

Newsletter of the ALABAMA WRITERS' CONCLAVE Founded 1923

PRESIDENT

Jim Reed
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POET LAUREATE

Sue Brannan Walker
62 Ridgelawn Dr. East
Mobile, AL 36608
www.suebwalker.com

www.alabamawritersconclave.org



From the Prez

Jim Reed (AWC President)

"Writing consists of applying the seat of the pants to the seat of the chair."

--Mark Twain

"Love. Fall in love and stay in love. Write only what you love, and love what you write. The key word is love. You have to get up in the morning and write something you love, something to live for."

— Ray Bradbury

The Alabama Writers' Conclave is unique in at least three ways:

We are one of the oldest continuing writers' conferences in the nation.

We nominate the Alabama Poet Laureate for confirmation by the Governor. (Sue Brannan Walker is our current Poet Laureate.)

We are the only major writers' conference in the region

concentrating exclusively on LEARNING and IMPROVING the craft and art of writing. (Many other conferences focus on the CELEBRITY of writing, with well-known authors providing entertaining public appearances and participating in signings. While the **Conclave's faculty members** are all well-known and highly skilled, they concentrate wholly on helping writers and emerging writers hone their skills and **renew the joy of writing.**)

In other words, the Alabama Writers' Conclave annual conference is designed to be an intense learning and networking experience. We focus on helping participants become better, more productive writers.

This year, we've added a special concentration for those who really want to roll up their sleeves and learn a whole lot in a small amount of time: **CRITIQUE SESSIONS**. This is a noble experiment, and

Inside this issue:

	Page
Poet Laureate	3
New Members	3
Newsworthy	4
To sell your book at the Conclave read →	5
Writer Resources	5
More July 21-23 Conclave Information Register Now!!!	See Pages 5 - 9

we've lots of participants who will be joining the critique groups.

Get ready to enjoy and learn and improve, all in a concentrated three-day period. **Register now!**

Notices

Next meeting of the AWC Executive Board.



Our next AWC board meeting will take place at Dixon Center on the Auburn campus. Time and location to be announced.

Any AWC member is welcome to attend.

Important: Please Read

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Student Dues: \$15 All others: \$25

For administrative purposes, the **Membership Year** has been changed to run from Oct. 1 to Sept. 31. If you have not renewed since October 1, your 2006 dues should be sent to the treasurer as soon as possible. Dues received after Sept. 31 are credited for the following year. **Keep your dues up-to-date to keep your *NewsWords* coming.**

Active members whose dues are current enjoy the following benefits:

- ▶ Subscription to the quarterly newsletter, *NewsWords*
- ▶ Lower contest entry fees
- ▶ Lower registration fees for the annual Conclave

Send membership dues to

Don Johnson, Treasurer
137 Sterling Drive
Hueytown, AL 35023

Has your address changed?

If so, please notify the Treasurer.

NewsWords

Submission Information

1. NEWSWORTHY. Anything new been published since the last issue of *NewsWords*?

2. YOURWORDS.

☺ Got any tips about helpful resources in books, magazines, the Web?

☺ Writers' conferences, contests, etc. you know about?

☺ Are you qualified or skilled to do a guest column on a writing theme? Send it.

3. GROUPWORDS. Share meeting times of a writers' group in your area.

4. SHORTWORDS. Submissions (up to 500 words). Short fiction, essays, poetry, novel excerpts, book reviews, info on writing themes/techniques.

5. PHOTOGRAPHS. Digitized preferred but can use paper photos.

HOW TO SEND YOUR STUFF

▶ Preferably e-mail attachments in MS-Word, PDF (or e-mail text).

▶ Regular mail, preferably typed, but I can use handwritten.

SEND TO: jsdhale4@juno.com or
Dennis Hale
200 E. Main St.
Notasulga, AL 36866

(All will be forwarded to new editor)

DEADLINE
For Fall *NewsWords*
October 10, 2006
The earlier the better!

NOTE FROM RETIRING EDITOR

I would like to express my appreciation for all the cooperation and encouragement I have received during the past two years as editor of *NewsWords*. Many of you have contributed excellent articles, creative writing, and informative content. I would also like to thank my patient proofreader, my wife Judith.

