

January 2022



The
MARCH

of CRIME

Inside this issue

[President's Rap p 2](#)

[Editor's Corner p 3](#)

[Over the Transom p 4](#)

[Member Appearances p 5](#)

[Last Word p 5](#)

HAPPY NEW YEAR from SoCalMWA!

Left Coast Crime "Southwest Sleuths"

April 7–10, 2022
Albuquerque, New Mexico

[More Info](#)



We look forward to seeing you in the coming year!



The President's Rap Sheet

Jessica Kaye

Hello, Chapter members. I sincerely wish you a happy new year.

This column is my swan song as President of SoCalMWA. Next month's column will be by your new Chapter President, **Travis Richardson**.

As a writer and reader with curiosity about the origin of expressions, I looked up the derivation of 'swan song'. According to various answers online, the term was first used by Aeschylus in *Agamemnon*, written in 458 BC. The mythology, or perhaps the fact, for all I know, is that swans sing a beautiful song shortly before they die. That is a little grimmer of a backstory than I had expected to find. Maybe this is more fitting for the Horror Writers Association. Of course, its current meaning is far less drastic than that. Merriam Webster defines it as "a farewell appearance or final act or pronouncement."

This is not really goodbye, though, because as a member of MWA, all that the Chapter does will keep engaging my interest and participation.

It has been interesting and challenging to helm a writer's organization when this group can meet prudently only via remote connection. Yet, we saw attendance numbers for the California Crime Writers Conference swell by presenting the event online and at no cost to registrants. We have hosted webinars with experts on a variety of topics. The SoCalMWA listserv has been more active than I can recall seeing in the beforetimes. All this is to say that we have found some good in this profoundly challenging era.

Keep mining for good things, such as the resources available to you at the national and local levels. Spend time on both websites, see what we do, get involved, get immersed. Get all the value you can out of your membership. If you have ideas for the Chapter, share them with the board and officers. Your proposals can help keep SoCalMWA vibrant and valuable.

"Stay safe" has been my signature phrase during my tenure and it is still the primary goal for us all now, nearly two years later. Omicron has proven itself a tenacious sibling of Delta. The sign-off is still relevant. I will look forward to the day I don't have to wish we would all stay safe and yes, with the highly communicable new variant, stay home when we can.

My farewell wish for you is to keep writing as much or as little as you like, keep reading and replenishing your TBR stacks, laugh a lot, support each other and be kind.

With hope for 2022 and beyond,
Jessica

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: [Jessica Kaye](#)
VP: Jennifer Younger
Treasurer: [Sarah M. Chen](#)
Secretary: [Travis Richardson](#)

Board of Directors

[Fred Andersen](#)
[Gay Tolt Kinman](#)
[Terri Nolan](#)
[August Norman](#)
[Edward Arno](#)
[Ona Russell](#)
[Nancy Cole Silverman](#)

Mystery Writers of America
 Southern California Chapter
 c/o Jessica Kaye
 8840 Wilshire Blvd.
 Beverly Hills, CA 90211

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

[Like us on Facebook](#)

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

Happy New Year!

This morning, I said goodbye to my 92-year-old grandma. I realize how that sounds, but rest assured, she didn't pass away—I don't know, maybe I should've led with that? To clarify, she'd travelled from Oregon to celebrate the holidays with us and today, I escorted her safely to the car's passenger seat, gave her a big hug and kiss, and waved to her as she and my uncle drove away.

But this trip did feel like an ending of sorts. My grandma is doing physically and mentally well, but she's getting tired and we can all see that. I will be surprised if she agrees to another long car trip down south to see us. And that's okay. At 92, she's travelled quite a few miles, both literally and figuratively.

I suppose I shouldn't be talking about endings when we're on the cusp of a brand new year. But new years bring changes of all sorts, and some of those changes will be beginnings, middles, *and* endings. It took me a long time to figure that out—that beginnings don't have to actually start there. For example, I'm beginning the year smack in the middle of writing a book but regardless, I'm looking at it as a fresh start.

I mention my grandma because she's on my mind, but also because of an experience I had with her over Thanksgiving. My husband I went to Oregon to see her but I couldn't take any writing time off because I'd committed to finishing NaNoWriMo with fifty-thousand words. Instead of holing up in the guest room, I'd sit in the living room with her while she watched her soaps, set my Pomodoro timer, and type away, oblivious to everything that was going on around me. Sometimes, I can do that.

