



November 2005 Issue

Share Opinions, Writing, and
Questions All in One Sitting

Next Meeting: November 19, 2005

Special Starting Time (November only)

- **11:30 – 1:00** *Outreach Program Rehearsal*: Help critique a seminar created to inspire new and struggling writers (deli-style lunch will be served).
- **1:00 – 1:15** *Potluck Nosh*: Bring your favorite snack.
- **1:15 – 1:30** *Share Your Writing*: Read a short work of two minutes or less.
- **1:30 – 2:15** *Guest Speaker*: Jedwin Smith, two-time Pulitzer Prize nominee and journalist, will discuss the writing and publication of non-fiction.
- **2:15 – 2:30** *Club Business*: Fall Contest entries are due.
- **2:30– 3:00** *Our Turn*: Writing query letters.

The Atlanta Writers Club was 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 judged contests for our members and host expert speakers from the worlds of writing, publishing, and entertainment.

NEW MEETING LOCATION: Sandy Springs Regional Library Meeting Room: 395 Mount Vernon Highway, Sandy Springs, GA 30328. (404) 303-6130. The library is one mile north of I-285 and west of GA 400. For detailed directions, look inside this issue, view our website, or go to <http://mapsonus.switchboard.com>

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.atlantawritersclub.org

2005-2006 Schedule of Saturday Club Meetings (1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.):

- **September 17, 2005** Patrice Dickey, motivational speaker on creativity
- **October 15, 2005** James A. Moore, horror writer
- **November 19, 2005** Jedwin Smith, journalist, nonfiction author, two-time Pulitzer Prize nominee
- **December 17, 2005** Shelia P. Moses, award-winning novelist and biographer
- **January 21, 2006** Peter Bowerman, freelance writer and motivational speaker
- **February 18, 2006** Laurie Abkemeier, nonfiction literary agent for DeFiore & Company
- **March 18, 2006** Spoken Magazine (members read their works) hosted by Kathleen Mainland
- **April 15, 2006** Maralys Wills, author in six genres, award-winning educator
- **May 20, 2006** Darnell Arnoult, poet and novelist

Deadline for the December E-Quill is November 25th

Contact E-Quill Editor: George Weinstein, gjweinstein@yahoo.com, 770-552-5887

WRITE IT AS YOU SEE IT: “The Quest”**by George Weinstein, President**

After we complete our novel or non-fiction work, the quest for publication for many of us begins with the query letter. So much rides on that one sheet of paper that we’re devoting our entire November *Our Turn* segment to this document.

Whether we want to attract an agent, who’ll maneuver our project through the labyrinth of the big publishers, or we’ve decided to approach small and midsize publishing houses that accept un-agented manuscripts, we need to introduce our projects and ourselves. Novelists and creators of book-length non-fiction often find it easier to write 100,000 words of text than to compose the 200-word query.

In the brief query letter, our challenge is to intrigue agents or editors with the story so much that they’ll request to read the entire work, while selling them on our qualifications to not only write the manuscript but market it as well. Merely telling a good story no longer guarantees sales (“if you write it, they will buy”). You can author the finest book ever, but if the publishing world doesn’t believe that you’ll be able to convince others to purchase a copy of it, you might not get the chance to prove them wrong.

To top off this challenge, you have to do your best writing in the query letter. Otherwise, agents or editors—your first and toughest audience—won’t give you the opportunity to show what literary wonders you can perform throughout an entire manuscript.

If this sounds bleak, don’t despair. Thousands of writers have succeeded in their quest to get published. Through determination, perseverance and skill, they touched every step on the path, from query to contract to bestseller. During our November meeting, we’ll discuss ways to put your best foot forward.

See you at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, November 19, for our special outreach program rehearsal, followed by our regular meeting at 1:00 p.m.

OFFICER LIST FOR THE ATLANTA WRITERS CLUB—2005-2006 Term:**President:** George Weinstein, 770-552-5887**First VP:** Joan Harmon, 404-351-5691**Membership VP:** Kathleen Craft Boehmig, 678-393-9324**Treasurer:** Adrian Drost, 770-998-7015**Publicity VP:** Lu Ann Sodano, 770-739-4749**Secretary:** Angela Harvey, 404-578-2002**Contests VP:** Richard Anderson, 770-830-6131**Quill Editor:** George Weinstein, 770-552-5887**OTHER CONTACTS:****Historian/Photographer/By-Laws:** Adrian Drost, 770-998-7015**Copy Editor:** Richard Anderson, 770-830-6131**Poetry Editor:** Dorothy Worth, 404-636-1316**Speaker Interviews:** Joan Harmon, 404-351-5691**Achievements:** Fran Stewart, 770-682-7483

SPECIAL PRE-MEETING STARTS AT 11:30 a.m.

