



GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY: SERVING GEORGIA'S POETS SINCE 1979
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GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY HOLDS 115TH QUARTERLY MEETING AT YOUNG HARRIS

COME CELEBRATE THE LIFE AND WORKS OF BYRON HERBERT REECE

Join us in the beautiful mountains of North Georgia for our fall meeting! Like the foliage, our program will be colorful and varied.

Our meeting at Young Harris College will celebrate the life and works of Byron Herbert Reece (1917-1958) through readings and a short film. The 90th anniversary of his birth was September 14th. Reece, the Honoree of this fall's Georgia Literary Festival, was the author of four books of poetry and two novels.

During his short career, he received attention throughout the United States for his poetry. He earned two Guggenheim awards and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. Reece, who is known today as the poet whose old-fashioned, finely crafted ballads and lyrics celebrate the life and heritage of the north Georgia mountains, served as writer-in-residence at the University of California at Los Angeles, Emory University, and Young Harris College. For more about Reece's life, see page 2.



Featured Reader: Bettie Sellers, Former Georgia Poet Laureate



Our featured reader will be Bettie Sellers, former Poet Laureate of Georgia and a scholar and admirer of Byron Herbert Reece. Bettie, a native of Griffin, Georgia, taught in the English Department of Young Harris College from 1965 to 1996. Her publications include Westward from Bald Mountain, Appalachian Carols, Morning of the Red-Tailed Hawk, Wild Ginger, The Bitter Berry: The Life of Byron Herbert Reece, Spring Onions and Cornbread, and Liza's Monday and Other Poems. Sellers was named Georgia Author of the Year in 1979 by the Dixie Council of Authors and Journalists. She was named Poet of the Year in 1992 by the American Pen Women. In 1997, she was selected as Georgia's Poet Laureate of Georgia by then Governor Zell Miller.

Workshop Leader: Nancy Simpson

Our afternoon workshop leader will be Nancy Simpson, who has published a chapbook and a full-length poetry collection and was co-editor of the anthology, Lights in the Mountains. "She wrote her first poem when she came to live in the mountains of North Carolina in 1969. Mountain images now fill her poems, which have been published in Southern Poetry Review, Georgia Review, and Prairie Schooner. She is also author of Across Water and Night Student and editor of Lights in the Mountains. Nancy holds an MFA in writing and has taught for many years. She is a member of the North Carolina Writer's Network West and Resident Writer at the Folk School."



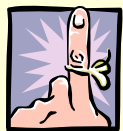
(http://www.folkschool.com/index.php?section=instructor_detail&instructor_id=269)

Following is information on lunch reservations, lodging in the Young Harris area, and the agenda. For directions to Young Harris College, watch for your mailed invitation and go to our GPS website (www.georgiapoetrysociety.org).

Hope you join your fellow poets and friends at Young Harris!

Clela Reed, Vice President and Program Chair

REMINDERS



- ☛ **GPS Contest Deadline is October 15.** Please send your entries in very soon!
- ☛ **Dues.** If you haven't renewed your dues since June 1, 2007, you need to do so now. If you have any questions about the status of your membership, please contact Ron Self, President, by email (SMRWS@aol.com) or call him at 706-649-3080. Thank you!



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AGENDA

115TH QUARTERLY GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY MEETING

Kennesaw State University, Student Center (Bldg 5)

9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m.

9:30 a.m.	Coffee and Registration, Sign up for member reading
10:00 a.m.	Welcome by Ron Self, announcements, member readings
10:45 a.m.	Introduction of John Kay
	Introduction of Bettie Sellers
	☞ Reading by Bettie Sellers
11:30 a.m.	Short Film: The Bitter Berry
12:00 Noon	Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Poetry Workshop with Nancy Simpson
3:00 p.m.	Adjournment

WHO IS BYRON HERBERT REECE?

Renowned Appalachian poet, novelist, and farmer, Byron Herbert Reece lived most of his life near Choestoe, southeast of Blairsville, Georgia. It was in this area that he composed, to critical acclaim, four volumes of poetry and two novels, **Better a Dinner of Herbs** and **The Hawk and the Sun**. Reece won two Guggenheims. He was a five-time recipient of the Georgia Writers Association's literary achievement award and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in poetry for *Bow Down in Jericho*. He served as poet-in-residence at the University of California at Los Angeles, Emory University in Atlanta, and Young Harris College. Suffering from tuberculosis, Reece took his own life three months before his forty-first birthday. He is buried in Old Union Cemetery near Young Harris.

Because of the respect and admiration that many Georgia communities have for Mr. Reece, the Byron Herbert Reece Society (BHRS) was officially formed in July 2003. The mission of the BHRS is *"to preserve, perpetuate, and promote the literary and cultural legacy of the Georgia mountain poet/novelist, Byron Herbert Reece. In addition to enhancing both knowledge of and appreciation for his writings, efforts will be made to honor his way of life, with particular emphasis on his love of nature and his attachment to farming."*

The Georgia Poetry Society also acknowledges and honors Mr. Reece with an annual poetry contest in his name because of his "finely-crafted ballads and lyrics (*that*) celebrate the life and heritage of the north Georgia mountains" (courtesy, New Georgia Encyclopedia).

