



The
MARCH

of CRIME

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Congratulations!

**SoCalMWA
Edgar Award
Winner**

Katie Alender
THE COMPANION
Best Young Adult

[More winners](#)

California Crime Writers Conference

with Guest of Honor
CARA BLACK

It's virtual, it's free, and it's
coming this summer!

June 12 & 13

[More info](#)

RMMWA Presents:

DETERMINING THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING DEATH by Dr. Diane France, Human ID Lab of Colorado

Thursday, May 13
6:30 p.m. MT (4:30 p.m. PT)
Virtual via CrowdCast



The Rocky Mountain Chapter of Mystery Writers of America has graciously invited all MWA members to their May meeting featuring Dr. Diane France from the Human ID Lab of Colorado.

Do you want to know how to write about the circumstances surrounding death, from sharp force trauma to blunt trauma to gunshot wounds?

A forensic anthropologist is often called to determine the circumstances surrounding the death of a body, and the key to successfully diagnosing trauma means that we have to understand how bone reacts to force. After this talk, you'll understand as well!

Speaker Bio

Dr. France has experience in archaeological techniques, particularly as they relate to recovery of human remains and evidence from outdoor scenes. She received her Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of Colorado, Boulder, in 1983 with an emphasis on forensic anthropology and osteology. She's been certified as an expert in forensic anthropology by the American Board of Forensic Anthropology since 1989 and she's a recognized expert by multiple Colorado district courts as well as in Wisconsin.

Zoom Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85438928232?pwd=dUxMWE1VY0c1dlloTHY-1Q3lpUIQzUT09>

Meeting ID: 854 3892 8232

Passcode: 091881

[MORE INFO](#)



The President's Rap Sheet

Jessica Kaye

Hello May!

The [Edgar Awards](#) took place last Thursday, April 29 in a daytime virtual event that sparkled with the love and shared joy shown when we celebrate each other. It is often said that mystery writers are a very welcoming community and how true that is. The speeches were lovely, the audience gracious. There were more clap and heart emojis in the Zoom chat than I could count, and they were all deserved. And a big congratulations goes out to **Katie Alender**, who won in the Best Young Adult category.

If you missed seeing the Edgar Awards live, you can [watch it here](#) at your convenience.

A member of MWA's national Board of Directors has shared an opportunity for underrepresented, unagented and unpublished women writers: [LitUp by Reese's Book Club](#). If this opportunity is not for you but may suit someone you know, please share it with them. **Note the May 30 deadline.**

A quote from the website:

"LitUp by Reese's Book Club is a writer's fellowship for unpublished, underrepresented women. We're set to discover, mentor, and champion first-time authors, so more diverse stories are seen, heard, and read by all."

Application deadline: Sunday May 30th, 2021 11:59pm PT

Eligibility requirements: Unagented, unpublished women writers who identify as diverse. Full eligibility details can be found [here](#).

Application materials: One completed fiction manuscript with a woman at the center of its story; a 750-word synopsis of your manuscript, and series of short essays."

But wait, there's more!

MWA has two new books, HOW TO WRITE A MYSTERY and WHEN A STRANGER COMES TO TOWN. They are beautiful books and filled with the writing of our fellow MWA members. [Find the schedule of upcoming events about HOW TO WRITE A MYSTERY here.](#)

That's the President's Rap for May. Keep storytelling and, whether or not you stay home, please stay safe.

Jessica

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SoCalMWA Discussion Group

- Member introductions
- Ideas for book launches & other book promotion
- Publishing insights & tips
- Book deal announcements
- Blog post promotion & discussion
- Book reviews
- Support & Networking
- And more!

[SUBSCRIBE HERE](#)



The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

The other day, something unpleasant happened in my life—actually, it was somebody else's unpleasantness, but I care about this person a lot so I was worried. Okay, worried is an understatement. I managed to work myself into a frenzy of panic.

The good news is that everything is okay and the situation was mostly resolved on the same day it happened. In fact, I wouldn't be telling you about this at all if it weren't for a key moment during my meltdown that I thought: I CAN USE THIS.

The manuscript I'm working on now requires me to extend myself emotionally into places I haven't experienced yet myself (like the death of a parent or spouse). But, like everybody, I've had situations that caused great emotional pain (some of it manufactured in my own head). I'm learning to use the feelings brought up during those experiences to inform my writing, expanding on them when necessary to include devastating events that I might not have personal experience with.

