

# THE ALABAMA WRITERS' CONCLAVE



# NewsWords

## Winter 2008

[www.alabamawritersconclave.org](http://www.alabamawritersconclave.org)

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



### Top 10 Reasons to Attend 2008 Alabama Writers Conclave

**10. Networking.** What could be better than hanging out all weekend with a bunch of other writers? This is the place to make connections.

**9. Contests.** Win cash prizes by competing in our annual contests. (Deadline for entry April 30, 2008) Winners to be announced Sunday morning. See website for details.

**8. Feedback.** Faculty members will conduct individual critiques of your manuscript during the conference. Find out what you're doing right and what you can do to improve your writing.

**7. The Panel.** Learn *How NOT to Get Published: Mistakes Writers Make and How to Avoid Them*.

**6. Sharing.** There will be an open-mic reading Friday night so everyone will have an opportunity to share his/her work.

**5. The Sergeant Major.** Learn from Jimmy Carl Harris, author of *WALKING WOUNDED* and *WOUNDS THAT BIND* (Iris Press, 2007), how to take risks in

writing, explore the challenges of complex dialogue, and how to give your reader an "opportunity to discover."

**4. *The Truth and Nothing But the Truth.*** Freelance journalist Cheryl Wray will give marketing and craft tips to help you make your nonfiction articles and essays sparkle and shine (and catch the eye of editors!).

**3. *The Poet.*** Bonnie Roberts, author of award-winning *TO HIDE IN THE LIGHT* and *DANCES IN STRAW WITH A TWO-HEADED CALF* (Elk River Review Press, 2002) will help you engage the reader's senses and unbury the heart of your poems.

**2. *The Editor.*** Michael Garrett, a.k.a. Stephen King's first editor, will be conducting workshops on novel structure, how to create believable characters, and how to write effective query letters. Learn how to write to sell!

**1. *Inspiration.*** R.A. Nelson, author of critically acclaimed *TEACH ME* and *BREATHE MY NAME* (Razorbill, 2007) will share his story about the road to publication and tell us why "Writing is Believing."

for the latest information, go to  
[www.alabamawritersconclave.org](http://www.alabamawritersconclave.org)

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## 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

Please make checks out to Alabama Writers' Conclave and write membership dues on the check.

### ALABAMA WRITERS' CONCLAVE 2008 WRITING COMPETITION GUIDELINES

WINNERS TO BE ANNOUNCED AT THE FOUR POINTS  
SHERATON CAPSTONE IN TUSCALOOSA, JULY 20, 2008.

Multiple entries accepted, but you may win only one prize per category. Entries must be original, unpublished, and may not have won a money prize in any contest. Sitting AWC voting Board Members not eligible. **Deadline is April 30, 2008 (postmark).**

Send one copy on standard white paper in standard font 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 with title, category, author name, address, e-mail. Please provide a separate cover sheet for each entry.

**Entry Fees:** \$3.00 per entry for AWC members, \$5.00 per entry for non-members for all contests EXCEPT First Chapter of Novel. Please note: \$8.00 for members, \$10.00 for nonmembers for First Chapter of Novel contest. Checks must be written 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.

#### Writing 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 TARGETED 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.

### Alabama Writers' Conclave Officers

#### President

**Jim Reed**

2021 Third Avenue North  
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## Alabama Writers' Conclave Conference July 18-20, 2008

Four Points Sheraton Capstone on the campus  
of University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Alabama

### MEET THE FACULTY



**Michael Garrett (novel)** served as Stephen King's first editor. He has also edited the works of such greats as Joyce Carol Oates, Harlan Ellison, Lawrence Block and many others. He has been widely published since 1979, in periodicals ranging from *Twilight Zone* magazine to a novel, *Keeper*, which sold out its initial printing and was optioned for a movie. His short story, "At the Count of Three," was also optioned as the pilot episode of a late night cable television series. His works have been published in England, Germany, Japan, Italy, the Netherlands, France, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Finland and Russia, as well as in audio book format. Garrett serves as co-editor of the internationally award-winning *Hot Blood* anthology series, a popular selection of the Doubleday, Mystery, Literary Guild, and Science Fiction Book Clubs. The series has also been optioned for television. He also serves an Editorial Associate of the Writer's Digest School, and since 1986 has presented highly acclaimed writing workshops across the nation. [www.writing2sell.com](http://www.writing2sell.com)



**Jimmy Carl Harris (short fiction)** lives to write in Birmingham, Alabama. A retired Marine Corps Sergeant Major with a doctorate from the University of Alabama, he was an assistant professor at Southeastern Louisiana University. He has received over forty writing honors, and his stories have appeared in *The Louisville Review*, *Appalachian Heritage*, *Confluence*, *ByLine*, *Birmingham Arts Journal*, and elsewhere. Harris is the author of two collections of short fiction: *Walking Wounded* (2006, Iris Press) and *Wounds That Bind* (2007, Iris Press). He has taught writing workshops all over the southeast and continues to offer his time and expertise as a member of the AWC Board. [www.jimmycarlharris.com](http://www.jimmycarlharris.com)



