



The
MARCH

of CRIME

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SoCalMWA Event

T. Jefferson Parker in Conversation with Matt Coyle

**Saturday, June 25
2:30pm**



SoCalMWA & the La Jolla Library present:

**AN AFTERNOON WITH
NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR
T. JEFFERSON PARKER**

Learn about the three-time Edgar Award-winning author's unconventional path to literary stardom in an interview with Anthony Award-winning author, Matt Coyle.

La Jolla Library
7555 Draper Ave
La Jolla, CA

Books will be available for sale at the event.



SoCalMWA Event:

Sunday, July 17

**Book-Swap &
BBQ Party**

[More Info](#)

[More info](#)



The President's Rap Sheet

Craig Faustus Buck

I'm writing this rap in Scrivener, a popular piece of writing software. This is far from an endorsement of the program, since I've tried it in the past and didn't like it, but I've been mired in the second act of my WIP so long that I thought a change of pace might be just the jolt I need.

The reason I mention this is that SoCalMWA is planning [a writing software workshop on October 22](#) in Studio City. This will be a free event to explain the ins and outs of various types of available writing programs out there, including Scrivener, plus some programs for idea/story organization, like Dramatica.

Board member Paul D. Marks is organizing this workshop and hasn't finalized all the speakers, so we don't yet know the exact list of programs to be covered, but you can expect a good overview of what's out there, what these programs do, how to use the most popular of them, and you'll be able to ask questions of existing users.

While we're on the subject of chapter events, be sure to check the events page on our website at SoCalMWA.com/events. Here's a sampling of things we have coming up:

June 25: [An Afternoon With New York Times Best-selling Author T. Jefferson Parker](#) in conversation with Anthony Award-winning author Matt Coyle at the La Jolla Library.

July 17: Author Elizabeth Little (with Eric Beetner) graciously opens her home for a Backyard Book-swap and BBQ Party. Those who were unable to reserve a spot for Jim Ziskin's house party before it filled up will be given priority for this one, should we fill up again, but try to [RSVP early](#) due to limited space.

August 7: [Tam O'Shanter luncheon with authors Jan Burke and DP Lyle](#) producing a live recording of their Crime and Science Radio show, interviewing Professor Don Johnson, a renowned criminalist with special expertise in forensic biology and crime scene investigation and reconstruction.

August 28: Co-hosted with Sisters in Crime OC, a luncheon in Irvine to hear an [ATF presentation of a true San Diego murder for hire investigation](#). The alleged perpetrator is currently on trial.

There's a more coming up, so [check our website](#) at least monthly and [join the Yahoo! group](#) to keep up.

Craig

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 for chapter news & info

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The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

In this month's "call for content" notice, I asked for submissions for "The Last Word" and many of you came through by sending selections from your work. Thanks! I can't use them all, of course, but I do keep all of the submissions on file for possible use in future issues. So just because I didn't use your submission this month, it just might show up in our next issue (or maybe the next).

So many of you submitted cover photos I had to re-arrange the presentation a little bit to fit them all in. But that's a good thing. I encourage you to send hi-res cover pics whenever applicable.

For our June issue, I'd like to feature some photos of our workspaces. I think it's interesting to see how/where authors work. I'll send out my usual reminder around June 20, so you'll have plenty of time to spiff up your space and pretend you're more organized than you actually are. Or is it just me who does that?

This month in Hollow Points, Gregory Von Dare discusses covert weapons used by the CIA (move over, James Bond). And Eric Beetner wraps up the recent SoCalMWA luncheon panel on adapting novels into screen and teleplays. Finally, be sure to check out the updated Crime Calendar.

Holly

FRESH BLOOD

SoCalMWA welcomes its new and returning members:

Jeremy Kaufman
Isabella Parra
Ann Larson



Like us on Facebook

Join our **SoCalMWA**
Yahoo! group
for chapter news & info

Email

SoCalMWA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
to join (members only)

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

Editor: [Holly West](#)

June Contributors:
Gregory Von Dare
Eric Beetner

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

OVER the TRANSOM

Member News

Ann Redisch Stampler's YA crime thriller, *HOW TO DISAPPEAR* (Simon Pulse, 2016), will be released on June 14. Told in two alternating (perhaps unreliable) voices, it's a cat-and-mouse, cross-country chase between a Midwestern girl on the run from a murder she might have committed and the straight-arrow son of a Las Vegas mobster who's blackmailed to track her down and kill her.

