

April 2018



The  
MARCH

of CRIME

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# MYSTERY



## ON THE SHELF

Saturday, April 7

10 a.m–4 p.m.

San Diego Central Library

330 Park Ave.

San Diego, CA 92101

### Save the Date!

*Los Angeles Times  
Festival of Books*

April 21–22  
USC Campus

[More Info](#)

*Tam Luncheon*

May 20  
Los Angeles

[Details TBA](#)

Partners in Crime and San Diego's Central Library present the second annual Mystery on the Shelf conference on Saturday, April 7. With additional support by SoCalMWA and Sisters in Crime, this free, all-day conference is designed to appeal to both writers and readers of mysteries and crime-related fiction, with keynote speakers Terry Shames and Gretchen McNeil and panel discussions featuring published authors.

Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. All events will be held in the Neil Morgan Auditorium by the main entrance of the library. For more information, see the [Partners in Crime](#) website or the [event page](#) on Facebook.

[See the complete schedule here.](#)

San Diego Downtown Central Library  
330 Park Ave  
San Diego, CA 92101



## The President's Rap Sheet

Glen Erik Hamilton

It's the high season for SoCalMWA, with Left Coast Crime just behind us and both the *LA Times* Festival of Books and the Edgar Awards directly ahead. Left Coast was my first convention in eighteen months. I had almost forgotten how enjoyable it is to choose whatever panel looks good at the moment, inevitably running late for the next one because I'm having too much fun chatting with friends. The same excuse applies as to why we stayed up too late, every darn night. As our Irish friends might say: It's not the drink, it's the *craic* (conversation, gossip, news, and great company).

While not everyone can make the trek to NYC for the Edgars, I hope those of you reasonably near to Los Angeles will take advantage of the Festival of Books, April 21 and 22. In addition to author signings at our booth, many of our chapter members will appear on panels, including **Lee Goldberg**, **Gar Anthony Haywood**, **Naomi Hirahara**, and **Ivy Pochoda**. All that, and SoCal's own **Steph Cha** will interview MWA Grandmaster Walter Mosely on Saturday afternoon. Tickets are required, so check out the [festival website](#) today.

As if that weren't enough fun, our chapter is also co-sponsoring [Mystery on the Shelf](#) with the San Diego chapter of Sisters in Crime on April 7 at the S.D. Downtown Central Library. It's free to all, and offers a terrific line-up of panels and keynote speeches from Gretchen McNeil and Terry Shames. A bargain at any price, but we are especially delighted that we can partner with SinC to bring you this great event at no cost.

Finally, huge congratulations to our chapter's Edgar nominee **Andrew Mayne** (Best Paperback Original, *BLACK FALL*) and Mary Higgins Clark Award nominee—and current chapter Vice President—**Nadine Nettmann** (*UNCORKING A LIE*). We'll be cheering you on! One of this year's Grandmaster honorees is also a longtime SoCal member and former MWA national president: **William Link**, co-creator of *Columbo* and author and producer of dozens of other outstanding works for television and mystery fiction. Our compliments and gratitude for everything Mr. Link has done for the genre.

Glen

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

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## The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

Last week, I attended Left Coast Crime in Reno (along with many of you). As I was sitting in the “The Wonder of You: Taking Emotional Risks in Writing” panel moderated by **Naomi Hirahara** and featuring fellow SoCalMW members **Dianne Emley**, **Timothy Hallinan**, **Josh Stallings**, and **Tyler Dilts**, I was struck, not for the first time in a panel, by a tremendous urge to write. I realized once again one of the biggest reasons I attend conferences like Left Coast Crime and Bouchercon: Inspiration.

My fellow writers never fail to inspire me, and for that, I'm grateful.

While that inspiration is always uplifting, sometimes, it's bittersweet. I was saddened when I learned of [Bob Levinson's passing](#) on March 13. I didn't know him as well as many of you did, but he often took the time to write me a quick note thanking me for this newsletter each month. He was always kind, generous, and humorous, and he'll be missed.

As always, I thank this month's contributors: **Ellen Byron** for her write-up of February's Tam Luncheon, **Mike Befeler** for LCC photos, and all of you who sent in your announcements. Congratulations for all of your accomplishments and may your hard work continue to pay off.

