



The MARCH

of CRIME

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## Luncheon at the Tam O'Shanter:

### AUDIOBOOK PRODUCTION BY THE PROS

Sunday, November 10  
11:30 a.m.

Audiobooks have become an increasingly popular format in the past few years, with readers clamoring to get more from their favorite authors. What goes into arranging for audiobook publication? How are narrators chosen and how are the books produced? A special panel of narrators, producers, and directors will be on hand for our November 10 Tam Luncheon to answer all of your questions.

Our panel includes full-time SAG-AFTRA audiobook narrator Jeffrey Kafer; award-winning audiobook narrator Nicol Zanzarella; **Richard Brewer**, author, audiobook narrator, director and producer, and moderated by Grammy Award-winning audiobook producer and director **Jessica Kaye**. Keep your ears open!

### Save the Date!

Holiday Party  
December 8

[More info](#)



Jeffrey Kafer



Nicol Zanzarella



Richard J. Brewer



Jessica Kaye

**Tam O'Shanter Restaurant**  
2980 Los Feliz Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90039

Doors open at 11:30 a.m., orders taken at Noon  
Noon–2:30 p.m. ~Paid valet or free street parking available.

[Click here for meal package information and to reserve your spot!](#)



## The President's Rap Sheet

Glen Erik Hamilton

I recently spent a hurried weekend in Seattle, motivated by what I've come to call "second-pass location scouting." My first pass occurs months before a book is due and is much more leisurely, with casual strolls around neighborhoods while noodling over what should happen in the next story and where its scenes might take place. Then I write the darn thing and of course everything changes, including the city itself. Best-laid plots of mice and men.

So for each of my last three books, part of my method—to give this inefficiency a highfalutin' name—has included another quick round-trip to my hometown. I'll run the wheels off a rental car in an effort to capture the sights and sounds and occasional smells of damp corners in the Rainy City before final rewrites. The hasty tour is always exhilarating and I always nod off on the flight home.

The whole process could stand as a metaphor for writing on deadline. Ambling through ideas and drafts until time is suddenly short, and then a mad dash to fill in the blanks at the end. Fueled by equal parts coffee and panic. Crazed but somehow thrilling, too. And I consistently fool myself into thinking: *Next time, it will be different.*

SoCal will wrap up the year with a one-two punch: Our third and final Tam O'Shanter luncheon on Sunday November 10, featuring a loaded panel of professionals in audiobook production and publishing. And then, as we have the past three years, we'll join with Sisters in Crime LA for the Killer Holiday Party at the South Pasadena Library on Sunday December 8.

Don't let the season pass you by without some time with your fellow writers and fans! Yes, it's a scramble to fit everything into the remaining weeks. But it can be exciting too. If you get stressed, just tell yourself: Next year, it will be different.

All Best,  
Glen

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

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## The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

Unfortunately, fire season is usurping Halloween this year for more than a few California residents, including myself. I'm writing this in my gym's cafe because our power went out on Saturday and we lost our internet service along with it. But I'm doing my best to keep cheerful because my loved ones are safe and I have options. Power outages, though inconvenient, are preferable to mandatory evacuations—or worse.

And for me, there's Bouchercon to look forward to this week. While I'm scrambling to do much of my preparations in the semi-dark, I'm excited to see friends and readers for this 50th Anniversary of a convention I've come to love in the past ten years. This year is particularly special because my short story, "The Best Laid Plans," is an Anthony Award nominee.

Given the strange circumstances of my life at the moment, I'm going to keep this Editor's Note short and sweet. I can't wait to see those of you who will be in Dallas this week.

Wishing you all safety and peace.

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 members

Michael Elias  
Barbra Ann Hardy  
Chip Jacobs

## OVER the TRANSOM

**Mark Bruce** has short stories published in the following anthologies: “The God of the Lame” appears in GRIEVOUS BODILY HARM and “The Oracle” appears in GRUMPY GODS III, a Halloween anthology about offending the “gods.”

