



The
MARCH

of CRIME

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SoCalMWA

Congratulates its members
who've been nominated for
2017 Edgar, Lefty, and Agatha Awards!

Save the Date!

SoCalMWA



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25th
3-6 p.m.

HOSTED BY
Steph Cha

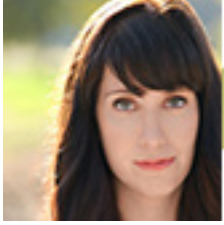
Meet your new board members and learn about this
year's upcoming events and initiatives.

More details soon!

Tucson Festival of Books

March 11-12

[More info](#)



The President's Rap Sheet

Elizabeth Little

Poker. At the end of the day, I'm writing to you now because of poker.

I'm not a joiner, by nature or by inclination. When I went to my first Bouchercon in Long Beach I was not, as they say, there to make friends. I was there because I'd just published my first novel, and the booksellers I'd met in conjunction with its release had all told me I had to be there.

It was also maybe kind of a way for me to get to go to Chili's twice in one weekend.

I'll be frank: I didn't particularly enjoy myself, skillet queso notwithstanding. Going in, I knew literally one other author, and I wasn't confident enough to insert myself into any of the groups that kept forming and reforming in front of me with such enthusiasm. I was intimidated by the congeniality. I was unnerved by all the hugging. I spent most of my time leaning up against a wall, pretending to text.

Everything changed for me the following year when, in Raleigh, Craig Faustus Buck asked me if I played poker. I smiled, very, very sweetly, and said something along the lines of *a little*.

Because I may not be a joiner. But, man, I really love to win at cards.

So here I am, not that much more than a year later, having not just joined our community but embraced it. Me. A non-joiner. An anti-embracer. Someone who could very easily have permanently remained on the outskirts of the mystery world. But then I would have missed out on so much. On the chance to immeasurably improve my understanding of the business and the genre. On the chance to be nurtured by the passion and dedication of MWA's regional and national leadership. On the chance to spend time with some of most interesting people in the world. And my life—both professionally and personally—would be the worse for it.

One of my goals over the course of the coming year is to figure out how to reach out to my fellow loners, and I hope my story might convince some of you to take a chance and join us later this month at our open house in Los Angeles. But for those of you who are still reluctant, don't worry, no judgment, I get it. I do. Know, though, that I will be doing my best to figure out what we can do to help each and every one of our members find their place in our community—be it by hook, crook, or card game.

Elizabeth

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The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

Reading Liz's Prez Rap this month, I was reminded of my own journey with the crime and mystery community. I joined MWA and Sisters in Crime within a few months of beginning my first novel, but I was reluctant to go to meetings. Unlike Liz, I'm a joiner, but I'm shy. And lazy.

The first SoCalMWA meeting I attended was a discussion with authors **Stephen Jay Schwartz** and **Attica Locke**. Somewhere along the way, I'd met **Naomi Hirahara** and she kindly introduced me to a few people, including **Travis Richardson**, who has remained one of my closest friends in our little community.

Having volunteered in various capacities over the years, I've become more than a joiner in our local writing organizations, and it's allowed me to get to know so many wonderful people. This business isn't easy, and having colleagues to learn from, to celebrate and commiserate with, has been an important part of my development.

Speaking of learning, this month's issue features an article by award-winning author **Glen Erik Hamilton**. In "[To the Power of Two: Writing the Second Book in Your Series](#)," Glen discusses the pros and cons of writing your second novel and offers some hints to help you get the job done.

Have a great month.

Holly

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

Editor: [Holly West](#)

February Contributors:
Gay Tolt Kinman
Glen Erik Hamilton

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:
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**Join our SoCalMWA
Yahoo! Group**

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

FRESH BLOOD

SoCalMWA welcomes its new and returning members:

Sharlyn Harley
Joe Ide
Ray McGinley
Anne Perry



OVER the TRANSOM

The second book in **Ronald Tierney's** Peter Strand Rapid Reads (Orca) mystery series, *THE BLACK TORTOISE*, will be released in March. Peter Strand is asked to investigate an arts organization located on San Francisco Bay, where he meets a cast of colorful, quirky characters who all seem to be hiding something. He soon finds evidence of a fraud, but is it the fraud that leads to murder?

