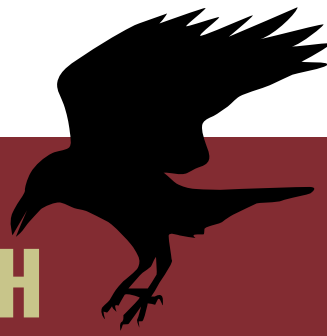


NOVEMBER 2024

THE MARCH OF CRIME

SoCalMWA's monthly newsletter.



November Event

Tam Luncheon

SoCalMWA
TAM
LUNCHEON:

RESERVATION
DEADLINE
11/13

**FBI COUNTERINTELLIGENCE AND
COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES**
with Ret. FBI Special Agent Thomas Leighton

Sunday, November 17
11 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Tam O'Shanter
2980 Los Feliz Blvd.
Los Angeles

[Learn more about this event here](#)



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PRESIDENT'S RAP SHEET



Join Our Board

BY LESLIE S. KLINGER



The annual gumbo party is behind us (thanks again to Kendall and **Bill Fitzhugh!**), and I'm reminded again why I love being a member of MWA: It's the parties! I don't mean free food or beverages, I mean the chance to talk—really talk—with other writers. Conversations ranged from what's wrong with the world to what's wrong with MWA to what's wrong with my/your life! Every problem was overcome (or beaten to death), every mystery solved—what more could one ask?

The party was not just the product of Kendall and Bill, however—many people, including neighbors, friends, and Chapter members, pitched in to bring supplies and equipment, set tables, and hang decorations. It made one other thing clear: We depend on each other.

Our Chapter is not some well-organized group that puts on events for you. It's a moderately well-organized group that puts on events for ourselves. In other words, we need you to volunteer to be part of the effort. Not only will our programs be better, you'll get a lot more out of them.

It's that time of the year when the Chapter Nominating Committee is looking for people to serve on the Chapter Board. You need not be an Active Member to be on the Board, but you do need to be someone who will voice opinions, generate ideas, and help carry them out.

We have a lot of great programming already on the books. November will see a traditional luncheon meeting at the Tam o'Shanter restaurant. December will be our holiday party, co-hosted with Sisters in Crime Los Angeles. We need volunteers to help with setup and decorations for that as well. In the Spring, we'll have at least two more traditional meetings—programming to be decided, but focused on craft. We'll have tables at the Tucson Festival of Books (thank you, **Fred Andersen!**) and the *L.A. Times* Festival of Books. We're working on another joint program with SinCLA at the Skirball, featuring some of our superstars. We'll organize another book exchange/barbecue. And yes, we'll have another gumbo party!

So, there are many, many opportunities for you to take an active role in your Chapter. It's only as good as you make it!

Les

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Writing as Medicine

BY HOLLY WEST

Well, friends, I don't mind telling you that the past week was a lot for me. My husband and I lost our beloved dog, Stella, on October 20. Sometimes, life comes at you fast and furious and your only real goal is keeping your head above water. I barely made it.

But we returned yesterday from a much-needed getaway in Lake Tahoe, and now, I feel ready to tackle the rest of the year. It's amazing how just two days of respite in a new/different place, unplugged from devices, can have the power to re-energize a person. I'd be lying if I said I'm completely recovered, but I'm ready to face my new normal, for which I'm grateful.

I put my WIP on hold last week because I didn't have the headspace for creativity. But ironically, I ended up writing more than usual in the form of journaling. When I was at my lowest, I wrote my little heart out. I let all of my feelings pour onto the page, and I can't tell you how much it helped me process my grief.

This was a different kind of work than the fiction I normally write, and I was reminded of this quote, attributed to Red Smith, a sportswriter: "Writing is easy; you just open up a vein and bleed."

I'm not saying the writing I did this past week was particularly good. But it *was* real. Honest. Something amazing happens when you're stripped bare of your protective shell and you allow yourself to write your feelings with authenticity and no boundaries. If only I could figure out a way to do it when my heart isn't broken in pieces.

And I wonder how much other writers think about being emotionally authentic in their work. As crime writers, getting the facts right is important, but how much do we focus on emotions? Some authors do it exceedingly well, but I think for many of us, it's far easier to describe the clinical details of a crime scene than it is to take a deep dive into the emotional impact on the characters involved.

If you have any thoughts about this subject, please feel free to let me know! —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)

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November Event

TAM LUNCHEON

Come join us at the Tam O'Shanter on Sunday, November 17, to see retired FBI Special Agent Thomas Leighton in a one-of-a-kind event.

We are in interesting and uncertain times. Tom will discuss counterintelligence and counterterrorism strategies that the FBI utilizes to keep Americans safe from bad actors, both foreign and domestic. Tom will discuss this timely topic and answer your questions. You don't want to miss this meeting.

