



The
MARCH

of CRIME

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Short Story Workshop

Well over 60 people showed up to benefit from SoCalMWA's free short story workshop at the Burbank Library on February 27, officiated by past SoCal president James Lincoln Warren.



More chairs had to be set up, more handouts copied, but even with the jumble, participants earnestly worked on their exercises, based on Warren's 9 Plot Elements:

1. Opening
2. Exposition
3. Point of Conflict (aka Inciting Incident)
4. Development
5. Climax
6. Abatement
7. Dénouement
8. Resolution
9. Closing

He discussed short story structure along with methods to map out the story before writing the first draft, imparted some style tips to achieve economy in writing, discussed the various lengths (flash, short story, novelette), and available markets.

Participants did some hands-on work based on the materials provided or used their own works in progress.

Next Meeting:

March 29, 2014
A Night in Noir City

More information:
[Page 19](#)



The PRESIDENT'S RAP SHEET

Jeri Westerson

Dear Members,

We opened this new year with a FREE short story workshop given by past SoCalMWA president James Lincoln Warren, and this is only a small portion of what you can expect throughout the year. Up ahead is a panel at Noir Fest held at the Egyptian Theater in Los Angeles on March 29; a panel of screenwriters to be announced in May; a talk with a former cop; an interview with a former DA; a private showing of a noir movie with discussion...and more!

Our attempt to include all members within our geographic reach by having events all over the southland (and a satellite event in Arizona) is paying off with some members returning to our midst and others signing up for the first time. Our chapter has some 358 members in Hawaii, southern California, Arizona, and Las Vegas. Welcome to all!

Coming up sooner than we think is the Tucson Festival of Books on the beautiful University of Arizona campus on March 15 and 16. SoCal will have a booth there, #117, and if you are interested in volunteering to man the booth and/or would like to sign your books, please email us at contact@socalmwa.com. There are a few slots left.

Also, we are setting up signing times at the LA Times Festival of Books April 12 and 13. Please let us know at contact@socalmwa.com what day and time you would like to sign your books. Mystery Ink and Mysterious Galaxy will provide books. Both stores have 60/40% consignment terms available for out of print titles and other titles not available at industry standard terms; the payment process is determined by the individual store. Please provide a list of not more than five preferred backlist titles and publishers. For Mystery Ink, the contact is: Debbie Mitsch, Owner (mysteryink@hotmail.com) and for Mysterious Galaxy, the contact is Maryelizabeth Hart, Publicity Manager (publicitymg@gmail.com). Or you may simply volunteer to sell our swag and talk up the chapter. And please join us for the festival pre-party on Friday, April 11 from 7 to 9pm at The Last Bookstore, only minutes from USC.

I hope to see some of you at our upcoming events. There's a lot to do, a lot to learn, and, as always, a big part of participation—and success!—is networking with fellow authors.

Now get out there and write!

Your prez,
Jeri

Chapter Officers

President: Jeri Westerson
VP: Craig Faustus Buck
Treasurer: Eric Beetner
Secretary: Terri Nolan

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Matt Coyle
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 Dennis Palumbo
 Deborah Coonts
 Susan Goldstein
 Susan Miller
 Charles Rosenberg

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Group

Email SoCalMWA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to
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The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

Now that I've put together a few issues of THE MARCH OF CRIME newsletter, I thought you all might like to know a bit about how the process works.

I designed the basic template in Photoshop and use In Design to put each issue together. The front page is usually dedicated to the previous month's meeting or something that our chapter wants highlighted. Over the course of the month, I add content in the order I receive it, although sometimes, items are placed based on how they fit into the issue's layout. But in general, the sooner you get me your information for OVER THE TRANSOM and other features, the better.

Since I now include active links in the newsletter text, feel free to send links along with your OTT and other submissions. And as a friendly reminder, send hi-res cover images. Speaking of photos, send them to me. I'd like to include more of them in future issues. Please include a credit and caption, where appropriate.

Remember when I said that I wanted to use quotes from member's books for THE LAST WORD? Well, I still do. Send me those quotes from your work that you think will make a good closing for our newsletter. I might not be able to use them all, but I'd like a selection to choose from. I don't reply to every submission, but rest assured that I've received it and it's saved in THE MARCH OF CRIME email box for review.

Holly

FRESH BLOOD

SoCal MWA welcomes its new and returning members:

Nancy Raven Smith, Affiliate

Becky Masterman, Active

Terry Ambrose, Affiliate, Reinstatement



The March of Crime is the newsletter of the Southern California Chapter of the Mystery Writers of America.

Editor: Holly West

Columnists:

Gregory Von Dare

John Morgan Wilson

Opinions expressed herein are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Mystery Writers of America Southern California Chapter.

Contact us at:

themarchofcrime@gmail.com

Crime & Science Radio

with DP Lyle, MD & Jan Burke

3/15 - Burning Down the House:
An interview with Fire Investigator John Lentini

3/29 - Sex, Lies, and Crime:
DP Lyle & Jan Burke discuss sex crimes with best-selling author Linda Fairstein

4/19 - When Disaster Hits - Naming the Dead:
An Interview with NTSB's Paul Sledzik

All shows air at 10am PST

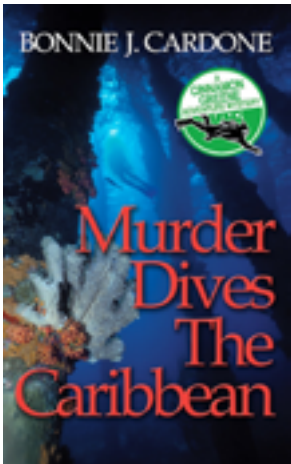
More details:

www.dplylemd.com

[C & S Radio Blog](#)

[See page 17 for more info](#)