THE NINJA DAUGHTER—**Tori Eldridge’s** debut mystery/thriller about a Chinese-Norwegian modern-day ninja in Los Angeles—releases Tuesday, November 5. [See Tori’s tour schedule here.](#)

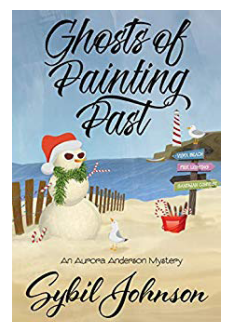
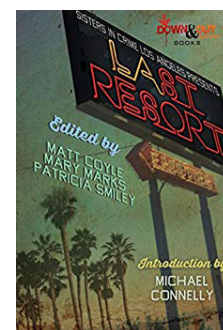
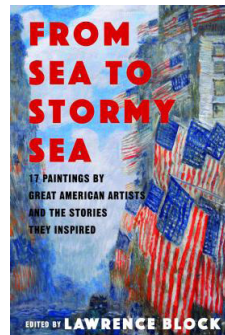
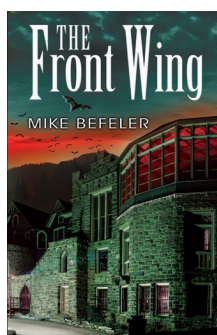
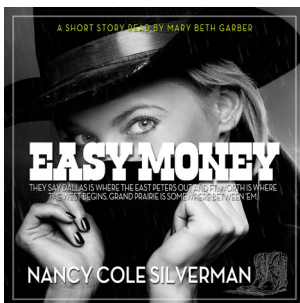
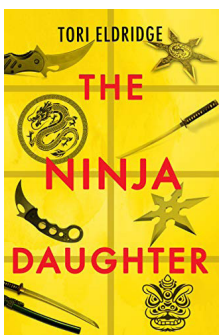
**Nancy Cole Silverman** has released EASY MONEY, the first of several audio short stories now available on Amazon.

**Mike Befeler’s** mystery novel, THE FRONT WING, a Harold and Bella paranormal geezer-lit mystery, will be released in November. People on a waiting list to get into the Front Wing of a retirement community have accidents and are killed. Harold McCaffrey marshals the special abilities of his unusual friends including aging witches, vampires, werewolves and shape-shifters to solve the mystery. [See related appearances here.](#)

“A Matter of Options” is **Gary Phillips’s** short story riffing on the Great Gatsby meets Chester Himes in the new anthology, FROM SEA TO STORMY SEA. Each story is inspired by a painting. In this case it was Reginald Marsh’s Depression-era “Why Not Take the L.” Edited by Lawrence Block, from Pegasus Books.

**Georgia Jeffries** was honored, along with all the contributors of SinCLA’s LAST RESORT (Down and Out Books 2017), by the American Library Association. The ALA’s national Book Club Central program selected the noir anthology for recommended reading during 2019 Short Story Month. Georgia posted a list of Book Club questions for the stories on the SinCLA website. She also moderated the Pasadena LitFest panel “Books to TV” with **Attica Locke**, Edgar Award-winning novelist and writer/producer of Netflix’s “When They See Us” and Jim Gavin, creator of AMC’s “Lodge 49” based on his short story collection.

**Sybil Johnson’s** fifth novel in her Aurora Anderson Mystery series, GHOSTS OF PAINTING PAST, will be released by Henery Press on November 19.





## OVER the TRANSOM

**Jay Kinney's** short story, "Francesca," appears in the Sisters in Crime (Desert Sleuths Chapter) 2019 Anthology, SoWest: LADYKILLERS. The collection was released on September 27. This is his publication debut.