Holly

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

Editor: [Holly West](#)

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](mailto:themarchofcrime@gmail.com)

### Join our SoCalMWA Yahoo! Group

Email [SoCalMWA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:SoCalMWA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) to join  
(members only)

# FRESHBLOOD

SoCalMWA welcomes its new and returning members:

Anne Louise Bannon

Stuart Gibbs

Miriam Hoffberg

Raul Melendez

Henry Turner



## OVER the TRANSOM

LADY AND THE DON, the second book in **Sherri Leigh James's** Saga of a Lady series, is now available on Amazon as an eBook. This is a continuation of Lady Clarissa's adventures in early California as she and her family travel to San Francisco.

**Gay Toltl Kinman's** new book from Mysterious Women, VENGEANCE IS MINE, documents nine cases investigated and solved by the owners of this unique P.I. agency, former LAPD officers Lara Chisolm and Angie Shay. All are famous cases—but with a twist.

**Lisa Morton's** "Summer of Sharks" will be in MWA's forthcoming SCREAM AND SCREAM AGAIN anthology, and "Whatever Happened to Lorna Winters?" will appear in MWA's ODD PARTNERS.

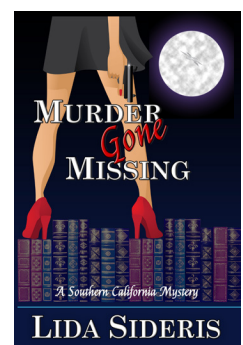
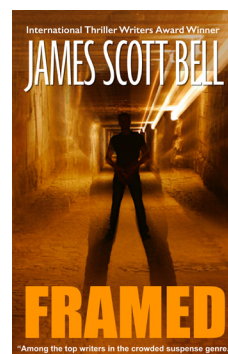
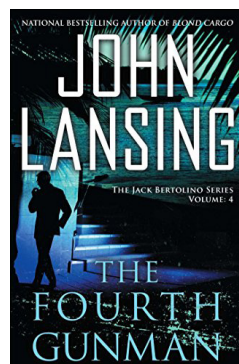
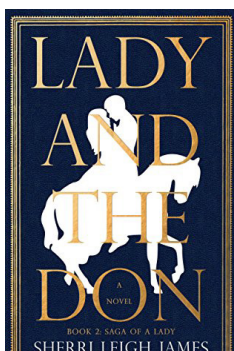
**John Lansing's** THE FOURTH GUNMAN (Gallery Books; April 3, 2018) is now available in paperback. Retired inspector Jack Bertolino, has done a priceless favor for Vincent Cardona, the Capo of the mob's West Coast Syndicate: he rescued his daughter from sex slavers. So when FBI agent Luke Hunter goes missing after a deep undercover assignment working for Cardona, the FBI calls Jack looking for a favor: find Luke Hunter, dead or alive. *Kirkus Reviews* says "The exuberant characters and swift pace will thrill new and returning readers."

**James Scott Bell's** suspense novella, FRAMED, was published by Compendium Press.

MURDER GONE MISSING, the second in **Lida Sideris's** Southern California Mystery series, will launch on April 10 (Level Best Books). It continues the misadventures of Corrie Locke, a newly minted lawyer and daughter of a late, great PI, as she dives into a school of suspects at a prestigious college campus to clear her best friend's name. It doesn't help matters that Corrie's gene for caution is a recessive one. For details, please visit [LidaSideris.com](http://LidaSideris.com).

**Betty Webb's** fifth Gunn Zoo mystery, THE OTTER OF DEATH, releases May 2 from Poisoned Pen Press. [Tour dates here](#).

**Paul D. Marks's** story "There's an Alligator in My Purse" has been selected for the 2018 Bouchercon anthology, SUNNY PLACES, SHADY PEOPLE, edited by Greg Herren. Paul is very happy to be included!