— Dennis Hale

AWC OFFICERS 2005-07

President

Jim Reed
jim@jimreedbooks.com

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Jimmy Carl Harris
harrisjc@bellsouth.net

2nd Vice President/Scholarship Chair/ Membership Chair

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Publications Chair/NewsWords Editor

Vacant

Publicity Chair

Melinda Dickinson
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Parliamentarian (nonvoting)

Jimmy Carl Harris
harrisjc@bellsouth.net

Alabama Poet Laureate

Sue Brannan Walker
negcap@bellsouth.net.



THE MERIT OF EXERCISE

by Sue Walker, Poet Laureate of Alabama

The body benefits from exercise. The body I am speaking of, however, is not the physical shape, the building of muscle, the loss of a pound or two, the shape shifting that an exercise regimen brings. The body I am speaking of here is a body of writing—a body that consists of, on one hand, a group of writers who have convened to write and work together, but also a specific body of writing: a story, a novel, a poem, a play, that body of words as it takes form and shape in order to become the best effort that a writer can produce.

Not much is going to happen until that gathering of words is whipped into shape – and this is where exercise comes in. In an article “The

Form Your Writing Takes,” Pat Schneider, author of *Writing Alone and with others*, published by Oxford University Press (2003), writes:

In my opinion, the pressure on writers toward specialization is unfortunate. I have resisted, and I still resist writing groups limited to one genre. When writing begins, it needs freedom to take its own form. Genius will express itself sometimes as story, sometimes as poem, sometimes a grand opera, sometimes as country-and-western ballad. People frequently join my workshops saying, I write only poems, or I write only fiction, and are surprised when something completely different comes bubbling up in response to a good exercise (117).

A writer needs surprise, and it is often through a writing exercise that

(Continued on page 4)

LOOKING FOR A *News- Words* EDITOR

Newswords editor, Dennis Hale has resigned effective June 30, 2006. He cites travel and other retirement pursuits which are not compatible with the duties and deadlines of the newsletter. We regret his leaving and continue to search for a replacement.

The current newsletter is created in Microsoft Publisher for printing and converted to an Adobe Acrobat PDF file for e-mailing and website use. Digital photography editing skills are also helpful. Dennis will give an orientation to the new editor in early August.

Volunteers please contact

jim@jimredbooks.com

NEW FOR CONTEST WINNERS!!

For the first time ever, *Alalitcom* will be published in journal format on-line! **1st- 4th place 2006 AWC Contest winners** were notified in May and invited to have their work included in the issue. To be accepted for inclusion, winners must provide a disk containing the winning piece in a WORD file, or send the winning piece via email as a word file attachment, or within the body of the email. The issue will be released following the announcement of awards at the **annual AWC conference at Auburn University, July 23, 2006.**

Questions? Please contact Irene Latham, *Alalitcom* editor.
irenelatham@bellsouth.net
Phone: 205-981-1935

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO AWC!

Susie Kennedy - Lower Peach
 Allen Krissie - Birmingham
 Glenda Harbison - Cullman
 Leah J. Prewitt - Auburn
 Steve Edmondson - Birmingham
 Sherry Kughn - Anniston
 Ramey Channel - Leeds
 Lucy Kubiszyk - Tuscaloosa
 Bill Bonner - Niceville, Florida
 Terri Dulong - Cedar Key, Florida
 Jim Herod - Grove Hill
 E. R. Carlin - Cazenovia, New York
 Abby Clark Maddox - Birmingham
 Kari Kampakis - Birmingham

NewsWorthy

What our members are doing.....



(Continued from page 3)



something unexpected happens, something unplanned; indeed, something magical occurs because of an exercise. One of my favorite exercises used by Schneider, and also by Esther Morgan who teaches at the University of East Anglia in Great Britain is what I call "No Idea but in Things," or "Choosing From a Group of Objects." The exercise is one in training the eye. Morgan says that the aim of the objects exercise is to "encourage the intensity of focus and to bring the senses back into writing."