OVER the TRANSOM

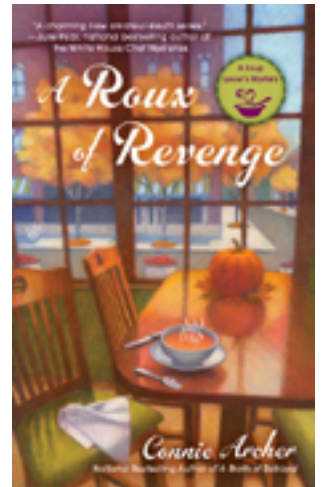
Member News

All three books in **Bonnie J. Cardone's** Cinnamon Greene Adventure Mystery series are now available in Amazon's Kindle Store. The books feature a scuba diving professional photographer who lives on the California coast and works part-time as a forensic photographer for her small hometown's police force. You can find THE BRIDE WORE BLACK, MURDER DIVES THE BAHAMAS and MURDER DIVES THE CARIBBEAN at: www.amazon.com/author/bonniecardone.

Craig Faustus Buck's Cold War noir short story BLANK SLATE has been accepted for the next quarterly edition of

Blank Fiction Literary Magazine, a new and independent magazine aimed at publishing intelligent and thought-provoking genre fiction.

Connie Archer's third book in the soup lover's mystery series from Berkley Prime Crime, A ROUX OF REVENGE, will be released on April 1, 2014. When a dead stranger is found by the side of the road, the past returns with a vengeance. Long kept secrets will be revealed, lost loves will be found and the lives of many in the village will be irrevocably altered. Visit Connie at www.conniearchermysteries.com.



Kristen Kittscher, debut author of SoCal Indie bestseller THE WIG IN THE WINDOW (Harper Children's, 2013), was named the 2014 James Thurber House Children's Writer-in-Residence. In addition to receiving a stipend, Kristen will spend a month in James Thurber's childhood home in Columbus working on the next book in her kids' mystery series, The Tiara on the Terrace. [View the book trailer here.](#)

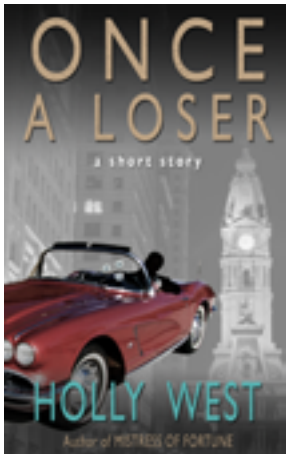


Henry Press has acquired **Diane Vallere's** Mad for Mod series. PILLOW STALK comes March 4 and THAT TOUCH OF INK on April 1. Library Journal says, "Make room for Vallere's tremendously fun homage. Imbuing her story with plenty of midcentury-modern decorating and fashion tips, not to mention a steady patter of Doris Day trivia, Vallere debuts a well-paced cozy series."

Do you have writing news to share with our chapter? Email it to TheMarchofCrime@gmail.com by April 20 for inclusion in the May/June issue. When submitting news for Over the Transom and other features, please include URLs (if applicable).

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OVER the TRANSOM



Holly West's short story, ONCE A LOSER, is now available for the Kindle. "When Lenny Marston's gangster uncle dies, Lenny must decide whether to fill his uncle's last wish or take the money and run." The story originally appeared in the Fall 2011 issue of NEEDLE: A Magazine of Noir. [Purchase here.](#)

Barbara DeMarco-Barrett has a story, MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE, in The Big Click, March issue. The story is part of a interconnected story collection/work-in-progress, along with CRAZY FOR YOU, included in USA noir: Best of the Akashic Noir Series that was published in November 2013.

Ted Elrick's humorous underworld tale, RESPECT was published in the premier issue of the online publication Liberty Island Magazine at www.libertyislandmag.com.

Charles Rosenberg's new murder mystery, LONG KNIVES will be published by Thomas & Mercer on March 1 as a trade paperback, Kindle book and audio book. It's a sequel to his best-selling novel, DEATH ON A HIGH FLOOR.



Lisa Brackmann's HOUR OF THE RAT (Soho Crime) has been nominated for Left Coast Crime's Calamari award, for best mystery set outside the United States.

Stephen Buehler's short story, JOHN'S SPOT, was published in February online by Akashic Books in their Monday's Are Murder feature. It's a story of crime on the streets of Hollywood and a street magician trying to hold onto his performing spot. [Read story here.](#)



Congratulations to members **Stephen Buehler** and **Andrew Jetarski**, whose short stories have been nominated for a 2014 Derringer award from the Short Mystery Fiction Society. Buehler's story, NOT MY DAY, is nominated in the Best Flash category, and Jetarski's story, DANCE MAN, is nominated in the Best Long Story category. Both stories appear in the 2013 Sister's in Crime Los Angeles anthology, LAST EXIT TO MURDER.



OVER the TRANSOM



Daryl Wood Gerber's INHERIT THE WORD, the second in the Cookbook Nook mysteries, debuted 3/4/14, published by Berkley Prime Crime, a division of Penguin/Random.

Jan Burke's APPREHENDED, a new short story collection published as an ebook by Simon & Schuster, will be available for \$1.99 on March 17th. The collection contains a new Irene Kelly story THE UNACKNOWLEDGED and also includes three short stories from the previously published Eighteen: WHY TONIGHT, A FINE SET OF TEETH, and A MAN OF MY STATURE. A series of these collections is being published this year. The first, CAUGHT RED-HANDED, is currently available and includes THE PRIVILEGED, a new short story about Frank Harriman.

LADIES OF INTRIGUE

Saturday, March 29, 2014
Hotel Huntington Beach

One of the most remarkable gatherings of international best-selling women mystery writers is on tap for Saturday, March 29 when the Orange County chapter of Sisters in Crime, hosts its annual full day of crime-writing panelists and speakers, Ladies of Intrigue. Members of SinCLA, OCSinC, and MWA are participants.

