



WINSTON SALEM
WRITERS

Year End Report
2014

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Winston-Salem Writers Mission Statement

Helping writers interact with other writers, improve their craft, and realize their goals.

In 2014, all members of Winston-Salem Writers lost a dear friend and dedicated Board Member . . . Nilla Childs.

We humbly dedicate this report to her memory. . . .



Message from the President . . .

At the General Membership Meeting in June 2014, I commended our Board for the outstanding work they had done in the previous year – and rightfully so! They had met every challenge and every charge we discussed, and not only that, had come up with new ideas and approaches to make the Winston-Salem Writers a more efficient and more vital organization to the writing community.

We continued to deliver the popular programs and events that you, the membership, supported such as our outstanding initiative *Poetry in Plain Sight*; sponsored and hosted the best - and most well-attended - **Ten Minute Play** presentation ever; organized another annual literary contest; continued managing our established Critique Groups plus added several; hosted **Open Mic** once a month at Community Arts Cafe; held **Writers Night Out** potluck suppers, plus organized exciting workshops; manned a booth during **Bookmarks**; judged the *Silver Arts* section in Winston-Salem area of the **NC Senior Games**. Shall I go on?

Your hard-working Board, plus dedicated Program Directors, and an ever-increasing group of volunteers were very, very busy. . . . But the Board did not rest on their laurels – they pushed the boundaries of what we could accomplish and offer our membership and all of Winston-Salem’s writers.

In May, Board members Lynn Byrd and Robin Chalkley, with the help of past-president Carol Roan, brought back a Winston-Salem tradition, “Outta The Bag,” a weekly Reading / Concert / Picnic / Art Fair downtown at Winston Square Park, which is next door to the Milton Rhodes Arts Center. This group approached the Arts Council, which managed the event in the eighties, and the Winston-Salem Recreation Department, for partnership. For nineteen weeks, May through September, they organized plays and poetry, harps and banjos, and smiles and a break from Tuesday’s routine for many citizens. The event brought out young and old alike, and made many new friends for Winston-Salem Writers.

For the past three years, we had printed an anthology, *Taking Flight*, which published our annual contest winners’ work. This year, Board members Anne Civitano and the tireless Robin Chalkley took that original premise into warp drive and “published” our first **on-line** literary journal, *Flying South*. What an

accomplishment, and it is a beauty, a genuine example to their vision and dedication.

And that is not where it stops! When you read Christy Vance’s report on our programming, you will see the total commitment of our organization and how we support our mission statement every day, and with every effort we undertake.

On the business side of the equation, we increased our efforts through Social Media, which is a necessity these days. Our Membership Director, Barbara Mellin, revamped our membership process by establishing a **Common Renewal Date** (September 1st). It is more manageable, efficient and practical for everyone. Plus, 2014 was the first year we had a Fundraising Drive, which was successful as we met our goal – an outstanding effort that will help keep Winston-Salem Writers fiscally solid throughout the year.

Please read the following reports and information as they illustrate what we do with our membership fees and donations. I hope you will be as proud of these accomplishments as I am.

Sam Barbee

Winston-Salem Writers President



Grace Winn-Ellis prepares to read at Outta the Bag

Communications . . .

Communications touches all aspects of Winston-Salem Writers' operations, because all programs, benefits, policy changes and more have to be delivered to members clearly and in a timely manner.

During 2014, we sent out 26 newsletters and we used "e-blasts" more often to stay in touch, sending those out on 23 occasions.

Our mailings now go to 909 folks, up from 818 at the end of last year and 704 in 2012. That's an increase of 11% this year, a 29% increase in just two years. People join the mailing list at all events - programs, workshops, Open Mic nights, and more - but the single event at which we get most interest is our participation in the annual Bookmarks Festival.

As detailed elsewhere in this report, we had a very successful fundraising effort this year, and Communications wrote the letter requesting donations, the follow-up mailings, and updated the website to be able to handle online contributions.

Keeping our website (wswriters.org) current is an ongoing effort. Among the improvements made this year:

- We posted a Member Spotlight feature, a category that will be updated more frequently in the future.
- We completely reorganized our photo gallery, allowing much easier browsing of our growing archive of pictures.
- We added *Flying South*, our new literary journal, to the website.
- In clearly the most ambitious website change, we completely re-created our Members Books location. Now readers can find books neatly arranged by genre, with cover photos and links to where the books can be purchased.

Robin Chalkley . . . Vice President - Communications

Membership . . .

