

writers' block

Carrollton Creative Writers Club Newsletter

September 2010



Carrollton Creative Writers Club

Founded Fall 2005

www.CarrolltonCreativeWritersClub.com
www.ccwcblog.blogspot.com

Mission:

Provide information and critique and facilitate the art of all forms of written expression.

Meetings:

2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 10:00 am - noon
 Carrollton Cultural Arts Center
 251 Alabama Street, Carrollton, GA 30117
 (770) 838-1083

Mary Wilburn 770-832-0675
mnsaxon@aol.com

ccwc business:

Super organizer, Tom Cook, gave an update on Mecca Fest.

Anita Buice shared an opportunity for visibility through the Pulpwood Queen group.

Eleanor Hoomes agreed to organize the facilitation calendar for 2011.

meetings:

September 14th

Shirley Garrett facilitated a discussion on book promotions. Below are some suggestions to help authors create more visibility (and greater sales) for their books:

Conduct a premier party. Have signings as soon as the book is available. Suggested hosts: family, friends, classmates

Make the event festive by including:

- Printed invitations
- Phone invitations
- Author's table
- Reading by author
- Decorations to support theme
- Food and drinks

Get the publicity out there:

- Newspaper announcements
- Magazines
- Speaking opportunities

Look for:

- People who love books
- Library, Friends of Library
- Community Centers, Senior events
- Book Clubs, bookstores
- People who need a program
- Civic organizations
- Red Hatter
- Church groups
- Writers, teacher

Market to:

- Hospital Gift Shops
- Local Book Stores
- Tourist Attractions
- Back-of-the-room sales

Do not handle the money yourself:

- Have an assistant handle money
- Let people pay on the honor system
- Hand out books if people are standing in line so
- Spend time with each person
- Suggest that the book will make a great gift for whatever season you are in

Have an appropriate display that attracts attention:

- Display books for to pick up and read

Self-promotion:

- Send articles to local magazines
- Write articles about your genre
- Web site
- Use a Flip video to capture comments about your book

Just Peachy by Jay Michael Jones



September 28th

Sixteen members and one guest attended the program. Eight of the members read excerpts from their writings. Topics ranged from the changing of season to personal reflections on God. We were transported in time through two of the writings and challenged with introspective thoughts.

Several times during the critique, the discussion led to topics of interest. It was suggested that we might devote a portion to some of our meetings to discuss issues about writing. Some suggestions were: dialogue; writer's block; favorite books read; sharing leads for promoting books.

Shirley Garrett

readings:

Comment from Richard Anderson: Because I had a somewhat unusual critique experience last Tuesday, I would like to extend these reader's comments beyond the usual notes of appreciation to something more of a demonstration of the process.

I have long felt that critique is the soul of our writers' club—an opportunity to share our writing and ourselves while receiving valuable guidance for improvements to our technique and new insights to the content. Always in the past, I have offered pieces that have been edited and polished to what I hope might be the final draft. Last week I read a poem written, rather spontaneously, earlier meeting-morning without opportunity even for a second read or any re-considerations. This is the poem my pencil wrote.

*Summer flowers still greet my eye
though in subdued proliferation
The taste of fall at last is on the season's lips
in this fair southern state
Bright yellow leaves shine forth amidst the
mainly green
motionless signals shining through the
morning fog—
droplets squeezed from the humid
atmosphere by temperatures well below the
saturation point.
Another season spent.
What new directions will the trails of
autumn take
before the leaves have dropped from branches
gray and bare?
And what of coming winter?
Will I be willing to face another spring?*

My only change was from prepared to willing in the last line. After applying critique

comments from the club and several coats of wax, the poem now stands as:

COMPRESSION

*The taste of fall at last is on the season's lips
Cool morning mist startles with its touch
Faded summer blooms still greet my eye today
subdued and hesitant before they pass away.
Bright golden leaves shine through
the shroud of fog—
shimmering droplets squeezed from the
humid atmosphere
by temperatures well below the
saturation point.*

Another season spent.

*A welcome passage after months of
summer's heat*

And yet

*What new directions will the paths of
autumn take*

*before the falling leaves expose branches
gray and bare?*

And what of coming winter?

Shall I be willing to face another spring?

The critique provided a title for the poem, gave clues as to the strongest lines and enhanced my own understanding of my words. I considered one additional change to the last line, substituting eager for willing, but decided against that, because willing resonates better with my mood on 9/28.

I cannot say that this is the final version, though I am satisfied to let it stand for now and hopeful that those who offered critique feel that some advantage has been gained. At the very least, I hope this specific example serves to amplify the critique process and show its value, so to encourage those who may be hesitant to read an uncertain piece of writing at our club meetings.

member news:

"Wendell Wordsworth's" mom, **Diana Black**, has just given birth to a second book, "Little Bitty Kitty!" This picture book, however, has a little twist. It's interactive, which means as the story goes along, there are pages for children to color and enhance so they feel more a part of the experience. It also includes a rhyming "Pet Promise" to encourage young people to treat animals with love, care and respect. www.LittleBittyKitty.com

Sat, Sept. 25th, **Mary Cunningham** had a booth at the Ithica Elementary Fall Festival, signing her series, "Cynthia's Attic." She will also sign books at MeccaFest, Oct. 9-10 at the Carrollton Cultural Arts Center. She will travel to Athens Oct. 14th for a book signing at the Athens Center for COMO XXI (Georgia Council of Media Organizations).