**Daniel C. Lorti's** THE BUSINESS END, the sequel to the acclaimed THE MISSING FACTOR, will be released on November 10: Jim Factor, a former arms dealer heads an arms manufacturing company in Bulgaria. He is targeted by a rival Russian mafia organization. Caught up in a potential mafia war, he conceives a complex scam to forestall hostilities while conducting company's business. Meanwhile, the U.S. Air Force intelligence agency is determining if he's betraying his country. Sooner or later, the rival mafia will discover the ruse and marshal forces against him. It's a tightrope act where success is dependent on deception, timing and revenge.

The You-Solve-It impossible crime mystery "Disappearing Diamonds" by **Peter DiChellis** appears in the new issue of *Mystery Weekly Magazine* (November). Additionally, Peter's creepy crime-horror story "Stegmann's Basement" was reprinted in the current issue of *Yellow Mama* (October Halloween edition). The story originally appeared at Spelk Fiction.



Left Coast Crime  
San Diego  
March 12-15, 2020

Left Coast Crime is currently accepting registrations (and panel ideas from authors) for its 30th anniversary conference to be held in the Marriott Mission Valley (easy to reach by train, with a trolley stop at the back of hotel).

700 mystery fans and authors will meet and discuss books.  
Register by end of December (\$215) if you want to be on a panel or be a moderator.  
Remember the debut author breakfast, author speed dating,  
and other opportunities to network.

More info at <http://www.leftcoastcrime.org/2020/>.  
Contact [Kim.lcc2020@gmail.com](mailto:Kim.lcc2020@gmail.com) with any questions.

## Member APPEARANCES

Join **Tori Eldridge** at the following Southern California locations to celebrate her intriguing ninja sleuth, Lily Wong: November 5, 7 p.m., Book Soup, West Hollywood; November 6, 7 p.m., Mysterious Galaxy, San Diego (co-event with **Jonathan Mayberry**); November 7, 6:30 p.m., Barnes & Noble, Thousand Oaks; and December 15, 2 p.m., Bruggemeyer Library, Monterey Park.

Join Michael Niemann (NW MWA) and Lance Charney for a special event at Book Carnival, 348 S. Tustin St., Orange, CA on November 16 at 3 p.m. Michael is the award-winning author of the Valentin Vermeulen international thrillers, *LEGITIMATE BUSINESS*, *ILLCIT TRADE*, *ILLEGAL HOLDINGS*, *NO RIGHT WAY*. Lance is the author of the DeWitt Agency art-crime series, *THE COLLECTION*, *STEALING GHOSTS*, and *CHASING CLAY*.

To celebrate the 40th Anniversary of *FLOWERS IN THE ATTIC* and **Andrew Niederman's** thirty-three years of writing the novels, Lifetime Television will run a marathon of the film on November 10.

**Jeri Westerson** will be at the following locations: Saturday, November 2, 3–4 p.m.—El Segundo Library Author Fair. Jeri will be on the 3 p.m. author panel of mystery authors. Books for sale immediately after the panel. El Segundo Public Library, 111 West Mariposa Avenue, El Segundo, CA. Thursday, November 7, 10:30 a.m. – noon—Foothill Ranch Library First Thursday Book Discussion. Come join the group to discuss books. Books for sale and signing. Foothill Ranch Library, 27002 Cabriole, Foothill Ranch, CA. Sunday, November 17, 2–4 p.m.—Sisters in Crime Author Panel in the community room of the Thousand Oaks Library. A panel of mystery authors entitled “Dying Laughing,” how we inject humor into our murders. 1401 East Janss Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362. Books for sale.

**Mike Befeler** will be presenting and signing *THE FRONT WING* at Gatsby Books, 5535 E. Spring St, Long Beach, on Sunday December 8 at 3 p.m., and at Book Carnival (along with Jeri Westerson), 348 S. Tustin Ave., Orange, CA, on Sunday, December 15 at 3 p.m.

**Barbara DeMarco-Barrett** will read from her noir fiction at Noir at the Bar at the Mandrake, 2692 S. La Cienega, Culver City on Sunday, November 10. Festivities begin at 7 p.m. No charge.