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Thomas Leighton is a retired Special Agent of the FBI with the Los Angeles Field Office (LAFO). He worked in a variety of FBI investigative and operational programs, including Civil Rights, Counterintelligence, Counterterrorism, and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). He also served as a Firearms Instructor, providing training to FBI Agents, as well as local law enforcement officers. Leighton was an FBI Crisis Negotiator and served for many years as a member of the LAFO Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT). He has provided Crisis Negotiation training to federal and local law enforcement officers, as well as police and military personnel in foreign countries. Prior to the FBI, Leighton served as a prosecutor in Winchester, Virginia, where he was an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney.

EVENT INFO

Sunday, November 17, at the Tam O'Shanter. Doors open at 11 a.m., and our program begins at approx. 1:15 p.m.

MENU (Selections will be made at the restaurant)

Choice of: Roasted Prime Ribs of Beef, Brisket Platter, Pan Seared Scottish Salmon, Roasted Chicken, or Cauliflower Tikka Masala (Vegan)

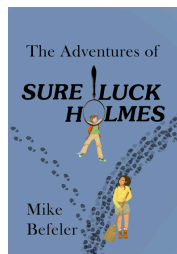
Coffee, Tea, and Iced Tea

RSVP by November 13

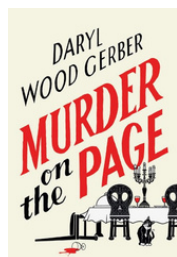




Final Cut, Hollywood Mystery Book #1 by **Marjorie McCown**, featuring movie key costumer Joey Jessop (Crooked Lane Books), an Amazon Editors' Pick in the Best Mystery, Thriller, and Suspense category, is now available in paperback at your favorite retailer. Purchase options [here](#).



In **Mike Befeler's** middle grade mystery, *The Adventures of Sure Luck Holmes*, fifth-grader Sherman Holmes and his sidekick Johanna Watson solve mysteries surrounding the Baker Street Elementary School in Londonberry, California. Nicknamed Sure Luck, he always cracks the case, but invariably for the wrong reason that only Johanna catches, particularly when it involves Sherman's nemesis, Jim Moriarty.



Murder on the Page, a new release by **Daryl Wood Gerber**, is the first in the Literary Dining Mystery series from Kensington Books.



John Shepphird's short story "Sutton's Law" will appear this fall in *Shamus & Anthony Commit Capers: Ten Tales of Criminals, Crooks, and Culprits* edited by Andrew McAleer and **Gay Toltl Kinman**. The story features the heist of an ATM from a drive up bank in LA.



Real-life friends Albert Einstein and Charlie Chaplin battle Nazis in 1930's Hollywood in **Paul Levine's** *Midnight Burning*, to be published by Amphorae in September 2025. First of a series.



Following **Amnon Kabatchnik's** *Murder In the West End*, *The Plays of Agatha Christie and Her Disciples Volume 1* BearManor Media published Volume 2, which analyzes dramas of menace, murder, and mystery that premiered in London during the second half of the twentieth century.



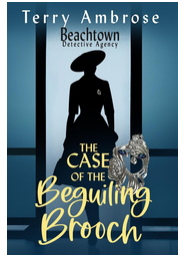
The Alta Journal has chosen the 30th anniversary edition of **Gary Phillips's** *Violent Spring* for its November California Book Club discussion. A year plus after the Rodney King riots of 1992, Black private eye Ivan Monk is hired by an association of Korean merchants to find the killer of one of their members gone missing before the conflagration—whose body just turned up. Register [here](#) for the zoom discussion on Thursday, November 21, 5 p.m. PT.



Shannon Baker announces the release of *Close Range* October 8 from Severn River Publishers. The series follows the adventures of a sheriff in the isolated Nebraska Sandhills. This time, Kate Fox finds herself at the center of a deadly mystery that threatens those she loves. SRP recently contracted for four more books, taking the series through book sixteen.

A Dark September Night is the first in a new series by **Patricia Smiley**, author of the Tucker Sinclair novels and the Pacific Homicide series. When Emmaline McCoy's beloved aunt dies in a hit-and-run accident, she leaves her L.A. corporate job for the Northern California coastal town of Justice Bay to settle the estate. Upon arrival, Emma experiences unsettling visions that suggest her aunt was murdered, but pursuing the truth soon lands her in a killer's crosshairs. (Out May 2025 from Level Best Books).

OVER THE TRANSOM



Terry Ambrose announces the release of the second Beachtown Detective Agency Mystery, *The Case of the Beguiling Brooch*. PI Jade Cavendish is hired to find a missing family heirloom. Her search takes her deep into the art world—and a brush with a cunning killer.



Alex Kenna's sophomore thriller, *Burn This Night*, comes out on November 12 from Crooked Lane Books.



