

THE MARCH OF CRIME

MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA — SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

DON'T GET BYTTEN: [Costly Spam](#)

Most spam we get is just annoying. There's the e-mail spam that clogs your Inbox, forcing you to delete requests from pleasant Nigerians who want to give you money, and not-so-pleasant Americans (ostensibly) who want to help you enlarge your erogenous zones. There's the old-fashioned postal mail spam that fills your mailbox with flyers for pizza places and coupons for personalized checks.

These things are annoying but, discounting your time, don't cost you much (of course, your time is not really worthless, but it's difficult to generalize that cost, as everyone's is worth different amounts).

There's a different kind of spam, though, that comes with a specific, discrete price tag. That's text message spam.

My phone chirped at me the other day. It fired off a sound I am not used to hearing from my phone, because I am over the age of 30. I had received a text message. This important notification informed me (or some dude named "Demetris," the supposed recipient) that there was a good stock to buy, and that I should hurry up and do it, because it was "about to rally."

The message was launched from an e-mail account to my T-Mobile Motorola handset, where it came through as a text message. Like many cell phone users, I pay a flat rate for my cell usage, up to certain maximum amount of minutes for the month, which I hardly go over, so I don't ever even think about the

price when I make a phone call; it's all rolled into my monthly bill. Texting, however, costs me between a dime and fifteen cents per message.

That is, I pay a surcharge whether I am the sender or recipient of a text message. This is not because texting somehow costs the cell company more in terms of bandwidth or delivery or maintenance or anything (in fact, it's probably cheaper to move text than

[It's] like burning down my house because I don't want to get robbed.

voice data)...this is because they can charge for it.

I am not so strapped for cash that fifteen cents will force me to subsist on noodles for the next month (although, if you wish to make a donation to the Malisow Dining Out Fund, please feel free). I do, however, hate to give money away for no reason at all, so I contacted my cell phone carrier to find out how they are addressing the texting-spam problem.

According to T-Mobile Customer Care Representative, "Bruce," #0442257, the way this corporate giant will tackle that dilemma, the way this technologically-sophisticated, state-of-the-art entity will handle text-spam concerns, is to give away more money.

Bruce offered to give me ten additional free text messages per month. I explained that this was very cool, and that I would take the

windfall, but I still wanted to know how T-Mobile was going to handle the problem in the future. If text-spam is anything like its e-mail-based cousin, the amount is going to escalate geometrically (Web experts have estimated a 200% per-annum increase in the amount of e-mail spam, for the past eight years). Bruce calmly explained that if I wanted to cut down on the chance that I would receive text spam, especially from e-mail sources, I should turn off that function.

I told him I wanted to have the capability to receive messages from e-mail accounts, which is why I bought the phone and paid for the service in the first place. He restated my option for discontinuing that feature.

Okay...in the security business, this is not exactly a textbook example of "getting out in front of the problem." We don't usually address security threats and risks by decreasing our technological capacity - that's a very Soviet method for dealing with problems (when they realized the superiority and efficacy of American air-to-air missiles, for instance, the Soviets decided to build cheaper planes...and more of them). Shutting off a service I want to have (even if I don't use it, and just want to have the potential for using it) because someone is abusing the system would be somewhat like burning down my house be-

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

cause I don't want to get robbed.

Of course, Bruce isn't going to have the answers. Sadly, neither will the government, anytime soon. I mean, which law enforcement agency would handle such a thing? The text spam dealt came via a cell phone, which the FBI has determined falls into their jurisdiction (because, y'know, satellites are...across...state lines...). The content of the spam dealt with fraudulently inflating the price of a publicly-traded stock, which should be the SEC's area of expertise. The CAN SPAM Act, passed by a rather optimistic Congress, makes unwanted electronic solicitation a federal offense altogether...Do I con-

tact the United States Attorney? My Public Utilities Commission? The FCC? If the senders are in another country, can we deploy the CIA?

Text spam is not nearly sexy enough, not nearly expensive enough, to assemble a joint task force of all these agencies and organizations, to where they'll go busting down doors and slapping around some text-spammers. Nope.

Not yet. Give it five years, with text spam quadrupling each year.

A lot of old people have cell phones. And they call their elected representatives.

Yet again, if there's any particular topic you'd like to see addressed in these pages, or if you have any questions, comments, or concerns,

please feel free to contact me, via the information posted on my website: www.benmalisow.com.