**Catharine Riggs** will discuss her newly released thriller, *WHAT SHE NEVER SAID*, as part of Bouchercon's “The Thrill Continues” panel on Friday, November 1 at 11 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Dallas. Moderated by Ingrid Thoft, panelists include authors **Patricia Smiley**, Danielle Girard, Bryan Gruley, and Wallace Stroby. For more information visit [catharineriggs.com](http://catharineriggs.com).

**Matt Coyle** will host a Premature Launch Party for *LOST TOMORROWS*, the sixth book in the award-winning Rick Cahill series, at Mysterious Galaxy in San Diego on Nov. 23 at 2 p.m. There will be wine, homemade cookies, and giveaways! And some talk...



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A Mysterious Galaxy Partner

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**12:00pm - 4:00pm**

**FREE!**

**Redondo Beach Library**  
with **Creating Conversations**  
303 N. Pacific Coast Hwy.  
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

**Sunday, November 17, 2019**  
**12:00pm - 4:00pm**

**Scripps Miramar Ranch Library**  
with **Mysterious Galaxy**  
10301 Scripps Lake Drive  
San Diego, CA 92131

**FREE!**

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Dianne Freeman\*  
C.M. Gleason / Colleen Gleason  
Debra H. Goldstein  
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\*\*Redondo Beach Only \*San Diego Only

Visit [KensingtonCozies.com](http://KensingtonCozies.com) to learn more about Kensington's Cozy Mystery Program!

**MYSTERY  
BINGO!**



Orange County Sisters in Crime

6<sup>th</sup> Annual

# Ladies of Intrigue

Featuring Remarkable Women Mystery Writers



**Sunday, November 10, 2019**

**8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**



## Our 2019 Headliners

### J. A. Jance

**J.A. Jance** is the *New York Times* bestselling author of over 60 books. She writes the Detective Beaumont novels, the Ali Reynolds books, and the Joanna Brady series set in Arizona where she grew up. She also writes the interrelated Walker family South-western thrillers and has received numerous award nominations.

**To be Interviewed by Maddie Margarita**  
(Lit Up! salons)

### Laurie R. King

**Laurie R. King** is a *New York Times* bestselling author and won the Edgar Award for her novel, *A Grave Talent*. *The Beekeepers Apprentice* was the first book in her acclaimed Mary Russell-Sherlock Holmes series and her second book in the series won the Nero Award (*A Monstrous Regiment of Women*).

#### Panelists:

**Greta Boris, Steph Cha, Mary Anna Evans, Lydia Fitzpatrick, Rachel Howzell Hall, Kaira Rouda, Laurie Stevens, Wendall Thomas, Betty Webb**

**Moderators: Jill Amadio, Barbara DeMarco-Barrett, Ellen Byron**



Hosted by Orange County Sisters in Crime (a non-profit organization)

Location: Mesa Verde Country Club, Costa Mesa, CA

Register at [www.ocsistersincrime.org](http://www.ocsistersincrime.org)/[www.mysteryink.com](http://www.mysteryink.com) or mail

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**FREE PARKING - LUNCHEON INCLUDED**



## DISCOVERING A LOST CLASSIC OF 1970S CRIME FICTION

by Lee Goldberg

*Editor's note: A longer version of this article was previously published on [Crimereads.com](http://Crimereads.com). I believe Lee's perspective as an author and publisher is of interest to our members, with lessons to be learned about editing, acquisitions, packaging, marketing, et cetera.*

Six years ago, I fell in love with the twelve *Hardman* novels by the late Ralph Dennis—an expensive obsession that led me to acquire the copyright to all of his work and to co-found a publishing company just to get the novels back into print.