DIRECTIONS TO YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE

- ☞ From Atlanta: Take I-75 North to exit 268. Get on I-575 N (Hwy 5/US 76/Hwy 515) through Jasper, Ellijay, Blue Ridge, and Blairsville to Young Harris. YHC will be on the right. (easiest way) Look for GPS signs to Wilson Hall.
- ☞ From I-85 North: to I-985/Hwy 365, left on Hwy 52 to US 129 North to Cleveland, Hwy 75 North through Helen, US 76 West through Hiawassee to Young Harris. YHC will be on the left. Look for GPS signs to Wilson Hall.
- ☞ From GA 400 N: continue to the end, go straight ahead on two-lane county road (Longbranch Rd.) and right on Hwy 52/115 to Cleveland, Hwy 75 North through Helen, US 76 West through Hiawassee to Young Harris. YHC will be on the left. Look for GPS signs to Wilson Hall.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER - THE REACH OF SONG

Someone asked what steps are involved in putting together *The Reach of Song*, our annual poetry anthology. I had never listed them, so here goes.

1. I am aided by an editorial advisory committee that currently includes GPS President Ron Self, and past GPS Presidents John Ottley, Jr. and Steven Shields. Together, we agree on policies, such as "All member poems will be evaluated by competent judges who are not members of GPS." The editor chooses two successful and experienced poets, usually from out-of-state, as judges.
2. In mid-November, I issue to all paid-up GPS members a Call for Submission of up to three poems by February 15 for the member section of the next edition. Rules and specifications are cited, such as no entry fee; 40-line limit, etc. I say, "Send your best poems."
3. Soon after February 15, I send a copy of each member poem (285 for 2007) to each of the two judges and ask them to rate each poem on a scale of 1 to 10. They return all poems to me by April 10, with each member's top-rated poem (in most cases) making the publication.
4. About April 20, I send the ten top-rated poems to the two judges and ask each to rank order those ten verses. The average of the two judges' scores determines the Awards for Excellence for member poems.
5. About May 1, I begin in earnest to insert the member poems into Microsoft Publisher, page by page by page. If the poem was emailed to me, I do not have to retype it. I do minimal editing, correcting only misspellings, grammatical errors, and sometimes punctuation. When the pages are completed, I send them to an advisory committee person to proof. John Ottley, Jr., formerly an editor, with a master's degree in journalism, is especially exacting.
6. I then email or snail-mail a page proof to each member poet and ask him/her to send me any corrections (but no rewriting).
7. I consummate negotiations with Print1Direct for a 154-page book and 350 copies at a fair price. I chose green for the same John Kollock cover art introduced last year.
8. I enter into Publisher the first, second and third place winning poems from the 11 adult and youth contests sponsored by GPS in 2006-07 – those having been emailed to me by Contest Chair Deuce Douglass.
9. After checking each poem five or six times, and the indexes 10 or 12 times, I place the book on a disk and take it 22 miles to Marietta. Three days later I have a complete proof, which I check twice more, then pronounce it "OK TO PRINT."
10. On July 27, the day before unveiling, I load in my van the six boxes of 06-07 ROS, and haul them to Kennesaw for unveiling and distribution to those at the quarterly meeting.
11. By August 3, I have 41 additional orders in the mail plus 18 anthologies to libraries in Georgia, placed there as gifts by GPS members.
12. Finally, I thumb through the book, grateful for the 107 poets who have contributed to it and thus extended the reach of poetry across Georgia and beyond.



George Williams presents a copy of *The Reach of Song* to Library Manager Miriam Baker for the Uncle Remus Regional Library in Madison. (Photo by Angelina Bellebuono, Staff Photographer, Morgan County Citizen)

MEMBERS PLACE ANTHOLOGY IN 21 LIBRARIES

GPS members are extending *The Reach of Song* by placing it on the shelves of their local libraries. The 2006-07 edition of the poetry anthology, unveiled on July 28, was donated to twenty-one libraries by nineteen members.

"We challenged our membership to sponsor a copy so that citizens of their communities will have access to quality poetry written mostly by Georgians," said Editor Robert L. Lynn. Past GPS President Rosemary Mauldin reported the Oconee City Library welcomed the volume and placed it in the Ivy Collection. When Dr. Mario Mion took a copy to the Phenix City (Alabama) Public Library the librarian immediately committed to shelve it. Larry Hand, a 1960 graduate of Jeff Davis High School, donated an anthology to the Jeff Davis County Library.