Karen Odden's debut novel, *A LADY IN THE SMOKE: A VICTORIAN MYSTERY*, was published as an e-book by Alibi/Random House on March 29 and is available at Amazon and elsewhere for all e-readers for \$2.99. For more info, visit karenodden.com.

Gary Inbinder's second Inspector Lefebvre novel, *THE HANGED MAN: A MYSTERY IN FIN DE SIECLE PARIS*, is coming soon from Pegasus Books. Expected publication is August 2016.

D.J. Adamson has just launched the second book in the Lillian Dove series, *SUPPOSE*. Available on Amazon.

Andrew Neiderman's latest thriller, *THE INCIDENT* (Severn House), will be available in the United States on July 1: a young woman, sexually assaulted in her small, upstate village, returns after college graduation and falls in love with a man who might know more about her attack than she dreamed. Neiderman, the ghostwriter of V.C. Andrews, also has a new V.C. Andrews novel out in July. *WHITEFERN* is the sequel to *MY SWEET AUDRINA*, a recent Lifetime movie. His international best seller, *THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE*, completed a stage play tour of Holland late May and is now being considered in Austria and France.

DP Lyle kicks off his new comedic thriller series starring Jake Longly with *DEEP SIX*, available July 5th from Oceanview. Details: <http://www.dplylcmd.com/books.html>.

Ben Winters' new novel, *UNDERGROUND AIRLINES*, comes out on July 5. It was featured by Publisher's Weekly as a Best Summer Book in the thriller/mystery category.



OVER the TRANSOM

Jeri Westerson signed a two-book deal with Diversion Books for her new paranormal romance series, *BOOKE OF THE HIDDEN*. Her Italian publisher, Newton Compton Editori, just offered a contract on the second Crisp-in Guest Medieval Noir, *SERPENT IN THE THORNS*. Chianti for everyone! Finally, Jeri's LGBT series writing as Haley Walsh, the Skyler Foxe Mysteries, received two plaudits this month; her novella *FOXEN DEN 2: Summer Vacation* was a finalist in The Romance Reviews Awards for best rom/com, and her audio book *DESERT FOXEN*, narrated by Joel Leslie, was named Best Audio Book for April by Open Sky Book Reviews.

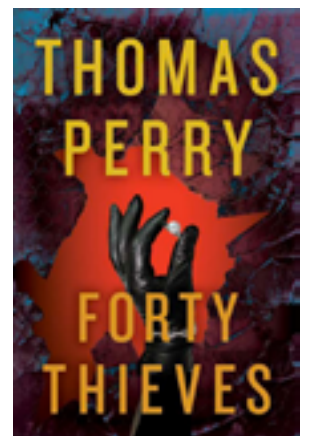
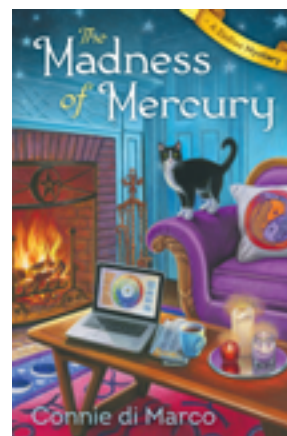
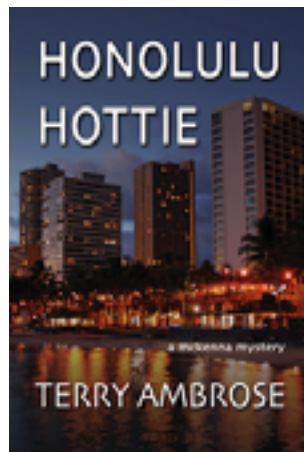
FRIEND OF THE FAMILY, the fourth novel in **Jennifer Moss's** series of "mysteries with a metaphysical twist," was released in May 2016. The series is published by Black Opal Books and follows Chicago homicide detective Ryan Doherty as he navigates high-profile cases, along with this professional and personal relationship with psychic empath Catharine Lulling. In *FRIEND OF THE FAMILY*, Ryan and his partner walk a tight line between the Chicago PD, the feds and the mob as they try to solve the homicides of the notorious crime boss's wives and girlfriends. For more information, visit her website: <http://www.JenniferMoss.com>.