**Wiley's Book Exchange is open!**

On September 4th, Diane Quimby, long-time club member, opened Wiley's Book Exchange in McIntosh Plaza. From the moment one steps into the place, one feels comfortable and welcome. Diane and her family have worked incredibly hard to put the shop together. Not only is the place very well organized, but the selections are varied and easy to find. These aren't your typical, dog-eared used books. Diane says one of her goals was to offer "used books in like-new condition, at reasonable prices." She's accomplished that (we bought several books from her on opening day!). The shop has a large selection of records as well. In addition, she's set aside an area right up front for local authors and book signings. Many club-member selections are already on the shelf there. If you're a published author and want to do a book signing at Wiley's, just drop by and let Diane know. Heck, drop by anyway. You'll be glad you did.

Tom Cook

opportunity:

Kathy Patrick, founder of the Pulpwood Queens and Timber Guys Book Club, with 330 chapters nationally, has picked the Carrollton Chapter to be on a television broadcast. During the week of October 18th--exact day this will happen to be announced--she will Skype the members of the club to include them in the broadcast.

Anita Buice, who is President of the Carrollton Chapter, asks that anyone in our club who might be interested in participating in this broadcast (national coverage) and who's not already a member of the local Pulpwood Queens, please let her know ASAP by sending a her a check for the lifetime membership dues.

Your check should be made out to "Kathy Patrick" and you should indicate on the check that it is for "Pulpwood Queens membership." Since you get a tee shirt with membership, Anita asks that you write in the left-hand corner of your check the size you need. She has sizes Small to Triple X. The

tee shirts are pink and have the club's logo on them (if you're a guy, they're white--and you're called a Timber Guy, not a Pulpwood Queen, so as not to ruin your macho image).

Further details of this event will follow, but for now, if you want to participate, you need that membership. Mail the checks (made out as described above) to Anita's address: 202 Richards Street, Carrollton, 30117. Questions can be directed to Anita, whose phone number you should have on your membership list.

of interest:

Pulpwood Queens Girlfriend Getaway Cruise will sail aboard Royal Caribbean's Majesty of the Seas departing Friday June 24, 2011 from Miami, visiting Coco Cay and Nassau, Bahamas, and returning to Miami on Monday June 27. Space is limited. To reserve your spot call BROOKE IVEY at 812-320-5423, toll free at 800-881-3157, or email brookei@mei-travel.com. Don't miss your chance to hob-nob with authors and have some fun in the sun with your fellow Queens!

calendar:

Saturday and Sunday, October 9 & 10: MeccaFest 10am-5pm. CCWC members read in the auditorium.

Saturday, December 4: CCWC Christmas dinner at Little Hawaiian, 7:30PM.

next meetings:

October: Joe Byrd, facilitator

November: Tom Cook, facilitator (2nd Tuesday only), Laurretta Hannon, marketing.

December: Tom Cook, facilitator (2nd Tuesday only), critiques.

Please send any corrections or omissions to editor's attention at margaretayer@minnosping.com

Reading and Critiquing Guidelines:

before the meeting:

Notify the facilitator of:

- ☛ what you are going to read, i.e.; genre, chapter, poem, short story
- ☛ the word count or number of pages.
- ☛ which draft your work is: rough, second, close to final or final, etc.
- ☛ If you are unable to notify beforehand, tell the facilitator upon arrival at the meeting.
- ☛ Provide copies of your work by email or hard copy; some members will make notes on their copy and give it back to you. It's a good idea to contact the facilitator to see how many will be attending/reading. Ten copies are usually sufficient.

during the meeting:

- ☛ When reading your piece, give one minute or less of back story if you feel it's vital to your presentation.
- ☛ You may have someone else read for you, but please make this arrangement in advance so your reader has a chance to familiarize himself with your work.

when you're finished reading:

- ☛ Sit back and accept your medicine gracefully; being defensive helps no one.
- Make notes of the verbal critiques given you for later reference. Should you disagree with someone's critique, just accept it and go on. If you have a question regarding someone's critique, ask for clarification, then move on.
- ☛ Be gracious and let everyone move on to the next reader.

for those critiquing:

- ☛ Remember the reader is looking for constructive criticism. Take care to point out one thing you liked for each thing that bothered you. This is called sandwiching your comments.
- ☛ Be specific about what did or didn't work for you. It's not helpful to hear "I didn't like that" but it may be better to hear "I would like to see more of the surroundings in this scene, I couldn't visualize very clearly," or "I'd like to know more about your character and why he would do this," or "I felt that word made me stumble, possibly another word would help it flow better, such as ...".
- ☛ Be honest and direct in a polite and caring way.
- ☛ The rough draft is probably the most sensitive to critique. It's really still in the idea stage, so punctuation is unimportant in this phase of the work. Look for the idea; is the plot being laid out? Is the scene being set? Are the characters being rounded out and becoming real?
- ☛ Be encouraging, this is a new creation that needs sculpting.