Other GPS members who donated copies include:

- Elizabeth Allan, DeKalb County Library
- Linda Ames, Vermillion (SD) Public Library
- F. William Broome, Lumpkin County Library

(Continued, next page)

- Angela Burns, St. Simons Public Library
- Tonette Taylor Long, Hall County Library
- Jane L. Hart, Porter Memorial Library, Covington
- Homer Overstreet, Young Harris College Library
- Mary Jo Winer, Sandy Springs Regional Library
- GPS VP Clela Reed, Athens-Clarke County Library (2 cy)
- Berthena Lankford, Union County Library, Blairsville
- Ellouise Connolly, Harris County Library
- Deuce Douglass, Harris County Library
- Robert L. Lynn, Forsyth County Library (2 cy)
- President Ron Self, Columbus Public Library
- George C. Williams, Morgan County Branch, Uncle Remus Regional Library
- Jill Jennings, Woodstock, Cobb County Library System
- John Ottley donated ten copies to the following libraries in the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System:
 - Alpharetta Branch
 - Buckhead Branch
 - Central Library
 - Robert E. Fulton Regional Library at Ocee
 - Northeast/Spruill Oaks Regional
 - Northside Branch (Buckhead)
 - Peachtree Branch
 - Ponce de Leon Branch
 - Roswell Regional
 - Sandy Springs Regional



"HEARTS FOR BAGHDAD" DRIVE



In 2004, GPS member and author Deborah Tainsh and her retired-Marine husband, David, lost their soldier son, Patrick, in Iraq. In his memory Deborah and Dave have been actively involved in many projects in Iraq; and, at Deborah's request, your Board has agreed to support a "Hearts for Baghdad" drive to raise school supplies for the children of Iraq. Items needed include ruled paper, rulers, pencils, crayons, children's stickers, glue sticks, construction paper, backpacks, blunt-end scissors, composition books and soccer balls (deflated, please).

If you would like to participate in this project, please mail your school supply donation to Deborah Tainsh at 387 Rocky Shoals Drive, Midland, GA 31820 or bring them with you to the October 20th quarterly meeting or to the November 3rd RoadShow Open House at the Midland, GA home of Deborah and David Tainsh. (See announcement under RoadShows in newsletter for address and directions to the Tainsh home.)

Thank you for supporting this project.

MEET THE GPS CONTEST JUDGES

☞ **Jennifer Horne** is the co-editor, with Wendy Reed, of *All Out of Faith: Southern Women on Spirituality* (Univ. of Alabama Press, 2006), and the editor of *Working the Dirt: An Anthology of Southern Poets* (NewSouth Books, 2003). She currently teaches in the Alabama Prison Arts and Education Project and serves as the poetry book review editor for *First Draft*, the journal of the Alabama Writers' Forum. Her poetry publications include a chapbook, *Miss Betty's School of Dance* (Bluestocking Press, 1997), and poems in numerous journals, mostly southern. She received an M.A. (English), an M.F.A. (Creative Writing), and an M.A. (Community Counseling) from the University of Alabama and has taught creative writing at the college, high school, and elementary school levels and has worked as a journal, magazine, and book editor.

☞ **David Oates** is the editor and publisher of *Monkey Magazine*, which includes poetry and humor. He has published comic strip writing, poetry, and fiction in literary magazines, hosts the Athens Poetry Slam, and is the host/producer of the Great Apes Humor Show on WUGA, the public-radio station in Athens GA. He has published a collection of poetry and fiction, *Night of the Potato* from Sow's Ear Press, and a collection of haiku/senryu, *Shifting with My Sandwich Hand*. David also teaches creative writing and SAT, GRE, and ACT preparatory classes.

☞ **Linda Taylor** teaches writing and literature at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, Georgia. She is from Ohio and was educated in the northeast. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry Northwest*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *Nimrod*, *The Georgia Review*, *Black Warrior Review*, *Indiana Review*, *The Ohio Review*, *The Centennial Review*, *Tar River Poetry*, *The (Ohio State) Journal*, *The Cimarron Review*, *Kansas Quarterly* and other journals. Her book manuscript *The Last Place Where Birds Live* is being reviewed for publication. She has published a book on Henry James and articles on Emily Dickinson. She has written songs and performed folk, blues and gospel music. She is active in the Atlanta community as a foster parent and the president of her homeowners' association. She has been an advocate for the natural environment on local, state and national levels.

☞ **John Summerfield** has a Master of Fine Arts degree in Poetry from Goddard College in Plainfield, VT and a BA in English from the University of Florida. He self-published a book titled, **I Suwannee**, and has published in journals. He is currently working on a novel, titled **Pete Sang!** and a short story/poetry collection titled, Ricordando la Sicilia, to be published by Bordighera Press, hopefully this year. Ricordando la Sicilia is a joint effort with his wife, Dr. Giovanna Summerfield, a professor of Italian and French at Auburn University. He has two years experience teaching college writing. His main areas of interest are nature, agrarian, and eco-poetry, though he does have an interest in military/travel memoirs, short short stories, and non-fiction.