- Ben Malisow

Ben's first book, 1,001 Things To Do If You Dare, was launched by Adams Media in April. His second, a book on counterterrorism from Chelsea House, is due out next year. Ben has provided computer and information security services to DARPA, the Department of Homeland Security, and the FBI, among other customers. He holds an MBA, a CISSP, and a CISM, among other alphabet-soup-flavored goodies.

I had the great pleasure of spending Saturday, April 26, at our MWA booth at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books. There were three distinct aspects to this pleasure that I want to share (not including sunburn!):

First, I had the chance to talk with many of our members who volunteered to staff the booth. Some of these were regulars at our programs and parties, but some were new acquaintances for me. I was impressed by how many of our affiliate members volunteered for the job. One volunteer in particular told me how she'd been "recruited" to join MWA at a previous LATFOB and wanted to participate in sharing the opportunity with others! It was also my first chance to meet in person one of our Board members, Debbie Atkinson, who flew to L.A. just to attend the Festival. (I'd like to think that it was just to be a volunteer!)

Second, I confess that I remain a fanboy at heart, and working at our booth (shared with the Mystery Bookstore) gave me the opportunity to meet some of the stars of the mystery world who were there for signings: Michael Connelly, Robert Crais, Mary Higgins Clark, and James Ellroy, just to name a few. I'm

happy to tell you

The President's Rap Sheet

that every single one of these "stars" was warm, gracious, and accessible to all of the readers and fans who swarmed the booth and took special time to converse with the other writers there.

Third, and most importantly, I relished the opportunity to "sell" our mission to the reading public, talking to countless Festival visitors about MWA and especially our So Cal chapter. "Join the MWA!" I'd call out: "Hang out with mystery writers!" I must admit, however, that I was greatly surprised when one well-known mystery writer, a long-time MWA member, turned to me from where he was signing books and said, "Why are you talking to all those people who aren't writers?" This gave me a chance to deliver one of my favorite sermons: MWA is not just for writers. I was surprised that this member didn't know that almost 45% of our National membership is comprised of affiliate and associate members—enthusiastic supporters of the mystery genre who haven't published works that meet our active-membership standards.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Some of these members are of course writers whose careers are (they hope) just beginning; others are simply readers who want to support and know more about the genre; still others are agents, editors, and publishers associated with the genre who are not writers themselves.

You should all know by now that MWA is an organization classified by the IRS as Section 501(c)(3) organization. This is because we are first and foremost an *educational* organization, educating persons who are writers about the craft, educating those who *want* to become writers, and educating the public about the genre.

As I write this, I'm traveling to the Edgars™ ceremonies in New York. We've made Edgars™ Week the centerpiece of our National activities in two different ways: First, it's of course an award ceremony, focused on giving recognition to the best achievements in the genre for the past year. This isn't done to glorify the writers who win—it's done to *promote* and *celebrate* the genre, to raise the public's awareness of mysteries in general and the best of them in particular. Second, as part of Edgars™ Week, we put on an ex-

tended seminar—known as MWA University—on the craft of writing. This is open to anyone, not just awards nominees, not just MWA members, and is part of our commitment to education.

Of course, the National MWA's activities are only a small part of our overall educational programs. Our National and Chapter newsletters are also intended for this purpose. However, the most important element of our educational efforts is the Chapter programs. We want to be sure that at least half of our local programming is focused on teaching writers how to be better writers, teaching those who want to write the elements of the craft, and teaching the public about our genre. We have exciting educational programs scheduled for the rest of 2008, including a program on poisons in June, a program on lawyers and mysteries in the Fall, and a program on writing for film in November. Of course, we'll also be educating the public more about MWA from the pulpit of our MWA booth at Book Expo America in late May and at the West Hollywood Book Fair in late September.

Sorry I didn't get to see more of you at the LAT-FOB, but there's always next year!

Les Klinger

MEET THE BOARD: Aloha Noir

Deborah "Debby" Atkinson



As a regular feature, we'll be introducing the new chapter board members of the Southern California Mystery Writers of America chapter.

You may be wondering why the Southern California MWA chapter has a board member from Hawaii. Well, the chapter name is a bit of a misnomer, as it officially covers both part of California and Nevada (regions below the 36th parallel, including San Luis Obispo, Kern, and San Bernardino counties) and all of Arizona and Hawaii. Although most of our meetings and events do happen in Southern California, we wanted to make sure that members in other areas had some representation. And with Left Coast Crime 2009 scheduled on the Big Island, who would be a better board member than Deborah Turrell Atkinson, author of the Storm Kayama mystery series (Poisoned Pen)? A resident of Honolulu, Debby has published three books in her series, *Primitive Secrets* (2002), *The Green Room* (2005), and most recently *Fire Prayer* (2005). A recipient of the University of Hawaii's Meryl Clark Award for Fiction, she is a graduate of the University of Michigan and the Iowa Writers' Workshop. She also serves as president of Sisters in

(Continued from page 3)

Crime Hawaii's chapter.

