



The
MARCH

of CRIME

Inside this issue

[President's Rap p 2](#)

[Editor's Corner p 3](#)

[Over the Transom p 4](#)

[Member Apearances p 6](#)

[Memorial Scholarship p 6](#)

[Last Word p 7](#)

SoCalMWA Presents

NETWORKING FOR WRITERS

with **Laura Brennan**

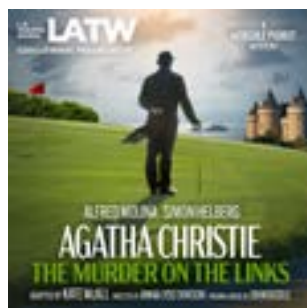
Thursday, August 19

6:30–8 p.m.

Notoriously solitary creatures, many writers would rather brave a blank page than a cocktail party. But networking is essential to building your career, finding opportunities, sharing resources, and connecting with other professionals. In this webinar, Laura will show you how to introduce yourself in a way that starts a fun conversation, how to make the most of conferences, and even how to network virtually. Webinar + Q&A so bring questions!

MURDER ON THE LINKS

L.A. Theatre Works presents an audio theatre adaptation of the classic Agatha Christie whodunit, starring Alfred Molina, Simon Helberg, & Joanne Whalley.



[Order Here](#)



Laura Brennan's eclectic career includes almost every storytelling medium: theater, television, film, web series, short stories, and video games. She was co-chair of the 2019 California Crime Writers Conference, and her short story, "Codename: Mom," is in the MWA middle-grade anthology, *SUPER PUZZLETASTIC MYSTERIES*. Her superpower is helping people talk about themselves and their projects in a way that's easy and engaging. Find out more at PitchingPerfectly.com.

REGISTRATION INFO WILL BE SENT VIA EMAIL



The President's Rap Sheet

Jessica Kaye

Welcome to August 2021, where the heat is turned up and calamity is fodder for our thoughts and for some, as prompts or plots.

I haven't even attempted to write on any of my WIPs in weeks. Maybe it is overload with work, maybe the ongoing appraisal of the world around us. For me, there is nothing that gets me writing as much as these two things: strict self-discipline or a deadline. One thing that previously kept me writing, with or without deadlines, was my writing group. I put it in the past tense, even though we occasionally reach out to each other to assure ourselves we intend to meet again, albeit via Zoom.

If this sounds familiar to you, let's make an agreement to try to get back to our prime directive, creating something original by combining words with other words. If you have stayed productive, as many have, hearty congratulations.

Of course, many of us are getting together in person. Bouchercon is later this month in New Orleans, a conference we enjoy in a city I love and miss visiting. My household is opting out this year. We just aren't ready to attend large events. Many of you are going, so have an extra beignet for those at home.

We do have another event you can attend without leaving home. **Laura Brennan** will present her popular talk on networking. Networking in a pandemic will be a key topic. Please join us on August 19 from 6:30–9:30 PT. Registration information will be coming to you via email.

See you in September and, as always, 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!

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The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

Lately, I've been giving a lot of thought to creativity. Specifically, my own commitment to living a creative life.

While I've never thought of it in quite that way—a commitment—I realize now that I've been on this path for quite awhile. My whole life, I suppose, if I look back on it. But what I never quite realized was that living a creative life is vital to living my best life. That creation, curiosity, and learning are my personal keys to being the best person I can be, the most authentic version of myself.

Yes, I know this sounds self-helpy (I created a word!) and maybe even a bit woo-woo. I don't typically consider myself someone particularly interested in self-help and definitely not woo-woo. And yet, here I am.

Much of my creativity is focused on writing. It's my highest priority creative outlet and also, the most challenging. But identifying writing as my highest priority doesn't mean that the outcomes that might result from it—publishing and financial success, for example—are my highest priorities for living a satisfying life. Rather, it's the process of writing that contributes to my life satisfaction. Taking joy in the process of creating rather than the outcome of those creations is an important shift in my thinking on the subject because it frees me up to enjoy the work rather than worrying about how that work might be received.