☞ **Keith Jones** is a pastor and freelance writer from Epworth, Georgia, north of Blue Ridge. He is co-author, with his mother Ethelene Dyer Jones (a past president of the Georgia Poetry Society), of **Mother and Child Reunion**, a book of poems on the themes of family, home, and the North Georgia mountain region. Jones was born in Macon, and grew up in Hartwell, Hiawassee, and Epworth. He graduated from Shorter College in Rome, attended Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, and earned his M.Div. degree from New Orleans Baptist Seminary. He has served churches in Georgia, Kentucky, and Indiana, and is currently pastor of Morganton Baptist Church. He is serving as co-chair of the planning team for the 2007 Georgia Literary Festival, to be held September 28-30, which will honor Byron Herbert Reece. He and his wife Debbie now live in the community where he grew up. They have three sons, two daughters-in-law, and one granddaughter.

GPS ROADSHOWS

GPS Members Invited to RoadShow Open House

Last February John Ottley and his wife, Judy, welcomed GPS members to their home for a RoadShow Open House. November 3rd Deborah Tainsh and her husband, David, will open their home for a similar RoadShow Open house. The Tainsh home is located in Midland, GA, a suburb of Columbus.

The event will run from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and will be followed by a soup and sandwich lunch. The program will include member readings and a featured poet, long-time GPS member and past-president, John Ottley. John is an award-winning poet, and currently serves as Treasurer of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies.

The RoadShow is open to all GPS members, families, and prospective members. To facilitate the coffee and lunch plans, please notify Ron Self at smrws@aol.com or 706-649-3080 if you plan to attend. If possible, please give this notice before November 1st. Thank you, Deborah and David, for your welcome.

Directions to the Tainsh home are as follows:

- ☞ Come to Columbus (I-85 / I-185) to the Manchester Expressway Exit *East*.
- ☞ Take exit and remain in *left* lane to turn *left* onto Manchester Expressway which is also called Bill Heard Parkway further down the highway.
- ☞ Pass Peachtree Mall & Bill Heard Chevrolet (*both to your left*), and continue for approximately 11 miles into Harris County to the County Line Road Exit.
- ☞ Take County Line Road exit and at end of ramp turn *left (also north)*, drive over bridge and continue until you dead end at Warm Springs Road stop sign (one mile (+/-)).
- ☞ Turn *right* onto Warm Springs Road and proceed one and one-half (1 ½) miles. Turn *left* onto Rocky Shoals Road.
- ☞ This is the second Entrance of Rocky Shoals Development. (I'll place balloons at entrance.)
- ☞ Proceed to Stop Sign (observable after you turn into the development) and turn *left* onto Rocky Shoals Drive.
- ☞ Drive a few feet and then turn *right* down my driveway by mailbox with flag and Gold Star. Or park on the *right* side of the road at top of incline in front of my house.

From Phenix City or Columbus: follow directions out Manchester Expressway OR take Highway 80 (toward Macon) until you get to Flat Rock Road and traffic light (across from Swift Mill).

Turn *Left* onto Flat Rock Road follow to dead end at Warm Springs Road. Turn *Right* and Drive about six miles to Rocky Shoals entrance with balloons.

Call if any problems.

An Evening with the Poets Laureate – The Ultimate RoadShow

Thursday evening, September 27th, the Georgia Poetry Society, along with the Chattahoochee Valley Writers' Conference, co-sponsored a joint reading by two poets laureate as the opening event of the Inaugural Chattahoochee

Valley Writers' Conference, a planned annual event bringing authors and would-be authors together for an intensive weekend of workshops and interaction in Columbus.

Margaret Britton Vaughn (Maggi), Poet Laureate of Tennessee, is the author of nine books of poetry, short stories, and children's literature. Her work has appeared in numerous magazines, journals, and newspapers, and she is the only poet to receive a Mark Twain Fellowship. Her media appearances include programs on PBS, USA, TNN, TNT, and the BBC. For the conference, her topic was "*Image, Image, Image. What I Learned From Country Music That Made Me A People's Poet.*"

Dr. Sue Brannon Walker, Poet Laureate of Alabama, is Chair & Professor of English at the University of South Alabama. She has published eight books of poetry, edited four national literary anthologies, published more than forty articles, and is known for her critical work on Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Connor, and James Dickey. Her many prizes and awards include a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, the Book of the Century Award from the Alabama State Poetry Society, and in 2003 her book, *Blood Must Bear Your Name*, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. Her conference topic was "Lives Like Lines or Life Lines of the Serial Killer Poem (Writing the Poem to Die For).

The nearly sixty people in the audience at the Columbus Public Library were alternately crying and rolling in the aisles with laughter at the poetry and life stories shared by Maggi and Sue.

Georgia Poetry Society members attending the reading or the workshops included Dr. Jean Copland, Hilde Holmes, Linda Ames, Jo Middlebrooks, Dr. Elizabeth Wurz, Neil and Terry Wilkinson, Keith Badowski, Dr. Tonette Long, Dr. Mario Mion, Ron Self, Frances Daniel, Anderson Frazer and Andy Waddell. "A good time was had by all."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Help, Please! We are seeking assistance in locating mailing addresses for members who've "gone missing." Mail sent to **Wanda Blaisdell, Gloria Harrington, and Dee Lubell** is being returned. If any of you know these members and have been in contact with them, please notify Ron Self (SMRWS@aol.com) or Linda Ames (linaka31904grace@knology.net) to update the address records.