Carolyn Hart and Rhys Bowen headline the event. Hart, one of the most prestigious Grand Masters of the 2014 Edgar Awards, is the author of 49 mysteries and her books have won multiple Agatha, Anthony and Macavity Awards. Her crime novels include her Death on Demand series, the Bailey Ruth Raeburn series, and the Henry O. series. Bowen has been nominated for every major award in mystery writing, winning seven. Her series include the Molly Murphy and Her Royal Spyness mysteries.

Fourteen published authors will be panelists and moderators at Ladies of Intrigue. Topics are: TOUGH COOKIES: Strong Female Protagonists; DOWN A DARK ALLEY: How Setting Shapes Story, and PASSPORT REQUIRED: Mystery Goes International.

The panelist authors are **Jill Amadio**, Cara Black, **Lisa Brackmann**, **Jan Burke**, Carol Higgins Clark, **Kim Fay**, **Naomi Hirahara**, **Tammy Kaehler**, **Sheila Lowe**, Jeanne Matthews, **Jeri Westerson**, and Patricia Wynn. Moderators are **Aileen Baron**, **Terri Nolan**, and **Patricia Smiley**.

Ladies of Intrigue is being held at the Hotel Huntington Beach. Sign-in starts at 8:00 a.m. The program is from 8:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and includes lunch. For more information and registration forms please visit <http://www.ocsistersincrime.org>.



The PRO SHOP

John Morgan Wilson

In each installment of The Pro Shop, John Morgan Wilson interviews a chapter member about crime writing and writing in general. In this issue: April Smith.

April Smith was a prolific television writer and producer (nominated for three Emmys and two WGA Awards) before breaking into crime fiction with North of Montana in 1994, the first of four mystery/thrillers featuring FBI Special Agent Ana Grey, as well as a standalone thriller, Be the One (2000). She shifts from the crime genre to the historical with her latest novel, A Star for Mrs. Blake, which has earned considerable praise, including a starred review in Booklist. Set in 1931, it follows five American "Gold Star Mothers" who make a life-changing pilgrimage to France to visit the graves of the soldier sons they lost in World War I.



Photo by Benjamin Brayfield

JMW: You earned a Master's in creative writing from Stanford University. How important was that kind of study to who you are as a writer today?

AS: It taught me how to be 'in the room' with other writers. How to contribute to their work and take in their responses to mine. Good prep for TV staff jobs, although I had no idea at the time. The comradeship at Stanford has lasted with terrific writers such as Thomas Ziga, Chuck Kinder and Scott Turow. Academic study grounded me in the world of serious writing – understanding why great works of the twentieth century are great, as well as making the intention to take the story, in whatever form, as far as it can go.

JMW: Your transition from TV to mystery writing in the early '90s was a big one. Why that move?

AS: It was an unintended consequence of the prolonged WGA strike of 1988, during which my production company lost several projects. I realized Hollywood was unstable ground for writers and returned to the craft of fiction, which of course held no guarantees, but at least at the end of the day you had a completed manuscript and the copyright belonged to you – not the studio.

JMW: How has your TV writing experience carried over to your fiction?

AS: The necessity of holding viewers by constructing fast-paced stories with unexpected developments has also kept readers turning the pages. It took me a while to master a prose style that was free of the conventional style of scripts. In other words, to find my voice. Constructing scripts as well as novels provided the chops to adapt fiction to television and visa-versa. The ultimate mind-blower was exec-producing and writing the script for the 2011 TNT adaptation of GOOD MORNING, KILLER, in which Catherine Bell played Ana Grey. It made you wonder which reality you were inhabiting.



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Member
APPEARANCES

Tucson Festival of Books
University of Arizona
March 15 - 16, 2014

Friday, March 14 (Pre-Festival Appearance)

10:00am - 2:00pm

Philip Caputo, Tom McNeal, **Thomas Perry**, and Jacqueline Winspear will speak at a benefit run by the Brandeis University National Committee to support the Brandeis University Neurological Research Program at the Tucson Skyline Country Club.

Saturday, March 15 (Check program for locations & additional info)

Panels:

10:00am - *Dreaded Anachronism* - **Donis Casey (M), Jeri Westerson**, Rhys Bowen, Jacqueline Winspear

11:30am - *Edgar Award Winners* - Becky Masterman (M), **Thomas Perry, T. Jefferson Parker**, Steve Hamilton

11:30am - *A Conversation with Anne Hillerman* - **Susan Cummins Miller**

2:30pm - *Big Crimes, Small Towns* - **Jeri Westerson (M)**, Bryan Gruley, Elizabeth Gunn, Terry Shames

4:00pm - *Death and the Domestic Arts* - Bonnie Henry (M), **Donis Casey**, Anne Canadeo, Jenn McKinlay

4:00pm - *Native American Elements* - Shannon Baker (M), **Thomas Perry**, J.A. Jance, Frances Washburn

Signings:

12:00 - 1:00pm - Desert Sleuths Sisters in Crime Booth #109-110 - Jeri Westerson

4:00pm - Clues Unlimited Bookstore Booth - Jeri Westerson

Sunday, March 16

Panels

10:00am - *Writing Action* - Mark Woodhams (M), **Thomas Perry**, John Lescroart, Richard Lange

10:00am - *Five Senses of the Desert* - **Elizabeth Gunn (M), Susan Cummins Miller**, Ann Hillerman, J.A. Jance

11:30am - *Brit Lit* - **Kim Fay (M), Jeri Westerson**, Deborah Crombie, Jenn McKinlay

11:30am - *Landscape of Fear* - Maryelizabeth Hart (M), **Jeffrey Mariotte**, Jonathan Maberry, Isaac Marion, Yvonne Navarro, Weston Ochse

2:30pm - *Deadlier Than the Male* - Zara Larsen (M), **Elizabeth Gunn**, Anne Hillerman, **Susan Cummins Miller**

