



The
MARCH

of CRIME

Inside this issue

[President's Rap p 2](#)

[Editor's Corner p 3](#)

[Fresh Blood p 4](#)

[Over the Transom p 5](#)

[Member Appearances p 7](#)

[Holiday Party p 8](#)

[Pitching p 9](#)

[Gumbo Party Pics p 10](#)

[Crime Calendar p 12](#)

[Last Word p 12](#)

Luncheon at the Tam O'Shanter
Sunday, November 4, 12 p.m.

**COLD CASE INVESTIGATION!
THE COLDER THE CASE,
THE HOTTER THE STORY**



In 1986, newlywed Sherri Rasmussen was murdered in her home. Despite a thorough investigation no suspect was arrested and the case remained open, unsolved for 23 years.



In 2009, Detective Robert Bub, Officer in Charge of the Van Nuys Cold Case Homicide Unit, directed detectives to re-examine the case. Immediately, one detail in the murder book sparked to life: DNA testing determined that the suspected killer...was a woman. A vigorous reworking of the case would lead detectives to a suspect that would shock the LAPD.

Author Terri Nolan interviews the investigators who dug deep. Join us November 4 for an insider look into how the LAPD finally got justice for Sherri Rasmussen and the secret investigation that captured one of their own.

[Click here to RSVP](#)

Save the Date!

SoCalMWA/SinCLA Holiday Party

Sunday, December 2
Los Angeles

[More information](#)



The President's Rap Sheet

Glen Erik Hamilton

In her book *MAKING A LITERARY LIFE*, famed author and professor Carolyn See made the case for writers to send “charming notes” to people whom they admire—primarily fellow authors but also to editors, critics, and others in the publishing field. She described those notes as paper airplanes sailing around the world, praising good work and encouraging camaraderie. Manners, civility, and affection in a few brief sentences.

See’s advice resonated with me, but it was many years before I tried writing my own notes, charming or not. Even so, that practice needs more practice. I manage only one brief letter a month—the same timeline as this Rap Sheet!—which is miles short of the five notes per week that See pushes her readers to strive for. (One a week seems more within the bounds of sanity. Writing five would be a part-time job, and honestly, how much content would someone have to consume to find all those admirable recipients?)

It’s the season of gratitude. I’m thankful for a lot of things in our mystery community. The friendships, our board who wrangles so many tasks, and our members who have turned out in record numbers for events this year. Mostly, I’m grateful for the mutual support we show. That we treat writing as a shared and worthy endeavor, rather than a zero-sum game.

Finally, let’s turn our gratitude inward and show ourselves some compassion in these tough times. Which includes being appreciative for what we can do, instead of obsessing over what’s left undone. One charming note a month (or whatever your own output might be) is just fine, thanks very much.

For those in the Los Angeles area, our final Tam O’Shanter luncheon of 2018 is Sunday November 4—still time to RSVP for those who read this newsletter on the day it arrives!—and our annual Holiday Party with Sisters in Crime LA is Sunday December 2. We hope to see you and celebrate this busy year’s accomplishments.

All Best,
Glen

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: [Glen Erik Hamilton](#)
VP: [Nadine Nettmann](#)
Treasurer: [Sarah M. Chen](#)
Secretary: [Travis Richardson](#)

Board of Directors

[Shannon Baker](#)
[Lisa Brackmann](#)
[Ellen Byron](#)
[Sue Ann Jaffarian](#)
[Jessica Kaye](#)
[Paul D. Marks](#)
[Terri Nolan](#)

President Emerita:

[Elizabeth Little](#)

Mystery Writers of America
 Southern California Chapter
 2140 N. Hollywood Way #7304
 Burbank, CA 91510

Contact: info@socalmwa.com
 Website: <http://socalmwa.com>
 Twitter: [@socalmwa](https://twitter.com/socalmwa)

Like us on Facebook
<https://facebook.com/groups/72570009680>

NATIONAL OFFICE

Mystery Writers of America
 1140 Broadway #1507
 New York, NY 10001
 t. 212.888.8171
 f. 212.888.8107

mwa@mysterywriters.org
<http://mysterywriters.org>



The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

I entered October with the best of intentions. My plan was to spend the month prepping a NaNoWriMo project so I'd be ready to start writing said project in November. Sadly, this didn't happen.

I felt a little better when Glen suggested we show ourselves some compassion in his [Prez Rap](#) this month. I'm compassionately telling myself that NaNoWriMo is just a construct and that's okay if I start in December.

With that said, I've still got a couple of days to pull something together in advance of NaNoWriMo's official start date. Don't count me out yet.

