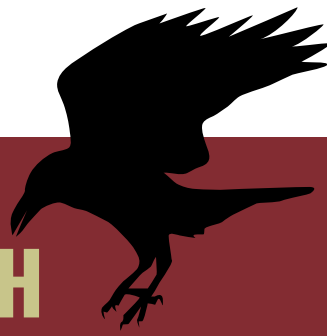


DECEMBER 2023

THE MARCH OF CRIME

SoCalMWA's monthly newsletter.



December Event

HOLIDAY PARTY



SoCalMWA and Sisters in Crime Los Angeles [invite you to toast to the holidays](#) with good friends and good cheer! This year, we'll celebrate the season's warmth at the [Woman's Club of Hollywood](#) with festive eats and sweet treats. We look forward to getting members (and their plus-ones) together on **December 10 at 2 p.m.**

Volunteer to bring your favorite holiday dish to share and bring a wrapped book (your own or a favorite) to put under the tree.

Surprise Entertainment • Hors D'oeuvres • Wine • Dessert

[RSVP Here](#)

What's inside

[December Holiday Party p. 1](#)

[President's Rap Sheet p. 2](#)

[Editor's Corner p. 3](#)

[Over the Transom p. 4](#)

[Appearances & Events p. 5](#)

[Crime Calendar p. 6](#)

[The Last Word p. 6](#)





A Trip to Branson

BY TRAVIS RICHARDSON



Dear Members,

I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I drove over 3000 miles from Los Angeles to Branson, Missouri, and back within a week. It was a long but successful road trip to visit family. I don't mind long drives as long as I'm moving, something that doesn't happen often in LA. If you haven't been to Branson, it's billed as the family-friendly entertainment capital of the world. Set in the Ozark Mountains, it had been the retirement destination of B and C-acts from decades ago. Andy Williams (70s crooner), Roy Clark (Hee Haw), Ray Stevens (70's parodies), and Yakov Smirnoff (80s Russian comedian) used to have theatres reliving past glories. Only Yakov is still there today as Bee Gees, ABBA, Beach Boys, and other impersonation acts have taken over.

We were fortunate to have mostly good weather and only a few issues (AKA a dead battery in Flagstaff). On the way, my daughter discovered that she loves Sonic drive-through French fries so we made several stops to and from Missouri (or Misery, as Siri says). Now I need to spend a month detoxifying all of the grease from my veins. If you'd like to find out more about Branson, NorCalMWA writer Claire Booth has a mystery series set out there.

I hope you can make our final event of 2023. On December 10 from 2-5 p.m., we will have our joint Holiday Party with Sisters in Crime Los Angeles. If you have not signed up yet, you can do it here: <https://forms.gle/ZLzG6KigLsh2PrJjZ>.

Also, we will be sending out ballots soon for our board election in the coming days, so keep your eyes open.

I wish all of you the best for the rest of the year and Happy Holidays!

Travis

CHAPTER OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Travis Richardson

VICE PRESIDENT
Ona Russell

TREASURER
Sarah M. Chen

SECRETARY
Leslie S. Klinger

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Fred Andersen
Edward Arno
Gay Tolt Kinman
Terri Nolan
Gary Phillips
Nancy Cole Silverman
Jennifer Younger

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)
Facebook: [Like us](#)



Immersive Writing Sessions

BY HOLLY WEST

Once a year, I reserve the right to say, “I can’t believe it’s already <fill in the blank month>” in my editor’s column. I’ve limited it because, by April, time’s rapid passage is already making my head spin.

Well, 2023 is almost over, so this month, I’m doing it: I CAN’T BELIEVE IT’S ALREADY DECEMBER.

Now that we’ve got that out of the way, I wanted to mention something that’s been helpful to my creativity recently: immersive writing sessions. There’s a few different kinds—some are simply video with soothing sounds like rain or ocean waves. Others are more complex and feature writing sprints (usually four) and evocative images like medieval castles or gritty crime scenes.