This has been a year of transition and growth. With the Board's approval, we decided to change our membership renewal procedure to a common-date renewal month of September and an annual rate of \$36 (\$24 for students).

For the first half of our 2013-14 year, we notified members of the impending changes, using announcements at meetings, printed and email notices and our webpage.

Beginning in October 2014, we pro-rated the member renewals to bring all existing renewals and new memberships to the common September 2015 date. (Oct.= \$33; Dec.= \$27 for example.) This transition has taken a little more effort, but I am confident that beginning in September 2015, the membership accounting will be much more streamlined and a benefit to our members, as well. Of course, new members will require a pro-rated schedule for their first year.

Our current membership stands at 167 members, up from about 140 last year.

In addition to the usual membership promotions at sponsored events, such as Open Mic Nights and Bookmarks, we have printed WSWriter "rack cards" or bookmarks which contain basic information about the group and its mission and a list of activities sponsored by the organization. (Printed at Barnhill's SprintPrint, approx. \$30 for 150 cards.) These have been well received.

I have also updated the Member profile on our website and hope to do so every couple of months.

Barbara Mellin . . . Vice President – Membership



Programs . . .

Winston-Salem Writers' 2014 programming featured programs with long-time friends and new ones.

We kicked off the year learning how to make a living as authors, with **Hope Clark**'s "Funding Streams for Writers" workshop. Children's writing was the topic of two programs, "Irony in Children's Literature" with Wake Forest professor **Joe Milner**, and Picture Books: From the Basics to the Secrets with **Stacy McAnulty**.

Steve Mitchell and **Carol Roan** offered "Writing from Experience," and **Kathy Norcross Watts** shared her writing experience and tips in "Everyone Has a Story." Poet **Jacinta White** got everyone writing about beginnings in "One City, One Prompt." **Teresa Frohock** taught us how to write "Real Women: Fabulous, Flawed and Human."

Our annual Ten Minute Play Contest produced a first-time playwright as our first place winner, WSW member **Jennifer Bower**, for her play *One Good Deed*. Second Place went to **Marilyn Barner Anselmi** for her play *Floral Deliveries* and third place went to **Serena Cates** for her play *Five Silver, Five Gold*.

For the staged reading, each of the plays had its own director and cast. **Nathan Ross Freeman** emceed the event and led an audience discussion on each play with the audience, writers, directors, and readers.

We wrapped up the spring with a lively City Memoirs Panel Discussion with **Cheryl Harry**, **Al Perry**, and **Bill Pfefferkorn**; moderated by **Frank Elliott** at New Winston Museum.

Fall programming focused our attention on November's National Novel Writing Month - thanks to member Ashley Carmichael. We started in October with a panel discussion, "So you want to write a novel?" by members **Sheila Englehart**, **Robin Chalkley**, and **Dan O'Sullivan**. Member and best-selling author **Cindy Holby** presented "Character, Dialogue and Plot," along with tips for publishing and selling the completed book. We held the NaNoWriMo kick-off party, four weekly write-ins, and a TGIO (thank goodness it's over) party. We established a Facebook page so members could share their word counts, successes, and challenges.

Also in November, well-known poets **Keith Flynn** and **Terri Kirby Erickson** treated us to poetry, music and stories at Community Arts Café. We closed the year with our Members' Holiday Party at Community Arts Café, and enjoyed readings of the December *Poetry in Plain Sight*.

College Interns

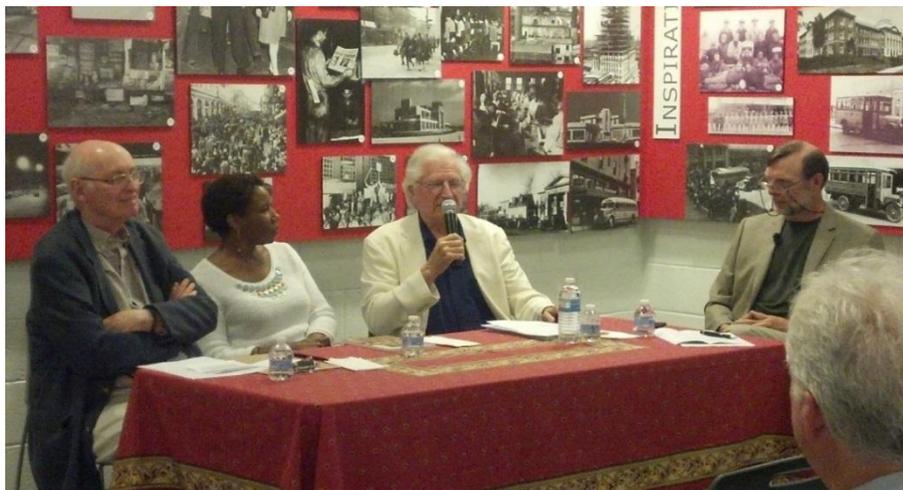
In 2014 we hosted three college interns. Winston-Salem State University student **Dominique Johnson** assisted with publicity and organized the program with Kathy Norcross Watts, which was held on the WSSU campus. Salem College student **Grashia Connelly** contributed to Poetry in Plain Sight and other programs, while **Jessica Goodard** expanded our social media presence to Pinterest, organized Teresa Frohock's workshop, and other assisted with our web page.

