Center
2051 Lower Roswell Road
Marietta, GA 30068

January 20 at 4:00 pm
Gwinnett County Public Library
at Christ the King Lutheran Church
5575 Peachtree Parkway
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

January 21 at 2:00 pm
Hall County Library System &
Piedmont Regional Library System
189 Bellview Street
Winder, GA 30680

Enjoy a live performance of stories and songs by beloved children's author Carmen Deedy and multiple Grammy nominated folk musician John McCutcheon.

North Georgia Reads was created to promote collaboration between neighboring library systems and to bring bestselling authors to a community of 46 libraries in the region. Free and open to the public. Books and audio will be available for purchase and signing.
Gwinnett County Public Library Presents

Brad Taylor
Ret. Special Forces Lt. Col. & NYT Bestselling Author

January 27 at 7:00 pm
Prototype Prime
147 Technology Parkway #100, Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

Join New York Times bestselling author Brad Taylor for a book talk and signing!

Brad served for more than 21 years in the U.S. Army, retiring as a Special Forces Lieutenant Colonel.

In 2011, Brad published his debut novel, One Rough Man, which was an immediate success and launched the Pike Logan series. Now with more than 11 installments and more than 1.6 million copies sold, the series has consistently hit the New York Times bestseller list.

When not writing, he serves as a security consultant on asymmetric threats for various agencies.

Free and open to the public. Books will be available for purchase and signing.
Ongoing Opportunities

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>Meeting Time/Place</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Mike Brown</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:michaelkbrown22@yahoo.com">michaelkbrown22@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alpharetta</td>
<td>All Genres</td>
<td>(starting Nov. 19th) Barnes &amp; Noble on North Point Parkway in Alpharetta on the 3rd</td>
<td>Susan McBrearty</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:sjmcb816@gmail.com">sjmcb816@gmail.com</a></td>
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<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>Open</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:contact@taracoyt.com">contact@taracoyt.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Buckhead/Midtown</td>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>4th Sat @11a.m.</td>
<td>Karen Holmes</td>
<td>Full</td>
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<td>k <a href="mailto:paulholmes@gmail.com">paulholmes@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Conyers</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Every other Tues, 6:00 @ Mandarin Garden</td>
<td>Nancy Fletcher</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:ncflcher50@gmail.com">ncflcher50@gmail.com</a></td>
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<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>Open</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:jandjgrant@bellsouth.net">jandjgrant@bellsouth.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>Adult &amp; YA Fiction</td>
<td>Sunday, 1:00PM, monthly</td>
<td>Ricky Jacobs</td>
<td>Wait List</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>Adult, YA Fiction, &amp; Memoirs</td>
<td>Sunday 10am, fortnightly</td>
<td>Ricky Jacobs</td>
<td>Wait List</td>
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<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>Open</td>
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<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, Rm3100</td>
<td>Gelia Dolcimascolo</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<td>770-274-5246</td>
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<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>Wait List</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:kerryssii@bellsouth.net">kerryssii@bellsouth.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Loganville</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>1st Saturday of each month at 9:30AM</td>
<td>Mike Brown</td>
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<td>Marietta</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st &amp; 3rd Tues. 6:30-8:00PM</td>
<td>Linda Sullivan</td>
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<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>
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<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>1st &amp; 3rd Thursdays @ The Heron House</td>
<td>Carolyn Graham</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Every Tues 6:45 - 9:00PM @ Member's Home</td>
<td>George Weinstein</td>
<td>Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>All genres</td>
<td>Twice monthly, Mon,10:30AM - 12:30Pm @ Roswell Library</td>
<td>Jeremy Logan</td>
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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](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?