Q: Tell us about your publishing journey. First of all, how long did you work on *Primitive Secrets* before you looked for an agent/publisher?

A: I worked on *Primitive Secrets* for four or five years. It was published in 2002, but I was working on it when I failed my mammogram and had to get a bunch of surgery and medical attention in 1998. It's probably not a good thing to remember milestones by medical events, but that one sticks in my mind.

Q: How did you find Poisoned Pen?

A: I'd read a number of Poisoned Pen Press mysteries and felt they had a good reputation. It was my agent who actually found them and submitted the manuscript.

Q: What's the best advice (besides "don't give up") you can give an unpublished author?

A: To seek criticism and LISTEN to it. The listening part is the hard part. A writer's first impulse is to defend his/her work, but she needs to be quiet and listen to every word.

Q: How can MWA get the public more excited about the mystery genre?

A: More grass-roots efforts at the level of local libraries and reading groups would be helpful. Also, widespread discussion regarding the "literary" value of mysteries would be excellent for the genre. Like most mystery writers, I cringe at the distinction between mysteries and literary fiction. It's significant that John Banville, a Booker Prize winner, has written an Edgar-nominated mystery.

Q: How long have you been living in Hawaii and what changes have you seen? If you didn't live there, where would you live?

A: I've lived in Hawai'i 30 years, and the changes have been both good and bad. More people, more traffic, more stress on the natural environment. But also more recognition as a gateway to Asia and the East, better academics, better cultural activities. I'm a Midwesterner by birth, though I probably would have ended living up on one of the coasts if I didn't live in Hawai'i. I love the many cultures and folklore of the

islands. It's a great place to bring up children.

Q: Is it hard for you to write about murder and mayhem in paradise?

A: Murder and mayhem exist anywhere there are human beings. Add that to the fact that we're one of the most geographically isolated spots on earth, we have remote wilderness and over-populated urban areas, a large homeless population, an often-struggling economy with a high cost of living. It's also easy to get rid of bodies...

Though the islands provide great material for writers, there's also an amazing kindness, or aloha, in the majority of people here. It may have to do with the

cultural mix. There is no majority race; all ethnicities embrace each others' food, customs, religious and cultural practices.

Q: How do you survive without independent bookstores in your area? How do you engage and find readers? Do you have close relationships

with the staff at the chain bookstores?

A: Good question! I wish like crazy there were more independent bookstores. I do have good relationships with the staff at the chain stores, and they are supportive of local authors. Newspapers and libraries have also been very helpful.

Q: Tell us about the "bug guy."

A: About two years ago, I called the ME's office to ask a research question for *Fire Prayer*. I needed to know what a body would look like after it had lain in a Molokai forest for a couple of weeks. Once people know you're a mystery writer, they love talking about their work. The phone call turned into an hour-long chat. Dr. William Goodhue, Honolulu's First Deputy Medical Examiner, suggested that I give Lee Goff a call. It turns out that M. Lee Goff, PhD, is one of eight certified forensic entomologists in America. He's one of the first people the CSI folks call when they have questions about bodies in the field. He'll be speaking to our SinC chapter on March 18. If you're in the islands, please come!

--Naomi Hirahara

In Preparation for Left Coast Crime Hawaii

Next year's Left Coast Crime is in Hawaii from March 7-12, 2009. What do you have to look forward to? Our resident expert, board member Debby Atkinson, gives us a few tips:

What's your favorite spot in Hawaii that visitors don't know about?

Perhaps Waipio Valley on the Big Island, or Halawa Valley on Moloka'i. Then there are those nude beaches on Kauai...

Do you have any sightseeing recommendations for convention-goers? How about food?

Aah, food—a local obsession. Hawai'i people love to eat. To make my information as up-to-date as possible, I asked a couple of friends for opinions, and here goes. For high-end, special meals, Alan Wong's at the Four Seasons, Roy's at Waikoloa (that'll be in the area of the LCC hotel), Brown's Beach House, Merriman's, and Daniel Thiebault's (latter two are in Waimea) are favorites. For mid-range, not quite so fancy, Oodles of Noodles, O's Bistro (both in Kailua-Kona), Café Pesto (Kawaihae) get thumbs up. For easy-going, local stops, try Big Island Grill, U Top It (Holualoa), Manago's (Kealahou).