Newsletter Editor Needed. Please notify Ron Self (SMRWS@aol.com) if you are interested in this position. Computer skills required. Contact Linda Ames to discuss what is involved (linaka31904grace@knology.net). Thanks!

Mary Jo Winer reports: "Thomas Lux and I are excited to announce Poetry@TECH's 2007-2008 reading series. Thanks so much for your attendance and support in the past and we hope you will join us for this season's events. This year our series began on September 21 with Dorianne Laux, Joseph Millar and Alan Shapiro. Our Bourne Poetry reading occurred on October 18 and featured Tony Hoagland and Dean Young. Looking ahead, this season's line-up includes readings from Georgia poets Katie Chapple, Jon Goode and Collin Kelley; later we'll feature poets Laure-Anne Bosselaar, Opal Moore, Mike Dockins, Elena Karina Byrne, Albert Goldbarth and Quincy Troupe, among others. For additional information, please visit our website at www.poetry.gatech.edu." Also, during the week of the Decatur Book Festival, Poetry at Tech featured an impressive line-up of writers and poets that included David Kirby, Stuart Dischell, Barbara Hamby, Natasha Tretheway, Claudia Emerson, Sherman Alexie, and others.



Hugh Pendexter III reports his new fantasy novel, *The Paladin's Rogues*, will be available through the Internet (<http://www.authorhouse.com/BookStore/ItemDetail~bookid~40978.aspx>) within the month. You will also be able to see a preview of this book and other titles of works by Hugh at this website.

In late August, **Ethelene Dyer Jones** underwent coronary bypass surgery; since her return home, she has been recuperating and would love to hear from you. She may be reached by e-mail edj0513@alltel.net. If you would like to drop by, please email her for her address.

She may have to curtail a once-in-a-lifetime experience due to illness. She was scheduled to participate in the Georgia Center for the Book's Georgia Literary Festival at Blue Ridge September 28-30 as one who knew honoree poet Byron Herbert Reece, to speak on two panels, to read her own poetry and that of Reece. She invites those who can attend the Literary Festival to plan a wonderful weekend getaway full of activities in Blue Ridge. See www.georgialiteraryfestival.org for the schedule.







Ethelene Jones, Mary Purcell and others from Learning-in-Retirement writer's group in Milledgeville are working on a book to be out before Christmas by Old Capitol Press entitled *Sweetwater Tapestry*. It will contain essays, poetry and short fiction about Milledgeville and the surrounding area, the old capitol town first known as Sweetwater.






B. Michele sent a link from Wordsmith Books about several events during September, October and November. Some of these would be great opportunities for GPS members to share information about the Georgia Poetry Society and promote membership.

-  Wordsmiths Books Open Mic Night, now a monthly institution in Decatur, provides a stage, a mic, and little bit of momentary fame to all singers, poets, essayists, writers, and musicians. We'll even take mimes. Sign-up is at 7:30 p.m., and the event starts at 8 p.m. All ages are welcome. We look forward to seeing YOU on the Wordsmiths stage! Wordsmiths Books, 141 E. Trinity Place, Decatur. Friday, October 26 at 7:30 p.m. Call 404-378-7166 for information.
-  Join us as Poetry Atlanta presents three distinguished poets performing on the Wordsmiths Books stage. Thomas Lux has written several books of poetry, including *The Cradle Place* and *The Streets of Clocks*. A finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Award in Poetry and a recipient of three National Endowment for the Arts grants and a Guggenheim Fellowship, Lux is now the director of Poetry at Tech at Georgia Tech. Travis Wayne Denton lives in Atlanta where he is the associate director of Poetry at Tech and editor of *Terminus Magazine*. His poems have appeared in *The Greensboro Review*, *Rattle*, *The South Carolina Review*, and *The Baltimore Review*. Tania Rochelle is the poetry editor for *The Chattahoochee Review*. Her poems have appeared in *The Atlanta Review*, *The Cortland Review*, *Iris*, *Rattle*, and *New York Quarterly*, and her first book, *Karaoke Funeral*, was winner of the 2003 Violet Reed Haas Prize. Wordsmiths Books, 141 E. Trinity Place, Decatur. Saturday, October 27 at 2:00 p.m. Call 404-378-7166 for information.

MEMBER NEWS

The Georgia Poetry Society welcomes new members:

-  **Alyson Shields**, Duluth
-  **Ting Gou**, Lawrenceville
-  **The Rev. David Turner**, Clarkesville
-  **Elizabeth Wurz**, Columbus
-  **William "Doc" Purdom**, Conyers
-  **Angela Branton**, Watkinville

-  **Jeanne L. Koone**, Pine Mountain
-  **Earl and Carol Taft**, Albany
-  **Lynn Wesch**, Marietta
-  **Neil and Terry Wilkinson**, Dunwoody
-  **Joanne Middlebrooks**, Columbus

During July, **Dr. Mario Mion** presented *America: The Land of Promise* at the Phenix City-Russell County (Alabama) Library. *America...* is a book about his experiences following World War II after he left Italy to make America his home. It was an inspiring presentation from someone with a deep love of this country.

