

THE ALABAMA WRITERS' CONCLAVE

www.alabamawritersconclave.org

The 2008 Alabama Writers' Conclave Conference and Annual Meeting will be on July 18-20, at the Four Points Sheraton in Tuscaloosa, Alabama

2008 Conference Site

The Alabama Writers Conclave conference will be held at the Four Points Sheraton on the lovely campus of the University of Alabama.

320 Paul Bryant Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Visit their website to learn more about the facility, including its location:

<http://www.starwoodhotels.com>

Perform search for Tuscaloosa, Alabama

➤ Important reminder ◀

Room reservations are not a part of conference registration! Reservations must be made separately, by telephone. To ensure that you receive the AWC discount (\$92 plus tax per room night), make reservations no later than June 18th. After that, expect to pay the standard (much higher) rate. Call 1-800-368-7764, make sure they understand you will attend the Alabama Writers' Conclave conference and you want the rate of \$92.

Conference Bookstore

The bookstore will be open 8 – 6, Saturday, July 19, in the conference area. NO book sales will be permitted at the conference, other than those handled by Marie Peerson, our official bookseller. She will ensure that faculty and professional books are available. She will also consider books authored by conference attendees. Any author who is registered for and will attend the conference may contact Marie, by July 1st, at jbbookseller@gmail.com or at (205) 870-8840.

NewsWords

Spring 2008

Like you, I've attended more than my share of writing conferences over the years, but the most satisfying experience I have, year after year, is signing up for the latest Alabama Writers' Conclave workshops. I'm proud to be associated with these events, because they cut through the ceremony and pomp, and get right down to the task of learning how to become a better writer.

This year's Alabama Writers' Conclave promises to be the best ever--no kidding! Just take a look at the first-class faculty, the truly unbiased and expertly judged writing contests, and the one-on-one critique sessions. Go on...take a look. I can't wait to get there, and I hope you'll sign up, too!

Jim Reed

Jim Reed, President
jim@jimreedbooks.com

Member News

Alice G. Duckett is working on the second book in her family history series, titled *MORE Digging from Attics to Basements*. During Jan.-Mar. 2008, Alice spoke about family history to several community groups. She also presented 3 programs for Young Authors Week at Greystone Elementary School in Birmingham. She was a guest on the "Morning Show" at WBHF Radio, and signed books at Open Door Christian Book Store in Cartersville, GA. Visit her website: <http://www.shadowpurr-r-rpress.com/index.html>

Jimmy Carl Harris, in addition to teaching fiction workshops for Conclave 2008, will also teach fiction for the Tennessee Mountain Writers and the Tennessee Writers Alliance. Details are on his website: <http://jimmycarlharris.com/>

Irene Latham's *What Came Before* is the 2007 Alabama State Poetry Society Book of the Year. Visit her website: <http://www.irenelatham.com/>

Conference Schedule

Friday July 18

5:00 PM Hotel check-in (at front desk) and conference registration (in conference area).
6:30-7:00 *Nuts and Bolts*: **Important** briefing on conference program and schedule. **Be there!**
7:00-8:15 Buffet supper. Faculty members serve as table hosts.
8:15-8:30 break
8:30-9:15 *How Not to Get Published*: Panel of editors moderated by Jim Reed. Auditorium.
9:15-9:30 break
9:30- Open Mic. All conference attendees invited to participate. 5 minutes max per person.
*****Bring something to read!*

Panel of Editors includes Linda Frost, founder of *PMS*; Dianne Hamilton, editor at OnStage Publishing; Jennifer Horne, editor of *Working the Dirt: An Anthology of Southern Poets*.