Andrew Neiderman will publish his 77th V.C. Andrews title, *BROKEN GLASS*, the sequel to *THE MIRROR SISTERS*, on February 28 (Gallery Books, Simon and Schuster). He is currently writing the stage play of *Flowers in the Attic* for Broadway producers, Martian Entertainment, with an eye to a 2018 opening.

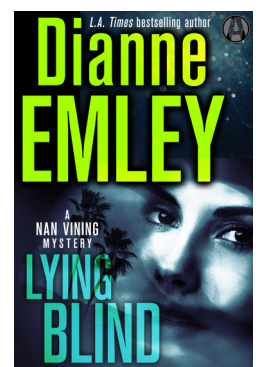
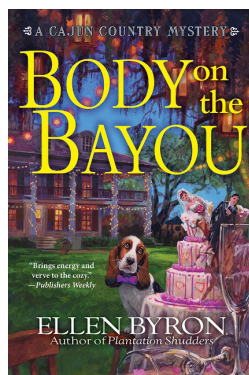
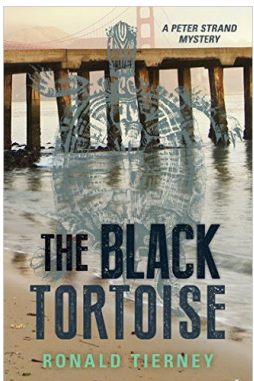
The seventh story in **Barry Wiley's** series with Victorian thought reader Stuart C. Cumberland as protagonist, "Time and the Thought Reader," will appear on *Kings River Life Magazine* on February 4. When Cumberland encounters a traveler apparently from 2036, odd things happen, and then everything changes with one word—from H.G. Wells. The eighth story, "The Uncertain Khedive," is in preparation. These stories, plus three or four others, will be part of a second collection of Cumberland stories, *TRAVELS OF A THOUGHT READER*.

BODY ON THE BAYOU, the second book in **Ellen Byron's** bestselling Cajun Country Mystery series, has been nominated for a Lefty Award in the category of Best Humorous Mystery.

Lily Torrence by Fred Andersen now out in paperback. Noir was born at the corner of Hollywood & Crime.

Jane Haseldine's second book in the Julia Gooden mystery series, *DUPLICITY*, will be released on March 28, 2017, from Kensington Publishing.

Homicide detective Nan Vining finds her world rocked when a murder investigation becomes chillingly personal in *LYING BLIND*, the sixth in **Dianne Emley's** *Los Angeles Times*-bestselling Nan Vining series. It will be published by Alibi/Random House on February 28, 2017 in a digital-first edition.



OVER the TRANSOM

The crime-horror story “Disaster Adjuster” by **Peter DiChellis** appears in the January issue of *Kzine*, a British cross-genre magazine for Kindle.

Robert S. Levinson’s short story “The House Across the Street” has been acquired by *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*. Contract signed, but no publication date set yet. The story is about: a house across a street.

Connie Dial’s seventh novel, *THE THIRD HELL*, will be available from The Permanent Press in February 2017. This police mystery is a stand-alone featuring a new character, an LAPD detective who believes being forced to retire is the worst thing that could happen in his life—until his twelve-year-old son disappears in the middle of the night.

Matt Coyle’s third novel in the award-winning Rick Cahill crime series, *DARK FISSURES*, has been nominated for a Lefty Award for Best Mystery.

Member APPEARANCES

On February 8, **Sheila Lowe** will be representing SinC/LA at the Newcombers Club luncheon in Pasadena. She’ll also have a table to display her books at the Ventura County Professional Women’s Network Expo and Tabletop Mixer on February 12.