Terry Ambrose released *HONOLULU HOTTIE*, his fourth Trouble in Paradise McKenna Mystery, on May 17. In this adventure, McKenna goes inside the world of veterans benefit scams and takes on a new partner, a PI-wannabe with a Magnum, PI obsession.

THE MADNESS OF MERCURY, **Connie di Marco's** first book in the new Zodiac Mystery series, will be released on June 8, 2016.

Thomas Perry's *FORTY THIEVES* has been chosen by Booklist as one of its ten best crime novels of the past year, and is also one of the five finalists for Strand Magazine's Best Novel award.

James W. Ziskin's third Ellie Stone mystery, *STONE COLD DEAD*, is a finalist for the 2016 Anthony and Barry Awards for Best Paperback Original. The fourth Ellie Stone mystery, *HEART OF STONE*, releases June 7.



OVER the TRANSOM

NIGHT TREMORS, **Matt Coyle's** second Rick Cahill crime novel, has been nominated for the Anthony Award for Best Mystery.

Deborah J. Ledford received her second Anthony Award Nomination for Best Audio Book. CAUSING CHAOS is narrated by TV and film actress Christina Cox.

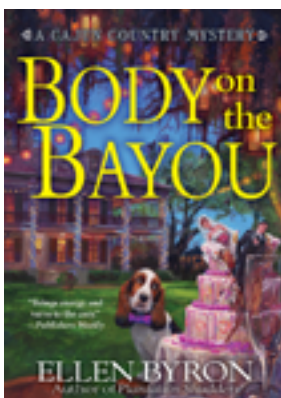
Arizona-based mystery writer **Betty Webb**, author of the Lena Jones mysteries, (DESERT RAGE, DESERT WIVES, etc.) and the Gunn Zoo mysteries (THE PUFFIN OF DEATH, etc.) has been chosen by the Arizona State Library to be a Writer-in-Residence for June, July, and August. "I'll be teaching some writing classes and holding a few office hours for writers who need help with their manuscripts, but basically I'm being paid for letting people watch me put the finishing touches to my next book, 'DESERT VENGEANCE.' It never occurred to me that some people define writers writing as entertainment!"

Holly West's story, "Don't Fear the Ripper," has been nominated for a 2016 Anthony Award in the short story category. Set in late Victorian London, it features Caroline Farmer, a Whitechapel midwife who takes it upon herself to stop Jack the Ripper's killing spree. "Don't Fear the Ripper" first appeared in the PROTECTORS 2: HEROES anthology in 2015 and will be re-printed in Otto Penzler's BIG BOOK OF JACK THE RIPPER in Fall 2016.

Ellen Byron has been invited to be a panelist at the Louisiana Book Festival on October 29. BODY ON THE BAYOU, the second in her Cajun Country Mystery series, debuts September 13.

Gretchen Baker's debut novel, AN UN-CONVENTIONAL MURDER, under the pen name C. A. Cox is now available. It features a cave biologist at the National Speleological Society Convention in Ely, Nevada.

THE CURSE OF THE WERE-HYENA, the first book in **Bruce Hale's** new Monstertown Mysteries series for young readers, will be published by Disney-Hyperion on July 5.



OVER the TRANSOM

Laurie Stevens' *TODES SCHULD* (the German version of *THE DARK BEFORE DAWN*) won the Best of General Fiction at the Amsterdam Book Festival.

John Shepphird's season #2 of his private eye series, *iPrivateEye*, is now available on the *Hooked* flash-fiction app. Nora's got a new case--digging up evidence that a deadbeat dad is not totally broke (as he claims) but actually rolling in dough. With help from her crazy ex-boyfriend, Mike, they embark in another twist-filled case. *Hooked* is a free app for cell phones. Readers follow stories through text messages. John's *iPrivateEye* series features clandestine photos Nora snaps on her phone as evidence and clues.