Don't feel bad if you've never heard of Ralph Dennis. His first seven *Hardman* novels, with titles like *HARDMAN #1: ATLANTA DEATHWATCH*, were all released in paperback in 1974 by Popular Library, which packaged them as cheap, sleazy, men's action adventure novels. Most of the books in the genre were disposable hack work, doomed to a short shelf life and oblivion. But the *Hardman* novels were something different, terrific crime novels with nuanced characters, strong plots, a remarkable sense of place, and something meaningful to say about race relations in the deep south. Even so, the novels slipped into obscurity and Ralph never achieved the recognition or success he deserved, despite publishing three standalone novels outside of the series. At the time of his death in 1988, he was a destitute alcoholic, sleeping on a cot in the backroom of George's Deli in Atlanta and working as a clerk at a used bookstore.

But Ralph wasn't entirely forgotten. His *Hardman* series remained beloved by crime writers, who credited Ralph for inspiring his work and passionately recommended the yellowed, hard-to-find paperbacks to friends. That's how I discovered Ralph. A friend made me read him, and I got hooked, bad.

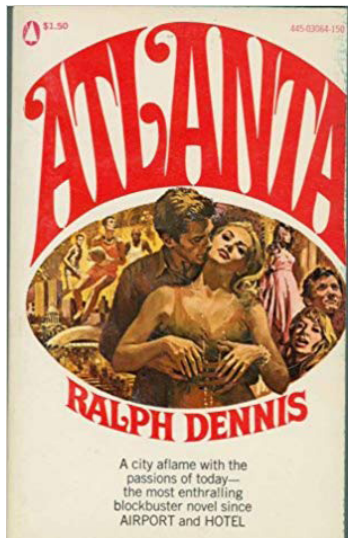
Having re-released Ralph's *Hardman* books, I'm tackling his other work, including his first standalone, *ATLANTA*. Published by Popular Library as a paperback original in 1975, it was inexplicably packaged as a sprawling potboiler similar to bestsellers of the day, written by authors like Arthur Hailey and Harold Robbins. Novels packed with sex, melodrama, politics, and high-finance, usually pegged to a specific industry, like banking, or cars. There was nothing subtle about Popular Library's ploy. The blurb across the cover of *ATLANTA* screamed:

---

**“At the time of his death in 1988, he was a destitute alcoholic, sleeping on a cot in the backroom of George's Deli in Atlanta and working as a clerk at a used bookstore.”**

---

*“A city aflame with the passions of today—the most enthralling blockbuster novel since AIRPORT and HOTEL.”*



The problem was that *ATLANTA* was nothing like those books, and Ralph wasn't like those authors, so the novel disappointed the readers the publisher was trying to attract and didn't reach the audience that would truly appreciate it: crime fiction fans. *ATLANTA* was essentially a novel about conflicted “fixer,” a ruthless lawyer of dubious morality hired by a real estate titan to quietly and efficiently make problems go away with bribes, cover ups and persuasion. Alas, once again, Ralph was sabotaged by his publisher's bad packaging and promotion, only this time, he also sabotaged himself.

Ralph's strengths were a keen eye for detail and writing lean, evocative prose that moved a story along at a brisk pace. But in *ATLANTA*, perhaps in an effort to bulk up the number of pages to Hailey-esque proportions, he filled the book with rambling descriptions and lengthy, irrelevant backstory that dragged the pace down.

*continued on next page*

**DISCOVERING A LOST CLASSIC** *continued from previous page*

ATLANTA was a commercial failure and quickly forgotten. Ralph returned to his *Hardman* series and the kind of writing he did best, though he was ashamed of the books and longed to be taken seriously as a literary writer. What he didn't believe, and most critics at the time didn't either, was that crime novels are serious, literary writing. Lean prose isn't a sign of superficiality and setting a story in a world of crime doesn't make it any less emotionally, spiritually, psychologically and culturally meaningful than so-called "literary fiction."