William H. Williams' poem, "Freedom Fighters," a tribute to veterans, was included in the July 2007 edition of *Writers Ink*.

Emery Campbell entered the Ohio Poetry Day 2007 contest series and proudly announced that he won Third Place in Category 1 with his poem, "Wafflers Aren't Winners" and Second Place in Category 7 with "For the Birds."

The title poem of **Janice Townley Moore's** chapbook *Teaching the Robins* has been selected by Ted Kooser and Judith Kitchen for inclusion in an anthology of bird related poems to be published by Anhinga Press in 2008. Another of her poems will be included in *Literary Trails of North Carolina*, published in September by the University of North Carolina Press.

Clela Reed participated in the 9th annual Summer Literary Seminars in St. Petersburg, Russia, held from June 14-30. In addition to the 20 highest caliber workshops, 35 lectures and 30 readings, the program included literary walking tours of the city, midnight boat rides on the Neva during the Summer Solstice White Nights celebrations, tours of museums, monuments, and cathedrals, and field trips to Peterhof (Peter the Great's home) and Pushkin (Catherine the Great's summer palace). Clela took part in open-mic readings, met interesting poets from all over the world, and learned to love borscht and appreciate Russian Standard vodka!

Clela presented a workshop, *Making it New, Making it Familiar: Language and Contemporary Poetry*, at the Forum of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Athens on August 19th. Fifty people attended.

Steven Shields received several acceptances this summer. His poem "Godland" is forthcoming in the next issue of the Tipton Poetry Journal. Two poems, "Dust Particles Suspended in a Ray of Light" and "Eidolon" (which he read at the GPS meeting in Athens) were published online at the *Umbrella Journal* summer issue (see <http://www.umbrellajournal.com/summer2007/poetry/StevenOwenShields-2.html>) and "The Stars in Her Mouth, The Sun in Her Outstretched Hands" was published in *Aoife's Kiss*.

Robert Simon's new book, "New Poems from the Airplane and Graveyard," is currently on sale at Finishing Line Press (www.finishinglinepress.com), under "New Releases and Forthcoming Titles".

☞ The Georgia Poetry Society, which met on July 28, announced the winner of their first ever Foreign Language Poetry Contest. **Jill Jennings**, a former Latin teacher, won for her poem in French entitled "Le train-train" ("A Humdrum Existence"). Written in iambic octameter, the poem, composed with French slang, captures the lifestyle of Parisians whose existence revolves around a daily train commute, a job, and escape on the weekends to the south of France. The contest was coordinated by Dr. Robert Simon of Kennesaw State University's Foreign Language Department. The prize was an edition of the newly released 2006-2007 GPS anthology, *The Reach of Song*.

Le train-train

Par Jill Jennings

Solange et moi mercredi en plein air au café
Je prends une tasse de thé et pour elle, citron pressé.
"Ça va, mon cher? Veux-tu de l'eau?"
"J'en ai plein le dos de tout ce boulot
et de tous ces soucis, je suis crevé, zut alors, vachement débordé."
"Moi, je suis très, très fatigué! Mais, j'ai une bonne idée,
pour le weekend, un jour de congé. Après la fête, faisons le pont.
Prenons un petit séjour dans le beau soleil encore.
à Sainte Rémy de Provence. C'est un petit restaurant,
Le Tire-bouchon qui danse, pas loin de L'auberge La Bonne Chance.
Ce n'est pas cher, c'est bon marché. On peut voir la vue et respirer.
Une place tranquille, pittoresque et claire. Alors, ma chérie, qu'en penses-tu?
On peut regarder les tournesols, et la lavande dans les champs."
"Tiens! Je sens déjà la bonne odeur du bon savon artisanal
avec du karité et du miel."
"Peut-être tu peut chercher
des tissus provençaux à acheter pour les fenêtres de la cuisine.
Je voudrais aujourd' hui un amuse-gueule, pas un banquet, une petite pause.
Il parte quelques fois par jour, le TGV. Tu as besoin des vacances?"
"Oui! Il est absolument nécessaire de temps en temps de s'en fuir."
Montant dans le wagon, j'écoute le bruit, le sifflement, et les grandes roues
qui marchent et marchent. Je sens le grondement d'un autre train
qui à ce moment est arrivé. C'est juste le train d' Avignon
qui est déjà arrivé de l'autre direction. Je sens encore fortement
dans mon coeur une grande langueur. Je crois que le voyage sera
trop, trop court, et que trop vite arrivera lundi.
Et dans la foule c'est moi-même que je vais voir à la Défense
en train d'attendre le métro, faisant le poireau.
Comme d'habitude au même quai, regardant le même écran
Le ticket composté à la main. Je crois que je peut discerner
centes semaines prochaines, mille jours nouveaux,
de métro, de boulot, et de dodo

Jo Ann Atkins, former leader in GPS and long-time staff member of *The Chattahoochee Review*, relates that Lifetime Member **Mikki Morris**, who recently observed her 90th birthday, died in late July in her nursing home near Savannah. Ms. Atkins said, "Mikki was an early, strong and serious supporter of the Georgia Poetry Society and was a good poet."

