

# News Words

A L A B A M A W R I T E R S C O N C L A V E

AWC MEMBERS—July 15 – 17 is streaking toward us faster than a hummingbird dodging a honeybee. The 2011 Alabama Writers’ Conclave workshop faculty is in place. They are a knowledgeable, stimulating and exciting group of noted writers. I am hoping that their classrooms will be filled with aspiring and seasoned writers eager to put pencil to paper. Their writing secrets, hints, methods, techniques, and encouragement will raise your prose and/or poetry to a higher level. Perhaps, the faculty will arouse your creative juices and set you on the way to writing a contest winning entry and/or publishable piece. Make your plans to join us at the Huntsville Marriott – next to the Space and Rocket Center – and take part in the 2011 workshops. This year registrants will receive discounts on the entry fees to the Space and Rocket Center, so you may want to hang around on Sunday after the workshops.

Besides the introduction of this year’s workshop faculty and writer-in-residence, the reception Friday evening will offer a “Round the World” gourmet buffet. The hotel’s catering manager has created five stations, each offering delicious foreign and, of course, America tidbits to excite the pallet.

Since AWC received many positive comments, we will again award the prizes and honorable mentions for writing contest winners at the Saturday evening banquet. This will again provide the winners the opportunity to receive extended praise by their peers. Promising writers need acclaim. By the way, dress for this affair is dress-up-casual (business suits or casual dress).

Don’t forget, following the final workshops on Sunday there will be a very important AWC Business Meeting. Not only because of the outstanding door prizes being offered, the election of new AWC Board members will also take place. I urge all members to attend. A wonderful slate of candidates is coming together. The 2011 conference of the Alabama Writers’ Conclave, like all previous conferences, is designed to instruct and nurture writers. If you love to put words to paper – or the computer – you will enjoy being with friends and expressing your creativity. I strongly encourage you to attend and look forward to being with you. - Richard Modlin, Program Chair 2009-2011

## M E M B E R S H I P

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Membership in the Alabama Writers Conclave begins October 1 through September 30 of each year. We try to keep up with our members and offer support as they develop their writing. If you have a writing web site, please email the link to us or write it on your return card when you pay dues. We will add the address to the AWC web site for all site visitors to see. If you have a book published or an award received, please let us know and we would love to post it on the site and in this newsletter. As part of our organization, you should receive a membership card in the mail after you pay your dues. The card serves as a reminder that you have paid for that year.

Please send your news to: [awcmember@gmail.com](mailto:awcmember@gmail.com)

Thanks! - Membership Chair, Francesca Gross

## 2011 ALABAMA WRITERS' CONCLAVE ANNUAL WRITERS' CONTEST

The **April 20 postmark deadline** is just a few weeks away, so hurry and send in your Manuscripts! Go to [www.alabamawritersconclave.org](http://www.alabamawritersconclave.org) and click AWC 2011 Contest for guidelines and more information. As last year, prizes will be presented during the Awards Banquet on Saturday evening. Money prizes of \$100, \$75, \$50, \$25 and four honorable mentions will be awarded in each of the eight categories (fiction, short fiction, juvenile fiction, nonfiction, humor, traditional poem, free verse poem, and first chapter novel). Contest judging is blind (author's names do not appear on the manuscripts). Alabama writers have a heritage rich in storytelling and they are always among top prize winners. **This year for the first time**, In addition to 1st through 4th place winners, the Honorable Mention winners will also have the option to publish in the online journal, *Alalitcom* ([www.alalit.com](http://www.alalit.com)) if they so desire. So, don't let the deadline slip by. Send manuscripts to the Contest Chair at the address below. Entering the contest is a great way to express your creativity. The Awards Banquet is always a festive occasion, a time of high expectation, especially for those who enter the writing contest.

Happy writing, Marian Lewis AWC Contest Chair, 250 Hartside Rd., Owens Cross Rds., AL 35763

### A W C B O A R D N E W S

I write as a way of keeping myself going. You build your life around writing, and it's what gets you through. So it's partly just curiosity to see what you can do.

[Robert Morgan](#)

#### FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee of the Alabama Writers' Conclave is now accepting nominations for the various positions on the 2011 – 2013 AWC Board.

Please visit the AWC Website [www.alabamawritersconclave.org](http://www.alabamawritersconclave.org) and click Constitution/Bylaws in the left column to learn the composition of the board and each member's responsibilities.

If you are interested, or know of someone who may be, please send the nominee's name, address, email, and telephone number to Richard Modlin, Chair of Nominating Committee: email, [rfm1937@earthlink.net](mailto:rfm1937@earthlink.net) or post, 250 Hartside Road, Owens Cross Roads, AL 35763. Make sure the person you nominate is willing to serve. Nominations will be considered until May 1st, 2011.