Here are a group of objects. At home, the writer may gather a group of objects or pick from the following: a candlestick, cheese grater, light bulb, scarf, corkscrew, paper grinder, spool of thread with a needle stuck in it, a wooden spoon, a hand mirror, a baby rattle, a baseball, a jump rope, a bottle of suntan lotion, a rock, a mug, a checkbook, a key, a can opener, etc. Schneider suggests offering 30 or 40 varied objects, and she asks that the writer choose an object and write about it for a designated bit of time. In a group, writers are invited to share what they have written.

I use this exercise in my writing classes, and since I write along with my students, I never fail to be surprised by the writing that comes from this exercise. Try it and share what you've written with someone else. ☐



Reilly Maginn, MD (Daphne) has had a poem, "Alabama November" accepted for publication by Sue Walker for the 2007

edition of the *University of Southern Alabama Poetry Anthology*. This is the first time he has ever written a poem for publication.

Also, *Seniors Today*, a quarterly publication of Gulf Coast Newspapers, LLC is featuring Elizabeth and Reilly Maginn in their debut issue, Vol. 1 Number 1. Congratulations!!!

image, click on www.birminghamartassociation.com and click on the newsletter line at the top of the Home Page. Scroll down within to find Irene & Liz.

Deborah Tainsh's (Midland, GA) book, *Heart of a Hawk*, was recently awarded the "Spirit of Freedom" award by Military Writers Society of America.

The Birmingham Arts Journal in the newest issue, published works of the following AWC members: Kory Wells, Reilly Maginn, Jim Reed, Stacy Pickett, T.K. Thorne, Geoff Langdon, Liz Reed, Irene Latham, Tommie Willis, Richard Modlin and others. More info under Writer Resources, p.5



Deborah Ann Cidboy (Jefferson, GA) won third place in the Writing for Young People category in the 2006 Tennessee Mountain Writers Competition with her story, "People." Entries came from eight states, including Alabama, Kentucky, Georgia, and Texas.

Sylvia Morris (Cullman) had her poem, "Violets" published in the May, 2006, special edition of *Good Old Days*. We wish Sylvia many more published successes.

Jimmy Carl Harris (B'ham) signed copies of his new book, *Walking Wounded* (Iris Press) at Crosshaven Books in Birmingham on June 15. Check his website for more book events at www.jimmycarlharris.com.

Irene Latham and Liz Reed (both of B'ham) combine art and poetry for a two-month exhibition at Birmingham's Historic Tutwiler Hotel in May in June. For poem and painting



FOR NETWORKING

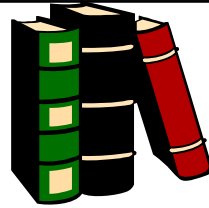
Conference Center
Coffee Shop



Conference Center
Bar →



Writer Resources and Opportunities



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Birmingham Arts Journal is calling for submissions of art, photography, poetry and prose. The non-profit quarterly has published a prestigious range of talent in the past few years, and its circulation is growing. To read the last two issues of Birmingham Arts Journal, go to

www.birminghamartsjournal.com.

For a complete index of all authors and artists published by the Journal, see www.birminghamartassociation.com/divisions.asp?content=baj.

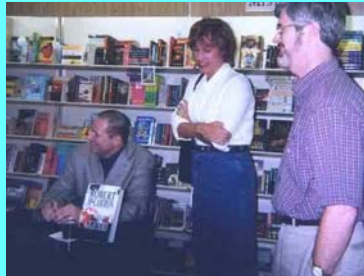


Toomers Corner, the heart of historic downtown Auburn, is only one long block from the Dixon Conference Center. Numerous eating places, watering holes, bookstores, and other establishments line the streets.

SELLING YOUR BOOK AT CONCLAVE 2006

(No used or donated books)

All book sales during our 2006 conference **must** be conducted by our official bookseller, Marie Peerson of Crosshaven Books. There will be no other book sales operations. Marie will be delighted to sell your book(s) whether conventionally published or self-published.



IMPORTANT: If you wish to bring your own book(s), you **must** contact Marie not later than July 21.

Call: 205-972-8778 or e-mail crosshavenbooks@msn.com

TERMS: Sold at list price. Crosshaven will keep 20% (10% donated to AWC and 10% for handling).