Emma Cottrell won first prize in the Poetry Society of Michigan International Poetry Contest 2007, Category 4: Religious (Illuminating). It will be published in the fall issue of their semi-annual literary magazine, *Peninsula Poets*. Emma also won also won a Second Honorable Mention for "Child's Play" in the 2007 New River Poets Awards Competition.

Mildred Greear will present a twenty minute reading from her just off the press book, *Moving Gone Dancing*, at the Southern Women Writers' Conference at Berry College on Saturday, Sept. 29. Greear was a presenter at the first conference 12 years ago. Organized to meet every second year, the conference brings together the described group who have gained regional and national prominence. Greear's book is already warmly acclaimed by significant critics, including John Stone, Philip Williams, Jo Ann Yeager Adkins, Jon Hershey, and others. The book is now available from the publisher, Fall Line Arts Press of Atlanta or by order from Greear. Other sources will be announced soon.

Greear also has a new poem in memoriam to Emma Lance Reece, mother of poet Byron Herbert Reece, whose ninetieth birthday anniversary was celebrated by the English Teachers of Georgia at Blue Ridge in September. Her poem, "Emma's Lullaby" is included in a joint publication by the fall issue of *The Chattahoochee Review* and the Byron Herbert Reece Memorial Society. Dr. Alan Jackson of Perimeter College is the editor representing the society for the publication.

Congratulations to all of you for your awards and acceptances!

POETRY IN THE SCHOOLS

The school year has begun; it is too early for poet visits, but Jean Mahavier is asking for members to contact her about visiting schools.

Last school year was a wonderful success story with a number of members volunteering at schools; we look forward to a great 2007-2008 school year. Teachers and students welcome a visiting poet who shares their love of poetry.

Would you go to a school and read poems to students? Talk to a class about poetry and writing? If so, contact Jean, our chair of the Poetry in the Schools Project, at jmaha@bellsouth.net; 404-633-3129; or 1632 Tamarack Trail, Decatur, GA 30033.

If you want help Jean has pointers, suggestions, and lots of ideas.

POETRY WORKBENCH BY STEPHEN SELF

CONSIDER THE POETIC VOICE

During a poetry-publishing workshop I recently attended, the group soon found itself sidetracked over a discussion of "voice." A participant wanted to know if, having found his "voice," one with which he was truly comfortable, he should nevertheless experiment with writing in other "voices." It seems this particular gentleman was most preoccupied with making sure his writing bore a personal stamp, which sounded like him. One truism of which the workshop's facilitators assured us, however, is that one's own writing always inevitably bears some kind of authorial stamp, be it in tone, choice of diction, common expressions, you name it. Thus, we need not overly worry that our work will sound like us; it has to, inasmuch as we produce it. Yet though this pronouncement makes a fine point, the question about voice still stands. The term "poetic voice" usually refers to the "speaker" in any given poem, and if the question is whether or not to vary this "voice" in the one's writing, the answer must indubitably be yes.

Perhaps the most pervasive flaw in a majority of the poetry I hear at readings is its almost absurdly over-personal nature. This observation holds true for much of the poetry I read as well. The hardest challenge we face as writers is to bridge the gap between the limitlessness inside our minds, where the writing starts, and the narrow strictures of the printed page, where it must necessarily end. As one facilitator at the publishing workshop stated: I cannot carry the poet home with me and engage him in a private performance any time I wish to hear or contemplate his poetry. Rather, everything I need to understand and enjoy the work needs to be firmly and indelibly on the page before me: every dramatic pause, every narrative twist and turn — everything. The issue of voice comes in precisely here.

We all write about what we experience, think, and feel; that cannot be avoided. Good writing, though, uncovers the universality in all these particular experiences. A great poem must be both particular and general. Too general and the poem becomes a work of philosophy: an essay, possibly even a great essay, but just not a poem. A poem needs the intense focus of a personal experience that consciously avoids all explicit talk of that experience per se, but rather depicts it via carefully chosen details. A good poem will deal with its subject by showing, not discussing, it. On that same token, if the details are too particular, the work risks overly contracting its theme, unnecessarily limiting its potential audience in the process. We have to discuss something intensely personal in such a way that anybody and everybody can feel its direct relevance to him or herself and his or her own life.

Perhaps the worst way to attack a poem about, say, a disease you or some loved one has suffered would be to write you playing the part of yourself and the other people involved playing themselves. Such a poem will inevitably bog down in the intense, unique emotion you feel. The ineluctable (*inescapable, unavoidable*) emotional myopia you bring to the

project will also likely lead to some vital part of the narrative being left out or glossed over in such a way that the reader feels an aspect of the story is missing, or else so poorly elaborated as to be all but missing, precisely because it remains locked inside your head.