Diann Adamson, Nancy Cole Silverman, and Laurie Stevens will be teaching a workshop at the Fillmore Library on Saturday February 25 at 1 p.m. on book promotion.

Writer Types



W/ **Eric Beetner**
& **S.W. Lauden**

Hosted by **S. W. Lauden** and Eric Beetner and dedicated to crime and mystery fiction, the Writer Types Podcast features interviews with authors and industry professionals, book reviews, short fiction, and more. Episode 1 features Megan Abbott, Lou Berney, and Steph Post. Fiction from Nick Kolakowski. An interview with Eric Campbell of Down & Out Books. Book reviews from Dan and Kate Malmon. The UnPanel features SG Redling, **Gary Phillips**, and Jay Stringer. Listen on [iTunes](#) and [Stitcher](#).



CALIFORNIA CRIME WRITERS CONFERENCE
Saturday, June 10, 2017 – Sunday, June 11, 2017

This is the premier crime writing conference in the country. It is for writers, not fans, and we cap attendance at just 200 people in order to keep it intimate, so it sells out fast. There will be agents, editors, law enforcement/forensics professionals, and panels on craft from some of the best writers in the business.

Keynote Speakers



Bestselling authors

William Kent Krueger
&
Hallie Ephron



[More Information](#)

[Register Here](#)

**PRIVATE EYE WRITERS OF AMERICA ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS
FOR 2017 SHAMUS AWARDS
For Works First Published in the U.S. in 2016**

Following are the categories for the Private Eye Writers of America 2017 Shamus Awards for private eye novels and short stories first published in the United States in 2016. The awards will be presented in the fall of 2017 at Bouchercon.

DEADLINE: Submissions must be postmarked by March 31, 2017. No extensions can be given. Shamus Committees will forward their final list to the Shamus Awards Chair by May 31, 2017.

ELIGIBILITY: Eligible works must feature as a main character a person PAID for investigative work but NOT employed for that work by a unit of government. These include traditionally licensed private investigators; lawyers and reporters who do their own investigations; and others who function as hired private agents. These do NOT include law enforcement officers, other government employees or amateur, uncompensated sleuths.

Independently published books (indies) may be submitted to the Best Original Paperback PI Novel category.

SUBMISSIONS: Please send one copy of each eligible work to ALL members of the appropriate committee. Do NOT submit a book to more than one committee.

There is no application fee and no submission form, as a simple cover letter will suffice. If you have any questions, please email Gay Toltl Kinman at gaykinman@gaykinman.com BEFORE submitting.

BEST HARDCOVER PI NOVEL: A book-length work of fiction published in hardcover in 2016 that is NOT the author's first published P.I. novel.

BEST FIRST PI NOVEL: A book-length work of fiction, in hardcover or paperback, first published in 2016 that is the author's first published novel featuring a private investigator as a main character.

BEST ORIGINAL PAPERBACK PI NOVEL: A book-length work of fiction first published as a paperback original in 2016 that is NOT the author's first P.I. novel. Paperback reprints of previously published novels are NOT eligible.

BEST PI SHORT STORY: A work of fiction of 20,000 words or fewer. Stories first published in an earlier year and reprinted in a magazine, anthology, or collection in 2016 are NOT eligible.