Craig Faustus Buck's short story, "Blank Shot," is featured in the new *BLACK COFFEE* anthology, edited by **Andrew MacRae** (Dark House Books). Twenty-three tales of crime and punishment told by current and rising stars of the mystery world. Buck's short story, "Honeymoon Sweet," was selected as a finalist for *Sequestrum Magazine's* Editor's Reprint Award. And he sold two more stories to *Hooked*, the short-story iPhone app.

Jane Haseldine's *BLOOD BLACKBIRD*, the third book in the Julia Gooden series, about a crime reporter who has no choice but to team up with her con man father, who abandoned her as a little girl, so she can decipher whether a stranger vowing he's the brother she lost thirty years earlier in a child abduction case is who he claims to be, or if it's a trap to ensure the many sins of her father's past will be paid in full this time, was sold to Kensington Publishing in a two-book deal, making it a four-book series.



Do you have writing news to share with our chapter?
Email it to TheMarchofCrime@gmail.com
by June 20 for inclusion in the July issue.

Member APPEARANCES

The launch party for **Ann Redisch Stampler's** *HOW TO DISAPPEAR* will be at Chevalier's Books (126 N. Larchmont Blvd, Los Angeles) on Tuesday, June 15 at 7:30pm. Everyone is welcome!

Nadine Nettmann will be discussing *DECANTING A MURDER* and "Summer Wine Pairings" at the Studio City Library on June 22 at 6:30pm.

Mike Befeler, Joel Fox, Neal Griffin, Laura Levine, Attica Locke, Nadine Nettmann, Terri Nolan, Nina Sadowsky, Diane Vallere, Jeri Westerson and Gwendolyn Womack will be participating in the El Segundo Public Library Author Fair on Sunday, June 12 from 11:30am-4:30pm.

Sheila Lowe is scheduled to speak at two events in June: 4th Ventura Newcomers Club, 27th Ventura Book Club. She'll be talking about the upcoming release of book six in the Claudia Rose Forensic Handwriting series: *OUTSIDE THE LINES*, whose theme deals with ecoterrorism.

Jeri Westerson will be on a panel at the El Segundo Public Library Author Fair on Sunday, June 12, 2016, 111 West Mariposa Avenue, El Segundo, CA 90245. The mystery panel is called, "Confessions of the Best Local Mystery Writers," from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm.



Suspense writer **Jane Haseldine** will sign copies of her debut suspense novel, *THE LAST TIME SHE SAW HIM*, the first in a new series by Kensington Publishing, on July 9 at 2 p.m. at Mysterious Galaxy in San Diego.

Laura Levine will be signing books at the El Segundo Author Fair, Sunday, June 12, 3:30-4:30. El Segundo Public Library, 111 West Mariposa Avenue, El Segundo.

Paul D. Marks and Pam Ripling (Anne Carter) will be signing their books at The Open Book: 2pm, Saturday June 18, Paul McCartney's birthday. We hope Sir Paul will come but if not we'll carry on with stiff upper lips. But maybe you can come. Valencia Town Center, 24250 Town Center Dr. Suite 190, Valencia, California. Outside on Towncenter drive, near Pottery Barn.

Matt Coyle has two book signings this month: June 7, 4-6pm, a store pop up, at Kettle Coffee & Tea in Escondido and June 21, 7pm, at Lit Up Orange County at Keen Coffee in Tustin.

Member APPEARANCES



Author Matt Coyle was first in line to get his copy of THE STARDOM AFFAIR signed by Robert S. Levinson when Bob appeared last month at Mysterious Galaxy in San Diego.

Robert S. Levinson kicks off June store visits to read from, discuss and sign THE STARDOM AFFAIR on Saturday, June 4, 1 P.M., at Debbie Mitsch's Mystery Ink, 8907 Warner Ave., # 135, Huntington Beach, CA 92647; phone 714.960.4000. The event will also feature an appearance by author **Kwei Quartey**. On June 18, Bob will be appearing at the West Coast Writers Conference at 4:45pm, at Valley College. He'll be speaking about "Incorporating Real Life into Fiction."

Craig Faustus Buck and **Connie de Marco** have been chosen to headline the next Book'd Bibliophile's Ultimate Night Out, presented by Liz D, on July 21 at the Group Repertory Theater in North Hollywood. Info at www.bookdevent.com.