Immersive writing sessions lend themselves well to the holiday season. During the summer, I rarely use them unless it’s so hot I can’t spend time outside—then I turn on some rain sounds or an ocean waves video and get to work. But in the winter, I light my desk candles, wear a warm sweater, and play a cozy jazz cafe scene with a roaring fireplace and a glittering Christmas tree.

Subject change: Has anyone else’s approach to social media changed this year? Mine has—Twitter was where I met most of my early writer friends, and I loved it for a long time. But, as we all know, it’s changed over the years, and, more recently, I can’t stomach its current leadership. I haven’t canceled my account entirely but I don’t use it much anymore.

Overall, I’m posting much less frequently on all platforms than I used to. Has social media finally run its course? This, of course, is an ongoing question, but what, if anything, will replace it?

If you’d like to weigh in on this subject, email me. If you give permission, I’ll post your comments in a future issue.

Wishing you all a happy holiday season and a fantastic new year.

Holly

The March of Crime

The March of Crime is the newsletter of the Southern California Chapter of the Mystery Writers of America.

Editor: Holly West

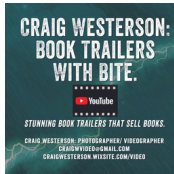
Opinions expressed herein are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Mystery Writers of America Southern California Chapter.

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



Jeri Westerson and her husband Craig have embarked on a new venture; creating stunning book trailers for authors to promote their books! [Peruse the gallery](#) and email craigwvideo@gmail.com to get yours started.



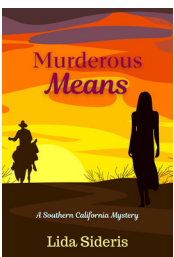
The Son's Secret, a new domestic suspense novel from **Daryl Wood Gerber**, debuts January 2, 2024 (Severn House). Maggie Lawson is the only one who believes her son is missing and must race against the clock to save him before he takes his final breath. Set in New Orleans.



Jeri Westerson's perennial send-up of noir stories, “Last Pole on the Left; A Santa Noir Short Story,” is available on Kindle for 99 cents. Santa investigates a murder in Christmas Town, encountering drunken penguins, closed-mouth reindeer, and a crime boss walrus.



The Washington Post has selected **Iris Yamashita's** debut novel, *City in the Dark*, as one of the 12 Best Thrillers of the Year. It has also been selected as one of the 25 Best Fiction Books of the year by Reader's Digest and has been shortlisted as Best Debut Crime Novel by Crime Fiction Lover.



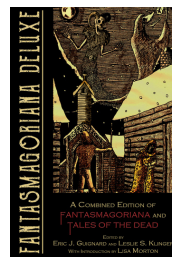
Murderous Means, #6 in **Lida Sideris'** Southern California Mysteries, will be released on December 5 (Level Best Books). Rookie lawyer Corrie Locke is hired by the dysfunctional Means family to prove their older sister's so-called peaceful death was anything but peaceful, according to a half-baked psychic vision. What should be a simple investigation morphs into something a little more...deadly.



Martin Roy Hill's WWII thriller, *Codename Parsifal*, was released September 1 by 32-32 North. Three teams—American, German, and Russian—are on a collision course that leads them to the ideological heart of the Nazi SS. The audiobook for Hill's latest Linus Schag, NCIS, thriller, *Upriver*, narrated by Brian Dullaghan, was also released in September.



Let Sleeping Dogs Lie, the third and final installment in **Peggy Rothschild's** Molly Madison Dog Wrangler mystery series will be available December 14.



Fantasmagoriana Deluxe: Combined Edition of Fantasmagoriana and Tales of the Dead, edited by **Eric J. Guignard** and **Leslie Klinger**, with an introduction by Lisa Morton, was published on November 28 by Dark Moon Books. This anthology of Gothic ghost stories combines and translates all stories from both books for the first time.