Kathleen Boehmig and George Weinstein will present their seminar entitled “The Will and Wherewithal to Write,” designed to encourage and attract new and struggling writers (to be given at bookstores, libraries, etc.). We need your critiques to make the hour-long presentation as effective as possible. As an incentive for helping us with your comments, we’ll provide a deli-style lunch!

NOSH & READ

Please bring your favorite snack to share during our pre-meeting social that begins at 1 p.m. At 1:15, members or guests can read a brief work they’ve written. Please limit your reading selection to two minutes or less.

NOVEMBER SPEAKER INTERVIEW

**“Lost in an Instant in the Uncertain Path of War”
by Joan F. Harmon, First VP**

On a recent tour of the Annapolis Naval Academy, I could see and hear the pride in the father who was the host of our tour. A career Naval man himself, but not good enough for the academy, he claims, he raised two sons who graduated from Annapolis. The older son, a Navy SEAL, graduated at the top of his class three years earlier. He was leaving the next week for his second tour of Iraq.

I thought to myself, What if his son doesn't return? All the hopes and dreams for a child who has been nurtured, encouraged, educated, and disciplined, so easily lost in an instant in the uncertain path of war. How would he deal with such a loss?

A month later, trying to secure a speaker for our November meeting, I came across Jedwin Smith, an *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reporter and editor (recommended by member Jim Stevens) who has written an account of how his family dealt with such a loss. Jedwin, the oldest of six children, tells the heart-wrenching account of his family’s struggle with the anger, guilt, grief, and denial of his younger brother's death. Jeffrey Smith was killed in Vietnam in 1968.

Come meet Jedwin Smith on Saturday, November 19 as he shares his experiences and observations of the journalistic world, his success as a published author, and his philosophic view of the writing world in general, along with the closure he secures in writing his memoir, *Our Brother's Keeper, My Family's Journey through Vietnam to Hell and Back*.

NOVEMBER OUR TURN

George Weinstein and Patrice Dickey will lead a discussion about writing effective query letters. Please bring examples of what’s worked for you and what hasn’t. Knowing what not to do is often as important as doing the right thing.

OCTOBER MEETING RECAP

by Kathleen Craft Boehmig, Membership VP

At our November meeting, acclaimed horror writer James Moore gave us a glimpse of the publishing world through the lens of his frightfully extensive experience and wicked humor. Nuggets of wisdom rained down on thirty attendees like drops of dragon blood, such as: "Writing is like crossing a river by jumping from stone to stone. It's what happens between the stones that gets interesting."

We also learned the importance of networking, knowing your market base, finding the right agent, and familiarizing yourself with contracts. Visit Mr. Moore's website at www.jimshorror.com.

Six members contributed from their own works prior to Mr. Moore's presentation. An eerily good time was howled, I mean had, by all.

DECEMBER MEETING PREVIEW

Award-winning author Shelia P. Moses will speak to us about her acclaimed young-adult novel *The Legend of Buddy Bush*, her ode to civil rights, understanding, and healing. Ms. Moses needs to begin her talk at 1:00 p.m., so we'll move our schedule around to accommodate her, opening the doors early for networking, noshing, and sharing our work.

CLUB-SPONSORED CRITIQUE GROUP CONTINUES

The Atlanta Writers Club sponsors a critique group at the Village Veranda coffee shop in Alpharetta on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. The next meetings are November 9 and 23. All members and guests are welcome. This group focuses solely on critiquing one another's work. The only rules are as follows:

- 1) Limit of 500 words for the piece to be critiqued
- 2) Bring at least ten copies so others can read along and provide written comments
- 3) Arrive on time and sign up, since only eight people can share their work on a given night

The Village Veranda (678-240-9202) is located at 52-B North Main St. (Hwy. 9) in Alpharetta, on the same block as the Welcome Center. Heading north on N. Main St., turn left onto Church St. and then make an immediate left to access the Village Veranda parking lot. We meet upstairs.

FALL WRITING CONTESTS

by Richard Anderson, Contests VP

The time is now. Enter before 19 November or forever hold your piece!
BUT FIRST—READ THE RULES.

Submission Rules

You may enter all 5 categories but only *one manuscript per category*.

- > Type your work in Times New Roman font, size 12, using 8.5x11 page format.
- > Double space prose entries. Single space poetry.
- > Place full Title and Category in upper left corner of first page.
- > Place Title in upper left corner and Page Number in upper right of following pages.
- > Do **Not** place your name anywhere on the manuscript entry.

Submissions may be e-mailed, mailed or delivered to the contest chairperson.

- > E-mail submissions must be as Word Attachment.
- > Give author's name and entry title, category and word or line count in *body* of e-mail.
- > If entry is mailed or delivered to chairperson attach a *note card* with:
Authors name, title, category and number of words or lines.

Manuscripts will not be returned. Be sure to retain a copy of your work.