Sightseeing recommendations: Waipio Valley—if you like horses, you might be able to ride through it. Historic significance, breathtaking beauty—black sand beach, waterfalls, ancient taro (kalo) patches, wild macadamia nut and mango trees. (WAY off the beaten path) On the beaten path, and also stunning, is Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau, the ancient City of Refuge and National Historic Park near Captain Cook. Just the drive is worth the visit. Take snorkels and stop along the way. A long, but worthy drive would be to go to Volcano National Park, too.

In early March, the humpback whales will still be tending their young in local waters. You'll probably have sightings from shore, but a boat ride will give you an unforgettable visit. If you like to swim and dive, the Kona Coast is world-renowned. Day trips will show you a multitude of ocean life, and you'll probably hear the whales' songs. Take the night dive to observe the Manta Rays. You'll never forget it, and you'll have video footage to reminisce. If you have questions about any of these suggestions, email me:

deborah.atkinson@gmail.com.

FRESH BLOOD

New Active Members:

Betty Hechtman (Tarzana, CA)

New Affiliate Members:

Teresa M. Burrell (Riverside, CA)

Tama Ryder (Claremont, CA)

Stephanie Serrano (Hilo, HI)

Complete Range of Editorial Services

Professional editor and published author offers complete editorial workout to new and experienced mystery writers.



Benefit from years of editorial experience at major publishing houses. Honest evaluation, sensitive critique, plot/character development, line editing, rewrites.

Helga Schier, Ph.D.: 310-828-8421, withpenandpaper@verizon.net

NEW ADDRESS FOR NATIONAL MWA

MWA National's new address is:

Mystery Writers of America

1140 Broadway, Suite 1507

New York, NY 10001

Phone, fax and email remain the same, but here they are again in case you need them:

Phone: 212.888.8171

Fax: 212.888.8107

Email: mwa@mysterywriters.org

Website: www.mysterywriters.org

Hang out with people who share the same dark, obsessive thoughts as you

No, not serial killers... Crime writers!

I'm Dianne Emley and I'm delighted to serve as your Program Chair this year.

Your SoCal MWA Board has planned a great mix of events to elucidate and to celebrate, to deliver the four-one-one and to party on! This schedule is evolving, and events will be added.

We've already had a well-attended hands-on seminar in January about book marketing and the new media. In February, our annual Agents Panel was again a hit. We toured the L.A. County Forensics Lab in March.

We're also drinking. Don't forget **MWA: Drinks!** In this no-host event, we pick a place to meet, usually on the last Thursday of the month, raise a glass, have pub grub, and gripe!

Would you like to see your name in print? I'm recruiting members to cover and take photos at our events and write a summary for our newsletter. If you'd like this opportunity, drop me an email.

I hope you'll find something to inspire you to come out and join us. If you have any suggestions, please contact me: Dianne@DianneEmley.com.

Good writing,
Dianne

SoCal MWA 2008 COMING ATTRACTIONS

June: Panel!

The Gentle Art of Poison, Sunday, June 22. 11:00 a.m. Champagne Brunch., Sportsmen's Lodge, Studio City
Our own medical forensics specialist, Doug Lyle, M.D., novelist and author of the Macavity Award-winning *Forensics for Dummies*, will be in discussion with David Ciambrone, novelist and author of *The Poisons Handbook for Writers*.

August: Party!

Saturday evening, August 23: Bill Fitzhugh will host a gumbo party at his house in the San Fernando Valley. If you missed this fantastic party in 2006, don't miss this one!

Arizona Event!: *Friday, August 1. Sedona, Arizona:* Kris Neri is organizing a reception and panel discussion in conjunction with the Sedona Public Library's 50th Birthday celebration.

September: Party!

Saturday, September 13. 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Reception at the UCLA Faculty Center. If you missed this terrific and popular party last November, don't miss this one!

Sunday, September 28. The West Hollywood Book Fair SoCal MWA will coordinate an MWA booth.

October: Panel!

Lawyers (hyphen) Writers, Sunday, October 26. 11:00 a.m. Champagne Brunch., Sportsmen's Lodge, Studio City, Pamela Samuels-Young is planning an event featuring lawyer-writers.

November: Panel!

From the Page to the Screen. Going from Books to Film. Sunday, November 16. 11:00 a.m. Champagne Brunch., Sportsmen's Lodge, Studio City, Bill Fitzhugh will moderate a discussion with producer Trevor Albert ("The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen," "Because of Winn Dixie," "Bedazzled," "Groundhog Day" and actor/writer/producer James Keach ("Walk the Line").