It's true that my reaction to the situation this past week was overblown but that didn't make it feel any less real to me at the time. Or, perhaps on some level, I understood that it *wasn't* real, which allowed me to pause for a second and take note of how I felt physically and emotionally. I tried to think of words or phrases to describe it. If the event was actually as catastrophic as I'd built it up to be, it's likely that figuring out how to best use the feelings it brought up in my writing would be the furthest thing from my mind.

For me, there is a close link between writing and therapy. I didn't always understand that, but now that I do, it's one of the primary ways I take care of my emotional wellbeing. Even writing this out here for you all now is therapeutic because I've put space between myself and my feelings about what happened so I can look at them more objectively.

You didn't know you'd get to sit in on my therapy when you joined MWA, did you? You're welcome.

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.

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**Join the SoCalMWA
Discussion Group**

groups.io/g/MWA-SOCAL
(members only)

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OVER the TRANSOM

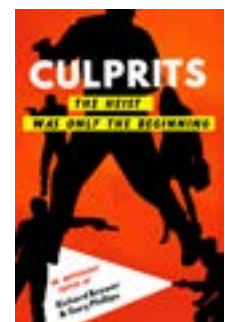
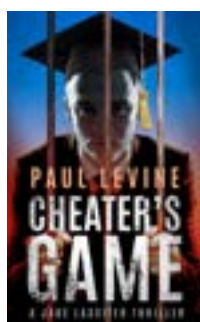
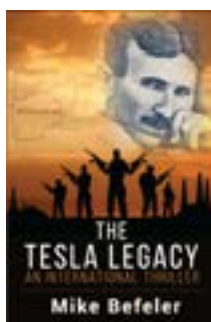
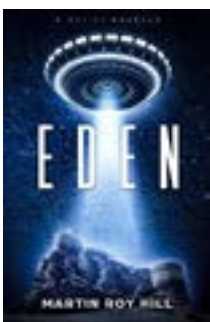
The audiobook of **Martin Roy Hill's** sci-fi thriller EDEN was released on April 10. Narrated by Tim Danko, EDEN tells the story of a U.S. Army patrol in Iraq that discovers ancient ruins hiding a centuries-old secret that could destroy civilization as we know it.

Mike Befeler's international thriller, THE TESLA LEGACY, is now available in audiobook as well as print and ebook editions: [Audio](#), [audio CD](#), [print](#), and [ebook](#). Picture a retired mathematics professor and conspiracy nut with a butt-kicking, surrogate-daughter sidekick. Following up on inventions from eccentric genius, Nikola Tesla, Elmore Krantz and rookie cop Brittney Chase team up to solve a hundred year old puzzle while trying to thwart a secret government agency and an Afghani terrorist group who seek to get their hands on a doomsday weapon. More info at mikebefeler.com.

Mystery Scene magazine named **Paul Levine's** CHEATER'S GAME as one of the best legal thrillers of 2020.

Laguna Beach's bestselling master of domestic suspense, **Kaira Rouda**, will release her latest thriller, THE NEXT WIFE, with Thomas & Mercer on May 1. In the novel, Kate Nelson had it all—a successful business with her husband John and a wonderful daughter. When her husband leaves her for another much younger woman—a coworker at the company they jointly own—things get very nasty very fast, and someone will end up dead. The novel promises to shock, surprise and satisfy with its unflinching depiction of an idyllic marriage gone very wrong and the lengths that two women will go to get retribution.

Culprits is a 2018 linked anthology conceived by **Richard Brewer** and **Gary Phillips**. It begins with a robbery of a slush fund from some politically connected good ole' boys in Texas. Each subsequent chapter/story by a different writer (contributors include Brett Battles, Joe Clifford, David Corbett, Gar Anthony Haywood, **Jessica Kaye**, Manuel Ramos, and Zoe Sharp), follows a member of the crew post the takedown until the concluding chapters by the editors tie up the loose ends. Character 7 optioned the book and it will be the basis for a streaming miniseries from Disney+ UK. CULPRITS can be purchased anywhere books are sold and online [here](#).



