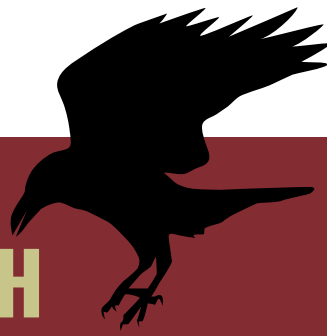


MAY 2024

THE MARCH OF CRIME

SoCalMWA's monthly newsletter.



The Unclaimed

May Crowdcast Event



PAMELA PRICKETT



STEFAN TIMMERMANS



SoCalMWA Presents:

THE UNCLAIMED: ABANDONMENT & HOPE IN THE CITY OF ANGELS

Discussion with Stefan Timmermans and
Pamela Prickett, hosted by Ona Russell



ONA RUSSELL
HOST

May 26, 2024
1 p.m. PT

Virtual Event on Crowdcast

THE UNCLAIMED: ABANDONMENT AND HOPE IN THE CITY OF ANGELS

A Discussion with writers

Pamela Prickett & Stefan Timmermans

Up to 150,000 Americans now go unclaimed each year. Who are they? Why are they being forgotten? And what is the meaning of life if your death doesn't matter to others? Sociologists **Pamela Prickett** and **Stefan Timmermans** set out to answer these questions in their new book, *The Unclaimed: Abandonment and Hope in the City of Angels*, by following four individuals in Los Angeles and the factors that put them at risk of going unclaimed, along with the investigators, notification officers, and crematorium workers who care for them when no one else will.

Join the authors and host **Ona Russell** for an in-depth discussion of the book on Sunday, May 26, at 1 p.m. on [Crowdcast](#).

[Register Here](#)

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2024 Edgar Awards

BY LESLIE S. KLINGER



The *Los Angeles Times* Festival of Books is in the rearview mirror (pictures are on [page 7](#)), and it was a grand affair! The weekend began with our Chapter member **Ivy Pochoda's** *Sing Her Down* taking home the 2023 Book Prize for Best Mystery/Thriller. Ivy subsequently signed at our SoCalMWA booth, along with almost thirty other writers, on Saturday and Sunday. In addition, we talked with dozens of people about the organization and its benefits. Some were just starting out on the pathway to publication; others were accomplished writers who just hadn't gotten around to joining. And some were readers who wanted to meet real authors!

By the time this appears, the 2023 Edgars will have been handed out, and we're proud to have several Chapter members among the nominees. I'll be attending the event for a number of reasons. First, I have always felt that we need to make the nominees and winners feel how much we appreciate them. It is a great honor to be nominated, especially an award like the Edgar, given by our peers. Second, it's a chance to network with other Chapter Presidents and Board members as well as agents, editors, publishers, and, of course, other writers. Third, and honestly, most importantly, it's a party with friends!

Attending the Edgars and events like Bouchercon over the years has made me appreciate what a great community of writers we swim in. We need to celebrate our chosen genre, what we do, and especially each other!

Best,
Les Klinger

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Location, Location, Location

BY HOLLY WEST

This past weekend, we traveled to Los Angeles to visit Venice and Santa Monica, our old stomping grounds. The last time we explored the area was before the pandemic. Much has changed, but I love it as much as ever.

For me, it was as much a research trip as it was a chance to catch up with old friends. My WIP is a contemporary mystery set in Venice Beach, and much of it takes place on and around the boardwalk. I'd forgotten little things, like how long it takes to walk from one end of the boardwalk to the other or how the air is filled with the smell of burning sage (among other things). Or how dilapidated some of the houses and condos along the beachfront are. These little details help me form a picture of the place I'm writing about, immersing me in the setting even if none of them make the final draft.

I'm not a writer who believes I need to visit every place I write about. One of my favorite short stories takes place in Miami, Florida. Okay, I've been there, but only for a few hours, and I never left the airport. And while I've been to London many times and know it well, my two historical novels are set during the 17th century. Very little from that time period still exists, though there are glimpses of it here and there if you try hard enough.

Still, I can't deny that experiencing a location in person makes for a richer writing experience. I can't say whether it makes the book better for readers. Our imaginations fill in details seamlessly; unless egregious errors are made, many readers won't guess that a writer never set foot in the place they've written about. At least, I hope so.

I'm home now, having consumed many Aperol spritzes and laughing for hours, reminiscing about the "old days." But this morning, when I sat down to write, I was right back in Venice, grateful for my time there this weekend. It's just what this WIP needed as I delve into my second half.