Saturday July 19

7:30-9:00 AM Registration and continental breakfast (in conference area).
8:30-9:30 Short Fiction (Harris): *The Art of Complex Dialogue* Through examples, discussion, and exercises, learn how to write complex dialogue that employs omission and implication and opposites to evoke tension and provide insight.
Poetry (Roberts): *The Human House* Explore connections between the “human house,” the psyche, and creativity in poetry.
9:30-9:45 break
9:45-10:45 Novel (Garrett): *Creating Believable Characters* Learn how to create characters that will seem as real to you as your best friend by examining the lives your characters had before their stories began.
Nonfiction (Wray): *Magazine Article Writing 101* Discover how to find marketable ideas, find the right markets, write queries, do research, polish rough drafts, and submit manuscripts to editors.
10:45-11:00 break
11:00-12:00 Conversation with Writer in Residence R.A. Nelson *Road to Publication*
12:00-1:30 lunch on your own. There is an excellent restaurant in the conference hotel.

1:30-2:30 Short Fiction (Harris): *The Opportunity to Discover* Learn to “show not tell” and empower your reader by writing in a way that makes them want to keep turning the page.
Poetry (Roberts): *Tasting, Smelling, and Writing* based on M.F.K. Fisher’s *The Art of Eating*: A sample of tastes and smells to inspire creativity.
2:30-2:45 break
2:45-3:45 Novel (Garrett): *Outlining and Structure* Learn how structure impacts a novel and how to use outline techniques to tell your story in the best way possible.
Nonfiction (Wray): *From Leads to Conclusions* using examples in current magazines, find out the parts of an article, what types of articles are popular today, and how to write them.
3:45-4:00 break
4:00-6:00 Formal Manuscript Critiques (as scheduled), Informal Manuscript Critiques
7:00-9:00 Annual Grace Gravelle Banquet with Poet Laureate of Alabama Sue Walker and keynote address *Writing is Believing* by R.A. Nelson

Bookstore 8:00 am - 6:00 pm Saturday only
All book sales must be arranged with and conducted by the bookstore operator.

Sunday, July 20

7:30-9:00 AM Registration and continental breakfast (in conference area).
8:30-9:30 Short Fiction (Harris): *Risk in Writing* Explore styles of effective writing that produce stories that unsettle, excite and ring true.
Poetry (Roberts): *Synesthesia* Learn to blend the senses and write poetry that surprises.
9:30-9:45 break
9:45-10:45 Novel (Garrett): *Writing Effective Query Letters* learn to create concise pitches for your work by speaking the publisher’s language.
Nonfiction (Wray): *Getting Creative with Nonfiction* Learn how to liven up your nonfiction with description, imagery, setting, drama, dialogue, and personal style.
10:45-11:00 break
11:00-12:30 Annual Meeting: **Contest Awards!** Farewell. Y’all come back next year!

FACULTY

Michael Garrett (novel) has been widely published, from *Twilight Zone* magazine to a novel, *Keeper*, which was optioned for a movie. His story, "At the Count of Three," was optioned as the pilot episode of a television series.

Jimmy Carl Harris (short fiction) is the author of *Walking Wounded* (2006, Iris Press) and *Wounds That Bind* (2007, Iris Press).

R. A. Nelson (writer in residence) authored the young adult novels *Teach Me* and *Breathe My Name*. Both were nominated as YALSA Best Books for Young Adults. His third book, a romantic ghost story, *Days of Little Texas*, will be published in spring 2009 by Knopf.

Bonnie Roberts (poetry) is the author of two volumes of poetry, *To Hide in the Light* (1998, Elk River Review Press), *Dances in Straw with a Two-Headed Calf* (2000, ERRP), and a chapbook *Bonnie Roberts: Greatest Hits 1983-2000* (2002, Pudding House Press). Her work appears in *Whatever Remembers Us: An Alabama Anthology* (2007, Negative Capability Press).

Cheryl Sloan Wray (nonfiction) has had more than 1000 articles appear in such publications as *ParentLife*, *American Profile*, *ePregnancy*, *FamilyFun.com*, *Home Life*, *Leaders for Today*, and *The Birmingham News*. She is also the author of four books on the craft of writing, including the popular *Writing for Magazines* (in its second edition with McGraw-Hill Publishers).

Membership Renewal

If your membership dues are not up to date, please send membership dues of \$25, \$15 for students, to:

Don Johnson, Treasurer
137 Sterling Drive
Hueytown, AL 35023

Make checks to Alabama Writers' Conclave and write "membership dues" on the check.