4:00pm - *Drop Kick Your Cliches* - Scott Glener (M), **Jeffrey Mariotte**, Elizabeth Bear, Jonathan Mayberry, Isaac Mor-ton, Sam Sykes

Member APPEARANCES

Tucson Festival of Books
University of Arizona
March 15 - 16, 2014

Sunday, March 16 (continued)

Signings:

9:00 - 11:00am - Tucson Sisters in Crime Booth - Jeri Westerson
10:00-11:00am - Poisoned Pen Pressbooth - Donis Casey
12:30pm - SciFi/Fantasy Sales & Signing Area #4 Integrated Learning Center - Jeffrey Mariotte
11:00am - 12:00pm - Desert Sleuths Sisters in Crime Booth - Donis Casey
2:00 - 3:00pm - Clues Unlimited Bookstore Booth - Donis Casey
2:00 - 3:00pm - Poisoned Pen Bookstore - Jeri Westerson
5:00pm - SciFi/Fantasy Sales & Signing Area #4 Integrated Learning Center - Jeffrey Mariotte

Left Coast Crime
March 20 - 23, 2014
Monterey, CA

Wednesday, March 19 (Pre-Conference Workshop)

9:30am-4:45pm

Jan Burke and Jerrilyn Farmer will be leading the writing workshop on Wednesday. The workshop is sold out, but they are taking names for a waiting list. [Click here](#) to add your name to it.

Thursday (3/20) (Check conference program for locations, additional panelists, & more info)

10:45 - 11:30am

Short Story Thursday - Travis Richardson
The Character-Driven Mystery - Darrell James
Leap of Faith - Charles Rosenberg (M)

12:00 - 12:45pm

Jumping Genres - Dianne Emley
Unusual Sleuths: Your Day Job is What? - Bonnie J. Cardone,
Tammy Kaehler

Do you have any appearances scheduled? Email it to
TheMarchofCrime@gmail.com by April 20 for inclusion in the May/June issue.

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Member APPEARANCES

Left Coast Crime
March 20 - 23, 2014
Monterey, CA

Thursday, 3/20 (continued)

1:15 - 2:00pm

Writing the California Detective - Gar Anthony Haywood,
Naomi Hirahara, Karen Keskinen

2:30 - 3:15pm

Cozy Noir: Murder on the Edgy Side - James Ziskin
The Life of Pi: Real Life Private Investigators Who Pen Mysteries -
Stephen Buehler (M)
The Truth & Nothing But: Law & Murder - Susan Goldstein
Writer's Craft: These Writers Teach - Kris Neri (M), Diana
Gould, Georgia Jeffries

3:45 - 4:30pm - Sue Grafton interviewed

Friday (3/21)

7:15 - 8:45am - **New Author's Breakfast** - Maxine Nunes, Holly West

9:00 - 9:45am

In the Beginning.. Reminiscing - Jan Burke (M), Sue Grafton
Mean Streets Aren't All in L.A. - Matt Coyle (M), Ken
Kuhlken, D. W. Putnam
Deadly New Voices: Writers Discuss Their First Sales - Holly
West

10:15 - 11:00am

When Setting Matters: Not Just a Pretty Backdrop for Murder -
Timothy Hallinan

11:30am - 12:15pm

Murder Lite: Why Authors Write Humor Into Mysteries - Harley
Jane Kozak (M)
Forensics: Experts Discuss How to Tell Fact From Fiction - Jan
Burke, D.P. Lyle
A Taste for Murder - Daryl Wood Gerber
Jagged Edge of Death - Terri Nolan (M), Gary Phillips, Dick
Loche
Evil Among Us - Alan Russell

1:30 - 2:15pm

Murder Across the Pond - Jeri Westerson
Haunted by Death: On the Paranormal Side - Dianne Emley
(M), Kris Neri
Where the Rubber Meets the Road - Deborah Coonts
Tough on Crime - Paul D. Marks, D.W. Putnam
Lights, Camera, Action! - Diana Gould (M), Melodie Johnson
Howe, Maxine Nunes

Continued on pg 11

Member APPEARANCES

Left Coast Crime
March 20 - 23, 2014
Monterey, CA

Friday, 3/21 (continued)

2:45 - 3:30pm

A Dark & Stormy Night: The Inspiration Behind our Characters - Rochelle Staab (M), Lisa Brackmann
Writing the Native American Protagonist - Deborah J. Ledford (M), Marilyn Meredith

4:00 - 4:45pm

Two Heads are Better Than One - Lee Goldberg (M), Dick Lochte

Saturday (3/22)

9:00 - 9:45am

Mystery Far Afield - Aileen Baron
Screenwriters on Screenwriting - Georgia Jeffries (M), Craig Faustus Buck, Ellen Byron

10:15 - 11:00am

Legal Thrillers: NOT Your Father's Perry Mason - Charles Rosenberg
Smile & Be a Villian: What Makes Villians Memorable - Darrell James

11:30 - 12:15pm

X-Factor: Responsibilities & Issues for Women Writing Women - Lisa Brackmann, Marcia Clark
Short Story Saturday - Jan Burke
Mystery Afficionados: The Books We Love & Why We Love Them - Ingrid Willis (M)
Pulp Fiction & Beyond: Very Untraditional Mysteries - Gary Phillips

1:30 - 2:15pm

Sex, Death & Taxes...and a Lot of Champagne - Deborah Coonts, Harley Jane Kozak
Behind the Badge: What Readers & Writers Need to Know - Marcia Clark
Thrillers: What's New (and What's Not) - Timothy Hallinan

2:45 - 3:30pm

Been There, Wrote That: A Game Show - Gar Anthony Hayward (M), Lee Goldberg
Amateur Sleuth Saturday - Naomi Hirahara (M), Rochelle Staab, Diane Vallere
Mystery's Class Clowns: Chandler's Successors - Alan Russell (M)

Join the Yahoo discussion group for our So-Cal chapter. Chat with fellow MWA members; discuss interesting news items; learn more about chapter events; ask a question or two about our industry and about writing or promotion. Email SoCalMWA-subscribe@yahoo.com to join. Members only.