Distance is key. If you must purge some demons first, write the original draft of your poem with all relevant characters appearing as themselves. You are you; they are they. Wring out all your inky tears; clear the bacteria-laden mucus of pent-up feeling by writing "I" at the start and end of every line if you have to. Afterwards, though, rewrite the poem from a more objective vantage. Turn all first person references into second or even third person. Write the scene from the point of view of some other person you may not even know, or even a part of the scenery. Be the hospital bed on which you or your loved one lies dying. Imagine what it might feel about the event. Try on the catheter drip for size or become the hospital orderly for whom, in all likelihood, you or your mother, father, husband, wife is, at the end of the day, simply patient 12345. Is the resultant work going to be less personal, at least from your point of view? Yes! Undoubtedly. And that is the good news. Is your personal tragedy bound to slip away from you in the hustle and bustle of the hospital scene, only to get lost? Great! Because that is exactly what you are writing about, is it not? Loss? How something so dear and intimate slips right through your fingers until the strangeness of memory all but effaces (*destroys, obliterates*) what it once was? You may feel the experience is not even yours anymore, but guess what: once you put the poem out there to be read or heard and understood, even cherished and repeated, it will not be yours anymore either. Your experience desperately needs to become everyone's experience unless all you really want to do is keep a diary with funny line breaks.

In this age of blogging and Facebook and MySpace pages, it is perhaps increasingly difficult to understand how it could be that not everyone in the world cares about the minutia of our minute lives. But they do not, not in any abiding sense anyway. People seek art for their own reasons, not those of the artist, which means artists must be especially cognizant of the possible reasons people might have for turning to their art. Will this open itself to others or merely close them out, we must ask ourselves. Experimenting with different voices might just make all the difference.

Stephen Self is a member of the Georgia Poetry Society and an avid reader and writer of poetry. A former high-school teacher and college instructor, he is currently following in the footsteps of Wallace Stevens, processing claims for a Fortune 500 insurance company. He lives and works in Columbus, GA.

LUNCH CHOICES AT YOUNG HARRIS

Our lunches – Tortilla Wrap Sandwich choices – are:

Choice of Wrap Selection: 1) Flour 2) Spinach 3) Tomato Basil 4) Garlic 5) Low Carb.

A--Chicken Caesar Wrap Strips of Grilled Chicken, Romaine Lettuce, Parmesan Cheese and Caesar Dressing, Wrapped in a Tortilla	B--Turkey Club Wrap Roasted Turkey, Lettuce, Tomato, Smoked Bacon and Creamy Ranch Dressing, Wrapped in a Tortilla	C--Tuna Wrap Tuna Salad and Sliced Roma Tomatoes with Alfalfa Sprouts, Dill Pickles and Shredded Lettuce, Wrapped in a Tortilla	D--Roasted Veggie Wrap Roasted Portabellas, Bell Peppers, Alfalfa Sprouts and Carrots with Hummus and Dijon Mustard, Wrapped in a Tortilla
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Served with Pasta Salad or Fresh Fruit Salad and a choice of Fresh Baked Cookies, Brownies or Lemon Squares (buffet service)

Indicate choice of wrap and filling. **Example:** Chicken Caesar in Tomato Basil tortilla wrap would be **A3**

Cost: **\$12.00** – Contact Terry Hensel as soon as possible, and not later than October 15 by email at thensel@comcast.ent or by phone at 770-475-4906 to make your reservation and lunch selection. You may pay at the meeting.

From: Georgia Poetry Society PO Box 2184 Columbus GA 31902 Email: georgiapoetrysociety@yahoo.com URL: http://www.georgiapoetrysociety.org/	To:
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Georgia Poetry Society Membership Renewal Form

Please Return This Form with Your Dues Payment to
Georgia Poetry Society, P. O. Box 2184, Columbus, GA 31902
Telephone: 706-649-3080; FAX 706-649-3094

Check preference:

- Please renew my regular membership for 18 months. Enclosed is my check for \$45.00.
- Please renew my regular membership for 6 months. Enclosed is my check for \$15.00. I will pay the balance of \$30.00 effective January 1, 2008.
- Please renew my student or military membership for 18 months. Enclosed is my check for \$22.50.
- Please renew my student or military membership for 6 months. Enclosed is my check for \$7.50. I will pay the balance of \$15.00 effective January 1, 2008.
- Please renew my family membership for 18 months. Enclosed is my check for \$60. The family members included in this membership are:
- Please renew my family membership for 6 months. Enclosed is my check for \$20. I will pay the balance of \$40.00 effective January 1, 2008. The family members to be included in this membership are:
- I joined since April 1, 2007 so my membership payment has been credited to the new year. Enclosed is my check for \$_____ to extend my membership through the new GPS calendar year December 31, 2008.
- Life Member or Other: Please explain.
- The information below may be included in a Member's-Only Membership Brochure.
- I want to support the activities of GPS. Enclosed is my voluntary contribution for \$_____.

Name: _____

Preferred Mailing Address: _____

E-mail Address: (Please print carefully and explain any letters, numbers, etc. that may cause confusion:

Telephone: _____

Name and Address of local newspaper: _____

Please use the space below to give us any comments about GPS, your membership, or suggestions for improvement.