Conventionally Published authors only: You may prefer that Crosshaven provide your books for sale under normal commercial procedures. In that case, **you must notify Marie by July 15** so Crosshaven can order & have your books on hand. (In such case, Crosshaven will still give AWC 10%.)

WRITERS' GROUPS

Baldwin Group meets every third Saturday, 10 'til 12 at Daphne Library. Contact: Reilly Maginn(251-625-0581)

☺ ☺ ☺

Ashville, AL St. Clair Bapt. Assn office on Hwy 231 S., usually every 3rd Thursday at 6:30 pm. Contact: Ben Chandler at (205) 594-5173

☺ ☺ ☺

Oneonta, AL Meets every Wednesday at 5:45 pm in the museum beside the courthouse.

☺ ☺ ☺

Cullman, AL Poets and writers meet in homes monthly. Contact Sylvia Morris at (256) 734-3347

☺ ☺ ☺

East Alabama Writers' Group which meets at the Jan Dempsey Arts Center in Auburn, AL, has canceled its meetings through August. For more information contact John Frandsen, (334) 821-2036 or jfrandsen2@charter.net

☺ ☺ ☺

Columbus Pod of Georgia Writers meets every fourth Saturday at the New Columbus Library on Macon Road. 10 am (Eastern time) for Georgia Writers and those interested in joining. 11 am General meeting for all other writers. AWC member, John Frandsen leads that group. Open to all.

MOBILE, ALABAMA WRITER'S REQUEST

I am searching for stories of old Mobile to add to my new website, www.oldmobilian.com, dedicated to the preservation of the rich history of our fair city. I started the site in hopes that I could get folks to tell me the stories I failed to ask my parents and grandparents before they passed away. I need stories submitted from everyone. This could be a really great site. Thanks, in advance for your help.

— Theresa C. Dennis

Send submissions to

submissions@oldmobilian.com.

Alabama Writers' Conclave Conference July 21-23, 2006

Registration, Critique Group, and Membership Form

Dixon Conference Center on the campus of Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama

If you are not already a member for 2006, you may join on this form. Membership privileges include reduced rates for the conference and contests, the quarterly newsletter, and a vote at the annual meeting. The one year membership fee is \$25.00.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Date Submitted _____

PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY THE COSTS THAT APPLY TO YOU

	Members	Non-Members
FULL Registration (All workshops, Friday Supper, Saturday Banquet, refreshments. <u>Note that critique group participation and membership are additional costs, listed below.</u>)	145	175
Friday Only, Conference Events & Supper	45	55
Saturday Only, Conference Events & Banquet	70	80
Sunday Only, Conference Events	45	55
Membership for 2006 (unless already paid)	25	
Critique Group Participation (Fee only for critique participants)	20	30
Saturday <u>Banquet ONLY</u>	30	40

Total enclosed (registration + membership if not already a 2006 member + critique group if desired)
\$ _____

Example: Full registration + membership + critique group = \$190. Saturday only + membership = \$95.

Full-time students may receive a 10% discount on all AWC fees (not hotel room). Please note "student" on your registration payment.

To receive vegetarian meals, please check here _____

Make Checks Payable to **Alabama Writers' Conclave**.

Mail all registration materials, including this form, critique manuscripts (**if** you've paid to participate in critiques) and check to:

Don Johnson, Treasurer 137 Sterling Drive, Hueytown, AL 35023

Please indicate your choice of **ONE** critique group, **IF** you wish to participate in this extra-cost offering:

Poetry _____ Writing for Children _____ Fiction _____ Humor _____

Manuscripts for critique groups (up to 2000 words prose, up to 30 lines poetry) **MUST** be submitted by **15 June 2006** along with this registration form and your payment. You **MUST** put your name and genre on your critique manuscript. Groups will be led primarily by workshop faculty. If needed, additional group leaders will be employed. Assignment will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

..Room reservations must be made separately. In order to ensure that you receive the AWC discount (\$84 plus tax per room night), you **must** call the hotel no later than **June 21**. After that, expect to pay the standard (much higher) rate. Call 1-800-228-2876, ask for reservations, make sure they understand you will be attending the Alabama Writers' Conclave conference and you want the rate of \$84.