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:
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Join the SoCalMWA
Discussion Group

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

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t. 212.888.8171
mwa@mysterywriters.org
<http://mysterywriters.org>



Congratulations

SoCalMWA Award Winners

Left Coast Crime Lefty Award for Best Humorous Novel

Wendall Thomas

Cheap Trills (Beyond the Page Books)



Left Coast Lefty Award for Best Mystery Novel (Bill Gottfried Memorial)

Naomi Hirahara

Evergreen (Soho Crime)



Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Best Mystery/Thriller

Ivy Pochoda

Sing Her Down (Macmillan)



Edgar Awards Live-Stream

MAY 1

Watch the Edgar Awards live on May 1 at 5:30 p.m. ET on the [Mystery Writers of America YouTube channel](#).

OVER THE TRANSOM



Marjorie McCown's *Star Struck*, book two in her Hollywood mystery series featuring movie costumer Joey Jessop, publishes May 7. A car involved in a fatal traffic accident belongs to the leading lady in Joey's latest film. Is the big box office star hiding more than her Botox appointments?

Topper Jones, author of *All that Glitters*, has just signed a contract with The Wild Rose Press for *Oceano Beach Bedlam*—Book Two in the Thad Hanlon & Bri de la Guerra mystery series featuring the surfing crime fighter and his sassy, martial-arts-obsessed partner. [Click here](#) for a peek at the elevator pitch.

Serita Steven's forensic series, "Nursing the Evidence" and *In His Name*, a historical feature that has won numerous awards, has been optioned by Legacy Pictures.

APPEARANCES & EVENTS



MARJORIE MCCOWN
Star Struck book tour

April 11-14
Left Coast Crime
Bellevue, WA

May 4-5
LitFest in the Dena
2300 N. Marengo Avenue
Altadena, CA

May 7, 7:00 pm
Star Struck Book Launch
Location: Book Soup
8818 Sunset Boulevard
West Hollywood, CA

May 9, All Day
Author for the Day
Global Girls Online Book Club
Facebook Group
(to see and comment on posts,
you must join the group)

May 11, 1:00 pm
Book signing with fellow author
Daryl Wood Gerber
Mystery Ink
Fernhill Clubhouse
5472 Diamond Drive
Huntington Beach, CA

May 21, 6:30 pm
Book event in conversation
with Kacy Treadway
Women's Twentieth Century Club
of Eagle Rock
5105 Hermosa Avenue
Los Angeles, CA

June 22, 3:00 pm
Book signing with fellow author
Matt Coyle
Book Carnival
348 S. Tustin Street
Orange, CA

August 28 - September 1
Bouchercon
World Mystery Convention
Nashville, TN

Sheila Lowe will be speaking to the Camarillo Writers Club for the second time on May 11. Her topic: “There’s More to Your Story...Make it a Series.” Pictured below: the Treasures and Treats” event, where Sheila found enthusiastic mystery readers.



DP Lyle will teach the Zoom class “Constructing/Deconstructing The Perfect Fictional Murder” at the Outliers Writing University May 14 at 4 pm PT. [Details/Sign Up.](#)

On Sunday, May 4, 3:30–4:30 p.m., publicist Holly Watson will moderate a panel on building an inclusive community of crime writers with **Marjorie McCown**, **Maddie Margarita**, **Ellen Byron**, and **Nancy Cole Silverman**.

Donis Casey's “Tell Me Your Story” guest for May is **Dennis Palumbo**, MA, MFT, writer, and licensed psychotherapist. His acclaimed series of thrillers, including *Mirror Image*, *Head Wounds*, and *Panic Attack*, features psychologist and trauma expert Daniel Rinaldi. Read Dennis’s fascinating tale May 20–31 at Donis’s [website](#).



On Thursday, June 20, at the Western Writers of America Convention in Tulsa, OK, **Susan Cummins Miller** will join authors Michael Gear, Preston Lewis, and Richard Prosch to discuss “Writing the Short Story: The Wherefore and the Why.”

On Saturday, May 11, at 2 p.m., **Terry Shames** will appear with fellow Severn House author Susan Shea at Book Passage in Corte Madera, CA, to discuss Terry’s new thriller, *Perilous Waters*. On Saturday, May 19, at 2 p.m., Terry will talk about *Perilous Waters* at Book Carnival, 348 S. Tustin St., Orange, and on Friday, May 31, at 8 a.m., she’ll moderate a panel at Thrillerfest. “Conflict, Clock, or Crucible” features John Dobbyn, Joseph LeValley, Jode Millman, Joshua Moehling, and Polly Stewart.

