

## Upcoming GWA Events

- ◆ Saturday, April 20: *A History of Nursing*, Ann Webster, celebrated poet and memoirist.
- ◆ Saturday, May 18: Red Clay Writers Conference. KSU Social Sciences Building in Kennesaw.
- ◆ Saturday, June 15: Georgia Author of the Year Awards banquet and ceremony, KSU Center in Kennesaw.



Did you know that GWA offers a free poetry workshop after each monthly event for its members? Attendees exchange poems in advance in order to prepare for the workshop and discuss poets, poetry genres, publication, and poetic devices. Please contact JoAnn Dropp for further information at [JLDropp@yahoo.com](mailto:JLDropp@yahoo.com).

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# The Georgia Authority

Monthly Memos from the Georgia Writers Association

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April 2013

## Wearing Pink Bunny Slippers and Rose Colored Glasses

by Vicki Carroll

I am positive that every writer develops ways of coping with the process of writing. It can be little superstitions that cause us to follow exact patterns and procedures or it can be wearing our lucky hat and listening to Mozart. Regardless, every writer eventually finds what works for him or her. I have a friend who must have the movie *What Lies Beneath* playing in the background before she starts writing. Writers are an odd lot—but so what?

What do our little odd rituals do for us? Are we more productive because of them . . . really? Maybe not, but I believe that these things represent the soft layers of love



and acceptance that we need to put between us and the sharp-tongued critic that sits on our shoulder. That ugly little critic who looks a little like us is always there, breathing into our ear, waiting impatiently for the time it can whisper, “You have no talent, so give it up.” When the going gets tough (and we all know how

tough it can get), we reach out for anything we can clutch to our beating hearts for comfort. When we no longer have faith in ourselves, we can look at that lucky hat that we were wearing when we sold our first little article and remember the successes that remind us who we are. We can keep going for one more day, or one more page, or one more line.

Anyone who is serious about writing has read tons of books about the writing process. We have read the words of the mega-authors, hoping to learn a secret, get a hint, or at least to become inspired. We have devoured the

*(Continued on page 3)*

## April Workshop Preview

### Ann Webster: A Diamond in the Rough

by Carolyn Buonomo

Join the Georgia Writers Association as we welcome poet Anne Webster from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. on April 20 in room 300 of the KSU center. During this workshop, “Diamonds in the Rough,” anyone from beginning to more experienced poets will gain simple yet concrete tools that they can utilize to make their poems as polished as they can be. “They can look at their unfinished work as with a jeweler’s loupe to cut away the unnecessary and add sparkle,” says Webster. Audience members will walk away with a

newfound confidence in their writing as well as techniques that will aid them in bringing their writing to the next level.

Webster is the author of two memoirs, *Gunsbot: A Nurse Betrayed* and *A Second-Choice Life*. She has also been published in many other literary magazines and anthologies. She carried on a nursing career for over twenty five years and now resides with her husband in Atlanta.

Attendees of this workshop will be provided handouts detailing



the highlights of the workshop and are asked to come with paper and pen.

**Carolyn Buonomo** is a junior at Kennesaw State University studying English and Professional Writing. She works at KSU’s Writing Center.

**Red Clay Writers Conference** has been rescheduled for **Saturday, May 18.**

For more information visit:  
<http://con-ta.cc/13uZ8YM>

**Caren A. Stewart** is an artist and writer working in the Augusta area. You can follow her on Twitter @goodwilljunkie1.

## The Purpose Propelled Life

by Caren A. Stewart

If a sense of purpose is what's driving my life, I'm in BIG trouble. If you could get a glimpse of my own personal roadmap it would pretty much look like a giant hairball.

In my relatively short lifetime, I've contemplated at least fifty different careers. When I was seven, I wanted to be a marine biologist and then, during the time I watched *CSI*, I wanted to be a crime scene investigator. But what can someone with so many aspirations do for a job? Well, she can become a fiction writer! That way, she doesn't actually have to make a career decision—she can just live vicariously through her characters' lives instead.

Being a creative writer is something that anyone with at least an eighth grade education can do (thank goodness for spell-check—I just drew a blank on how to spell eighth). It's also great for someone who wants to stay home and not actually have to talk to anyone (except the few, choice words reserved for our computers). Of course, it does also help to have an extremely wealthy patron if possible; otherwise, you'll have to get a desk job, and then you'll be forced to write at work.

The point is, Rome wasn't built in a day, and your novel might not get written in a month, a year, or even ten years, but you've got to start somewhere. Just look around you. Be an observer of humanity; you might be surprised by what you see . . . okay, don't look over there at what that guy's doing; I'm pretty sure that's illegal.