Dan Bronson's *Shout at the Devil*, the second of his Jack Shannon mysteries, debuts November 1. *New York Times* best-selling novelist Phillip Margolin has called it "spellbinding."



Jennifer Graeser Dornbush's newest book, *Frozen Lives*, released with Blackstone Publishing October 29. This is book four in her *Coroner's Daughter* series. It can be read as a stand-alone, but to get the full experience of Dr. Emily Hartford's journey, you won't regret starting at the beginning with *The Coroner*.

APPEARANCES & EVENTS

On November 15, **Sheila Lowe** will be at the Camarillo Library Author Fair from 2–4 p.m. PT, signing *Maximum Pressure* (#9 in the Claudia Rose Forensic Handwriting suspense series) and her memoir, *Growing From the Ashes*, which details how the murder of her daughter in 2000 led to a spiritual awakening.

Paul Levine lobbed the "Q's" and Malcolm Gladwell tossed the "A's" in a Live Talks L.A. event for Gladwell's new book, *Revenge of the Tipping Point*.



Paul Levine (L) interviews Malcolm Gladwell.



Jeri Westerson's Sherlockian *The Mummy of Mayfair* Tour continues: November 2, 1–3 p.m., A Book Barn Bookstore, 640 Clovis Ave, Clovis, CA. Free book bags with book purchase while they last! Saturday, Nov 9, 1 p.m. at Baker Street West's "Scotland Yard" annex, 2 Summit Street, Jackson, CA. Saturday, November 16, 2 p.m. at Book Carnival, 348 S. Tustin Ave., Orange, CA, in conversation with Jerry Kegley, the Tin Box/Co-President of the Curious Collectors of Baker Street, the Los Angeles Sherlock Holmes Society. Giveaways and free book bags with purchase while supplies last.

Dan Bronson will be introducing and leading the discussion of "Chinatown," the opening film at NoirCon, which takes place November 7-10 in Palm Springs. Dan will also serve on the "Palm Springs Noir" panel and reading from his new novel, *Shout at the Devil*, at Noir at the Bar.



APPEARANCES & EVENTS

Andrew Neiderman has been writing V.C. Andrews for thirty-six years. Recently, the Adult School of Montclair offered a class called “V.C. Andrews, Part 1: Exploring the Dollanger Series.” A discussion of Neiderman’s first book, *Garden of Shadows*, was included.



Barbara Pronin, author of *The Miner’s Canary* and six other mysteries, greeted readers at the annual Author’s Marketplace in Laguna Woods in October. Pronin’s next novel, *Winter’s End*, due out in May, 2025, has already earned a 5-star review by Reader’s Favorite and a glowing book jacket blurb by best-selling author Faye Kellerman.

Georgia Jeffries will be reading from her novel, *The Younger Girl*, on Sunday, November 17, at 4 p.m. at the Huntington Beach Main Street Library. The Friends of the Huntington Beach Library will sponsor a “Wine and Pastries” event afterward. On Tuesday, November 19, at 6:30 p.m., Georgia will read at DIESEL, A Bookstore in the Brentwood Country Mart, Santa Monica, in conversation with author Aimee Liu. Finally, Georgia’s podcast interview with Arts Calling host, Jaime Alejandro Cruz, can be found at artscalling.com

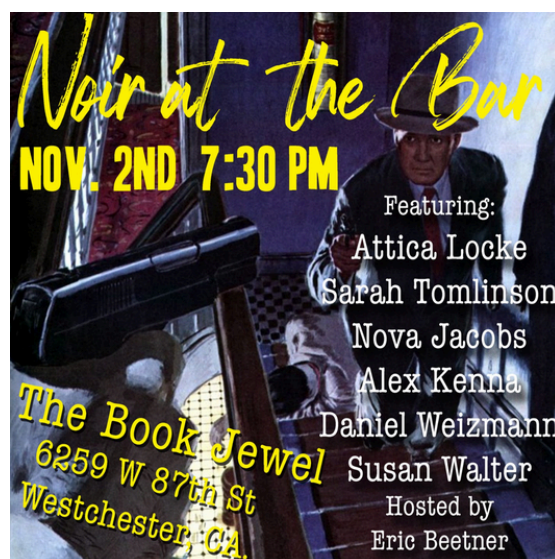


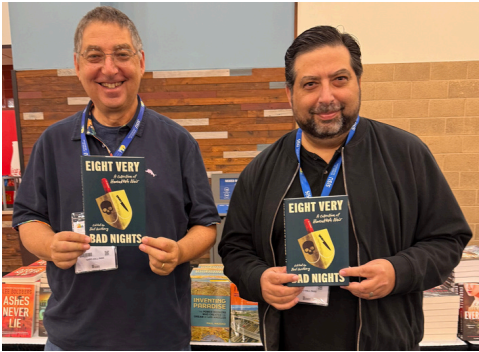
Ellen Byron will be on a panel titled “The Funny Thing About Murder” at the Midwest Mystery Conference in Chicago, IL on Saturday, November 9.