## A W C B O A R D C O N T A C T

**Board President** Greg Screws[greg.screws@gmail.com](mailto:greg.screws@gmail.com)**First Vice President- Program Chair**

Richard Modlin

[rfm1937@earthlink.com](mailto:rfm1937@earthlink.com)**Historian** Teresa Thorne[tthornecap@aol.com](mailto:tthornecap@aol.com)**Publicity Chair** Open**Recording Secretary** Marie Peerson[mpeerson3@hotmail.com](mailto:mpeerson3@hotmail.com)**Treasurer** Don Johnson[e.d.johnson@bellsouth.net](mailto:e.d.johnson@bellsouth.net)**Assistant Treasurer** Open**Contest Chair & Alalitcom Editor**Marian Lewis [bo325sky@earthlink.net](mailto:bo325sky@earthlink.net)**Past President** -Jim Reed[jim@jimreedbooks.com](mailto:jim@jimreedbooks.com)**Long-Range Planning Committee Chair**

Jimmy Carl Harris

[harrisjc@bellsouth.net](mailto:harrisjc@bellsouth.net)**Corresponding Secretary**

Kathleen Thompson

[ktompson42@aol.com](mailto:ktompson42@aol.com)**Second VP Membership** Francesca GrossSend membership dues, conference payments  
and registration to:

Francesca Gross

2229 Chapel Road

Birmingham, AL 35226

[awcmember@gmail.com](mailto:awcmember@gmail.com)J O H N C H A M B E R S N A M E D 2 0 1 1 A L A B A M A S T A T E  
P O E T R Y S O C I E T Y ' S P O E T O F T H E Y E A R .

AWC Recognizes J. William Chambers: Alabama the Poet of the Year 2011.

A poet himself, editor of the Elk River Review journal, editor/publisher of Elk River Review Press, Alabama State Poetry Society member, who included other poets in his work, and reviewed the poetry of others. John Chambers has lived his life in Alabama and has dedicated much of his time, resources, energy, and, most importantly, his love to the world of poetry. We recognize him for what he has done to keep poetry not only alive in Alabama, but a growing, unique, and viable force in the literary world.



A member of the Alabama State Poetry Society since the mid-1990's, Chambers served for two years on the Board of Directors as Contest Chair, and since becoming a member he has funded eleven (11) contests for the Alabama State Poetry Society. As editor of the highly-acclaimed journal Elk River Review, Chambers published more Alabama poets and writers than any single journal in the state.

In addition to his vocation as a poet, Chambers has been involved in language his whole life. He has taught English in private schools, served as librarian for Athens College. He worked as writer, editor, arts and information officer, historian, and management analyst for the Redstone Arsenal; and served for seventeen years as music critic and reviewer for The Huntsville Times. In the mid-1980's he resurrected and provided the funding for the student-faculty publication *The Gyre*. John deservedly received Athens State University Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1987. See *Bits and Pieces* on page 6 for a list of some of his works.

## WRITING SENSE: MY TWO BITS

*What is the best writing advice you've ever received?* The question recently posed to me didn't require pondering. Unfortunately, I have to credit it to "Anonymous," because the name of the genius who bestowed it--long ago at a writer's conference (possibly the AWC)--is lost in the mists of time or at least in the fog of my mind. The advice, however, I do remember, and it is deceptively simple:

The best stories come from taking two unlikely elements, mixing them together and seeing what happens.

"Elements" are characters or a character's qualities, situations, plot lines, etc. My faith in this principle was sorely tested when the central character in my novel (*Noah's wife*, for heaven's

sake!) seemed to have a form of autism (now) known as Aspergers. I argued with myself about such a bizarre pairing, but then I remembered the above advice, took a deep breath...and let 'er rip. It turned out to be a perfect point of view for the story I wanted to tell.

**Let's hear your two cents!** What is the best writing advice you've ever received?

T.K. Thorne  
Author of *Noah's Wife*  
(Chalet Publishers, 2009, 2010)

Send your "advice" to  
TThorneCAP@aol.com

## REMEMBERING REILLY

Dr. Reilly Maginn, 78, departed us on Sunday, February 20th, 2011 in Daphne, Alabama. He was a good friend and long time AWC member.

2010 was a great year for Reilly and his writing. He was nominated for the Pushcart Prize by the editor of the Timber Creek Review for his short story, *BOOTS*, and was published in the Timber Creek Review. (Univ. of NC).

