



The MARCH

of CRIME

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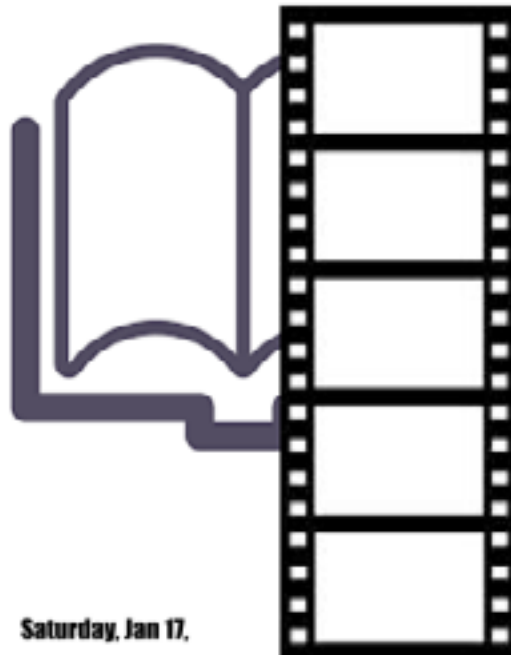
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From Page to Film

The event will feature presentation and discussion by author, screenwriter and producer **Deborah Ledford**, president of independent media company IOF Productions Ltd; and author/attorney Kerry Droban, a true crime writer and producer with an upcoming History Channel series.



from page to film

a Mystery Writers of America free event at The Poisoned Pen Bookstore, Scottsdale

January 17, 2015

Come hear from MWA members who have turned their books into screenplays and movies as both writer and producer!

Then socialize at a friendly nearby pub with food and drink specials!

sponsored by the Southern California Chapter of Mystery Writers of America.

Saturday, Jan 17,

2 to 4 p.m.

The Poisoned Pen

4014 N. Goldwater Bl.

Scottsdale, 85251



www.socalmwa.com

California Crime Writers Conference

[Registration now open!](#)

More information:
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The President's Rap Sheet

Craig Faustus Buck

Dear Members,

This being my first President's Rap, and I being the kind of writer who finds exhaustive research to be a perfect excuse to avoid writing, I decided to go back and study the works of my esteemed predecessors for wisdom regarding what I was supposed to accomplish in this first presidential column. Here are my meticulous and illuminating findings:

2008 Les Klinger, 500 words
 2009 Les Klinger, 450 words
 2010 Naomi Hirahara, 600 words
 2011 Gary Phillips, 240 words
 2012 Gary Phillips, 250 words
 2013 Jeri Westerson, 230 words
 2014 Jeri Westerson, 350 words

I think it is instructive that the president with the lengthiest opening remarks was also the only one-term president in the bunch. Though I love Naomi dearly, I'm wary of following her 600-word example lest I cut too deeply into my exhaustive research schedule. Jeri and Gary, on the other hand, seem like shining beacons at 230 and 240 words respectively. The obvious conclusion is that shorter is sweeter. I suppose that means I should have already gotten to the point. Live and learn.

Our outgoing president Jeri Westerson leaves big gumshoes to fill. I want to thank her, along with the rest of our hard-working board, for leading us through innumerable book festivals, CCWC 2013, a broad spectrum of instructive luncheons and events, and fabulous chapter parties (uber-appreciated, Bill and Kendall!). Jeri has spearheaded our interests on the national board and expanded our activities to traditionally underserved areas like San Diego and Tucson. Though we are called the Southern California Chapter, our literal territory includes California and Nevada below the 36th parallel, and all of Arizona and Hawaii (MWA meeting in Maui, anyone?).

We have one of the largest chapters in the country and one of the richest talent pools. This offers fertile opportunities for networking and exchanging valuable information with other members, increasingly vital tools for writers in today's turbulent and challenging publishing environment.

Continued on pg 10

Chapter Officers

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

Board of Directors

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 Sue Ann Jaffarian
 Jessica Kaye
 Paul D. Marks
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 to join
 (members only)

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The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

As you can see, there's been a changing of the guard within SoCalMWA. I look forward to working with our new president, Craig Faustus Buck and our new board.