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Member
APPEARANCES

Left Coast Crime
March 20 - 23, 2014
Monterey, CA

Saturday, March 22, 7:30 - 9:30pm
2014 Left Coast Crime Awards Banquet

Congratulations to our members who are nominated for the following awards:

The Lefty:

Timothy Hallinan, *The Fame Thief* (Soho Crime)

The Squid:

Darrell James, *Purgatory Key* (Midnight Ink)

The Calamari:

Lisa Brackmann, *Hour of the Rat* (Soho Crime)

Additionally, SoCalMWA President **Jeri Westerson** will be hosting a table at the banquet. Be sure to sign up!

Sunday (3/23)

9:00 - 9:45am

Small Press vs. Independent: Pros & Cons - Joel Fox (M)

Going it Alone: Authors Discuss the Pros & Cons of

Self-Publishing - Laurie Stevens (M)

10:15- 11:00am

Amateur Sleuth Sunday - Jill Amado

Agent-Author Relationships - Matt Coyle, Terri Nolan, D.P.

Lyle

Additional Appearances

March 8 - Sheila Lowe will be appearing at Thriller School in Ventura.

Robert S. Levinson reads, signs, and does his show biz Q&A for FINDERS, KEEPERS, LOSERS, WEEPERS

March 8 - 2pm: Book'Em Mysteries, 118 Mission Street, South Pasadena.

March 15 - 2pm: Mystery Ink, 8907 Warner Avenue #315, Huntington Beach

March 26 - 10:00am - Noon: **Susan Cummins Miller** joins **Elizabeth Gunn** and **J.M. "Mike" Hayes** to discuss their Southwestern mystery series with the Sonoron Sleuths Mystery Book Club (Oro Valley Public Library, 1305 W. Naranja Drive, Tucson, AZ)

Continued on pg 13

Member APPEARANCES

Additional Appearances (continued)

March 29 - Ladies of Intrigue ([see page 6](#) for details and participating SoCalMWA members)

April 2 - 1:00 - 3:00pm: **Jeri Westerson** will appear at the Rancho Bernardo Library, waving weapons around and discussing her books, London, and crime in the Middle Ages. 17110 Bernardo Center Drive, San Diego.

April 10 - 8:00 - 9:30pm: **Holly West** appears at Book'd in Burbank with a panel of other authors to discuss her debut historical mystery, MISTRESS OF FORTUNE. Theatre Banshee, 3435 W. Magnolia Blvd., Burbank, CA. \$10 general admission.

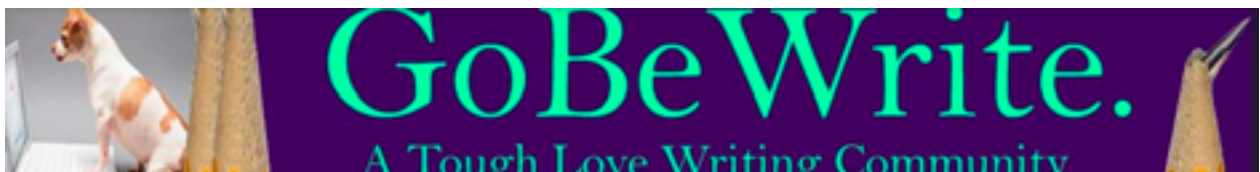
April 12 & 13 - LATFOB: **Jeri Westerson** and other members will be at MWA Booth #377.

April 13 - LATFOB: **Georgia Jeffries** is moderating the panel "Sitcoms, Dramas, and Blockbusters: Creating for the Screen."

April 19 - 10:00am - Noon: **Dianne Emley** will join the Central Coast Sisters in Crime on a panel at the Santa Maria Public Library, in conjunction with National Library Week.

April 26 - 2:05pm - 3:00pm: **Susan Cummins Miller** will speak on "Elements of a Crime: Mining a Gem From your research" at the Desert Sleuths Sisters in Crime 4th Annual Mystery Writer's Workshop (Scottsdale Civic Center Library, 3839 N. Drinkwater Blvd., Scottsdale, AZ).

May 3 - 11:00am - 3:30pm: **Diana Gould** will speak at the annual Beach Cities AAUW Author's Luncheon at the Torrance Doubletree Inn, 21333 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA.



An open invitation to speak in and around San Diego

If you've published (traditional, or not) a book, or are a writer of short stories, and wish to speak to a group of people who want to hear about your writing process and experiences, Go, Be, Write! would love to have you. The group has been meeting at a Seaport Village bookstore where books are ordered by the bookseller, but we also have meetings at other venues where you can offer your books for sale (or provide links to your online book). We'll also be setting up library panels in case you have someone else you'd like to speak with, and B&N has asked us to schedule some events. Check us out at <http://www.meetup.com/GoBeWrite>. The events are free, and members buy books and are very attentive and appreciative. Feel free to contact group leader & SoCalMWA member Sally Richards at Sally@SallyRichards.com.

You're Invited!