Community Collaborations

We continued our membership with the Community Arts Café and the Downtown Arts District Association. We also become a supporting partner of HandsOn Northwest North Carolina, an organization that helps nonprofits be more effective. In January, we participated in the Silver Arts kick-off and poetry contest. Silver Arts is part of the Piedmont Plus Senior Games, sponsored by the City of Winston-Salem. In May, we participated in the Local Author Fair at Central Library.

Members read their work and helped young writers at Camp Discovery, a summer day camp held by the City of Winston-Salem Recreation Department. We sold our books at the first-ever BookMarks Holiday Bazaar at the Milton Rhodes Center for the Arts, held in conjunction with Sawtooth Center's Deck the Halls art sale.

Christy Vance . . . Vice-President – Programs



Al Perry, Cheryl Harry, Bill Pfefferkorn and Frank Elliot at New Winston Museum during the Memoir Program

Poetry in Plain Sight

Poetry in Plain Sight completed its 2nd year in 2014. In addition to the original monthly poster initiative, which boasts new poetry posters of four poems in over twenty locations in Winston-Salem, this year, extensions of the program included the ambitious Bus Project. Winston-Salem Writers received an Innovative Projects Grant from Winston-Salem Forsyth County Arts Council to design and place specially designed posters that were placed in all 58 city buses of the Winston-Salem Transit Authority. This project received statewide recognition and promotion from our enthusiastic participants and sponsors.

Another notable opportunity came with Associated Artists of Winston-Salem. Spearheading a dynamic new community project called ‘Storefronts Winston-Salem,’ which placed full-scale art installations in vacant downtown store windows, Associated Artists collaborated with Winston-Salem Writers and used poems from the Poetry in Plain Sight Program as the inspiration for the inaugural event of Storefronts. Select poems, based on a literary theme, were made available to artists to choose for their inspiration. Six store windows that melded visual art and poetry were unveiled on the eve of Bookmarks.

These two extensions, along with the monthly program, saw Poetry in Plain Sight mirrored in our community in three different ways, in addition to our monthly reading event, which brings the program full circle with the public, the poems and the poets.

In 2015, Poetry in Plain Sight is poised for continued success. The Bus Project will go into its 2nd year due to an extension of the Innovative Projects Grant. There is also potentially another collaboration with Associated Artists on the horizon. Special projects such as these seem to be a natural fit for Poetry in Plain Sight and we look forward to seeing what the coming year may bring, as we continue to place poetry in places for all to experience.

And thanks go to the volunteers who have helped in so many ways: Dan O’Sullivan, Cheryl Davis, Donna Wallace, Christy Vance, and Sam Barbee.

Julie Kolischak . . . *Poetry in Plain Sight*, Project Coordinator

OUTTA THE BAG

Winston Salem Writers sponsored Outta The Bag, a nineteen-week series of creative community events that featured local and regional writers, musicians, poets and other artists. OTB was held on concurrent Tuesdays from May 27 through September 30, 2014, at Winston Square Park in downtown Winston Salem.

Over 60 community residents performed before appreciative live audiences during Outta The Bag's 2014 season. Average attendance was 51 with a high of 117 (July) and a low of 24 (September). Twenty WSW members read or performed their work, and 43 non-members participated by sharing their words and music.

Many thanks to those dependable volunteers who helped to make this event so successful: Board members Dan O'Sullivan and Sam Barbee for working the WSW table; graphic designer and artist Jamie Cheshire for stage management and banner hanging; musicians Tom Medlin and Jim Matthews for PA support.