Change has been afoot in my own life, as well. In December, my husband and I picked up and moved to a small Gold Rush town in Northern California. As I work toward finding a new normal in my life, I'm reminded how important routine is. Now that 2015 is here, I'm looking forward to establishing a new one for myself.

Despite my new location, I'll continue as a member of SoCalMWA. Having lived in Los Angeles my entire adult life, I've no wish to cut those ties completely. You'll still see me around at events, conferences, and of course, on line.

Wishing you all a happy and productive 2015!

Holly

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
Stephanie Stolinsky

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

FRESH BLOOD

SoCal MWA welcomes its new and returning members:

Suzanne Rizzolo, Active
Vanessa A. Ryan, Active
Bradley Smith, Affiliate
Eric James Miller, Affiliate
Anna Nordstrom Draper, Affiliate
Andrew Mayne, Active
Rachel Howzell Hall, Active
Nadine Nettmann



Like us on Facebook

OVER the TRANSOM

Member News

Craig Faustus Buck's short story "Heavy Debt" was accepted for publication in Akashic Press's Mondays are Murder series.

Jeri Westerson just signed with Severn House for a two-book deal for her Crispin Guest Medieval Noir novels. The 8th book, THE SILENCE OF STONES, is to be released first in the UK/US in March 2016.

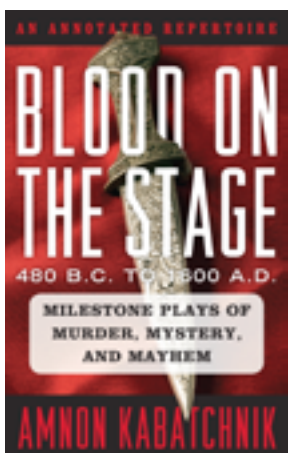
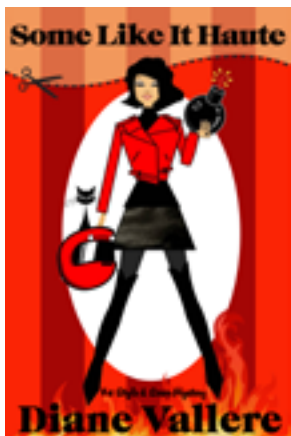
Bruce Hale's juvenile mystery, BIG BAD DETECTIVE AGENCY, will be published by Scholastic on January 27. Kirkus Reviews called this fractured fairy tale "Funny and flip, like Saturday morning cartoons."

Ellen Byron has sold her "Cajun Country" contemporary mystery series to Crooked Lane Books. The first book in the series, PLANTATION SHUDDERS, will be published in late summer/early fall 2015.

Diane Vallere kicks off 2015 with SOME LIKE IT HAUTE, #4 in her Style & Error series. In this installment, former fashion buyer Samantha Kidd takes on an arsonist while working for her ex-boyfriend's maybe-former girlfriend. With a crash course in sizzle, Samantha's curiosity leads her into one inferno after another, and this time she either faces the fire or gets burned. Polyester Press, ISBN 9781939197108. Available in trade paperback and eBook on all major platforms.

Caitlyn Willows' erotic suspense, LIES THAT BIND, is a finalist in the 2015 EPIC eBook awards. Winners will be announced in March 2015.

In conjunction with **Amnon Kabatchnik's** recent publication of BLOOD ON THE STAGE, 480 B.C. to 1600 A.D., Strand Magazine featured Kabatchnik's blog "The Greeks Began it All," which illustrates that the Ancient Greeks introduced the first stage murderer; the first domestic homicide; the first mass murder; and the first staged whodunit.



Do you have writing news to share with our chapter? Email it to TheMarchofCrime@gmail.com by February 20 for inclusion in the March/April 2015 issue.

OVER the TRANSOM



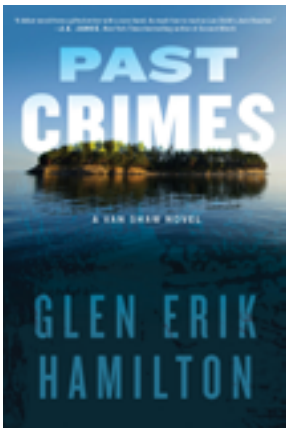
Jill Amadio post-mortem of Bouchercon 2014 and the British invasion of authors is the focus of her December column in the online magazine, MysteryPeople.co.uk. The monthly column is titled “Writing Experiences of an Ex-Pat,” and she welcomes comments from members. The February issue (January is blacked out) will feature a discussion of the pros and cons of author newsletters.