**R. A. Nelson (writer in residence)** lives in North Alabama and works at the Marshall Space Flight Center where he earned NASA's prestigious Silver Snoopy Award. He is the author of the young adult novels *Teach Me* and *Breathe My Name*, which have both been nominated to the YALSA Best Books for Young Adults lists. Nelson was chosen as a Horn Book Newcomer in 2005, and his writing has also been recognized by the New York Public Library Books for the Teen Age, Booksense Kid Picks, the *Miami Herald* Best Books

of the Year, teenreads.com Best Books of the year, the Michigan Library Thumbs Up! list (Top Twenty), and numerous other award lists.. Nelson's third book, a romantic ghost story called *Days of Little Texas*, is slated to be published in spring 2009 by Knopf. [www.ranelson1.com](http://www.ranelson1.com)



**Bonnie Roberts (poetry)** is the author of two full-length 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). She has been published in many literary journals and magazines, including *Flyway*, for which she received monetary compensation and a book bag of sweet Iowa corn.. Roberts' work has also appeared in numerous anthologies, most recently *Whatever Remembers Us: An Alabama Anthology* (2007, Negative Capability Press). In addition to writing and collecting awards, Roberts also teaches at Calhoun Community College, serves as co-director of Limestone Dust Poetry Festival, and speaks about poetry and her love of the writing life anywhere from the Coffee Bean in Cullman, Alabama, to the internationally famous Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, where she was a "Master Poet," -- and enjoyed both equally. She has one daughter, Jennifer, of whom she is very proud.



**Cheryl Sloan Wray (nonfiction)** is a full-time freelance writer who 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). The book is used around the nation by freelance writers and in college nonfiction writing courses; it also was a Featured Selection of the Writer's Digest Book Club. Wray is a frequent speaker at writers conferences and workshops, and has taught freelance writing at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She especially enjoys instructing and encouraging both aspiring and successful writers. She has a Bachelor's and Master's degree in journalism (specializing in magazines) from The University of Alabama. She lives in Hueytown, Alabama, with her husband and three daughters.

**2008 Alabama Writers' Conclave  
July 18-20, 2008**

Four Points Sheraton Capstone on the  
campus  
of University of Alabama in  
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

**Alabama Writers' Conclave Conference      July 18-20, 2008**  
**Registration, Formal Critique, and Membership Form**  
 Four Points Sheraton Capstone, 320 Paul Bryant Drive, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

*This form is **NOT** to be used for contest entry. Contest entry is a separate process..*  
*See the AWC website for details.      <http://www.alabamawritersconclave.org>*

**If you are not already a member for 2008, you may join on this form. Membership privileges include reduced rates for the conference and contests and a vote at the annual meeting. The one year membership fee is \$25.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ ***\*I give my permission for the above information to be included in a membership list to be distributed at the conference.    yes    no***

**PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY THE COSTS THAT APPLY TO YOU**

	Members	Non-members
<b>FULL</b> Registration (All workshops, Friday Supper, Saturday Banquet, refreshments. <u>Note that critique group participation and membership are additional costs.</u> )	160	185
Friday Only, Conference Events & Supper	45	55
Saturday Only, Conference Events & Banquet	75	80
Sunday Only, Conference Events	45	55
Saturday <b><u>Banquet ONLY</u></b>	35	40
<b>Membership for 2008</b> (unless already paid)	25	
<b>Formal Manuscript Critique</b> (optional)	30	35

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

Poetry \_\_\_\_\_ Nonfiction \_\_\_\_\_ Short Fiction \_\_\_\_\_ Novel \_\_\_\_\_

Manuscripts for formal critiques **MUST** be submitted by **June 10, 2008** along with this registration form and your payment. **\*\*\*Read and follow complete guidelines on website.    [www.alabamawritersconclave.org](http://www.alabamawritersconclave.org)**

**TOTAL ENCLOSED** (registration + membership + critique, if desired)    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Examples: Full registration + membership + critique group = \$215. Saturday only + membership = \$100.

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**

**\*\*\*Room reservations at the Sheraton must be made separately.** In order to ensure that you receive the AWC discount (\$92 plus tax per room night), you **must** reserve your room no later than **June 18, 2008**. Call 1-800-368-7764.

# 2008 Conference Site

Alabama Writers Conclave is pleased to announce that our conference will be held at **Four Points Sheraton Tuscaloosa Capstone** on the lovely campus of University of Alabama



320 Paul Bryant Drive  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Please visit their website to learn more about the facility, including its location:  
<http://www.starwoodhotels.com/fourpoints/property/overview/index.html?propertyID=695>

**An important reminder about hotel accommodations:**  
Room reservations must be made separately. In order to ensure that you receive the AWC discount (\$92 plus tax per room night), you must make your reservation no later than **June 18<sup>th</sup>**. After that, expect to pay the standard (much higher) rate.. Call 1-800-368-7764, ask for reservations, make sure they understand you will be attending the Alabama Writers' Conclave conference and you want the rate of \$92.