This is where I'm at today. I might be someplace different tomorrow, as I am a person who thinks a lot—possibly too much—and the conclusions I arrive at on one day might change on the next. But regardless, I'm on a path, and today I'm excited about where that path might take me.

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
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FRESHBLOOD

SoCalMWA welcomes its new members

Barbara Pronin



Barbara Pronin, aka Barbara Nickolae, returns to MWA with renewed interest in the genre as her six older mysteries are currently being re-issued and her newest, *THE MINER'S CANARY*, is under contract with Touchpoint Press. The Brooklyn-born writer, who lives in Orange County, is a contributing editor to two national real estate publications and she's hard at work on a historical novel set during the waning days of WW II. When she isn't writing, she's most often reading, cooking, watching a Dodgers game, or hopelessly tinkering at the piano. Find her on Instagram: [@writerbobbi](#).

OVER the TRANSOM

Shea E. Butler's urban fantasy short story about murder, shapeshifting and revenge, "Metamorphosis," was accepted for publication in Scare Street Publishing's upcoming NIGHT TERRORS anthology which will be published late fall/early winter 2021. Also, on July 28, Butler's third short chat story, "Capsized," will be published on the Shortz story app.

Dark Moon Books publisher **Eric J. Guignard** announced that SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT: A 21ST CENTURY MODERNIZATION is available July 30. This literary modernization is of the classic Arthurian tale, SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT, the tale that inspired the A24-movie *The Green Knight* starring Dev Patel. The book also includes illustrations, the original Middle English poetic version, the original 1898 translation to modern English, academic insight, and more. Available [here](#).

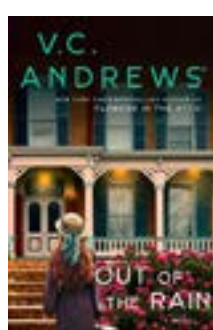
THE OC, **DP Lyle's** fifth Jake Longly comedic thriller, is coming on October 5, 2021. [More info](#).

CAJUN KISS OF DEATH, the seventh book in Ellen Byron's Agatha and Lefty Award-winning Cajun Country Mystery series, will release on August 10.

OUT OF THE RAIN, the sequel to **Andrew Neiderman's** (writing as V.C. Andrews) THE UMBRELLA LADY, will be published in October by Simon and Schuster's Gallery Books. In OUT OF THE RAIN, the main character surprises her father, who now has a new family. He had left her at the train station in a nearby town where she was discovered by an elderly lady who had a room prepared for a little girl.

PALM SPRINGS NOIR has been released by Akashic Books. **Barbara DeMarco-Barrett** is editor as well as story contributor. DeMarco-Barrett's first involvement with Akashic came in 2010 when her story, "Crazy for You," was published in ORANGE COUNTY NOIR, and a few years later included in USA NOIR: BEST OF THE AKASHIC NOIR SERIES.

Out now from Skyboat Media is the audio book version of MATTHEW HENSON AND THE ICE TEMPLE OF HARLEM by **Gary Phillips**. Set in the political, artistic and cultural crucible that was the Harlem Renaissance, real life North Pole explorer Henson is reimagined in the pulp tradition. With the help of his pal Bessie Coleman, America's first Black aviatrix, he contends with Dutch Schultz, numbers boss Queenie St. Clair and Nikola Tesla, whose Death Ray he must keep out of the clutches of coup plotting plutocrats. Available on Audible and the CD version coming soon from Blackstone.



OVER the TRANSOM

Lisa Morton's *Spine Tingle*s podcast will launch this month as part of My Paranormal Network, a collection of paranormal-themed podcasts. *Spine Tingle*s will feature weekly original horror and suspense short stories by Lisa read by celebrity readers, including Dean Haglund (*The X-Files*), Naomi Grossman (*American Horror Story*), Bridget Marquardt (*The Girls Next Door*), and Rob Zabrecky (*Penn & Teller: Fool Me*). [Subscribe to the newsletter](#) for more news as it happens!