2017 SHAMUS Awards Committees

BEST HARDCOVER PI NOVEL

Colleen Collins, Chair
POB 12159
Denver CO 80212

John Hegenberger
6487 Ethan Drive
Reynoldsburg OH 43068

Rick Ollerman
61 Forest Glen Road
Littleton NH 03561

BEST FIRST PI NOVEL

O'Neil DeNoux, Chair
428 West 25th Avenue
Covington LA 70433

Billy Kring
POB 1036
Sabinal TX 78881

S.J. Rozan
302-A W. 12th St. #298
New York NY 10014

BEST ORIGINAL PAPERBACK PI NOVEL

Stephen Rogers, Chair
POB 286
Buzzards Bay MA 02532

Beth Terrell
2919 Dunmore Drive
Nashville TN 37214

Michael Bracken
1213 South Haven
Hewitt TX 76643

BEST PI SHORT STORY

Charles Ardai, Chair
333 Central Park West #33
New York NY 10025

Jack Clark
4021 North Sawyer Avenue
Chicago IL 60618

Linda Sands
7010 Sentara Pl.
Alpharetta GA 30005

Chapter Finance Report (7/1/2016 through 12/31/2016)

Inflows

Chapter Share \$3327.13
Dinners, Banquets, Luncheons \$837.00
TOTAL INFLOWS \$4164.13

Outflows

Dinners, Banquets, Luncheons \$8938.86
Office, Stationary, & Printing \$410.38
Special Events Expenses \$1646.50
Newsletter \$1000.00
TOTAL OUTFLOWS \$11,995.74

Starting Balance (7/1/16) \$32,028.22
Ending Balance (12/31/16) \$24,900.55



To the Power of Two: Writing the Second Book in Your Series

by Glen Erik Hamilton

Veteran series writers are experts at navigating the choppy waters of writing multiple novels. I'm still tapping my compass, wondering if the N on it stands for Not Yet...

In the summer of 2013, I was an unpublished writer with a shiny new manuscript, having my very first conversation on the phone with the woman who might, if I were very fortunate, offer to become my literary agent.

One of her starter questions was: "Is this book the first in a series?" I assured her that it was, and I had hopes for that series to be a long one. That was partly a practical decision: Series sell better. But there are also the creative advantages. I loved and still love the idea of gradually assembling a large cast of characters over time and having them bounce off one another in different combinations and with different conflicts.

That conversation was nerve-wracking (for me), encouraging (from her), and ultimately successful for both of us. We sold that manuscript as part of a two-book deal within a handful of months. My debut PAST CRIMES came out in early 2015, the sequel HARD COLD WINTER followed one year later, and I'm looking forward to launching my third this coming July.

Volumes have been written (even second volumes!) about the challenges of writing a second book. Meeting both reader and publisher expectations. Reintroducing your characters and settings economically. Going bigger, getting better. Just considering all of those hurdles can make your knees shake.

So let's Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive and talk through a few questions. I wrestled with these demands while drafting HARD COLD WINTER. Answer them for yourself and you'll have some foundation blocks for your next brilliant effort.

Is this Book Two or Act Two?

If your novel is Book Two of a long series, you have some flexibility. You can revisit themes, allow for new characters and slower character growth, and even expand on the world-building you started in Book One while your heroes and heroines are jumping through the hoops of the plot.

But if your series was conceived as having only three or four books, then you better get on with that larger story in Book Two. Incorporate big obstacles, new goals, and the classic Dark Night of the Soul for your protagonist, setting up the climax that will happen in the final book(s). Second acts are infamous for the difficulty of having no beginnings and no endings. Beat that problem. Introduce a major twist that forces characters (good and evil) to re-evaluate the game. Kill off someone your readers might have thought essential to the climax. Defy some of your own expectations.

This isn't to say that protagonists shouldn't undergo those trials during a longer series. Your heroine might still be recovering from the events of Book One, or realize that her corner of the world isn't as secure as she imagined. That's good. Force some change upon them. Which leads me to...

Will My Characters Change?

This seems like an obvious answer (Change is conflict! Conflict is good! Characters must have an arc!), until you consider how many protagonists remain largely the same during long series. Miss Marple. Spenser. Jack Reacher. The world around them might mark time, but our heroes just keep on keeping on.