*Pre-Party for
LA Times Festival of Books*

**Come to
*The Last Bookstore***

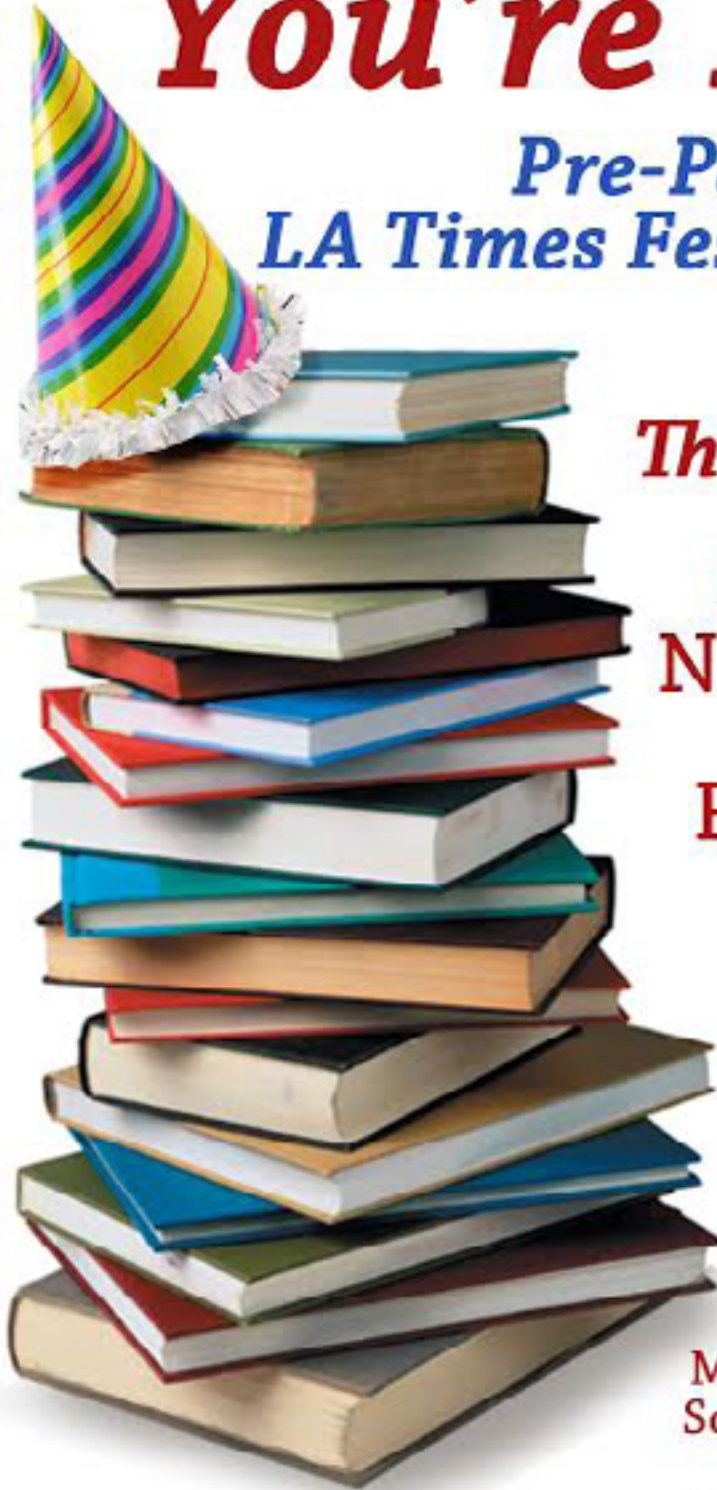
**Meet Authors,
Nosh, Buy Books!**

**Friday, April 11
7 to 9 pm**

453 S Spring St
Los Angeles, CA 90013

**Only Minutes Away
from USC**

**Hosted by
Mystery Writers of America
Southern California Chapter**



Hollow Points

Gregory Von Dare

Long, Long Arms

For the past few months, I've delved into the lore and mechanics of pistols and handguns as a means of making our mystery and detective stories more real and convincing. Now we cross a line to the other side of weaponry, the long guns: rifles and shotguns. In this series, we'll again look at both history and hardware. While these weapons may be more appropriate to the realm of military tales or action/adventure and thrillers, many a true mystery has hinged on the use of a rifle or shotgun.

Historically, long guns appeared on the scene first by a hefty margin and eventually devolved into short-barreled pistols. As before, it will be impossible to cover every weapon in these categories, partially because they are overwhelmingly military in use and there have been countless military rifles issued and used around the world since about the year 1200 CE, which represents the earliest discovered firearm of any kind, in Mongolia. Rather than confuse readers, we'll stick with popular rifles and shotguns and emphasize the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the heyday of firearms, and coincidentally, of the detective story.



Bronze Firearm, Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368 ACE). Photo by Yannick Trotter, 2007.

Blame it on the Chinese. Once they had invented gunpowder in the 9th century, the rest was inevitable. So much force is liberated by gunpowder that it can power a projectile with enough strength to make suits of armor irrelevant or smash through stone fortifications in a fort or castle.

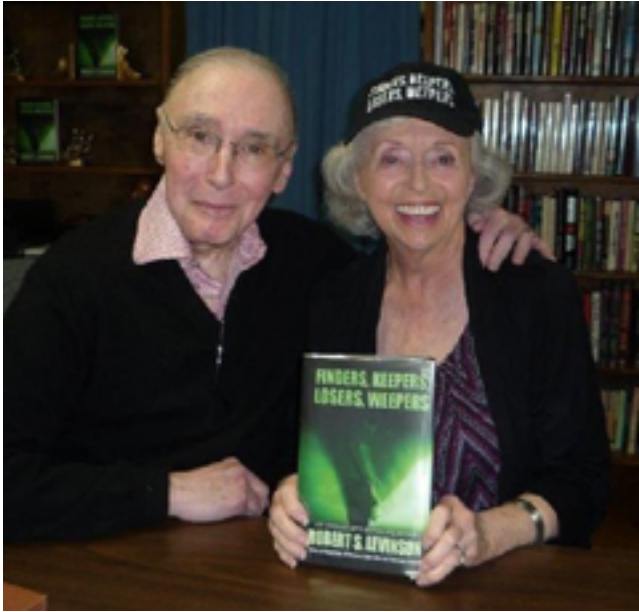
The first devices to make use of this “chemical weapon” were primitive cannons and mortars. These were simple cast bronze or iron tubes with one end sealed off and a tiny opening at the top rear to ignite the powder charge. In some early Asian weapons, bamboo tubes were used. Throwing shot from the size of a billiard ball to a bowling ball, they were not very accurate and prone to explode. Yet they were cutting-edge in their day and evolved rapidly to be dangerous siege weapons -- castle busters. As blacksmiths became more skilled in working with iron and bronze, smaller, portable hand-cannons appeared, the first hand-held, hand-fired long guns.