When it was clear I'd finished, my grandma asked me how I wrote. She wanted to know what went through my head as I typed; did I picture scenes or dialogue, how did I know what to write, did I make it all up—that sort of thing. I was unaware that she'd been paying any attention to me at all, so the fact that she'd actually been watching me, wondering about my work, really touched me. It was a moment of connection I'll treasure for the rest of my life.

I have plenty of New Year's goals, but the one I'll work hardest at is having more of these types of connections in my life. Being present in as many moments as I can so I don't miss as many.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and prosperous year in 2022!

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 the SoCalMWA
Discussion Group**

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

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>

OVER the TRANSOM

HJ Forman and Alexia Forman recently published *TOXIC VENGEANCE*: Bodies of respected, highly educated men and women are dropping in different parts of the country. Why are all the victims poisoned even when they die by different means? It takes fiery redhead police detective Cindy Firestone from a Washington, D.C. suburb to spot a connection. She brings the case to the attention of FBI Special Agent Steve Jude, who recognizes her intelligence and enjoys the packaging. Together, they investigate the many suspects and learn about the world of academic science, which most outsiders assume to be sedate. How wrong is that! [On sale now.](#)

Andrew Kaplan's new novel, *BLUE MADAGASCAR*, is an Amazon #1 Hot New Release, a 2021 winner of the Global eBook Gold Award for Best Thriller Novel of the Year, a 2021 American Book Fest Award Finalist in the Best Mystery/Thriller category, and a 2021 Chanticleer Global Thriller of the Year Award finalist.

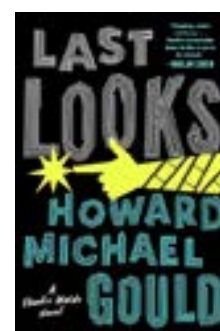
Mark your calendars! *CAJUN KISS OF DEATH*, the 7th book in **Ellen Byron's** award-winning Cajun Country Mysteries, will be a Kindle Daily Deal on January 29, offered at a reduced price of \$2.99. Ellen has also joined the National board of MWA as a director-at-large.

BUSHWHACKED IN THE OUTBACK, book two in **Nancy Raven Smith's** Land Sharks Cozy Mystery Adventure series, will be available on Amazon.com on January 3, 2022: Lexi loves her job as a Beverly Hills bank fraud investigator. It lets her pursue scam artists and con men—known in the business as land sharks.

Paula Bernstein just released the second audiobook in her Hannah Kline mystery series, *MURDER BY LETHAL INJECTION*. It's available on Audible and multiple other audiobook sites.

The movie version of **Howard Michael Gould's** debut Charlie Waldo novel, *LAST LOOKS*, will be released in theaters and on pay-per-view on February 4. It stars Charlie Hunnam and Mel Gibson, and was directed by Tim Kirkby ("Fleabag").

Susan Cummins Miller's poetry chapbook, *MAKING SILENT STONES SING*, will be released by Finishing Line Press on February 11. The poems evoke the western landscape familiar to readers of Miller's Frankie MacFarlane, Geologist, mysteries. [Click here for more information.](#)



Member APPEARANCES

Jeri Westerson will have a booth at the Tempe FanCon on Saturday, January 29 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the [Tempe Library](#), 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe, AZ. Buy books signed by the author: medieval mysteries, historicals, and paranormal. Or just come and say hello!



Join **Tori Eldridge** on January 11 at 7 p.m. for a virtual book discussion for *THE NINJA BETRAYED* with Capitol Crimes, the Sacramento chapter of Sisters in Crime. Open to the public. Register [here](#). The Lily Wong books can be read in any order, so come join the fun!

Andrew Kaplan appeared on “The Weekend with Ed Kalegi” to discuss his novel, *BLUE MADAGASCAR*, on December 20. [Listen here](#).

Matt Witten will be signing his thriller *THE NECKLACE* at [The Book Jewel](#) in Westchester on Saturday, January 22, at 5 p.m.

On Saturday, January 15 at 1 p.m., **T. Jefferson Parker** will appear at Mystery Ink (7552 Warner Ave., #101, Huntington Beach) to discuss and sign his new novel, *A THOUSAND STEPS*.

The LAST WORD

“My husband is a vulgar man. He made his fortune in the South African mines, and it shows. He simply cannot appreciate the niceties. He isn’t even French.”

—THE MAN UPON THE STAIR, Gary Inbinder