## 2008 Alabama Writers Conclave Important Dates to Remember:

- April 30:** Postmark Deadline for Contest Entries
- June 10:** Postmark Deadline for Formal Critique Manuscripts
- June 18:** deadline for reduced room rates at Four Points Sheraton Tuscaloosa Capstone
- July 18:** Conference begins! See you there!!
- July 20:** Contest awards announced

## 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.

## Conference Bookstore

The bookstore operator for Conclave 2008 will be Marie Peerson, of Jonathan Benton Booksellers, located in Mountain Brook, AL.

The bookstore will be open 8 AM – 6 PM, Saturday, July 19, in the conference area.

*ALL* book sales must be handled by Marie. She will ensure that faculty and professional books are available for purchase. 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 1<sup>st</sup>, at [jbbookseller@gmail.com](mailto:jbbookseller@gmail.com) or at (205) 870-8840.

*NO* book sales will be permitted at the conference, other than those handled by Marie Peerson, our official bookseller.

## Schedule of the 2008 Alabama Writers' Conclave Conference and Annual Meeting

### 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!*

### 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 the connection between the "human house," the human 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 a rough draft, and submit a manuscript to an editor.  
10:45-11:00 break  
11:00-12:00 **Conversation with Writer in Residence R.A. Nelson - The Road to Publication**  
12:00-1:30 lunch on your own. There is an excellent restaurant in the hotel.  
1:30-2:30 **Short Fiction** (Harris): *The Opportunity to Discover* - Learn how 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 sampling 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) and Informal Manuscript Critiques  
 7:00-9:00 Annual Grace Gravlee Banquet with Poet Laureate of Alabama Sue Walker and keynote address *Writing is Believing* by R.A. Nelson

*Bookstore open 8:00 am - 6:00 pm Saturday only! All book sales must be arranged with and conducted by the bookstore operator. (in conference area).*

## 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 how 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 how to create concise pitches for your work by speaking in 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.

not have been a winner of a previous "Let's Write" Literary Contest.

- **All entries** must be typewritten, 12 pt. *Times New Roman* font, double-spaced, poetry may be single-spaced, on one side only of 8 1/2" x 11" white paper.
- For **each** entry, include a **COVER PAGE**. (See Cover Page requirements below)
- On **each** entry, put title only on the first page, then title and page # in the upper right hand corner of each additional page. Please put **No Other** identification on your entry.
- **Keep your originals**. Send only copies. Entries will not be returned. GCWA cannot be responsible for entries lost in the mail or damaged due to natural catastrophe.
- **GCWA retains the rights** to publish the winning entries in the Magnolia Quarterly and on the web site.
- **Multiple entries** in all categories are welcome and may be mailed in one envelope.
- **Entry fees**. Include **\$10.00** for one **Fiction** or **Nonfiction** entry and **\$5.00** for each additional **Fiction** or **Nonfiction** entry. Include **\$5.00** for each **Poetry** entry.
- **Cover page** must include the following information: name, address, phone number, email address, title of entry, category (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, word and/or line count (not to exceed 2500 words or 36 lines of poetry

**Mail entries to:**

## Call for Submissions

The Gulf Coast Writers Association twentieth annual "Let's Write" 2008 literary contest will be taking submissions beginning January 15. All entries must be postmarked no later than April 16, 2008. All categories-- Poetry, Fiction, and Nonfiction are open to all writers, published or unpublished. The GCWA will accept most genres, except pornography, erotica, graphic violence/horror, or anything racial or biased toward any religious or moral preference.

### RULES:

- **Maximum** entry length: 36 lines (poetry), 2500 words (fiction and non-fiction).
- **All entries** must be original, unpublished, and not under consideration for publication during this competition, (this includes submissions to our Magnolia Quarterly Magazine) and must

### Gulf Coast Writers Association

#### "Let's Write" Literary Contest

P.O. Box 6445

Gulfport, MS 39506-6445

To receive acknowledgment/receipt of your entry, include a self-addressed stamped post card. For a list of winners and/or information about the awards banquet, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the above address before **May 1, 2008**. The SASE may accompany your entry.



Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Alabama Writers' Conclave • Founded 1923

Seth Tanner  
1953 Shelton Shores Drive  
Talladega, AL 35160

**Address Correction Requested**

**To:**

## Newsorthy....what our members are doing!



This has been a banner year for Irene Latham. Here young adult novel, *The Witches of Gees Bend*, has just been accepted **and scheduled for publication** by

Putnam's. Irene also has a new book of poetry, *What Came Before*, and her poem appears in Sue Walker's "Whatever Remembers Us." She was Alabama Poet of the Year 2006, **is poetry editor of the Birmingham Arts Journal and producer of the annual "My Favorite Poem" event.**

two yearly contests, and produces it own publication, *The Magnolia Quarterly*.

This is the GCWA's first anthology, and they would like to include voices from other southern states in the collection. Writers will find all the information they need to submit at the following address:

<http://gcwriters.org/anthology.htm>

All profits from the anthology go directly to GCWA.

Thank you for your support.

Dixon Hearne,  
Co-Editor

## Another Call for Submission

The Gulf Coast Writers' Association is calling for submission for its anthology of short stories. GCWA was founded in 1986, sponsors