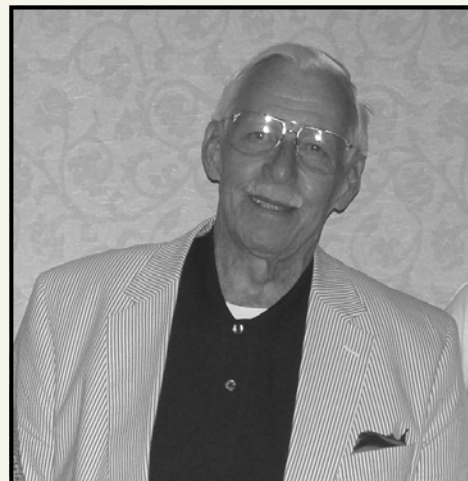
Short stories published in 2010:

*Sarah*, was published by the Bracelet Charm Mag. in San Antonio.

*Gabe and the Sodbuster* was published by Conceit Mag. in San Francisco.

*Winners* was published by the Down in the Dirt Mag. in New Orleans

*High Iron* accepted for publication in the Dead Mule Mag.



This photo of Reilly is from the 2007 prize winner photo at the AWC Conference in Auburn.

STATE POET LAUREATE



Sue Brannon Walker

AWC has the privilege of sponsoring the Alabama State Poet Laureate. Sue Brannon Walker has been re-elected as poet laureate for 2008-2012 by the AWC membership.

Our Poet Laureate Sue Walker just returned from the National Poets Laureate conference in Lawrence, KS. She has a chapbook coming out on-line in April from the Dead Mule School of Southern Poetry.

**Another writing challenge from Sue:**

Sue Walker challenges you to submit a "fowl" piece -- either poetry or prose of three to five pages that comments on "fowl," the feathered kind. Books sent to the top winners.

**April is National Poetry Month**

**Alabama Poetry Society Book of the year is**

"POSSIBLE CROCODILES"

by BARRY MARKS

Barry Marks is a Birmingham attorney whose poetry, fiction, articles, and essays have been published in nearly 100 journals, magazines, and periodicals over the last 30 years. Marks was 1998 Alabama State Poetry Society Poet of the Year and his chapbook, *There is Nothing Oppressive as a Good Man*, won the Society's 2003 Morris Chapbook Competition. A member of the Big Table Poets, his work is featured in that group's anthologies, "Poems from the Big Table" and "Einstein at the Odeon Cafe." He is a past president of ASPS and a former Board member of Alabama Writer's Conclave.

"Possible Crocodiles" was published by Brick Road Press of Columbus, Georgia. The book can be purchased online ([www.brickroadpoetrypress.com](http://www.brickroadpoetrypress.com)).

A CHALLENGE FROM OUR FALL 2010 NEWSLETTER

Get off on the floor of your choice. Tell me about it in 150-600 words. The deadline is December 18. I'll send you a New Year's award—but don't expect money – just a book which is worth more than money and more lasting, *nes't pas*?

*Sue received 15 responses. Posted below is the winning piece by Betty Spence*

Space Elevator by Betty Spence

Judson Jerome once said "knowing Myrtle Whimple's poetry you would recognize her anywhere--and everywhere", and having heard that sometimes you meet important people in elevators, I took to Myrtle right off. As sure as fate, the two of us found ourselves being lifted on a university elevator to one of those open mic affairs where poem-makers read to one another.

It was the sheer weight of a satchel of books Myrtle paid dearly to have bound and stamped in gold--even had her picture on the back flap, that grounded her. I knew it was Myrtle when she began her elevator speech: "I'm not a new wave," she told me. "I'm kind of middle wave . . . kinda like, y'know, the mainstream. It's high time your garden variety poet got recognized."

And then, as if a fairy touched a button with a wand, the elevator door opened on the fourth floor and Myrtle with her satchel of gold and I with mine, stepped out into a green hall that led us like Jack's beanstalk, up, up and away.

AWC FOUNDED 1923

**A L A B A M A W R I T E R S  
C O N C L A V E**

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**One of the oldest writers' organization in  
continuous existence in the United  
States. Founded 1923.**

**B I T S   A N D   P I E C E S**

The works of John Chambers 2011 Poet of the year  
include :

Camellias in Autumn published, 1989, (Honeysuckle  
Imprint), (Pulitzer Nominated)

A Taste of Wine and Gentian published 2000, (Negative  
Capability Press) (Pulitzer Nominated)

Collage: A Tribute to Steven Owen Bailey published  
2006 Negative Capability Press)

Whatever Remembers Us: An Anthology of Alabama  
Poetry (Negative Capability Press)

Co-editor, proof-reader, business manager, lay-out and  
type-setter.

Individual poems have appeared in  
Negative Capability, Louisiana Literature,  
Connecticut Review, and Southern Voices.



**CHECK OUT THE WEB SITE: [WWW.ALABAMAWRITERSCONCLAVE.ORG](http://WWW.ALABAMAWRITERSCONCLAVE.ORG)**