Daryl Wood Gerber will be chatting and signing her new release, *Murder on the Page*, at Book Carnival on November 9 at 2 p.m. PT.



Jon Lindstrom (*Hollywood Hustle*) appeared with Elise Hart Kipness to celebrate the release of her latest novel at Zibby’s Bookshop in Santa Monica on October 8. They enjoyed a terrific turnout that included fellow SoCalMWA member **Alex Kenna**.





Jennifer Dornbush and **Paige Shelton** will be sharing their latest works and signing books at the Poisoned Pen bookstore (4014 N. Goldwater Blvd, Scottsdale). on December 7 at 7 p.m.

Arizona Holiday Gathering: Following Jennifer and Paige's signing, there will be complimentary pints for SoCalMWA members at the Cornish Pasty (3800 N. Goldwater Blvd, Scottsdale) nearby. Let's all get together to celebrate another great year and ring in the holiday season!

Lee Goldberg, **Tod Goldberg**, **T. Jefferson Parker**, and **Naomi Hirahara** were among the SoCalMWA authors who spoke and signed books at the California Library Association's annual conference in Pasadena in October. Here are Lee and Tod with the anthology *Eight Very Bad Nights: A Collection of Hanukkah Noir* which Tod edited and that includes Lee's story "If I Were a Rich Man."



Gumbo Party 2024

For more pics, check out **Ellen Byron's** [blog post](#) about SoCalMWA's recent Gumbo Party for the Chicks on the Case blog.





Remembering Bob

BY GARY PHILLIPS

It's with great sadness that I note the passing of Robert Joseph Randisi, one of the stalwarts in our field. The fact that he wrote more than 650 novels and novellas and some 60 short stories earns him a place among the pantheon in the celestial Genre Hall of Fame. He wrote mysteries (in particular, check out his Miles Jacoby PI novels), westerns, horror, science-fiction, fantasy, and “men’s adventure”—having done pulp duty on long-running paperback original series Nick Carter: Killmaster and Remo Williams, the Destroyer. As J. R. Roberts, a good portion of the books he wrote was the Gunsmith series, turning out one a month for years—more than 400 in total. In an interview for *Shotsmag* conducted by Ali Karim, Bob noted he usually worked on two books at a time, splitting up day and nighttime writing on them.

In 1981, Bob founded the Private Eye Writers of America (PWA), which awards the Shamus in several categories. With his friend, the late mystery writer Ed Gorman, he co-founded *Mystery Scene* magazine in 1985. Thirty years ago, when my first novel was published featuring private eye Ivan Monk, Bob invited me to contribute to more than one of the anthologies he edited back then, as well as others over time. At some point, he talked me into being the president of the PWA, though I know that was merely a figurehead gig. SoCalMWA's board member, **Gay Toltl Kinman**, is the current president.

Years later, he and I would co-edit the anthology *44 Caliber Funk: Tales of Crime, Soul and Payback*. It was our love letter to the halcyon '70s. The collection includes stories by March of Crime editor **Holly West**, our past chapter presidents **Travis Richardson** and the late **Robert Levinson**, as well as one by Shamus award winner **John Shepphird**. As also noted in the *Shotsmag* interview, one of Bob's Rat Pack mysteries, *Everybody Kills Somebody Sometime*, was optioned by Sandy Hackett, son of comedian Buddy Hackett. Bob, of course, wrote the screenplay adapting his book.

In 2016, Bob received the Peacemaker Life Achievement award from the Western Fictioneers. That same year, he also received the John Sighthaler Legends Award at Killer Nashville. In 2017, he was presented with the Derringer Award for Life Achievement by the Short Fiction Mystery Society.

You will be missed, Bob!

CRIME CALENDER



2024

November 7–10: Noircon, Palm Springs, CA

November 17: Tam Luncheon—FBI Agent Tom Leighton, Los Angeles, CA

December 7: Arizona Holiday Gathering, Scottsdale, AZ

December 22: Joint Holiday Party w/ SinCLA, Los Angeles, CA

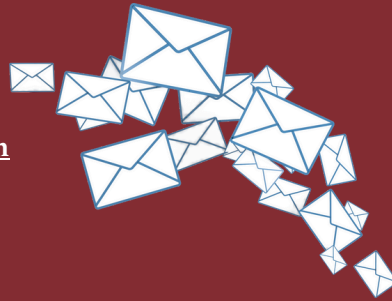
2025

March 13–16: Left Coast Crime, Denver, CO

March 15–16: Tucson Festival of Books, Tucson, AZ

April 26–27: LA Times Festival of Books, Los Angeles

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



THE LAST WORD