## OVER the TRANSOM

In *NATE HOLLIS, P.I.*, **Gary Phillips'** youngish L.A.-based shamus leaps from the comics to prose and now audio for the first time. Authors Juliet Blackwell, Bobby Nash, Aaron Philip Clark and Derrick Ferguson join Phillips to create six (a bonus story by Phillips features Hollis' sometime ally, bounty hunter Irma Ducett aka Irma Deuce) double-barreled tales of hardboiled mystery. "Nate's a great character and these stories do him justice and more"—Bestseller T. Jefferson Parker. On Audible from Pro Se Productions and Radio Archives.

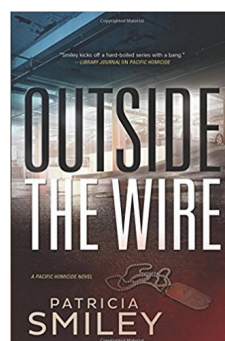
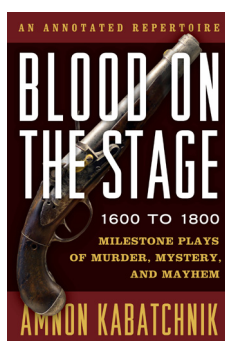
Foreword Reviews has just announced that **Amnon Kabatchnik's** "BLOOD ON THE STAGE, 1600 TO 1800" is a 2017 Finalist in the category of Reference, and that Kabatchnik's "BLOOD ON THE STAGE, 1800 TO 1900" is a 2017 Finalist in the category of Performing Arts & Music. Each of the two books profiles fifty works of theft, kidnapping, treachery, court intrigue, incest, and murder, produced over these centuries—from William Shakespeare to Arthur Conan Doyle, from Iago to Moriarty. Along the way are "The Bagger's Opera" by John Gay, "The Castle Spectre" by M.G. Lewis, "Presumption; or, The Fate Of Frankenstein," adapted from Mary Shelley's masterpiece, "The Woman in White" by Wilkie Collins, and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," adapted from Robert Louis Stevenson's classic. Mainstay authors who mixed their ink with blood include Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, Emile Zola, Charles Dickens, Leo Tolstoy, and Oscar Wilde.

**Holly West's** short story, "The Best Laid Plans," has been selected to appear in the 2018 Bouchercon anthology, *SUNNY PLACES, SHADY PEOPLE*, edited by Greg Herren.

*OUTSIDE THE WIRE*, **Patricia Smiley's** second in her new Pacific Homicide series was included in *Strand Magazine*: [Ten Women of Mystery Authors To Read This Week!](#)

Greg Garcia (creator of *My Name is Earl*) says that **Lawrence Maddox's** debut noir thriller *FAST BANG BOOZE* puts you in a "world of seedy characters, sex, drugs, non-stop action and humor." It's a beat-the-clock thrill ride that shoots through 1993 Los Angeles like a bullet. Released March 23 by Shotgun Honey.

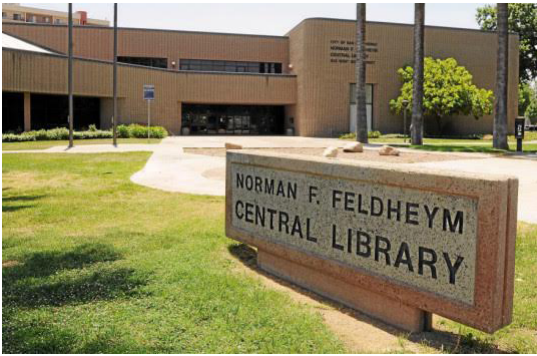
*Woman's World Magazine* published the You-Solve-It whodunit "Killer Workout" by **Peter DiChellis**. Additionally, Peter's creepy crime story "The Lonely Gravedigger" appeared at *Spelk Fiction*.



## Member APPEARANCES

**DP Lyle** and David Putnam will appear at the Huntington Beach Library Author Luncheon on Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 11:30 a.m. Huntington Beach Public Library, 7111 Talbert Ave., Huntington Beach. 714-842-4481. [More info.](#)

**DP Lyle, Matt Coyle, Patricia Smiley,** and Robin Burcell will appear at the Anaheim Library Foundation Mystery Author Luncheon, “High Tide and Homicide,” on Sunday, April 15 at the Sheraton Park Hotel, 1855 S. Harbor Blvd., Anaheim, CA. [More info.](#)



**Elaine Ash** will deliver a one-hour workshop on pitching and querying at the Norman F. Feldheim Central Library in San Bernardino on Saturday, April 28 as part of the Book Fair festivities. Hundreds of attendees enjoy this event every year. The presentation is jointly offered by the library and San Bernardino Writers’ Group.