Lenny Kleinfeld’s novel, SOME DEAD GENIUS, was chosen as one of [National Public Radio’s Best Books of 2014](http://NationalPublicRadio.com).

Glen Erik Hamilton’s novel, PAST CRIMES, will be published by William Morrow in the U.S. and Faber & Faber in the UK on March 3. This crime thriller is the first in a series which J.A. Jance called “A debut novel from a gifted writer with a sure hand.” Lee Child said “A home run off the first pitch - this guy has got what it takes.” Signing appearances will be made in Seattle and southern California; for more information, visit glenerikhamilton.com.

LADLE TO THE GRAVE, the fourth book in the Soup Lover’s Mystery series by **Connie Archer** will be released on March 3, 2015. A woman poisoned at a pagan ritual, a dead man floating in the creek. Are the deaths connected and will more victims fall prey to a killer?

Mysterious Galaxy has expanded to a new location in San Diego, CA. Located just off Balboa and Genesee, the new store offers stunning warm new interiors in more than 3,200 square feet of floor space for books, including a significant collection of signed first editions. Best known for bringing high-profile genre authors to Southern California, they’ll now be able to accommodate even larger numbers of fans for its growing events business. For more info visit <http://www.mystgalaxy.com>.



Crime and Science Radio with D.P. Lyle & Jan Burke

1/17/15 - What You Did Here Told Me Who Your Are: An interview with former FBI criminal profiler Mark Safarik

1/31/15 - Watching the Detectives: Investigative Journalism & Forensic Science, an interview with Douglas Starr

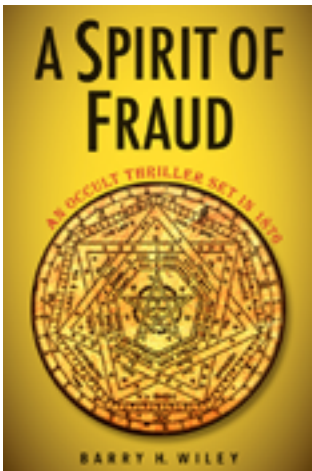
[Further info and links to past shows](#)

OVER the TRANSOM



JAPANTOWN, the debut novel by **Barry Lancet**, and the first in his series about San Francisco Japan expert and reluctant PI Jim Brodie, won the prestigious Barry Award for “Best First Mystery Novel of the Year.” The award caps off a run that began with Best Debut Novel citations from Suspense Magazine, mystery critic Oline H. Cogdill, and a Silver Falchion award nomination. JAPANTOWN’s TV rights have been optioned by J. J. Abrams and his production company, Bad Robot, in conjunction with Warner Bros.

Barry Wiley has had an active 2014. He has had two thriller novels up on Kobo and on Barnes & Noble, along with several mystery short stories published in Kings River Life. A SPIRIT OF FRAUD, an occult thriller set in 1876 (on Kobo) was compared to Dan Brown’s THE DA VINCI CODE in an October review in Kings River Life. A 3,000 word excerpt from the novel appeared in the January, 2015 issue of “Genii,” one of the premier magazines in the magic world, along with the author reading the first two chapters on their digital edition.



Birthered full-blown several years ago in a DC Comics mini-series, Angeltown, L.A. private eye Nate Hollis makes the jump to prose in six new short stories in Hollis, P.I. New York Times bestseller Juliet Blackwell, acclaimed young crime writer Aaron Philip Clark, Pulp Ark award winner Bobby Nash and Derrick Ferguson join Hollis’ creator **Gary Phillips** in penning these tales. As Kevin Burton Smith in Mystery Scene said of the character, “Slick as spit, big-shouldered Hollis walks the walk and talks the talk...” In tradepaper and e-book from Pro Se Productions.