Paula Bernstein, author of the Hannah Kline Mystery series, just released her first audiobook, MURDER IN THE FAMILY, produced and directed by SoCalMWA President Jessica Kaye. Her short story, The Queen of Mean, has been published in the 2021 Sisters in Crime LA Anthology, AVENGING ANGELENOS.

THE NECKLACE, by **Matt Witten**, comes out on September 7 from Oceanview Publishing. The thriller has been optioned for film by Appian Way and Cartel Pictures. It stars an unlikely heroine: Susan Lentigo, a small-town waitress from upstate New York, fighting to prove that the man who's about to be executed for killing her daughter is actually innocent—and the real killer is still free. As the clock ticks down, she takes on the FBI in a heart-pounding crusade for justice. “Fast and tense”—Lee Child.



Member APPEARANCES

Rob Osler will participate in “Debut: The Thrill of Publishing Your First Book” on Saturday, August 28, at 10:30 a.m. at Bouchercon in New Orleans.

The City of Agoura Hills, in conjunction with the Las Virgenes School District, the Los Angeles County Library & the Agoura Hills Arts Council, has selected **Lee Goldberg** and his novel *LOST HILLS* as their 2021 ONE CITY, ONE BOOK/AUTHOR honoree. Past honorees include Michael Connelly and Dick Van Dyke. The city is hosting “An Evening with the Author—Lee Goldberg” on Thursday, September 30, at the Agoura Hills Event and Recreation Center. Registration will begin starting August 1 at agourahillsrec.org. Admission is free, but registration is required; space is limited.

Sheila Lowe is celebrating the release of *DEAD LETTERS*, a Claudia Rose Novel (book #8) on August 3 with a big outdoor party at a Mexican restaurant in Ventura. [Email an RSVP](#) if you would like to come. On August 18, she will share her presentation, the Clark Rockefeller Case, via Book Carnival’s Zoom. On August 19, she will be a live guest of Molly on Mysteries (former SinC maven Molly Weston), and on August 21 at 2 p.m., Sheila will be with Debbie Mitsch of Mystery Ink for a live signing not in the bookstore, but in a clubhouse in Huntington Beach. Email events@mystery-ink.com for details). All welcome. Sheila is also holding a [Goodreads Giveaway](#) for *DEAD LETTERS*.

MWA Barbara Neely Memorial Scholarship Program



Barbara Neely, a trailblazing Black novelist, short story writer, and activist, was named Grand Master by MWA in late 2019. She was best known for creating the distinctive amateur sleuth Blanche White, featured in the novels *BLANCHE ON THE LAM*, *BLANCHE AMONG THE TALENTED TENTH*, *BLANCHE CLEANS UP*, and *BLANCHE PASSES GO*.

Ms. Neely was to be publicly honored by her colleagues and presented with the Grand Master award at the 2020 Edgar Awards banquet. Sadly, Ms. Neely passed away in March 2020 before she could be feted and honored as she deserved.

MWA received permission from Ms. Neely’s family to establish an annual scholarship in her memory for a Black crime writer. To this end, MWA will give out two \$2000 scholarships per year: One for an aspiring Black writer who is unpublished in the crime or mystery field, and another for Black authors who have already published a crime or mystery.

MWA will accept applications for the scholarship from July 1–September 30. For eligibility requirements, the application, and more information, visit the [MWA website](#).

Questions can be addressed to mwa@mysterywriters.org.

The
LAST WORD

“Dry mouth, bloodshot eyes, the purple haze of a mild hangover. Not so much from booze, it was more a lack of sleep and loud music. A normal start to the day, in other words.”

—Jonathan Brown, THE BIG CRESCENDO