OVER the TRANSOM

Judith Ayn's first book in her Cheater's Lake mystery series is now available. MURDER AT THE NO-KILL ANIMAL SHELTER, a prequel novella, sets the stage for the next full-length book, DEAD LAWYERS, due out this summer. MURDER asks the question: Why would someone burn down kennels and murder a kindly old caretaker at a no-kill animal shelter? Cheater's Lake, Washington, Homicide Detective Mark Walsh must solve the crimes. If successful, the shelter's back in business. Failure= cat-astrophic! Available at [Book Locker](#) and Amazon.

MURDER IN THE BAYOU BONEYARD, **Ellen Byron's** sixth Cajun Country Mystery, won the Lefty Award for Best Humorous Mystery.

THE EVICTION OF HOPE, a short story anthology edited by Colin Conway and including stories by **Gary Phillips, John Shepphird, Travis Richardson,** and **Holly West,** will be released on May 18.

Amazon bestselling author of the acclaimed Lily Wong series, **Tori Eldridge's** dark magical realism suspense about a desperate mother who rises from the slums of Brazil to become a powerful Quimbanda priestess bent on revenge, spanning three continents, forty years, and a mysterious incident in 1560 France, to Lisa Kastner at Running Wild Press for publication in May 2022 by Nicole Resciniti at The Seymour Agency (world English).

Nancy Cole Silverman has sold THE NAVIGATOR'S DAUGHTER in a three book deal to Level Best Books, commencing December 2021.

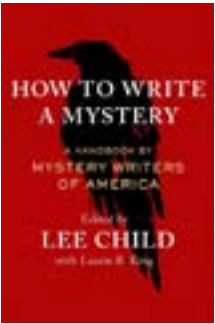
Travis Richardson won the Derringer Award in flash fiction for his story "War Words" published in *Punk Noir Magazine*. You can find the story [here](#).

Sarah M. Chen won the Derringer Award in the long story category for her story "Hotelin" in SHOTGUN HONEY, VOLUME #4: RECOIL.

BLIND VIGIL, the seventh book in **Matt Coyle's** Rick Cahill crime series has been nominated for the *Deadly Pleasures Magazine* Barry Award in the Best Thriller category.



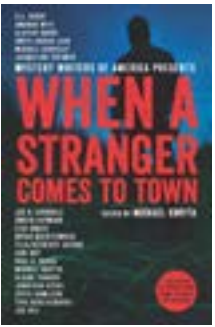
Member APPEARANCES



MWA has arranged several virtual events to celebrate the publication of *HOW TO WRITE A MYSTERY, A HANDBOOK BY MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA*, edited by Lee Child and Laurie R. King (April 27).

Tuesday, May 4, 6 p.m. PT—Book Passage (Corte Madera, CA), with Lee Child and Laurie R. King: <https://www.bookpassage.com/event/2021-05>.

Thursday, May 6, 5 p.m. CT—The Raven Bookstore (Lawrence, KS), with Lee Child and Laurie R. King: <https://www.ravenbookstore.com/event/lee-child-laurie-r-king-how-write-mystery>.



Monday, June 14, 6 p.m. ET—New York Society Library, with Laurie R. King, Jeffery Deaver, and Charles Todd: <https://www.nysoclib.org/>.

Saturday, July 31, 5:30 p.m. PT—San Diego Writers Festival in partnership with Warwick's (La Jolla, CA), with Lee Child, Laurie R. King, Frankie Bailey, and Neil Nyren: <https://sandiegowritersfestival.com/>.

Additionally, MWA just published *WHEN A STRANGER COMES TO TOWN*, an anthology edited by Michael Koryta, on April 20. [Find info on both books here.](#)

Jennifer J. Chow will be part of the virtual Asian American Authors in Conversation series presented by Chatham Square Library of New York Public Library in cooperation with the Asian American Writers' Workshop (AAWW). She'll discuss *MIMI LEE READS BETWEEN THE LINES* on Wednesday, May 19 from 6–7pm ET. The following day, Thursday, May 20, she will be holding a writing workshop in conjunction with the series.

On May 18, 7 p.m. PT, **Barbara DeMarco-Barrett** talks with grammar guru and Random House copy editor Benjamin Dreyer, author of *DREYER'S ENGLISH*. Details and Zoom login at penonfire.com/speakerseries.

**MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA
2021 EDGAR ALLAN POE AWARDS**

WINNERS

BEST NOVEL

DJINN PATROL ON THE PURPLE LINE Deepa Anappara (Penguin Random House—Random House)

BEST FIRST NOVEL BY AN AMERICAN AUTHOR

PLEASE SEE US by Caitlin Mullen (Simon & Schuster—Gallery Books)

BEST PAPERBACK ORIGINAL

WHEN NO ONE IS WATCHING by Alyssa Cole (HarperCollins Publishers—William Morrow)

BEST FACT CRIME

DEATH IN MUD LICK: A COAL COUNTRY FIGHT AGAINST THE DRUG COMPANIES THAT DELIVERED THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC by Eric Eyre (Simon & Schuster—Scribner)

BEST CRITICAL/BIOGRAPHICAL

PHANTOM LADY: HOLLYWOOD PRODUCER JOAN HARRISON, THE FORGOTTEN WOMAN BEHIND HITCHCOCK by Christina Lane (Chicago Review Press)

BEST SHORT STORY

“Dust, Ash, Flight,” ADDIS ABABA NOIR by Maaza Mengiste (Akashic Books)

BEST JUVENILE

PREMEDITATED MYRTLE by Elizabeth C. Bunce (Workman Publishing—Algonquin Young Readers)

BEST YOUNG ADULT

THE COMPANION by Katie Alender (Penguin Young Readers—G.P. Putnam’s Sons BFYR)

BEST TELEVISION EPISODE TELEPLAY

“Episode 1, Photochemistry”—*Dead Still*, Written by John Morton (Acorn TV)

ROBERT L. FISH MEMORIAL AWARD

“The Bite,” TAMPA BAY NOIR by Colette Bancroft (Akashic Books)

THE SIMON & SCHUSTER MARY HIGGINS CLARK AWARD

THE CABINETS OF BARNABY MAYNE by Elsa Hart (Minotaur Books)

THE G.P. PUTNAM’S SONS SUE GRAFTON MEMORIAL AWARD

VERA KELLY IS NOT A MYSTERY by Rosalie Knecht (Tin House Books)

MY QUIRKY CRUSADE

by **Rosemary Mild**

A zillion books, articles, and workshops are out there on how to be a better writer. If you put them end to end they'd probably circle the earth.

In the writing of dialogue, there's a current style these days for authors of mystery and suspense fiction. The standard appears to be the verb "said." For instance, "I feel miserable," she said. "My car broke down," he said. We're taught that "said" is a good verb and we should use it—and rarely anything else.

And, above all, ditch the adverbs! Here are a few examples of adverbs that tell instead of show: "...she said angrily, spitefully, sweetly, happily, morosely." Instead of showing: "I'll never come back," she shouted.

Elmore Leonard said something like "Let's kill all the adverbs." Lawrence Sanders wrote a book for writers: TELLING LIES FOR FUN AND PROFIT. He said that if your characters are good and your dialogue is natural, "let them talk to each other. And stay the hell out of their way."

The same rule goes for piling on the adjectives. PEN IN HAND, the Maryland Writers' Association newsletter, once had a cartoon of a speaker at a podium in front of a large audience. A sign on the wall behind him read: "Adjectives and Adverbs Anonymous."

But getting back to the word "said." I'm launching my own personal crusade to do away with the persistence of it. My point is, the word "said" is boring. Downright booooring! I miss the old-fashioned authors' extravagant animal sounds, such as: "He barked, he yelped, he bayed, he grunted." "She snarled, she screeched, she warbled, she bleated." Now I ask you: Aren't those verbs more fun? I intend to indulge in them.

But I promise you, I will never write "The horse-faced woman neighed" or "whinnied." You have my word on that.

"My Quirky Crusade" appears in **Rosemary Mild's** new book of personal essays, IN MY NEXT LIFE I'LL GET IT RIGHT. When not dreaming up outrageous ideas, she goes to Jazzercise, satisfying her suppressed desire to be a Rockette. She and her husband Larry wallow in crimes and clues coauthoring mystery and suspense fiction. Visit them at www.magicile.com.



The
LAST WORD

"Los Angeles in summer is an inferno that will bake your brain, dull your judgment, and turn the gentlest Angelino into a killer."

—Josh Stallings, TRICKY