Community organizations involved or represented included Sawtooth School, Arts For Life, Green Tree Peer Center, Piedmont Senior Cheering Hearts, Authoring Action, Compassionate Winston Salem, and Imagination Installations.

Community Sponsors included WSW, Winston-Salem Parks & Recreation, Milton Rhodes Arts Center, and the WSFC Arts Council.

Total expenditures for Outta The Bag were under \$300, including the purchase of two reusable "Read Local" banners.

Lynn Byrd . . . Director, *Outta the Bag* Coordinator



Nathan Ross Freeman reads from his book at *Outta The Bag*

Critique Groups

WSW sponsored around ten critique groups for most of this year. They averaged 5-6 members each. One each of Poetry, Children's Literature, and Script Development were included, along with fiction and CNF, both short and long. Anecdotally, there seem to be an increasing number of novel writers seeking groups these days, and somewhat fewer short story writers.

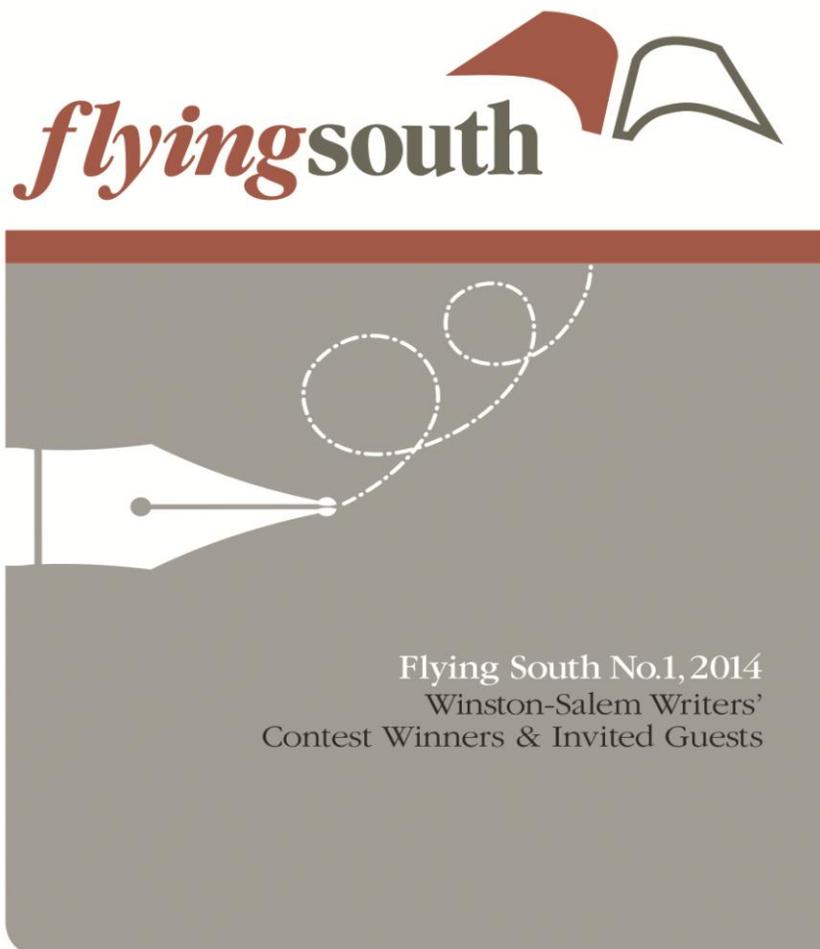
One fiction group disbanded this year, after most of the group had finished their projects and went on from there. We have short waiting lists for whom we hope to start two new groups in 2015.

Anne Civitano . . . Director, Critique Group Coordinator

***Flying South*, the 2014 On-Line Journal**

Flying South was published this year to replace the former WSW anthology, *Taking Flight*. It was published both in paper via CreateSpace (Print on Demand) and online, in a fabulous, full-color journal as a subdomain of the WSW website. Other additions this year were invited essays and a professional cover for the print edition, and a logo design. We also reduced the price of the physical edition to \$9.99. And priced the Kindle edition at \$2.99.