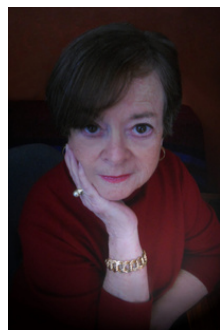
Serita Stevens' forensic nurse series, tentatively titled “Nursing the Evidence” has been optioned by Legacy Pictures.

Happy
holidays

APPEARANCES & EVENTS

Andrew Kaplan will be giving a presentation titled “James Bond, Homeland Security, Scorpion, the CIA, the KGB, and Other Spies I’ve Known” on Wednesday, December 27 at the Springs in Rancho Mirage, 1 Duke Drive, Rancho Mirage, CA.

Topper Jones was recently interviewed on “The Mighty Books Podcast,” hosted by Ryan Oliver, to discuss his debut mystery novel, *All That Glisters*, his lifelong journey to publishing his book, and a little bit of surfing, or what he likes to call, “water therapy.” Take a listen [here](#).



Donis Casey’s December guest on “Tell Me Your Story” is **Rosemary Simpson**, author of the Gilded Age mysteries, including *What the Dead Leave Behind*, set in NYC during the Great Blizzared of 1888. Rosemary’s story will appear December 20–31 on doniscasey.com.

Jeri Westerson is offering a Special Ticketed Event for her Tudor mystery *The Twilight Queen* at noon on January 28 at Lucky Baldwin’s British Pub in Pasadena. \$74 for a pub meal and beverage (alcohol not included), a steeply discounted hardcover, and exclusive goodies. Don’t forget the free raffle and presentation as well. Only seven spaces left! Contact Jeri at jeriwesterson@gmail.com for details.



DP Lyle and many other authors will present the year-long 2024 Outliers Writing University Ongoing Symposium beginning January 2, 2024. [Details here](#).

In November, **Lee Goldberg** and Cara Black were “in conversation” together at Book Passage in San Francisco. Lee also teamed up with authors Ann Parker and Penny Warner at Towne Center Books in Pleasanton and at the Culver Center for the Arts in Riverside with his brother, Tod Goldberg, and Susan Straight.

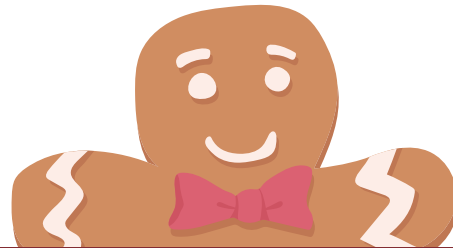


Edgar winner Mary Higgins Clark Award-winning author **Naomi Hirahara** will be in conversation with **Gary Phillips** on Tuesday, December 5 at 7 p.m. at the Beverly Hills auditorium, 444 N. Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills. Call (310) 288-2244 for more info. Gary’s *One-Shot Harry* was named one of the best mysteries of 2022 by *The Washington Post*. His latest is *The Unvarnished Gary Phillips: A Mondo Pulp Collection*.

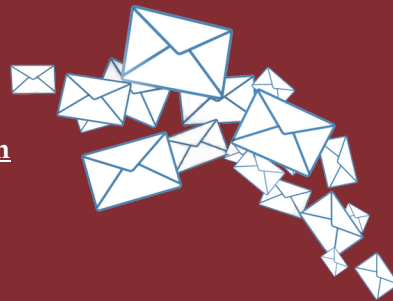
CRIME CALENDER



December 10: SoCalMWA & SinCLA Holiday Party, Los Angeles



If you know of an event that belongs on the Crime Calendar, email themarchofcrime@gmail.com with the info.



THE LAST WORD



"Oscar thought I was risking too much, but I couldn't help myself. Georgie Ann's husband was the fitter, less bald version of my own husband, and he was better in bed."

"Georgie Ann"
Love and Other Criminal Behavior
by Nikki Dolson