The Catalyst, the Corpse, the Catch, and the Candy

Writing Memorable
Secondary Characters

UCLA Screenwriting Professor **Wendall Thomas** is celebrating the 20th anniversary of her “Living Room Lecture” series with a 6-hour webinar, “The Catalyst, the Corpse, the Catch, and the Candy: Getting The Most From Your Secondary Characters,” on May 18 and 19 from 10 a.m.–1 p.m. PT. You can find a full course description and registration info [here](#).

Terri Maue, author of *Knife Edge*, book one of the Zee & Rico series, is interviewed on the Coffee House Tours website. In her short interview, she discusses her favorite character, among other topics. [Here's the link.](#)



Left Coast Crime 2024—Bellevue, WA



Writing Multiple Series Panel (Back, L-R): Lee Goldberg, Tracy Clark, Robert Dugoni, Gigi Pandian. (Front): J.A. Jance.



L-R: Matt Coyle, Robert Dugoni, Lee Goldberg



Ready For My Close Up Panel L-R: D.A. Galin, Gary Phillips, Lee Goldberg, Jon Lindstrom, Elizabeth Crowens



L-R: Susanna Calkins, Marco Carocari, Holly West



British Mysteries Pane (Back, L-R): Marty Wingate, Holly West, Emma Dakin, Nicholas George, Sharon Lynn



Sarah M. Chen



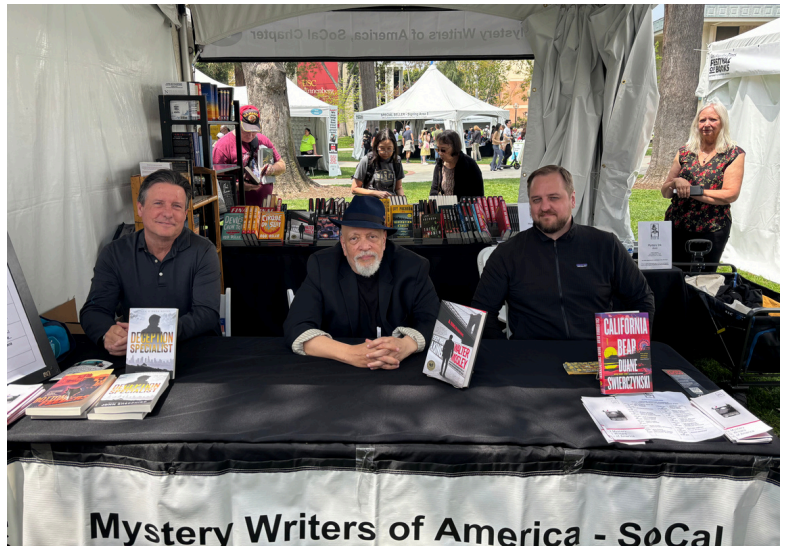
Mike Befeler

APPEARANCES & EVENTS

LA Times Festival of Books



L-R: Adam Sikes, Leslie S. Klinger, Ona Russell, Lee Goldberg



L-R: John Sheppard, Walter Mosley, and Duane Swierczynski at the SoCalMWA booth



L-R: Lee Goldberg, Eriq LaSalle, Gregg Hurwitz, Tracy Clark, Daniel Weizman



SoCalMWA Get-together at Rock 'n' Reilly's



L-R: Megha Parekh, Rachel Howzell Hall, Jordan Harper, Ivy Pochoda



L-R: Lee Goldberg, Tracy Clark, Naomi Hirahara, Gregg Hurwitz

CRIME CALENDER



- May 1: 78th Annual Edgar® Awards, New York, NY
- May 26: The Unclaimed Writers, Virtual Event
- June 22: Book Swap & BBQ, Los Angeles, CA
- August 22–25: Killer Nashville, Franklin, TN
- August 28–September 1: Bouchercon, Nashville, TN
- September 15: Joint Meeting with SoCalMWA & PWA, Virtual Event
- October 5: Gumbo Party, Los Angeles, CA

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

THE LAST WORD



“Why would you plan a spa day if you killed someone?”
Cookie protested. “It makes no sense.”
“It does if you want to look your best for a mug shot,” Theo said.

French Quarter Fight Night
by **Ellen Byron**