Lionsgate will release bizarre crime thriller “The Voices,” written by **Michael R. Perry**, on February 6, in theatres and video-on-demand. Directed by Academy Award nominee Marjane Satrapi (Persepolis), the film stars Canadian superstar Ryan Reynolds in five roles, alongside Anna Kendrick (Pitch Perfect), Gemma Arterton (The Quantum of Solace) and Jacki Weaver (Silver Linings Playbook).

From Left: Gemma Arterton, Ryan Reynolds (as Jerry) and Ryan Reynolds (as Whiskers)

Member APPEARANCES

Jeri Westerson will be on a Mystery Writer panel at the Women Sage dinner on Tuesday, January 13, from 5 - 8:30pm, with authors Patricia Wynn and **Terri Nolan**. Register on the [website](#), by [email](#), or leave a voicemail at (949) 222-4210. Note: PREPAYMENT is necessary to enjoy the discounted rate. Reservations will close at noon, Friday, January 9. Center Club, Orange County, 650 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626.

Sheila Lowe is heading to Tucson for a January 10th appearance at the Arizona Mystery Writers Luncheon. While there, she'll also address the Tucson chapter of the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation, of which she is the current president. On the 18th, Sheila will host a special meeting on National Handwriting Day at the Embassy Suites in Oxnard, and has been invited to speak to the American Association of University Women in Camarillo on the 28th. February 7th will see her at Book Carnival in Orange, along with **Connie Archer**, George Fong and **Dennis Palumbo**. February 28th she will be a guest speaker at the La Crescenta Woman's Clubhouse Authors Luncheon.

In Orange County, **Sam McCarver**, author of six mystery novels, who has taught writing for 15 years, teaches "Novel and Short Story Writing," emphasizing mysteries, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Community Centers: Dana Point six Tuesday evenings, 1/20/15 to 2/24/15 (phone: 949 248-3530), enroll online: www.danapoint.org/recreation (Barcode 7495), and San Clemente six Thursday evenings, 1/22/15 to 2/26/15 (phone: 949 361-8264) enroll online: www.san-clemente.org/recreation Barcode 42341. City fees are each \$85. Materials fee is \$30 for instructor's book, "Novel Writing for Wanna-be's," and class handout copies. Student writing is critiqued. Email: Sam McCarver, scm13725@cox.net.

Diane Vallere is one of six participants in "Booked in Burbank," a bookish social gathering at the Theater Banshee on January 22. She will be reading from SUEDE TO REST, first in the Material Witness Mystery Series. She is also participating in the 10th annual Mystery on the Menu Luncheon on January 24, and moderating the panel, "Nice Work If You Can Get It," a discussion of the role a character's job plays in solving a crime. The event is sponsored by the Friends of the Cerritos Library.

On February 7, **Connie Archer** will be at Book Carnival in Orange, CA at 3:00 p.m. with **Sheila Lowe**, George Fong and **Dennis Palumbo**.

Join our SoCalMWA Yahoo! Group

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

Pitch Your Ideas

TMOC is looking for informative articles written by our members. Email us at themarchofcrime@gmail.com with your pitches.



2015 California Crime Writers Conference

Culver City, California
June 6 & 7, 2015 (Saturday & Sunday)
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Los Angeles - Westside
6161 West Centinela Avenue, Culver City, California

SPECIAL GUESTS:



Charlaine Harris



Anne Perry

Sisters in Crime LA and SoCalMWA welcome both members and non-members to the 2015 California Crime Writers Conference. Join us in Culver City, California for a weekend of workshops geared to the needs of both emerging and established mystery writers. Attendees will enjoy tracks on forensics, craft, industry, and marketing, along with other mystery-themed activities. A manuscript critique is available as an add-on option.

[Registration now open!](#)

Hollow Points

*Gregory Von Dare**Baby Grows Up*

By the middle of the 19th Century, modern engineering techniques began to find their way into the design and manufacture of firearms. Precision machining and interchangeable parts made the mass production of guns a reality. The Civil War in America and the Crimean War in Europe proved the primacy of the rifle as a combat weapon, and hunters also benefitted from the increased range and accuracy of mid-19th Century long guns. Now only two critical steps remained to usher-in the modern rifle: breech loading and metal cartridges. We'll tackle one of them today.