Mail entries to Richard Anderson, 136 Manor Way, Carrollton, GA 30117,
(I must receive mailed entries by the deadline date.)

or e-mail to Richard at: BeardedOne@charter.net,

or deliver to Richard at or before the AWC meeting on 19 November.

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u> (excluding Title, Page #s, etc.)
Nonfiction	1000 words	2000 words
Short Story	2500	3500
Juvenile Story	750	1500
Serious Poetry		60 lines
Light Verse		60 lines

Cash Prizes in all Categories!

<u>First Place</u>	<u>Second Place</u>	<u>Third Place</u>	<u>Honorable Mention</u>
\$50	\$30	\$20	Citation at judges' discretion

Eligibility

Contests are open only to current, paid members of The Atlanta Writers Club.

Entries must be original, unpublished, and never received any previous award.

Polish up your best work now and enter it into our Fall Contests !

Entries for all Contest Categories must be Received by 19 November 2005

FROM THE TIP OF MY PEN – A Writer’s Tip of the Month:

“A Cow’s Life” by Fran Stewart

Someone recently asked me if I had any thoughts about the creative process. What writer hasn’t? I would quibble a bit with the word *process* in that question, though, for *process* sounds so tidy. I’m pretty sure the creative impulse that leads to writing must be shored up, for each individual writer, with a veritable toolbox of individual habits and techniques. Put together, the tools in that toolbox may look like a rather motley assortment, but if they help the writer create, then they are worth far more than their proverbial weight in gold.

Ruminating, for instance, is a tool frequently found in almost any writer’s toolbox. Like cows, who cannot digest grass quickly (who could?), but need to chew their cud for hours at a time, writers often take an unwieldy idea and chew away at it from a dozen different angles until it begins to soften, and the nutritious juice that must have been there all along begins to ooze out.

I love ruminating. As I’m driving to the post office, I can take a mundane conversation that happened four years ago, and reinvent it twelve different ways. In one, my companion becomes agitated, in another she wilts with discouragement. I may have her throw herself off a moving train, or I may have her save me from dashing into traffic to pursue a bank robber. In my writer’s mind, I can do anything, go anywhere. If I don’t like where I’ve gone, I just regurgitate the scene and rewrite it. Fun? You bet!

As we think about creativity in general, I challenge you to jot down your ideas about it in your constant companion—the notebook you depend on. Ah! A notebook, another of those tools that aid the creative process. Some of the ideas in *my* notebook...okay I admit it...*many* of the ideas in my notebook would take an unconscionable amount of regurgitation and chewing to amount to anything. But once in a while there is a glimmer of useable material. So I take it out and chew and chew and chew. Then, when my ruminating is far advanced, I write and write and write.

I’ve been known to read what I’ve written to the squirrel who spends an inordinate amount of time running up and down the tree outside my office window. But the squirrel as inspiration (or audience) is another topic altogether. This column, I’ll read to the cows.

ACHIEVEMENTS & ACCOLADES

(Submit all Achievements & Accolades to Fran Stewart, myownship@earthlink.net, 770-682-7483)

Fran Stewart’s mystery novel *Green as a Garden Hose* has been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. She will present the keynote speech to the Georgia Council of Teachers of English at their annual conference at Callaway Gardens on Friday, February 17th.

Kathleen Craft Boehmig and **George Weinstein** taught a historical fiction workshop to the fifth graders at Davis Academy on October 11. They brought in a \$200 donation for the club!

Jack Thomas is scheduled to teach a class at the Writer’s Institute of Georgia, Georgia Perimeter College, on how to write and fearlessly deliver a great speech, Tuesday and Thursday evenings, April 4-13, 2006. Please visit <http://www.gpc.edu/writersinstitute/> or call 678-407-5244. You can contact Jack about the course by writing to Editor@RewriteRight.com.

Membership Dues, Donations and Information Update

Please make checks payable to The Atlanta Writers Club:

2005-2006 Membership Dues: \$30 per member \$ _____

Note: Students, ages 25 and under, pay only \$20 year-round

Donation in the amount of \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Please mail with checks payable to *The Atlanta Writers Club* to
Adrian Drost, 500 Periwinkle Drive, Roswell, GA 30075

- Unpaid members will be removed from *The E-Quill* mailing list.
- 2005 Membership Year runs from 9/1/05 through 8/31/06

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

Name _____

Address _____ City & Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

E-mail address _____

Sponsor (if any) _____

Tell us about yourself:

1. Please circle your three primary interests novel/ poetry/ short-story / humor/
nonfiction/ fiction/ juvenile/ travel/
drama/ screen-writing/ other

2. Please identify you experience level published submitted none

3. Please tell us how long you have been writing <5 yrs <10 <20 or >20

4. Please tell us what you expect from the club _____

Date: ____/____/____