ATLANTA is essentially a crime novel, but it's also a scathing indictment of a city being radically transformed in the 1970s by gentrification and greed—and of politicians more interested in courting business and tourism, and enriching themselves, than preserving the neighborhoods, culture, and deep, if sometimes cruel, history that gave ATLANTA its distinct personality. These were the same kinds of issues that John D. MacDonald was tackling in his fiction at the time, in both his Travis McGee series of crime novels and his standalones like CONDOMINIUM, though his concerns were more about the impact of development on the environment. Ralph's real interest was the people on the fringes of society. He saw the dive bars, coffee shops, and strip clubs that he loved for their character (and, yes, probably for the vice that went with them) being mowed down in favor of cold, charmless shopping malls, office towers, and sports arenas. As a result, the novel is also about the struggling underclass whose lives were intertwined with, and shamelessly exploited by, the wealthy and powerful.

I knew there was a good book in ATLANTA... it just needed editing. So I cut tons of unnecessary exposition and tightened scenes to improve pacing and sharpen characters. And, finally, I retitled the book THE BROKEN FIXER to reflect what the story is actually about. But all the words are still Ralph's, as only he could write them, and vividly illustrate the cultural, racial, and sexual attitudes of the time. Only now it's the book it always should have been.

\*\*\*



**Lee Goldberg** is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of over thirty books, including the new crime novel *LOST HILLS*, coming out January 1. He's also written and/or produced scores of TV shows, including *Diagnosis Murder* and *Monk*, and co-created the hit Hallmark movie series *Mystery 101*. His company Brash Books has published nearly 100 crime novels and thrillers. Find him online at [leegoldberg.com](http://leegoldberg.com).

### 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).



## MORE GUMBO PARTY PHOTOS

Submitted by **Pat Broeske**

Taken by Jim Broeske



Host Bill Fitzhugh in the kitchen.



Jeri Westerson and brewmaster husband, Craig.




L-R: Linda Nakamura, Debbie Mitsch



Former SoCalMWA presidents. L-R: Gary Phillips, Craig Faustus Buck





It's time to  
**SAVE THE DATE!**

It's not the first.

It's not the second. It's the

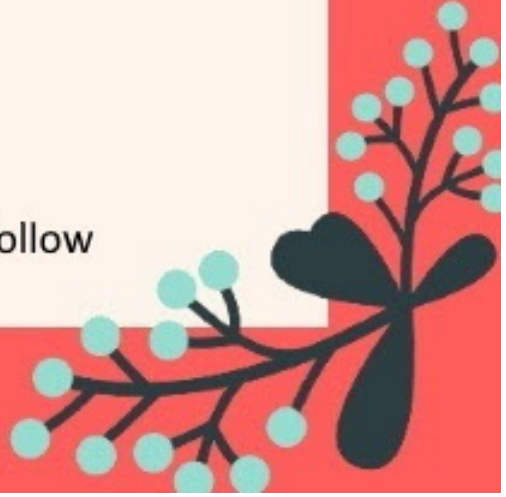
*Third Killer  
Holiday Party*

**More Food Wine and Desserts  
Plus Trivia and Prizes**

Once again, Sisters in Crime/LA and Mystery Writers of America So Cal are joining forces to triple the holiday cheer. Look for the RSVP, coming to your inbox soon!

And the big day is *December 8, 2019*  
*Noon to 3 p.m.*

More details to follow



Crime  
CALENDAR

October 31–Nov 3 – [Bouchercon, Dallas, TX](#)  
November 8–10 – [New England Crime Bake, Boston, MA](#)  
November 10 – [SoCalMWA Tam Luncheon, Los Angeles, CA](#)  
November 10 – [Ladies of Intrigue, Costa Mesa, CA](#)  
December 8 – [SoCalMWA/SinCLA Holiday Party, Los Angeles, CA](#)

The  
LAST WORD

“I had rules for a reason. Unfortunately, they only worked if I followed them.”

—Matt Coyle, LOST TOMORROWS