**Betty Webb’s** THE OTTER OF DEATH tour dates:

- May 19, 2 p.m.: Official debut and signing of THE OTTER OF DEATH at the Poisoned Pen Bookstore, 4014 N. Goldwater Blvd., Scottsdale AZ
- June 4, Time TBD: Clues Unlimited, 3154 E. Fort Lowell Road, Tucson AZ
- June 6, 7 p.m.: Mysterious Galaxy, 5943 Balboa Ave., #100, San Diego CA
- June 8, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Huntington Beach (CA) Author’s Luncheon: Betty joins author Candice Fox at the Huntington Beach Library, 7111 Talbert Ave., HB, to discuss the pros and cons of the writing life
- June 10, 4 p.m.: Mystery Ink, 8907 Warner Ave., #135, Huntington Beach, CA

**Jeri Westerson** will be signing at the following locations:

- Saturday, April 14, 1 p.m.: San Juan Capistrano Library Tea, at La Sala Auditorium 31495 El Camino Real, San Juan Capistrano, CA. She’ll be speaking and selling books there.
- Sunday, April 22: *LA Times* Festival of Books. Jeri will be signing at the Sisters in Crime booth #367 from 10 a.m.–noon, the Mystery Writers of America booth #376 from noon–1 p.m., and the Horror Writers Association booth #828 (time to come). The festival is located on the USC campus in Los Angeles. It’s free!

**Susan Cummins Miller** will be presenting “The Art of the Rewrite,” her final workshop as 2018 Writer in Residence for Pima County Public Libraries, on Saturday, April 28 at Kirk-Bear Canyon Library, 8959 E. Tanque Verde Rd., Tucson. The workshop is free and open to the public.

## Member APPEARANCES

**Sheila Lowe** will be making these appearances in April:

- April 8: Reader at the Sisters in Crime Los Angeles chapter meeting.
- April 14: Panelist at a Sisters in Crime panel at the Culver City Library (see details below)
- April 15: Author fair at the office of Bunny Vreeland
- April 21: Addressing the North Bay Chapter of the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation
- April 22: *LA Times* Festival of Books
- April 28: Panel at the new Hill Road Library in Ventura

**Connie di Marco, Sheila Lowe, Catherine Pelonero, and Lida Sideris** will be at the Culver City Library (4975 Overland Ave., Culver City, CA 90230) on April 14 at 2 p.m. on a panel entitled, “I’d Like to Write a Book Someday.”



**Pamela Asbury-Smith** on stage at Odyssey Storytellers.

In early February, **Pamela Asbury-Smith** appeared as one of six speakers for Odyssey Storytellers, giving a ten-minute version of “You Don’t Know Me.” Her topic was Bullets, Bombs, and Mascara. No notes, no props... and an audience of about a hundred. She admitted to being terrified yet managed not to pee, puke or pass out so she saw that as a success. The Tucson Festival of Books was held at UA March 10 and 11. Pamela signed books in three booths, including the MWA booth. She received an invitation from a reader to speak to a toastmasters group, and sell her book there. Over the years, Pamela has given talks about the year she worked on the island of Kaho`olawe, relating her experiences as a Quality Assurance archaeologist on an island that had been bombed by the US Military for over 50 years. She has just been invited to give that talk to a local crime writers group. Fortunately, she may use slides and notes for the one-hour session.

**Patricia Smiley** will be signing at the *LA Times* Festival of Books, Saturday, April 21 from 2–3 p.m. at the MWA booth.

**Lawrence Maddox** hopes to see you at the *LA Times* Festival of Books, where he’ll be signing FAST BANG BOOZE at the MWA booth on Sunday, April 22, 2–3 p.m.