The early hand-cannon consisted of a tube, a rudimentary barrel, with a touch-hole at the rear for firing it. A handle or “stock” was attached at the rear for holding and aiming the device. The stock was a length of wood much like a broom handle, probably with a pointed end to be jabbed into the ground for support and stability. Normally it required a two-man crew for firing: one to hold it steady and aim it, and one to touch off the powder. These weapons quickly spread from China to Europe along the Silk Road and the first European hand-cannons are dated to about 1380 CE.

Hand canons became popular because they could be mastered in a few weeks and did not require a lifetime of practice, as was needed to produce a superior bowman. There was also a terror element to their use. Both horses and green troops would run away from the hand-cannon due to fear of the unprecedented noise and smoke it produced on the battlefield – in addition to killing and maiming the enemy. To simple villagers and superstitious farm hands, the blast of sound and fury must have been fearsome indeed.

Continued on pg 18

You Ought to be in Pictures
SoCalMWA members out on the town

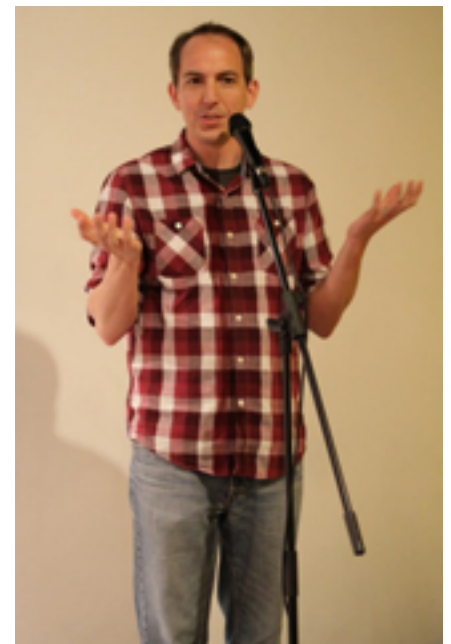


Robert S. Levinson, here with Book Carnival owner Anne Saller, made his annual visit to the Orange, CA, indie last month, and spent almost two hours answering questions about his adventures in show business as well as his eleventh crime novel, *FINDERS, KEEPERS, LOSERS, WEEPERS*. Photo by Sandra Levinson.



In what's become an annual tradition, **Robert S. Levinson** launched his eleventh crime novel, *FINDERS, KEEPERS, LOSERS, WEEPERS*, last month at Skylight Books in Los Angeles, where he was greeted by an SRO audience and sold/signed every copy in stock. The crowd included long-time pals from show business, including (from left): record promotion icon Dandy Don Whittemore; Joe Sutton, radio host of "The Heart of Hollywood;" Jay Lowy, past president of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences; (Bob); music marketing guru Macey Lipman. Photo by Sandra Levinson.

Noir at the Bar
February 9



L to R: **Holly West** reads from *MISTRESS OF FORTUNE*, **Terri Nolan** reads from *GLASS HOUSES*, **Eric Beetner** reads from *WHITE HOT PISTOL*

The Pro Shop *continued from page 7*

JMW: Your use of a white board as you prepare to write a new novel sounds akin to script storyboarding to visualize story structure. How does that work?

AS: It's just like outlining a script. I learned the technique thanks to [producers] Gene Reynolds, Allan Burns and Seth Freeman on Lou Grant. We would all contribute to the story and watch it take shape. Step back and look at the act breaks. Now, I'll start jotting ideas on the white board, type them up and print out, jot new ones, until I'm ready to organize. I still use Final Draft's Scene Navigator to move things around in the outline stage of the books.

JMW: On your website, you state that "writers must be ruthless" if they are to do it well. What are you getting at there?

AS: You have to be as objective with your own emotions as you are with your characters'. Read your stuff as if it were written by a stranger. Leave ego and attachment behind when you spot personal vendettas and pet tropes creeping into the work. Be as fearless in confronting difficult subjects as your hero. Respect the story and the way it wants to be told above all.

JMW: Your new novel, A STAR FOR MRS. BLAKE, is another turn for you. How did you come to write it?

AS: I was compelled to tell this story from the moment I saw a diary written in 1931 by a young West Point Graduate named Thomas Hammond, who accompanied the Gold Star Mothers on their pilgrimage to France. The experience changed his life as well as theirs – and mine. I couldn't sell it on a pitch so I wrote the entire novel on spec – it took 25 years to find the right moment and the right editor. It was the same with NORTH OF MONTANA, which I also wrote on spec. I felt no matter what happens, I've done it.

JW: What comes next? Will we be seeing more of Ana Grey?

AS: I'm imagining another Ana Grey, but right now, based on the reaction to A STAR FOR MRS. BLAKE, I'm on the trail of another novel of historical fiction.

John Morgan Wilson *is the author of ten mystery novels, including eight in the Benjamin Justice series. Simple Justice, which launched the series, was awarded an Edgar for Best First. John's short stories have appeared in EQMM, AHMM, and several anthologies. He is a former board member of SoCalMWA and a recipient of the chapter's Distinguished Service Award.*

**The March of Crime would like to thank this issue's contributors:
John Morgan Wilson and Gregory Von Dare.**

Hollow Points *continued from pg 15*

Accuracy was a minor issue, since military forces of the times fought in tight ranks, clots of soldiers. Holding the line was a major tactical element of the era. Point a crude weapon at a crowd and you're likely to kill or injure someone. However, these weapons were not a major factor in battles until the Renaissance, when more sophisticated versions appeared in the form of the matchlock.