Since the beginning of their evolution, guns shared one common element--muzzle loading. The barrel was a closed tube of metal, with a tiny hole at the back for igniting the powder charge. Gunpowder, a lead ball and some "wadding" or patch were all fed down the front of the barrel and rammed into place at the rear with a wood or metal rod. It was a slow and painstaking process and nearly impossible in the rain. Loading the right volume of gunpowder into the barrel under stress was also difficult, although the 1840's paper cartridge with its consistent, pre-measured charge of gunpowder helped.



The Dreyse "needle" gun. Licensed under Public Domain via Wikimedia Commons

It would be a great advantage if you could open the rear of the barrel and put your powder and ball in there, rather than having to sluice it down from the front. It would also be faster to do so, and you could lie flat on the ground while loading, a tactical advantage for a soldier or hunter. This concept is called breech loading. The challenge is to keep the barrel tightly sealed at the rear so none of the hot gas from the exploding gunpowder leaks out and diminishes the force propelling the bullet.



Guest SPOT

S.A. Stolinsky, Ph.D.

Life Changes

Life changes are more likely to allow you new venues for writing. Even if they overwhelm you when they are unexpected, or when many of them come at once and the strains they cause you are unremitting, when they are over, you have rich material from which to draw. Recent research on stress show that even more important than the raw number of life changes is what they mean to you. A divorce you experience is a liberation and the start of a new life might be much less onerous if you have something to share with others going through the same trauma, through your writing.

Many changes that most people take in stride can be particularly upsetting to others. Among them are entering the army, starting college, moving to a foreign country, changing or losing jobs, or suffering a drop in income. If you are having bad reactions to such a situation, psychotherapy can really help, but so can journaling which will morph into an essay, a short story or even a novel.

Therapists recommend investigating the underlying emotional issues that make situations troubling. You can, with the same dynamic, describe feelings, thoughts, limitations and conclusions that others have not considered, through writing out your experiences. Put the focus of your writing on how people can adjust to and cope with a situation. Therapeutic approaches are often combined with writing. Together they are powerful tools of self-expression. Use your protagonist in a way that shows how he/she can explore distorting beliefs and the trigger that enables them to have other reactions to the situation. For example, you could show how the protagonist catastrophizes, then calms him/herself down enough to find a viable solution to a problem. Describe in your work how anxiety or depression are the norm in particular situations, but are readily replaced by movement forward to a satisfying conclusion.

As always, just about any therapeutic approach can help your writing, but be sure you find a way to express rapport with your readers and put your focus on helping them understand what you mean when you solve a plot problem.

Stefanie Stolinsky, Ph.D., QME author: *ACT IT OUT: 25 Acting Exercises to Heal from Childhood Abuse*, (Second edition) (2013). Praeclarus Press, Inc., University of Texas.

President's Rap Sheet - [continued from pg 2](#)

Among other things, I hope to maximize these opportunities by restoring our regular luncheons with an exciting roster of speakers at some freeway-accessible central meeting place (suggestions welcome) and by planning more free events and casual get-togethers in scattered locations.

On the national level, the business of writing is changing fast and MWA can either ride that wave or drown in it. Being from SoCal, I'll be pushing to shoot the curl. There's a lot to be done, but I can't dig in until this rap is wrapped. So be it.

Craig Faustus Buck

The March of Crime would like to thank this issue's contributors:
Gregory Von Dare and S.A. Stolinsky, Ph.D.

Hollow Points - continued from pg 9

The first notable breech loader appeared in Europe. This rifle used a “bolt” action. So called because the breech of the barrel was sealed by a metal bolt that could be rotated and slid backward or forward, opening or closing the bore. This was the Dreyse “needle” gun, which used a long, thin firing pin that penetrated deep into a paper cartridge and hit a percussion cap, igniting the gunpowder and firing a bullet. This system was invented by German gunsmith Johann Nicholas von Dreyse in about 1824 and a practical breech-loading rifle was produced by 1836. Improvements to this system came from Cramer von Baumgarten and later from Johannes Friedrich Christian Carl. This new rifle became popular in Europe and Russia but was not adopted by the USA.



Needle gun bolt action and firing pin Licensed under Public Domain via Wikimedia Commons.