But seriously, being a writer can sometimes be a challenge—like when your characters are so real that you try to call one on the phone to ask for advice, not that it's happened to me personally . . . The important thing is to socialize. Join a writers group. Your local

library, bookstore, or college can probably point you in the right direction.

A writers group can be a great tool for gaining constructive criticism (yay for spell-check again) and insight into your work. When you've already edited something twenty times, fresh eyes can do wonders. A writers group can also be great support when you start receiving rejection after rejection after rejection . . .

It's also helpful to join a writing

well. That means don't post what you had for breakfast or how your neighbor's cat peed on your car again; people will only resent you for making them unwitting participants in your plan for revenge—believe me, I know what I'm talking about.

Instead post a question, like, "How can you keep a neighbor's cat from peeing on your car?" That way you're not implicating anyone directly. Or you could post a line from a book you're reading



organization pertinent to your genre, like the American Crime Writers League (so cool!), Romance Writers of America, or the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. Often times, these groups will have writers conferences in exotic locations, like the Cat Writers Association Conference in Sherman, Texas, or the Maritime Writers Workshop in Fredericton, Nebraska (do they have an ocean in Nebraska?) Conferences can be valuable tools for networking, having your work critiqued, and staying up crying all night with your new best friends.

Which brings me to another great tool: social media (ugh, I know several of you have just left the room). Yes, social media can be time-consuming, but a lot of authors are able to establish a following before they even get published. And according to a local publisher I know, you only have to pick one form of social media—just do it

and ask what everyone else is reading. You know, come to think of it, you can really learn a lot about a person by what they're reading. Um, who left this book, *Guide to Amateur Cat Taxidermy*, on my coffee table?

The purpose of social media is to get people engaged so when your book does finally get published, there will be a bunch of people at your fingertips forced to read about how you used your advance to pay off the debt you accumulated while writing the book . . . and hopefully one or two of them will buy it, too.

So in summation what do eighth grade education, writers groups, writers conferences, and social media all have in common? Why they're all parts to the making of a great writer—you! Now stop thinking about cats and go write something already.

## Wearing Bunny Slippers and Rose Colored Glasses (continued from page 1)



wisdom of writers we admire: do an outline, don't do an outline, stop in the middle of a sentence, keep a schedule, don't keep a schedule, stick to a daily word count, keep

writing when the fire is burning . . . and in the end, all it tells us is that every writer is different. There is no secret. There is hard work. It is hard work to master the craft, learn to write first and edit later, and to realize that sometimes it takes ten drafts, not three, and most painful of all, sometimes you have to throw it all out and start again.

When I am frustrated, tired, and hating my story as I hit that bog-of-middle part, I do all the things I am sure a lot of other writers do, I look

for a diversion. Is there anything out there that can take away the pain for a little while? For me, it is usually chocolate and old movies. When I get to the "why did I ever think I was a writer" kind of desperate, I know it is time to bring out the big guns. It is time to find a bit of writing that I did sometime in the past that made me proud. I read it again and put on my rose colored glasses and lucky pink bunny slippers and march myself back to the computer. I am a writer.

*Vicki Carroll is a published non-fiction writer from Atlanta who is now hard at work on a novel that is set in Ireland.*



Looking for calls for submissions? New reading material?  
Writing Contests? Reviews? Publishers?  
Check out NewPages.com.

[www.newpages.com](http://www.newpages.com)

## Around Georgia

- \* April 2, **Play Pen Open Mic**, Poetry, Prose, Storytelling and Music, Johnnie MacCracken's Celtic Pub, Marietta.  
[www.facebook.com/events/400718693358518](http://www.facebook.com/events/400718693358518)
- \* April 2-5, **Agnes Scott College Writers' Festival**, Atlanta.  
[www.agnesscott.edu/writersfestival](http://www.agnesscott.edu/writersfestival)
- \* April 3, **Janie Dempsey Watts**, *Moon Over Taylor's Ridge*, Gainesville.  
[www.negawriters.org/negacalendar](http://www.negawriters.org/negacalendar)
- \* April 5-7, **19th Annual Association of Literary Scholars, Critics, and Writers**, Hosted by the University of Georgia, Athens.  
[www.alscw.org/events/conferences/2013/index.html](http://www.alscw.org/events/conferences/2013/index.html)
- \* April 10, **Speaking Pages: A Spoken Word Event/Gathering**, Open mic, Avid Bookshop, Athens.  
[www.avidbookshop.com/event/speaking-pages-spoken-word-eventgathering-open-mic](http://www.avidbookshop.com/event/speaking-pages-spoken-word-eventgathering-open-mic)
- \* April 27, **Letters About Literature**, Annual awards ceremony celebrating Georgia students' letters to famous authors, Decatur Library Auditorium.  
[www.georgiacenterforthebook.org/Events/show.php?id=570](http://www.georgiacenterforthebook.org/Events/show.php?id=570)
- \* April 28, **Creating Compelling Characters**, An immersion writing workshop with author Susan Hubbard, Lily Creek Lodge, Dahlonega.  
[www.lilycreeklodge.com/WriterRetreat.html](http://www.lilycreeklodge.com/WriterRetreat.html)
- \* April 30, **An Evening with Southern Poets**, Two dozen poets to give readings from *The Southern Anthology of Poetry: Georgia*, Decatur Library Auditorium.  
[www.georgiacenterforthebook.org/Events/show.php?id=576](http://www.georgiacenterforthebook.org/Events/show.php?id=576)
- \* April 30, **Jill McCorkle**, *Life After Life*, Margaret Mitchell House, Atlanta.  
[www.atlantahistorycenter.com/cms/Lectures+/489.html](http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/cms/Lectures+/489.html)