Interestingly, it was the invention of the "slow match" a kind of early, slow burning fuse, that ignited further advances in long gun technology. Later hand-cannons used a flash-pan and a hole at the side of the barrel to ignite the main powder charge, rather than the touch-hole at the top. A slow match cord could be touched to the grains of powder in the pan and fire the weapon in that way. This side ignition led to the development of a mechanical, clockwork-like device to bring the slow match into contact with the flash-pan, the matchlock. Initiated by the pull of a trigger, the matchlock swung the slow match into contact with the flash-pan and fired the gun. Now, a single soldier could load and fire. And he could keep both eyes on target while firing. Soon, barrels were made longer and the chemistry of gunpowder improved at the same time – in the 1500s. Suddenly firearms emerged that were capable of killing troops at a distance as well as bringing down game for the pantry.

You might meditate on the term fire-arms for a bit to get a sense of how magical and compelling these weapons were to our ancestors and how little their terrible attraction has changed today. Yet another school shooting in the news.

Next time, the origin of the shotgun, the smooth-bore weapon, as opposed to the rifle with it's single, accurate projectile.

Gregory Von Dare *comes from Chicago and was raised on crime, corruption and clout in the big city. He has written non-fiction books, magazine articles and radio scripts, as well as stories, plays and screenplays. He once worked as a pyro detonator and talent manager for Universal Studios Hollywood.*

Crime and Science Radio

An hour with: a retired FBI agent who worked on one of California's most notorious cases. A leading criminal law attorney. A forensic anthropologist who responds to mass disasters. A scientific arson investigator. An expert on the history of toxicology. A cadaver dog trainer. A nationally known medical examiner. A fraud and financial crimes investigator.

Want to know more about these fields and the people who work in them?

Now you can! Two of your fellow So Cal chapter members have established Crime and Science Radio. Hosted by **Jan Burke and DP Lyle**, and produced by Suspense Magazine, Crime and Science Radio interviews experts in forensic science, law enforcement, and criminal justice. The online programs "air" every two weeks on Saturdays at 10 AM Pacific, and can always be listened to free of charge -- from our website, as iTunes downloads, or from Suspense Magazine's site.

Jan and Doug also post lots of additional links to sites where you can learn more about the subject of each episode.

Visit us at <http://www.crimeandsciencerradio.com> for links, interviewee info, and more!

Crime CALENDAR



MARCH MEETING A NIGHT IN NOIR CITY

The annual Film Noir foundation festival of noir returns to the historic Egyptian Theater in Hollywood and this year SoCalMWA members are sponsoring a night of L.A. Noir with a double feature on **Saturday, March 29th at 7:30pm.**

[Purchase Tickets](#)

Roadblock (1951)

Warner Bros., 73 min. Dir. Harold Daniels. After several years of playing tenacious cops or cruel gunmen, character actor Charles McGraw was elevated to leading-man status by RKO boss Howard Hughes, becoming the studio's "B" version of Bob Mitchum. Nobody could clip off dialogue like McGraw. In this prototypical noir, he finally reveals a soft center, as an insurance investigator who goes crooked trying to satisfy an avaricious dame (Joan Dixon).

Southside (1950)

New 35mm Print! Warner Bros., 73 min. Dir. Boris Ingster. Slam-bang crime drama courtesy of the King Brothers is highlighted by downtown L.A., Hollywood and San Quentin prison locations as Don DeFore goes undercover to smash up a counterfeiting ring. Sultry Andrea King, George Tobias, Barry Kelley and Morris Ankrum co-star.

The films feature Los Angeles locales and all the elements we love in film noir. Prior to the films will be a panel discussion on the literary heritage of noir and in Southern California in particular with a panel of MWA member authors.

Come show your support for our sponsorship of this wonderful organization and see two great noir films in the heart of Hollywood. Tickets go fast for the Noir City festival so **pre-orders are advised.**

MORE CRIMINAL HAPPENINGS

March 15-16 - [Tuscon Festival of Books](#)

March 20-23 - [Left Coast Crime](#)

March 29 - [Ladies of Intrigue](#)

April 12-13 - [LA Times Festival of Books](#)

July 8 - 12 - [ThrillerFest](#)

November 13-16 - [Bouchercon](#)

In MEMORIAM

Gary P. Brandner - by Bonnie J. Cardone

Gary Brandner, author of *THE HOWLING*, died September 22, 2013, in Reno, NV, of esophageal cancer. He had been a member of MWA and the SoCal chapter since 1970.

Gary's first love was mysteries and when he decided to write them full time, he saved enough money to last a certain number of years (five, if memory serves) and quit his day job. We became friends during a UCLA extension class on mystery writing not long after that. He had just sold his first short story to Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine (1969).

One of Gary's other loves was tennis and in 1975, *THE PLAYERS*, a murder mystery featuring international tennis, was released. *THE BEE-ZLEBUB BUSINESS*, about a psychic investigating a satanic spy network, was also published that year. It was *THE HOWLING* (1977) that changed everything. Gary focused his attention on horror from then on and out of that came the successful career he had set his sights on.

Gary encouraged me to write and to join MWA. For about 10 years I saw him nearly every Friday night, either at SoCal's monthly meeting at the Sportsman's Lodge or in the homes of our critique group members. But things change. Though we exchanged Christmas cards and FaceBook pokes, we hadn't spoken in person for many years when he died. Yet somehow it never occurred to me that he wouldn't always be around. RIP Gary. You are missed.



Gary Brandner in 1980
Photo by Bonnie J. Cardone

Submissions for "In Memoriam" should be emailed to TheMarchofCrime@gmail.com by April 20 for inclusion in the May/June issue.

The LAST WORD

"My body tensed and my breaths quickened when I walked through the front door. It was a police station.
A place where I used to belong, but never would again.
A place where you were forced to face the truth, even when you lied."

--Matt Coyle, YESTERDAY'S ECHO