



Murder Goes South 2005

By Debbie Battiste

An ice storm shut down the city of Smyrna on Saturday, January 29, 2005, so the Writers' Forum was rescheduled for Saturday, March 5, 2005 and as many attendees attested, "It was worth the wait!" The Forum began at 9:30AM and was held in the downstairs conference room of the Smyrna Public Library.

Smyrna's own Patricia Sprinkle, along with Atlanta writers Walter Sorrells and E. Joan Sims were on hand to kick off the event with a discussion on creating believable southern characters. Conference goers were given the opportunity to ask questions of the writers after each panel session.

The program continued with a demonstration by Walter Sorrells on the use of knives and the craftsmanship and art of making knives and swords.

Atlanta-based writer and film producer David Fulmer and writer/school teacher Cheryl Ritzel addressed the topic of suspense and plotting.

Crime scene investigator, Keith Sherwood of the Smyrna Police Department provided an insightful look into how a crime scene is processed and evidence is gathered.

Most attendees agreed that Nikko, the five-year old German shepherd of Smyrna's K-9 unit stole the show. Sgt. Frank Durrance, Nikko's partner was on hand to answer questions and explain K-9 training techniques.

The third and final panel, consisting of North Carolina writer Steve Brown, E. Joan Sims, David Fulmer, and Cheryl Ritzel. The panel explained the importance of setting. Each writer has set his or her mystery novel in the south.

The conference wrapped up with book signings and casual chat with the writers. A delicious brown-bag lunch was catered by Café Michel.

Meet Miller Davis, Friends Treasurer

Miller Davis has been a member of the Friends of the Smyrna Library since its beginnings. As Treasurer, he manages the funds we raise at book sales and other events... and, as Linda Evans quipped at the Volunteer Recognition Brunch, he "keeps the checkbook open."



A Smyrna native, Miller attended school in Smyrna and graduated from Smyrna High School. He attended Reinhardt College and the University of Georgia before graduating from Atlanta Technical College.

Miller served three years on active duty with the U.S. Navy, on board the U.S.S. Ranger before returning to Smyrna to marry Joyce Lovern (also from Smyrna). The Davises have lived in Smyrna ever since, raising their daughter and three sons, and now enjoying their four grandchildren.

Miller stays active as the owner of a utility construction company (where his four children also work), a lifelong member of the Smyrna First United Methodist Church, and as our Treasurer. Says Miller: "My interests over the years have been hunting, fishing, coaching my children's ball teams, and traveling when we can."

The Friends are fortunate to have Miller managing our money!

◀ **RIGHT: Miller Davis at the Friends Volunteer Recognition Brunch**