## Get Writing!

*Write a story. The story must involve some slippers . During the story, a character drinks something they haven't had in a while.*

Prompt courtesy of  
[www.seventhsanctum.com](http://www.seventhsanctum.com)

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*Here are ten words. Start writing incorporating the words in as you go along:  
night, dinner, news, cloudy, perks, festival, irresistible, trafficking, blonde, supporter.*

Prompt courtesy of  
[www.squidoo.com/writeprompts](http://www.squidoo.com/writeprompts)

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**Submissions**

Please send your member news and events to *The Georgia Authority* editor by the 20th of each month.

If you wish to contribute an article to *The Georgia Authority*, please contact the editor for guidelines.

**The Georgia Authority**  
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Melissa Roberson, Editor  
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## About GWA

Georgia Writers Association is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization that works across the state to encourage and strengthen the proficiencies of writers in both the creative and the business aspects of the writing life. We do this through an array of speakers and programs at regular meetings. GWA sponsors workshops, conferences, seminars, contests, and other events. We encourage the formation of satellite groups, critique groups, and other writer resource groups. We encourage the funding of guest authors to various Georgia counties. Our online publications are an attempt to educate and inform the diverse literary community of Georgia. Accomplished Georgia writers are recognized through the Georgia Author of the Year Awards.

**Become a member for discounts to workshops & conferences, exclusive online resources, and more!**

Join today at [www.georgiawriters.org](http://www.georgiawriters.org).

## Clean Green Writing Machine

by Amber Lanier Nagle

Almost everyone is trying to live greener—from reducing carbon footprints to purchasing hybrid vehicles to planting trees. After taking the initial steps to make my lifestyle more earth-friendly, I soon asked myself, “How can I green-up my writing process without compromising productivity?”

The business of writing presents several opportunities to embrace green practices such as energy conservation, paper reuse and minimization efforts. Here are a few to consider:

### 1. Brainstorm without paper.

Whether you use listing, outlining, clustering, mapping, or bubbling techniques to generate ideas and draft structure for your writing, you can reduce your paper consumption by using a paperless brainstorming method. For example, try using [www.bubbl.us](http://www.bubbl.us), a free web application that allows you to create large, colorful mind maps that you can save, edit, print, and share. Or try organizing your thoughts on a large dry-erase board. You can also diagram your ideas by using the flowchart shapes and connectors from the AutoShapes menu in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint.



### 2. Shift from printed to electronic correspondence.

Several years ago, I printed each of my queries on paper, printed color copies of my writing clips, prepared self-addressed stamped envelopes, stuffed them all in over-sized envelopes with extra postage, and drove my gas-guzzling SUV to the post office to mail my packages. Today, I only do business with publications who accept queries and manuscript submissions via email. And instead of sending numerous hardcopies of my writing clips out each week, I've posted a few writing samples online. In my query letters, I simply direct editors to my website to review my clips.

### 3. Switch to earth-friendly research methods.

Traditional research and note-taking consumes lots of paper. Instead of using note cards, notebooks, and printing dozens of pages from the Internet,

consider using a hand-held device to record interviews and a web-content-clipping and note-taking app such as Evernote to save and organize information. Evernote allows writers to put everything in one place—notes, images, documents, web clips, and audio notes. Evernote is free, easy to use, and syncs across all your devices.

### 4. Green-up your work area.

Make your office more environmentally-friendly by replacing your light bulbs with more energy efficient compact fluorescent bulbs. Move your desk near a window to take advantage of natural lighting. Turn-off lights and unplug power strips, computers, printers, monitors, and other appliances when not in use. Recycle paper, toner cartridges, and any other recyclable material that you use in your workspace. Finally, consider using your HVAC system's energy efficient settings to conserve energy.

*Amber Lanier Nagle is a writing coach and freelance writer with hundreds of nonfiction articles and two ebooks in her portfolio. Connect with Amber at [www.AmberNagle.com](http://www.AmberNagle.com).*