**Eva Montealegre** will be signing her debut novel, *BODY ON THE BACKLOT*, at the *LA Times* Festival of Books at the MWA booth at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 21. The official launch of her book is in May. She’ll also be on the Crime Writing panel at Pasadena LitFest on May 19 at 4:15 p.m.

## MURDER ON THE SHELF

April 7, 2018

### Full Schedule

10:00 a.m. Keynote Address by Terry Shames, author of the Samuel Craddock series, including the award-winning *A KILLING AT COTTON HILL*.

11 a.m.: “You Can’t Kill Me—Why the PI Novel Won’t Die” with **Joe Ide**, G.M. Ford, and **Martin Roy Hill**, moderated by **Matt Coyle**.

12 p.m.: Lunch Break (Pre-order lunch by March 29)

1 p.m.: “Mischievous & Mayhem: Middle Grade and Young Adult Mysteries” with Gretchen McNeil, Barrie Summy and **Kristen Kittscher**, moderated by **Kathy Krevat**.

2 p.m.: “Mysteries with a Supernatural Twist” with Marcia Buompensiero, Cornelia Feye and April Baldrich, moderated by Nicole Sours Larson.

3 p.m.: Keynote by Gretchen McNeil, YA author of *POSSESS*, *3:59*, *RELIC*, *GET EVEN*, *GET DIRTY*, and the award-winning *TEN*.

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### *TMOC Needs You!*

TMOC is looking for articles (500–700 words) on subjects of interest to SoCalMWA members. This includes craft, marketing, and all aspects of publishing.

Content shouldn’t be overtly promotional, but rather instructional or informational.

Include a brief bio (100 words or less) and a headshot or cover image.

Send your questions and/or pitches to [themarchofcrime@gmail.com](mailto:themarchofcrime@gmail.com).



## Event Wrap-Up: DA vs. DA: Prosecutors Share Their Trial Tactics

By Ellen Byron

At the February SoCalMWA Tam O'Shanter luncheon, Orange County Prosecutors Susan Price and Matt Murphy shared engrossing anecdotes about the methodology behind some of their most high-profile cases.



Orange County prosecutor Matt Murphy

They began by explaining the difference between horizontal and vertical prosecutions. Prosecutor Price says that horizontal prosecutions mean “attorneys will be assigned to specific tasks, whether it’s crime charging or preliminary hearings. They handle many cases depending on what is on the calendar or comes before them that day. They don’t keep the case beyond that function.” With vertical prosecutions, one prosecutor is assigned to see a specific case through from intake to appeal. Both Price and Murphy specialize in homicide vertical prosecutions and work “hand in hand” with detectives, taking felony cases where evidence can prove guilt “beyond reasonable doubt.”

“Every homicide is a mystery,” says Murphy, and many take years to solve. Murphy used his prosecution of Rodney Alcala, “The Dating Game Killer” as an example. Alcala’s rampage of rage and murder began in 1971. He was eventually captured and tried, receiving the death sentence in 2010, almost forty years after his crime spree began. Authorities are still trying to identify victims from his collection of a thousand photos of possible victims. D.A. Murphy gave former LAPD homicide detective and SoCalMWA member **Steve Hodel** a shout-out for his own work on the Alcala case.

Price and Murphy also walked attendees through several other high-profile cases, including the prosecution of former child actor Skylar DeLeon and his wife Jennifer for the murder of Thomas and Jackie Hawks, who were bound, gagged, and thrown into the sea from their own boat, never to be seen again. Murphy then revealed a case he was assigned to review that he brought to the attention of *LA Times* reporter, Christopher Goffard. This became the *Times*’ legendary series and podcast, “Dirty John,” about the case of murdered con artist and serial domestic abuser, John Meehan.

Currently D.A. Murphy is working on twenty-three active and a half-dozen cold cases. Both he and Price are proof positive that the Orange County District Attorney’s office is in great hands.

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## You Oughta Be in Pictures

Left Coast Crime 2018



Steph Cha on the “Path to Publishing” panel.



“Role of Police in Modern Crime Fiction” panel. L-R: Josh Stallings, G.M. Malliet, Claire Booth, Steph Cha, and Tyler Dilts



Josh Stallings on the “Role of Police in Modern Crime Fiction” panel



Tyler Dilts on the “Role of Police in Modern Crime Fiction” panel



“Writing in More Than One Genre” panel. L-R: Mike Befeler, Keith Tittle, Maegan Beaumont, Daryl Wood Gerber, and Phoebe Sutton.