Questions about registration and critique groups may be addressed to

Jimmy Carl Harris, Program Chair, at harrisjc@bellsouth.net.

Visit our website for additional information. <http://www.alabamawritersconclave.org>

Schedule of the 2006 Alabama Writers' Conclave Conference and Annual Meeting

21 – 23 July Dixon Conference Center Auburn, Alabama

Friday, 21 July

- 5 PM Hotel check-in and conference registration (at front desk).
7-10 Authors buffet. Meet the faculty, poet laureate, writer in residence, each other.
Faculty will describe their workshops and read from their work. Participants who registered for critique groups will meet with designated group leaders.

Saturday, 22 July

- 7:30-8:30 Registration and Continental Breakfast (in conference area).
8 Bookstore opens.
8:30-9:45 Writing for Children I (Kittinger) or Humor I (DiGregorio).
9:45-10 Break. Refreshments.
10-11:15 Poetry Workshop I (Worthington) or Fiction Workshop I (Moran).
11:15-1 Lunch on your own. A superb restaurant is within the conference center.
1-2:15 Writing for Children II or Session with Writer in Residence (Barton).
2:15-2:30 Break. Refreshments
2:30-3:45 Poetry II or Fiction II.
3:45-4 Break. Snacks and other Refreshments.
4-6 Book Signing. Critique groups meet.
6 Bookstore closes.
7 Annual Grace Gravlee Banquet with Writer in Residence as Keynote Speaker.

Sunday, 23 July

- 7:30-8:30 Registration and Continental Breakfast (in conference area). Check out of hotel.
8:30-9:30 Writing for Children III or Humor II.
9:30-9:45 Break. Check out of hotel.
9:45-10:45 Poetry III or Fiction III.
10:45-11 Break. Check out of hotel.
11:00-12:30 Reading by Poet Laureate (Walker). Annual meeting. Contest awards.

Farewell. Y'all come back!

LET US DELIVER *NewsWords* TO YOUR COMPUTER

1. The full color digital version of *NewsWords*. Can be printed on your printer.
2. To help with rising costs (almost \$1.00 per copy printing and postage)
3. Notify editor at: jsdhale4@juno.com.
4. The .pdf file can be opened with the free Adobe Reader available at www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html.
5. *NewsWords* will still be mailed to those who do not choose the digital version.



Writer in Residence and Other Faculty

2006 ALABAMA WRITERS' CONCLAVE JULY 21-23



Marlin Barton, Writer in Residence and Keynote Speaker

I look forward to meeting and talking with other writers, and I hope to share some of my experiences with writing and teaching and publishing. We're all struggling to shape our voices into something meaningful, and when writers come together to listen to each other, we often find the kind of support that enables us to continue our work with a sense of purpose and renewal.



Marianne Worthington, Poetry Workshops

I want AWC participants to know that the poetry workshops are for everyone—not just those of us who call ourselves poets—and that writing poems is one way into exploring identity, family, and place. These issues are, to me, universal elements in all writing. We will work on finding our singing voices as poets as well. By the end of the weekend, I hope workshop participants will leave with a notebook full of poetry sketches, ideas, and drafts.



Judy DiGregorio, Humor Workshops

Saturday workshop. Don't Make Me Laugh! Is Humor Writing for You?

Class will include writing exercises and discussion of the following: 1) how I became a humor columnist, 2) what humor is, 3) tools and techniques used in humor writing, 4) favorite humor writers and what makes them funny, 5) why do you want to write humor, 6) who is your audience?



Jo Kittinger, Children's Writers Workshops

Saturday morning workshop: The Truth About Nonfiction for Kids

Class will include instruction and discussion of the following: 1) nonfiction genres in children's lit, 2) researching nonfiction books and articles, 3) photo research, 4) markets for nonfiction. Plus you'll be caught up in a brainstorm to flood you with ideas for your next project.