Membership Renewal may also be submitted on the Conference Registration Form

FORMAL MANUSCRIPT CRITIQUE GUIDELINES

Conference attendees may pay an additional fee of \$30 to receive a formal, one-on-one critique. Conference faculty and other published authors perform critiques.

1. Send a complete manuscript of one short story or nonfiction article, up to ten pages in length. For poetry, send up to ten pages (may be one poem or several). For longer works, send complete chapters up to ten pages plus a one page synopsis.
2. Manuscripts (Mss) must be properly formatted to be critiqued. (Double spaced, 12 pt. font, one inch margins)
3. You must indicate genre (novel, short fiction, poetry, or nonfiction) on registration form; on the Mss indicate genre and your name.
4. Mail Mss with completed conference registration form. Include payment for critique as a part of total payment.
5. Mss for formal critiques must be postmarked by June 10. Mss will then be forwarded to the critiquer to read ahead of time. The critiquer will make notes to bring to the critique, and will meet privately with you for 12 minutes to discuss your work.
6. Due to the limited number of critique slots, manuscripts for formal critique are selected on a first-come first-serve basis. Slots fill up quickly. Register early!
7. Mss sent in, but not critiqued, will be returned to the author at the conference with a refund of the critique fee.

INFORMAL CRITIQUES

Conference attendees may bring several copies of a manuscript for free informal critiques on Saturday afternoon while formal critiques are in session. Those interested in participating will break into small groups in which they will read each other's work and make suggestions to strengthen the manuscripts.

NewsWords is the Quarterly Newsletter of
the Alabama Writers' Conclave • Founded 1923
Jim Reed, President
2021 Third Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35203

To:

➤ **2008 Important Dates to Remember** ◀

April 30: Postmark Deadline for Contest Entries

**June 10: Postmark Deadline for Critique
Manuscripts**

**June 18: Deadline for reduced room rates at
Four Points Sheraton Tuscaloosa**

July 1: Deadline to arrange book sales

July 18: Conference begins!

July 20: Annual Meeting and Contest awards

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WRITING CONTEST GUIDELINES

Multiple entries accepted, but you may win only one prize per category. Entries must be original, unpublished, and have not won a money prize in any contest. AWC Board Members not eligible. Deadline is April 30, 2008 (postmark). Send one copy, standard font and double-spaced, to:

Marian Lewis, AWC Contest Chair
250 Hartside Rd.

Owens Cross Roads, AL 35763

Put title and category on manuscript but no author identification. Enclose a separate cover sheet for each entry with title, category, author name, address, e-mail.

Entry Fees: \$3.00 per entry for AWC members, \$5.00 per entry for non-members for all contests EXCEPT First Chapter of Novel. \$8.00 for members, \$10.00 for nonmembers for First Chapter of Novel. Make checks to Alabama Writers' Conclave. (Membership and conference fees must be submitted separately to Treasurer.)

Prizes In Each Category: First - \$100 Second - \$75 Third - \$50 Fourth - \$25 Up to 4 Honorable Mentions.

Eight Competition Categories:

Fiction – maximum 2500 words.

Short Fiction – maximum 1000 words.

Juvenile Fiction (stories for ages 4-12) – maximum 2500 words. MUST LIST GENRE AND TARGET AGE GROUP (i.e. picture book, 3 & up).

Nonfiction – maximum 2500 words (PLEASE SPECIFY IF WRITTEN FOR ADULT OR CHILDREN'S MARKET).

Traditional Poem (any “form” poem, i.e. villanelle, sonnet, sestina) – maximum 40 lines.

Free Verse Poem – maximum 60 lines.

Humor (fiction, nonfiction, or poetry) – maximum 2000 words or 50 lines (for poems).

First Chapter of Novel - up to 10 double-spaced pages, first chapter ONLY.

WINNERS ANNOUNCED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING ON JULY 20th. You do not have to be present to win.