Do you have an upcoming appearance you'd like to share?
Email it to TheMarchofCrime@gmail.com
by June 20 for inclusion in the July issue.



Hollow Points

Gregory Von Dore

Covert CIA Weapons

One of the challenges of being a political assassin is you want to get away with murder—literally. Consider the case of John Wilkes Booth. He shot President Abraham Lincoln at the Ford Theatre in Washington D.C. on April 14th, 1865 and then bungled his escape. Booth broke a leg when he jumped from Lincoln's box down to the stage. (And took a bow!) Despite relying on a web of Southern sympathizers, Booth was quickly run to ground. Surrounded in a burning barn, he was shot dead by a Union Army Sergeant—despite orders to bring him in alive.

For his crime, Booth used a single-shot, .44 caliber, percussion-cap Derringer. It was 5.87 inches long and could easily fit in a pocket. It was one of a supposed pair. The actual gun resides today in a display at the Ford Theatre. It was exhaustively authenticated by the FBI in 1997, after a prison inmate claimed that expert thieves had stolen the original gun during the 1960s and substituted a fake. Now there's a story to match the attempted theft of Lincoln's corpse in 1876 by a Chicago gang.



Clockwise from upper left: Here's a deadly collection--ring gun, lipstick gun, briar pipe gun and fountain pen gun.

The best assassinations are those where no one knows murder has been done, at least not right away. Instead of raw courage or stupidity, an assassin needs a plan and specialized equipment. While poisons have always been used as an effective tool of assassination, our modern era seems to prefer the idea of guns and bullets rather than more subtle means.

In fact, some of the high-tech covert weapons described by Ian Fleming from Q-Branch were real and were first used by the American OSS (Office of Strategic Services) and the British SOE (Special Operations Executive) during World War Two. Many a spy mission during the war involved quietly murdering a French, or Dutch or Norwegian collaborator, so they would no longer benefit the Nazi occupation.

Since a part of the CIA's mandate is getting rid of foreign government officials, even heads of state, they were obliged to create some of the most interesting covert weapons in the modern age. Of course, the KGB did the same. Although the James Bond movies take this concept to an absurd length, the deadly pen, lipstick or cane are a reality of spy work and are real-world objects which we will examine.

Event Wrap-Up: Adapting Novels Into Screen/Teleplays

by **Eric Beetner**

A full house enjoyed lunch at the Tam O'Shanter on Sunday May 22 and then enjoyed a discussion on adapting novels and other works into screenplays. An expert panel consisting of authors and screenwriters Richard Lange (*Angel Baby*), Jordan Harper (*Gotham*, *The Mentalist*), Terrill Lee Lankford (*Bosch*) and Elissa Matsueda (*Spare Parts*), broke down the process of adaptation.

Matsueda shared her insight in adapting a non-fiction source for the screen, saying she felt it “worked the same muscles” as creating original stories.

Lange said he might not do it again when referring to adapting his own novel for the screen. He didn't like being penned in by the rigid structure of the script, which is the opposite of how he works on a novel.

Harper was excited about the prospect of writing for features after years of working in TV, so he was eager to begin adapting his debut novel (due out in January) for the big screen.

Lankford revealed that he is often more precious about keeping element from the Harry Bosch novels intact for the Amazon series than even original author Michael Connelly is. Connelly, he said, is much quicker to let go of story elements from the books.

Moderator Eric Beetner kept the discussion moving along and the panelists were not shy about the myriad frustrations and roadblocks to working within the Hollywood system, but the conversation was informative and entertaining, even if a little discouraging.

As a bonus, Beetner's young daughter introduced the panel and charmed everyone with her adorable delivery.



L - R: Richard Lange, Jordan Harper, Terrill Lee Lankford, Elissa Matsueda and Eric Beetner (moderator). Photo by Ellen Byron.

Hollow Points - [continued from pg 10](#)

At its most stripped down, a gun would consist of a barrel to hold ammunition, a spring and a firing pin. Most spy weapons follow this architecture, with some clever variations on the theme. Obviously a commonplace item that resembles a gun barrel is the easiest to disguise. Specifically, the fountain pen gun, the lipstick gun, the cane gun and the briar pipe gun. All of these are meant for use in a paranoid environment where security is high.