Mary Carol Moran, Fiction Workshops

Whether you have a manuscript gathering dust, one you are actively working on, or one that's still in your head, all writers can participate and learn from these nuts-and-bolts sessions. We'll share ideas that work and gain inspiration from each other's stories.

Session 1: Plotting by escalating events and plotting by character arc; major and minor characters -- how to put in the quirks that make them real

Session 2: editing for publication -- a checklist and practice on your own manuscript

Session 3: learning from group critique; the business of publishing.

ALL FACULTY MEMBERS, INCLUDING THE WRITER IN RESIDENCE, WILL SERVE AS CRITIQUE GROUP LEADERS. IN ADDITION, EACH WILL SERVE AS A TABLE HOST AT THE FRIDAY EVENING BUFFET AND WILL READ FROM HER OR HIS WORK ON FRIDAY EVENING. THOSE WITH BOOKS IN PRINT WILL PARTICIPATE IN A BOOK SIGNING ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

Critique Groups

Those who register for the conference are encouraged to participate in a critique group. If you wish to participate, you **MUST** do two things: 1) Indicate on your registration form the type of group (genre) in which you wish to participate and 2) submit, with the registration form, a manuscript of no more than 2000 words (prose) or 30 lines (poetry). These limits **MUST** be strictly adhered to, in order to ensure that all group members get a fair discussion of their manuscript. Critique group leaders will receive the manuscripts in advance—therefore, manuscripts **MUST** be submitted no later than 15 June 2006. Group members will receive copies of their group members' manuscripts the first evening of the conference.

Participation in the critique groups will require an additional fee of \$20.00 per participant. This fee MUST be paid along with your conference registration.

Faculty members will serve as primary critique group leaders. If additional group leaders are needed, they will be drawn from qualified members of the Alabama Writers' Conclave. Assignment to groups will be on a first received, first served basis.

These groups, of no more than ten participants plus a leader, will meet for ½ to 1 hour on Friday evening, after the faculty introductions. They will quickly become acquainted and plan their activities.

Between Friday evening and Saturday afternoon, participants should read each others' manuscripts and plan their comments.

On Saturday afternoon, the groups will meet for 1½ to 2 hours. The group leader will facilitate a discussion of each manuscript.

Any other critique group activities will be at the discretion of the group members, with the leadership of the group leader.

Groups, by genre. You MUST indicate ONE choice on your registration form.

Poetry

Fiction

Writing for children

Humor

Conference Site



For 2006, the Alabama Writers' Conclave is pleased to announce that our conference will be held at the Dixon Conference Center and Auburn Hotel, on the lovely campus of Auburn University.

Please visit their website to learn more about the facility, including its location. <http://www.auhcc.com/>

An important reminder about conference accommodations

Room reservations must be made separately. In order to ensure that you receive the AWC discount (\$84 plus tax per room night), you must call the hotel no later than June 21. After that, expect to pay the standard (much higher) rate. Call 1-800-228-2876, ask for reservations, make sure they understand you will be attending the Alabama Writers' Conclave conference and you want the rate of \$84.

The hotel does offer on-line registration, but to ensure that you get the special Alabama Writers Conclave rate, it is strongly recommended that you call them at (334) 821-8200 or (800) 228-2876 (Toll-Free).

NewsWords Quarterly Newsletter of the
Alabama Writers' Conclave ◊ Founded 1923

Dennis Hale
200 East Main Street
Notasulga, Alabama 36866-2592

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

TO:

Alabama Writers' Conclave Application for Membership & Renewal Form

Membership dues are \$25 per year and include the quarterly newsletter, reduced registration costs, and reduced contest entry fees. (Students \$15). Membership application and dues should be mailed to::

Treasurer: Don Johnson
137 Sterling Drive
Hueytown, Alabama 35023

To qualify for lower fees for 2006 Writing Competition,
membership dues must be paid before the contest deadline.

Check applicable boxes: Application for membership Renewal only Student

Membership renewal for following year is from October 1 until January 1.

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Cell _____

Address: _____

City-State-ZIP: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Personal Website Address if any: _____

Do you have time and skill to volunteer in the service of our members?

Please describe. _____

Many members pay their annual dues and register for the conference at the same time. Do both on the Conference Registration form