I'm feeling particularly inspired because I spent this past weekend in Los Angeles. Though I wasn't able to attend the Gumbo Party ([see pics from the event here](#)), I did get to see many of my SoCalMWA pals at Noir at the Bar the next night. There's really nothing that gets me hyped to write more than seeing my writing friends and talking shop.

Distance prevents me from attending most of SoCalMWA's events, but I particularly regret not being able to go to the upcoming Tam Luncheon on November 4 ([details and RSVP here](#)). **Terri Nolan's** interview with the investigator who cracked a twenty-plus-year-old cold case sounds fascinating. I have no doubt that SoCalMWA will plan many more interesting events in 2019.

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

**Join our SoCalMWA
Yahoo! Group**

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

2019 California Crime Writers Conference

Saturday, June 8–Sunday, June 9, 2019

Doubletree Hilton in Culver City

The 2019 California Crime Writers Conference, co-sponsored by SoCalMWA and Sisters in Crime/Los Angeles, is gearing up to be an exciting weekend.

In addition to keynote speeches by our two guests of honor, Tess Gerritsen and Catriona McPherson, they'll each teach a session on creative writing. Plus, we're taking advantage of our proximity to Hollywood to bring in producers and screenwriters to discuss book options, adaptations, and what to do when Hollywood calls. All of this in addition to craft panels, forensic workshops, and the fun and fellowship you've come to expect from CCWC.

Registration and hotel blocks are NOW OPEN!

[Click here for registration info](#)

FRESHBLOOD

SoCalMWA welcomes its new and returning members



Meghan Farrell

A native Texan, Meghan Farrell joined Tule Publishing as the Managing Editor in 2014 and oversees and coordinates the development of the company's imprints, production, subrights, editorial and marketing departments. Tule Publishing was founded in 2013 with a publishing focus in commercial fiction and is excited to expand into the mystery genre in early 2019. We are looking forward to learning more about mysteries and being a part of the MWA community!



Fay Gauthier

Having just finished the first draft of her mystery novel, *DROPPED*, Fay Gauthier is excited to be a new member of the SoCalMWA community. She is a Los Angeles based singer-songwriter, actor and writer. Her music video, "Be What You Are," which Fay co-wrote and executive produced, was an official selection of the Los Angeles Film Awards, and received an Award of Recognition from the Best Shorts Competition. In addition to writing, Fay has a flourishing on-screen career, having appeared in several films and over 40 commercials.

Jordan Harper



Craig Holland

After creating several scripts for stage and screen, Craig has turned his attention to developing his first mystery novel. His background as a game designer over the past 15 years informs his writing style. He developed story and dialogue for game adaptations of classic mysteries such as Gaston Leroux' *The Mystery of the Yellow Room* and Wilkie Collins' *Moonstone* and *Woman in White*. Craig's skill in developing story stems from earning a BA in English Literature from UCLA. He also received an MBA from USC. (Yes, he is both a Trojan and a Bruin, which has created a life-long inner conflict).

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.

OVER the TRANSOM

D.J. Adamson's third Lillian Dove novel, *LET HER GO*, releases November 6. Murder. Betrayal. Love Gone Wrong. With her ability to present clues without giving away the endings and offering surprising twists encouraging the reader to the next page, Adamson delves into a family tragedy ending up in murder and a teenage daughter missing. When Lillian Dove finds herself involved in the police investigation, she realizes the daughter holds the key to unravel who killed her mother.

Gay Toltl Kinman's *VENGEANCE IS MINE* from *Mysterious Women* is now on Kindle. The paperback is also available. The book is a series of cases worked by two former LAPD Detectives now P.I.s who try to bring justice where none was before.

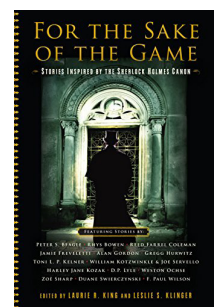
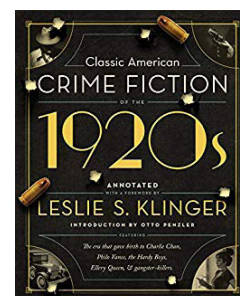
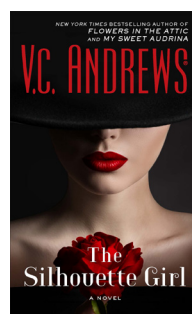
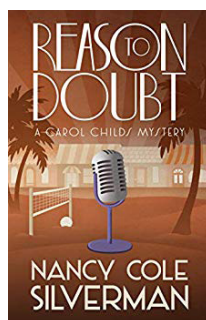
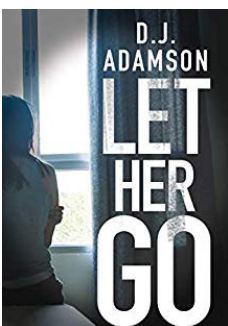
Nancy Cole Silverman's *REASON TO DOUBT*, book five of the *Carol Childs Mysteries*, releases November 6 by Henry Press.