Look at most high-powered hunting rifles today and you will see a rotating bolt action almost identical to those manufactured in the 1840s. A bolt action seats a locking, cylindrical shaft of metal against the breech, or back, of the barrel. It typically rotates 90 degrees between open and closed and uses heavy metal lugs or tabs to lock it in place. An important benefit of this action is that it no longer requires a hole in the barrel to ignite the main charge of gunpowder. This leads to higher chamber pressures within the barrel and more oomph for the bullet. Precision machining and superior metals were necessary for the bolt action to be effective and they were finally available by the mid-1800s.

In the USA, Christian Sharps patented a breech loading rifle in 1848 which used a “falling block” action. In this scheme, a heavy metal block--like the door to a safe--closes off the back of the barrel. When a lever (the hinged trigger guard) is swung down, the block moves down, exposing the interior of the barrel, where a cartridge may be inserted. The first Sharps cartridges were .52 caliber and similar to paper cartridges, although made of linen fabric. Then the block is raised, which slices off the back of the linen cartridge, exposing the gunpowder and the rifle is ready to fire. The Sharps used a percussion cap to fire its cartridge. Unlike the needle gun, there was no firing pin, since the falling block needed to be one solid piece. Due to its high accuracy and fast-moving bullet, the Sharps was considered a sniper rifle in the Civil War and only a very small number were allocated to regular ground forces. The short-barrel Sharps Carbine was a favorite of Cavalry troopers due to its light weight and quick loading action. After the Civil War, many Sharps rifles were converted to use the new brass cartridges.

As a side note, cannons and other artillery pieces converted over to breach loading at about the same time. This greatly improved their firepower and accuracy. Cannons were subsequently made with rifled barrels and a firing pin action that proved much more reliable than the older fuse or touchhole. While rifle bullets became smaller in diameter going into the 20th century, cannons grew ever bigger, until gigantic monsters mounted on railroad cars were deployed in WWI. These siege cannons, known as Dicke Bertha (Big Bertha) or Langer Max (Long Max) were originally designed to be mounted on battleships. They fired a 15” shell (fifteen inches wide!) over a distance of twenty-two kilometers. The whistling approach and enormous, ground-shaking explosions caused by these shells traumatized troops so badly that the term “shell shock” was coined to describe soldiers’ shattered nerves. “Mortars” are the exception to this rule, and are still muzzle-loaded today.

As rifles grew in sophistication, large caliber, smooth-bore guns also evolved into modern firearms, although with a very different use. We’ll examine the origins of the shotgun next time around.

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.*

A decorative banner with a central olive-green box containing the text "Crime CALENDAR". The word "Crime" is in a cursive font, and "CALENDAR" is in a bold, sans-serif font. The banner has ribbon-like ends on both sides.

Crime
CALENDAR

Criminal Happenings in 2015

January 17 - [From Film to Page](#), Scottsdale, AZ
February 6-8 - [Love is Murder](#), Chicago, IL
March 12-15 - [Left Coast Crime](#), Portland, OR
March 14-15 - Tuscon Festival of Books, Tuscon, AZ
February 26 - March 1 - [Sleuthfest](#), Deerfield Beach, FL
May 1 - 3 - [Malice Domestic](#), Bethesda, MD
May 14-17 - [Crime Fest](#), Bristol, UK
June 6-7 - [California Crime Writers Conference](#), Culver City, CA
July 24-27 - [Book Passage Mystery Writers Conference](#), Corte Madera, CA
October 8-11 - [Bouchercon](#), Raleigh, NC

A decorative banner with a central olive-green box containing the text "The LAST WORD". The word "The" is in a cursive font, and "LAST WORD" is in a bold, sans-serif font. The banner has ribbon-like ends on both sides.

The
LAST WORD

“Weed shops, tattoo parlors, Rose the body painter. Crazy Guitar Dude on roller blades, amp strapped to his back, singing as he swept past. Amateur rappers hawking their latest CD. Old guy wearing nothing but a Speedo; everyone said he’d been there forever. A pall of pot smoke thick enough to give everyone within a block a contact high.”

--Sheila Lowe, *INKSLINGER’S BALL*, a Forensic Handwriting Mystery