Mike Befeler and Mr. Poe



“Improv” panel. L-R: Glen Erik Hamilton, Naomi Hirahara, and Tyler Dilts.

## You Oughta Be in Pictures

Left Coast Crime 2018



SoCalMWA VP **Nadine Nettmann** and Prez **Glen Erik Hamilton** at the joint SoCalMWA & NorCalMWA reception.



L - R: **Holly West**, **Kim Fay**, **Meredith Taylor**, and **Lisa Brackmann**.



**Holly West** and **Travis Richardson**.



L - R: **Matt Coyle**, **Dianne Emley**, **Mike Befeler**, and **Stephen Buehler**.



Extracurricular Bowling with (Back row, L-R) **Charles Emley**, Guest, **Elizabeth Little**, **Steph Cha**, **Colleen Dunn Bates**, **Dianne Emley** (Front row, L - R) **Phoef Sutton**, **Naomi Hirahara**, **Lisa Brackmann**, and **Kim Fay**.

### Got Pics?

TMOC welcomes your photos taken at author events, SoCalMWA meetings, conferences, et cetera.

Send your hi-res pics to:  
[themarchofcrime@gmail.com](mailto:themarchofcrime@gmail.com)

## In Memoriam

**Robert S. Levinson**  
(1936 – 2018)



The MWA lost a treasured member of its community when Robert (Bob) Levinson passed away on March 13, 2018. He served four years on the Mystery Writers of America national board of directors and two years as SoCalMWA's president. Additionally, he wrote and produced two Annual Edgar Awards galas for the MWA and the inaugural and 2nd Annual Thriller Awards shows for the International Thriller Writers organization.

Bob was the bestselling author of thirteen novels including the Neil Gulliver and Stevie Marriner series of mystery-thrillers. His short stories appeared in *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* and *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine* and multiple anthologies. He won the Short Mystery Fiction Society's Best Short Story, the Derringer Award, and was an *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* Readers Award winner three consecutive years.

Bob's careers spanned newspaperman, public relations executive, and writer-producer of more than three dozen television specials. His company, Levinson Associates, created and pioneered "independent PR support services" in the music industry and at one time was the largest rock-contemporary music PR firm in the world. He formed Levinson Entertainment Ventures, Inc., developing, writing, and producing some forty comedy, musical, variety, and awards specials for the world marketplace. More information about Bob and his accomplishments can be found at [rslevinson.com](http://rslevinson.com).

Our heartfelt condolences go out to Bob's wife Sandra Levinson, daughter Deborah Levinson and son David Levinson as well as his grandchildren and other family. We are grateful for his wonderful contributions to crime and mystery fiction as well as his stellar work for the MWA community.

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Crime  
CALENDAR

Los Angeles Times  
**FESTIVAL  
OF BOOKS**  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

This year SoCalMWA will once again be hosting a booth at the *Los Angeles Times* Festival of Books, the largest festival of its kind in the country. As always, all members of MWA, regardless of their chapter affiliation, are invited to join us at our booth on Saturday and Sunday, April 21–22, to sign and sell books, meet colleagues, and interact with readers from Southern California and beyond.

[Click here for more information](#)

More Criminal Happenings

- April 7 – [Mystery on the Shelf, San Diego, CA](#)
- April 21–22 – [Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, Los Angeles, CA](#)
- April 24–26 – [Edgar Week, New York, NY](#)
- April 27–29 – [Malice Domestic 30, Bethesda, MD](#)
- May 20 – [Luncheon at the Tam, Los Angeles, CA](#)
- July 10–14 – [Thrillerfest, New York, NY](#)
- September 6–9 – [Bouchercon, St. Petersburg, FL](#)
- November 4 – [Luncheon at the Tam, Los Angeles, CA](#)

The  
LAST WORD

“*Chère*, it’s Louisiana. We only follow the rules we like.”

—Ellen Byron, *A CAJUN CHRISTMAS KILLING*