Gun canes go back to roughly the Civil War. Sword canes have been around since the Renaissance.

One of the first covert guns was the ring gun. This complex little piece looked like a large, man's ring, but the back end held a miniature revolver, or really a "pepper pot" since there was no barrel per se, just a slightly lengthened cylinder holding six shots. The ring is normally aligned so that the "gun" part faces inward, concealed by the fingers and palm. The device in our photo appears to use .22 shorts as ammunition and the cylinder is rotated by manually turning the knurled ring at the top edge. The trigger

is the tab on the side of the ring. It's a clever and deadly gun which could be quite dangerous close-up. To use, twist around on the finger and press the tab to fire, then rotate the cylinder (careful, it's hot) and fire again.

Most covert guns are single shot and meant to be used at extreme, point-blank range. That's certainly true for the pipe gun and the lipstick gun. They would have very little accuracy so the best plan is to jam them up against someone's head and fire. It takes a very special, very dedicated personality to do that. The pen gun actually had a bit of a barrel and so might have had a range of a few feet.

As a young man, I had a chance to hold and examine a fountain pen gun. It was a WWII vintage item but today's versions operate in much the same way. The one I saw had a two inch-long barrel which unscrewed from the firing mechanism. It took a .25 caliber rimfire short, much like the one in the photo. A small steel ball in a "J" gate stuck out of the upper pen body and was attached to a firing pin rod inside. You pulled the ball back against a strong spring with your thumb and eased the ball down into the hook of the "J". Now it was cocked and ready to fire. At the appropriate moment, you took aim, slid the ball into the long slot of the "J" and released it. The firing pin sprang against the round in the barrel, shooting a bullet out the front of the pen. Mightier than the sword, indeed.

Most of these devices, despite their beautiful craftsmanship, were meant to be dropped or otherwise discarded once used—a shame but a necessity. Bowing afterwards is not recommended.

Next time we'll begin the history of police firearms at home and abroad.

Photos are courtesy of Wikipedia, used with permission.

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 CALENDAR

SoCalMWA Event Book-Swap & BBQ Party at Elizabeth Little's



Author **Elizabeth Little** graciously opens her Los Feliz home for an afternoon of books and BBQ.

Clear out your old books to make space for some new ones.
Come by and shoot the breeze with your fellow writers.

Enjoy drinks and great BBQ from a prominent food truck. Kids welcome.

Sunday, July 17

Noon - 3pm

(Address provided with RSVP)

[RSVP ONLINE](#)

Criminal Happenings in 2016

- June 4 - [LitFest Pasadena, Pasadena, CA](#)
- June 25 - [An Afternoon with NYT Best-Selling Author T. Jefferson Parker, La Jolla, CA](#)
- June 26 - [SoCalMWA Cocktail Party at James Ziskin's, Los Angeles, CA \(Wait-List Only\)](#)
- July 5 - 9 - [Thrillerfest XI, New York, NY](#)
- July 13 - 16 - [RWA Conference, San Diego, CA](#)
- July 17 - [Backyard Book Swap & BBQ at Elizabeth Little's, Los Feliz, CA](#)
- July 28 - 31 - [Book Passage Mystery Writers Conference, Corte Madera, CA](#)
- August 7 - [SoCalMWA Luncheon: DP Lyle & Jan Burke Live Radio Podcast, Los Angeles, CA](#)
- August 28 - [SoCalMWA & SinC OC Joint Meeting, Irvine, CA](#)
- September 15 - 18 - [Bouchercon, New Orleans, LA](#)
- October 1 - [Homemade Gumbo & Home-Brewed Ale Party, Woodland Hills, CA](#)
- October 22 - [SoCalMWA Workshop: Demystifying Writing Software, Studio City, CA](#)
- November 6 - [SoCalMWA Luncheon, Los Angeles, CA \(details forthcoming\)](#)
- December 17- [SoCalMWA Holiday Party, Los Angeles, CA](#)

The
LAST WORD

“I’ve never trusted happiness. Just when you think you’ve corralled that mustang, she busts through the fence and leaves you with splinters. I should’ve seen it coming.”

--Shannon Baker, STRIPPED BARE