Andrew Neiderman, V.C. Andrews' ghostwriter, successfully placed the *Heaven* (Castell series) at Lifetime. To celebrate the 40th anniversary of *FLOWERS IN THE ATTIC*, a two-volume prequel entitled *BENEATH THE ATTIC* and *SWAN SONG* will be published in November 2019 and January 2020. Neiderman's best-selling book, *THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE*, will premiere in Seoul next year under his co-authored libretto. His *FLOWERS IN THE ATTIC* stage play was optioned by Jane the Virgin's Gary Pearl, and is now in development. Finally, Gallery Books will publish the next V.C. Andrews novel, *THE SILHOUETTE GIRL*, as a trade paperback in late January.

Les Klinger's *CLASSIC AMERICAN CRIME FICTION OF THE 1920s* (Pegasus) was selected as an Amazon Editors' Best Book of the Month pick in the Mystery, Thrillers & Suspense category for October.

Paul D. Marks' story "Windward" appears in the just-released *Best American Mysteries of 2018*, edited by Louise Penny and Otto Penzler. "Windward" also won the Macavity Award for Best Short Story at the recent Bouchercon.

FOR THE SAKE OF THE GAME, with **DP Lyle's** short story "Bottom Line," will be released on December 4. Some great stories inside. Check it out. [Details here.](#)



OVER the TRANSOM

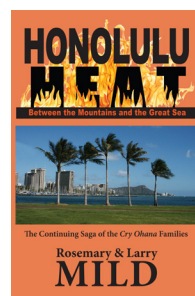
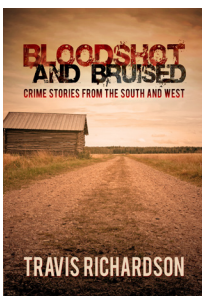
FATAL BLOW, the third entry in **James L. Thane's** series featuring Phoenix, Arizona homicide detective Sean Richardson, was published by Moonshine Cove on October 18. It features an unfaithful husband, an aggrieved wife, and a cunning plan for revenge that's too clever by half. What could possibly go wrong?

Travis Richardson's short story collection, BLOODSHOT AND BRUISED, will be released on November 27. The collection contains sixteen stories set in either rural America or the West Coast, including Anthony, Macavity, and Derringer award finalists.

Sheila Lowe recently celebrated getting her books back on the shelf at the Ventura Barnes & Noble.

Rosemary and Larry Mild announce their thriller HONOLULU HEAT: BETWEEN THE MOUNTAINS AND THE GREAT SEA—the continuing saga of the Cry Ohana families. Alex and Leilani Wong anguish over their son, Noah, an idealistic youth who teeters on both sides of the law. Facing a murder charge, he flees and finds himself immersed in a bloody feud between a Chinatown protection racketeer and a crimeland don (ironically, the father of his beloved girlfriend). Torn between loyalty and betrayal, only the boy can bring peace to his family—and Honolulu's Chinatown.

DESIGNED FOR HAUNTING, the fourth book in the Aurora Anderson mystery series by **Sybil Johnson**, launched October 9.



Member APPEARANCES

Connie di Marco will be appearing at [Iceland Noir](#) in Reykjavik on Saturday, November 17 at 3 p.m. on a panel entitled ‘Super and Natural’ discussing Icelandic elves, ghosts, black magic, trolls and all things that go bump in the night, along with authors James Oswald, William Ryan, and Michael J. Malone. David Headley of the DHH Literary Agency will moderate.

Jeri Westerson continues to tour her paranormal romance DEADLY RISING at the following locations:



—Friday, November 2, 3:30–4:30 p.m., at the Corona Library. A presentation and a reading, a free raffle, and spooky refreshments! Free to the public. Books available for sale. 650 S Main St, Corona, CA 92882.

—Saturday, November 3, 8–10 p.m. BIG LAUNCH PARTY at the fabulous Bearded Lady’s Mystic Museum. Come to this mysterious locale to enjoy refreshments, giveaways, a tarot card reader, and a gift shop of the weird and wonderful. Bring your friends! (You’d ordinarily have to pay a fee to see the museum, but with Jeri’s launch, it’s FREE!) Come to 3204 W Magnolia Blvd, Burbank, CA 91505.

—Sunday, November 4, 4 p.m., at Mystery Ink. Refreshments, a giveaway and bookes! 8907 Warner Ave #135, Huntington Beach, CA 92647.

David Knop gave a presentation to the San Diego Mystery Society on Native American spirits and ghosts on October 11, just in time for the Halloween season. I hope they came away informed and spooked!