Anne Civitano & Robin Chalkley . . . Editors



Anthology Contest Winners

Poetry

Janet Joyner *2 Yellow Leaves by Georgia O'Keefe*

Steve Kushman *Spring*

Mary Jo Balistreri *Behind the Curtain*

Flash Fiction

Grace Winn Ellis *Catwalk*

Janet Joyner *Dawson Honeycutt*

Angell Caudill *Hope Swirls*

Fiction

Janet Joyner *Anna Greene's Coke Break*

Joan Leotta *The World Turned Upside Down*

Michele Tracy Berger *The Invisible Son*

Creative Non-Fiction

Mark Havlik *In a Word*

Lynn Veach Sadler *Tourist Roulette in the New Russia*

Michele Tracy Berger *Navigating the Man-Cession: A Gen-Xer's Journey*

Ten-Minute Play

Jennifer Bean Bower *One Good Deed*

Marilynn Barner Anselmi *Floral Deliveries*

Serena Cates *Five Silver, Five Gold*



Terri Kirby Erikson and Keith Flynn read their poetry in December

OPEN MIC

The Winston Salem Writers Open Mic is a monthly event held every third Tuesday, and has been a local institution for most of nine years. Held at many fine venues throughout those wonderful years, in 2015 we will end our stay at The Community Arts Cafe. Though our departure is amicable, it is regrettable as well. We are looking at several new venues for poetry programs. In the growing Arts District of downtown Winston Salem, poetry is only the beginning of the many fine readings we might enjoy. Excerpts from ongoing works of fiction, songs rising from the page on youthful melody and passionate voice have filled the air and stirred our souls.

From the newest reader to the old hand the emphasis is on the effort, and the courage of those baring their souls does not go unnoticed. The option of posting

readings on YouTube has been available in the past and we look to offer this opportunity again soon. For me this is a great chance to hear my words out loud and to receive much appreciated feedback on my own work. I am grateful for the kinship of my fellow writers demonstrated at our open mic.

Dan O’Sullivan . . . Director, Open Mic

BOOKMARKS Book Festival

WSW participated in the Bookmarks Book Festival on Saturday, September 6, 2014, for the ninth consecutive year. As before, its purpose was to publicize WSW’s services to emerging and published writers in the community.

During the event, WSW members informed festival attendees about Winston-Salem Writers as a resource to writers, announced upcoming programs, exhibited books written by its members, displayed poems won through the *Poetry In Plain Sight* contest, sold the anthology *Taking Flight 2013*, and promoted the e-version of the upcoming Anthology *Flying South*.

As a result of this effort several people became members of WSW, 63 signed up for the bi-weekly newsletter, and sold Poetry In Plain Sight posters and over twenty anthologies *Taking Flight*.

Seven WSW authors also had the opportunity to market their books at the WSW table. They were Ashley Carmichael, Missy Carroll, Bill Donahue, Cindy Holby, Steven Lindhal, Susan Williamson and Will Wright.

Members who volunteered at the table were Sam Barbee, Lynn Byrd, Robin Chalkley, Nilla Childs, Anne Civitano, Bill Donahue, Teri Hariston, Steven Lindhal, Barbara Mellin, Dan O’Sullivan, Christy Vance, Robert Vorsteg and Susan Williamson.

Vijya Campagne . . . WSW / Bookmarks Festival Coordinator



Vijya Campagne, Susan Williamson, Dan O' Sullivan, Will Wright and Sam Barbee help out at *Bookmarks*

Writers Night Out

This year's WNO meetings were changed to once a month, as attendance had waned by the end of 2013. Barbara Mellin hosted the fourth Friday of each month, with Ed Robson filling in whenever needed. Ed requested that, if the need for a second meeting per month arose, his place be considered. So far, we have not had the need for a second gathering.

Attendance ranged from 6 to 16 people. Barbara conveyed to me that she enjoyed larger groups and thought it prudent to invite nonmembers as well as members. I deferred to "hostess rules." In the past, we only allowed members and used this as a membership incentive. No one objected to the change, and spouses and guests freely joined the group. At least three new members joined the WNO group this year, giving us a total of 36 people we send announcements to each month.

October was the last WNO for 2014. There was a hiatus out of respect for the holidays, but the dinners started again January 23, 2015.

This gathering continues to be a success with the change of location and addition of nonmember guests.

Shelia Englehart . . . *Writer's Night Out* Coordinator

External Publicity

During 2014, Winston-Salem Writers events were publicized in the *Winston-Salem Journal*, *The Chronicle*, *The Kernersville News*, *Clemmons Courier*, *The Weekly Independent*, online at Camel City Dispatch, Events Near Here, North Carolina Writers Network, NC Poetry Society, The Winston-Salem Arts Council Calendar, WFDD and other local news sources.