[Continued on pg 10](#)

[continued from pg 9](#)

That's both limiting and freeing. I know Spenser's not going to die. I know he's not going to reach an age where thrombosis is a bigger danger to him than thugs. But Boston is not the same city it was in the early seventies, when that ex-heavyweight boxer first climbed into the fictional ring. The Spenser of today has a smartphone and knows his way around the internet, like any good P.I. He doesn't change much, but he adapts.

Even if you decide to let your characters change significantly, there's the question of the internal calendar. My own lead character, Van Shaw, is a young guy. He could have an adventure each year for twenty years, aging in real time, and still be in his forties. But while drafting the third book, I already find myself deliberately clouding the elapsed time. Ten months between the events of PAST CRIMES and HARD COLD WINTER. Only six months between HCW and the third book. Bending the relationship between the pages and the years, so that Van hits the big Three-Oh when I want him to, and not before. (Wouldn't that be a nice trick for all of us?)

What Are Your Readers Looking Forward To?

Here's the big one. By the time you're feverishly working on Book Two, you may already have some feedback on your debut—from friendly readers, keen-eyed editors, and maybe even reviewers. What stuck with them? What did they love? It's great to hear praise, but it's also critical to listen to it. Because those are the bits of candy that are going to bring your readers back, hopefully again and again.

Note this lesson doesn't mean robotically repeating the same action scenes or romantic flirtations (this is the tricky part, people), but building on them—adding a chocolate coating to the candy.

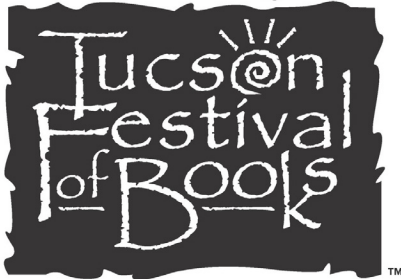
Reader fulfillment also doesn't mean serving up anything and everything your audience is clamoring for. To quote Joss Whedon – who knows a little something about an impassioned fan base—“What they want is different from what they need.” And what readers need is to watch their heroes and heroines struggle, overcome, and struggle again. No rest for the valiant. No happy endings, at least not without many more adventures. Many more books.



Glen Erik Hamilton's debut, PAST CRIMES, won the Anthony, Macavity, and Strand Magazine Critics awards for Best First Novel, and was also nominated for the Edgar, Barry, and Nero awards. The follow-up HARD COLD WINTER was published to rave reviews last March, and the third in the Van Shaw series, EVERY DAY ABOVE GROUND, will be published this July by William Morrow (US) and Faber & Faber (UK). A native of Seattle, Glen grew up aboard a sailboat, finding trouble around the islands and commercial docks of the Pacific Northwest. He now lives in California but frequently returns to his hometown to soak up the rain. Follow his wet footprints on Facebook and Twitter @GlenErikH. glenerikhamilton.com

Crime CALENDAR

Arizona Daily Star



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA.
March 11-12, 2017

Showcase your work to the more than 130,000 readers who will be attending the 2017 Tucson Festival of Books!

Signings at the SoCalMWA table will take place at the University of Arizona, March 11-12, from 9:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

We'll be obtaining a Tucson business license so that members can sell their books directly from the booth.

There are a limited number of slots available, so [sign up today!](#)

MORE CRIMINAL HAPPENINGS

February 23-26 - [SleuthFest, Boca Raton, FL](#)

February 25 - [SoCalMWA Open House, Los Angeles, CA](#)

March 11-12 - [Tucson Festival of Books, Tuscon, AZ](#)

March 16-19 - [Left Coast Crime, Honolulu, HI](#)

April 28-30 - [Malice Domestic, Bethesda, MD](#)

June 10-11 - [California Crime Writers Conference, Culver City, CA](#)

October 12-15 - [Bouchercon World Mystery Conference, Toronto, Canada](#)

More dates to come!

The LAST WORD

"I planned to see Rose often, unless she really killed Harry, and ended up in a six-by-eight room with iron instead of damask at the window."

— Phyllis A. Humphrey, DEAD MEN'S TALES