Ellen Byron will be signing at the Tulane Bookstore in New Orleans on November 9. On November 10, she’ll be on the Louisiana Ladies of Mystery panel at the Louisiana Book Festival in Baton Rouge.

Sybil Johnson, Ellen Byron, and Nancy Cole Silverman have joined the promotional bandwagon in promoting their fall releases. The trio is scheduled to appear Saturday, November 17 at Mystery Ink (8907 Warner Ave #135, Huntington Beach) from 3–4 p.m. Sunday, November 18 at Book Carnival (348 Tustin St, Orange, CA) at 3 p.m. And Saturday, December 1 at Mysterious Galaxy (5943 Balboa Ave. #100, San Diego) for the store’s holiday party beginning at 2 p.m.

On November 3, **Sheila Lowe** will be participating in the very first Santa Paula Blanchard Library author fair.



Michael Connelly will be in conversation with **Paul Levine** on Monday, November 12 at New Roads School, 3131 Olympic Blvd, Santa Monica at 8 p.m. Connelly will discuss DARK SACRED NIGHT (A Ballard & Bosch novel), his new release. This is a ticketed event of Live Talks Los Angeles. [More info here.](#)

Steve Hodel, author of BLACK DAHLIA AVENGER III, will appear at the South Pasadena Public Library on November 1 at 7 p.m.



SINC/LA AND MWA SOCAL PRESENT

*One Killer Holiday
Party*
The Sequel!

**FOOD · WINE · DESSERT
FORTUNE TELLER · PRIZES**


In the spirit of the season, MWA SoCal and Sisters in Crime/LA are joining forces to throw a killer holiday bash in celebration of an amazing year for the Southern California mystery-writing community. Members and plus-ones only.

December 2, 2018

11:30 am to 2 pm

**SOUTH PASADENA LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM
1115 EL CENTRO STREET
SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030**

RSVP HERE:
[Holiday Party](#)



Pitching

by **Thomas B. Sawyer**

A good pitch is concise, articulate, and entertaining. In more cold-blooded terms, a good pitch is one that sells your idea, premise, short story, novel, or screenplay.

The good pitch also says something important about the writer—about how he or she will approach the story. How it will be told. How solid a grasp the writer has of what it's *really* about.

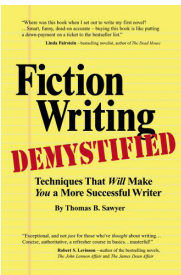
But perhaps the single most important element of a good pitch is that it either suggests (if you're trying for subtlety) or (better yet) spells out, the main conflict. In the publishing business, it's that quotable bullet that sets apart the idea for a novel, the one that succinctly says what it's about, that can make it a “big” book.

A story premise or situation that compels you—or your listener(s)—to involuntarily begin imagining the reactions of an established character, or characters, can be highly effective, both in selling the idea, and clarifying it for yourself.

From there, if the pitchees are sufficiently hooked, the writer gives them a brief, verbal beginning-middle-end breakdown. In the case of a pitch for a series pilot, a movie or miniseries, the writer usually provides a “leave-behind,” a written proposal of from two to ten-or-so pages.

A successful pitch is one that excites, that starts your listener mentally writing the rest of your story.

For writers of *any* kind of fiction, it's a good way to think. Because by pitching your story—to a friend, spouse, publisher, editor—but particularly to yourself—you will gain a better, firmer handle on it. You will be less likely to marry yourself to an incomplete premise, or to a story that goes nowhere. Most important, it's about clarity. About knowing what your story is about—and then maintaining your focus.



Thomas B. Sawyer is a novelist, screenwriter, playwright, and the former showrunner/head writer of *Murder, She Wrote*, for which he wrote twenty-four episodes. Edgar and Emmy-nominated, he's also the author of the Barney Moon P.I. series, a memoir, numerous screenplays and teleplays, a documentary, and a musical. His nonfiction book, *FICION WRITING DEMYSTIFIED*, offers hundreds of no-nonsense tips and techniques for successful writing. More info at thomasbsawyer.com.

Send Us Your Cover!

Did you know you can display your latest book cover and your website in our Member Directory, available to all visitors to our chapter webpage? You may add or update your information here: [Your Member Listing](#). Contact info@socalmwa.com if you need a password reminder!

You Oughta Be in Pictures
SoCalMWA Gumbo Party



You Oughta Be in Pictures
SoCalMWA Gumbo Party



Crime
CALENDAR

Year-End Events

November 4 – [Luncheon at the Tam, Los Angeles, CA](#)

December 2 – [SoCalMWA/SinCLA Joint Holiday Party, Los Angeles, CA](#)

The
LAST WORD

“Two weeks before Halloween, Rory Anderson received an email from Beyond The Grave.”

—Sybil Johnson, DESIGNED FOR HAUNTING