Susan Williamson . . . Director



Judie Holcomb-Pack and Susan Williamson speak with a visitor at the Silver Arts Kickoff

Financial . . .

Income/Expense by Category

1/1/2014 through 12/31/2014

<i>Category</i>	<i>OVERALL TOTAL</i>
<u>INCOME</u>	
General Income	\$10,690.86
Program Income	\$3,390.79
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$14,081.65</u>
<u>EXPENSES</u>	
Community	\$200.00
<i>Flying South</i> 2014 Expense	\$107.98
Membership Cultivation	\$485.00
Office Administration	\$4,934.57
Program Expense	\$7,537.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$13,264.55</u>
OVERALL TOTAL	+ <u>\$817.10</u>

Fundraising

\$100 and Above

Dedication

Rachel Garrity
Sam Barbee

- in honor of Penelope Niven
- in honor of the Winston-Salem Writers
Board of Directors, past and present

Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Babcock
Charles Gelly
Raymond Morrison
Al Perry
Donna and Hugh Wallace

\$26 to \$50

Susannah Cecil
Vijya Campagne
Angell Caudill
Rob McOuat

- in honor of Geoff Penney

\$20 to \$25

Harriet Clark

Cheryl Schrillo
Sam Barbee
Sam Barbee
Joyce Compton Brown
Marylyn Constine
Mary Covello
Bonnie Doeror
Marta Felber
Tony Lindsey
Cynthia Marvin
Bill Merrick
Robert Vorsteg

- in honor of her sister Carole Nanzetta,
a gifted wordsmith
- in honor of *Imagination Installations*
- in honor of Rodney Holman
- in honor of Geoff Penney

Your 2014 – 2015 Board . . .

Officers

Sam Barbee	President
Robin Chalkley	VP of Communications, Newsletter
Barbara Mellin	VP of Membership, Writers Night Out
Christy Vance	VP of Programs, Volunteer recruitment
Rob McOuat	Treasurer
Judie Holcomb-Pack	Secretary, Archives, Public Relations

Directors

Lynn Byrd	Director, Outta the Bag, Venues
Anne Civitano	Director, Flying South, Critique Groups
Teri Hairston	Director, Grants, Events
Steve Mitchell	Director, Grants
Dan O’Sullivan	Director, Open Mic, Venues
Susan Williamson	Director, External Media,

Program Coordinators

Vijya Campagne	Bookmarks; Ten Minute Play
Shelia Englehart	Writers’ Night Out
Julie Kolischak	<i>Poetry in Plain Sight</i>
Grace Winn-Ellis	Ten Minute Play
Olivia Fennel - Intern	Twitter Account

Looking Forward . . .

2015 is already shaping up to be a year of change.

We are negotiating a move to the Arts Council facilities at the Milton Rhodes Center, away from our friends at The Community Arts Café where we held the majority of our events, and also saying farewell to Barnhill's Book store, where we have held our *Poetry in Plain Sight* monthly readings at the always-fun *Four Poems and a Party*.

Christy Vance, our Vice-President of Programs, along with members Ashley Carmichael and Deborah Johnson Wood, already are planning two workshops in March and more in the upcoming months. Also, the annual **Ten Minute Play** presentation will be in April, so stay tuned for details in the WSW newsletter. We are also in the planning stages of another *Memoir Panel Discussion* at **The New Winston Museum**. **Shelby Stephenson**, the new North Carolinian Poet Laureate, has agreed to come in the fall for a workshop and poetry reading.

We have already participated in the *Silver Arts* kickoff with the **NC Senior Games**, have renewed our memberships in **DADA** (the Downtown Arts District Association) and the **Winston-Salem Downtown Partnership**. We will also be involved with *Bookmarks Book Festival*, and hope to do another project with *Associated Artists of Winston-Salem*. The first quarter of the *Poetry in Plain Sight* posters are already displayed in the WSTA business in each Winston-Salem Transit Authority buses.

As you see, your **hard working** Board is *working hard* organizing and developing programs and events that will offer some of the very best writing experiences for all of our members, and we will continue throughout this year.

But there are only so many things we can do without your support – both your time and your financial support. If you would like to become more involved with planning and staffing our events, we would love to have you!

Please contact me, or any Board member, if you have interest in taking on the responsibilities of a Board member or Committee Chair. We **always** need more talented individuals and their ideas.

I encourage you to contact your Board about any concerns or issues regarding the organization. And always remember, there is a standing Board meeting the first Monday of every month. You are invited!

We look forward to seeing you in 2015.