December: Party!

Last year, the holiday party was at the Jonathan Beach Club in Santa Monica and it was great. What? You missed it because of a little rain? Don't miss it this year. Location and date to be announced.

Be there, or be square!

CRIME FICTION'S GOT REAL CLASS

Despite the words of Frank Cairnes, a Nicholas Blake character who is "...unable to convince [himself] that detective fiction is a serious branch of literature...", the mystery novel has gained enough respect to be studied in universities. Is there anything worthwhile for the mystery writer in these classes?

With the availability of numerous conferences and publications, the need for a university education in developing skills as a mystery writer appears to be a moot point. On the other hand, a university class enables a writer to study basic detective fiction structure, history, characterization, and themes in an academic environment. That might be of some use.

My own stint in a detective fiction class took place in the Fall semester of 2006 at UC Santa Barbara. Enrollment was so heavy that over 60 students had to be turned away. My first evening in class was spent in a cavernous lecture hall with about a hundred people. The professor had to yell instructions about the syllabus, as the PA system was out of order.

In addition to my excitement at reviewing the long list of mysteries we would be required to read, and wondering how this could possibly be considered "work," there was an interesting man sitting next to me. He was a ginger-haired giant, straight out of a pulp novel, hair sticking up as if being torn at by huge hands. His most arresting feature was his eyes; like Joel Townsley Rogers' horrifying murderer, the "...red eyed man..." the whites of my classmate's eyes were the color of a rare t-bone steak. Who was he? A prospective killer here to learn better ways to get away with it? Eventually, the real answer would surprise me. To deepen the mystery, he didn't say much, except once or twice to ask, "What page are we on?"

In the early days of class, we worked on plot analysis, beginning with a typical Poe "whodunit." This included an observation / inference exercise showing Poe's Dupin at work with clues and conclusions. As the semester progressed, we read and discussed fiction that was progressively more modern, Christie, Chandler, Grafton, Mosely, and Hiassen. The authors were discussed from the perspective of

history, the wars and social upheavals that influenced their work, and how those were reflected in fictional detectives such as Philip Marlowe, Easy Rawlins, and Kinsey Millhone.

At the same time, I watched as my neighbor rubbed his hair and eyes with the palms of his hands, making one stand up straighter and the other even redder. When would the explosion happen? When he would ask what page we were on, I was prompt with my reply.

By the time the semester was over, I had gained a much better understanding of the detective fiction genre despite the fact that I have long been an aficionado. I had read many new authors and revisited some old ones, all placed in their historical context. I had a better understanding of the mystery genre's place in literature. I had a better grasp of the craft of mystery writing, particularly in the areas of plot and character.

Who was he? A prospective killer here to learn better ways to get away with it?

mystery of my red-eyed classmate was solved. Class had been cancelled, and as I walked past the empty lecture hall to head home after my other classes, I nearly bumped into him.

"Hey, where is everybody?" he asked.

"No class today," I answered. His hands clenched into fists and his jaw tightened. Maybe my lurid speculations were about to be fulfilled. I took a few steps back.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

His explanation: he had just driven nearly one-hundred miles in nearly stopped-dead traffic for no reason. No one had told him that class had been cancelled. Employed at an Orange County bookkeeping firm, he had been making this awful drive twice a week to complete these last units before receiving a business degree. Hence the red eyes and wild appearance. I apologized and got out of there as fast as I could.

Best of all, a week before the end of the term, the

(Continued from page 7)

For those interested in enrolling in a detective fiction class at a university, it is not necessary to pursue a four-year degree. Many campuses offer something called “open enrollment,” wherein an interested person can enroll in any on-campus class, as long as space is available. There are usually prerequisites. At both my UC and State campuses, permission must be granted by the instructor for enrollment, any other class prerequisites must be met, and fees must be paid. In the case of detective fiction, where space might be unavailable, it is also possible to enroll in the class through an off-campus satellite program. My UC campus has two satellites, and although the on-campus

class may be broadcast rather than “in-person,” the available technology not only allows for real time instructor/student interaction, the class may be as small as one or two members.

It is, indeed, useful for a mystery writer to study the genre at the university level. Having a broader view of one’s own calling certainly does not hurt, and even for well-known writers, there is the opportunity to view one’s connection to and potential place in a huge cannon of work. Mystery fiction will always address our beliefs in justice and right action. To have the opportunity to celebrate this genre as literature is an experience not to be missed.

Mary Birch
psychicmry@aol.com

JUNE PANEL: ***The Gentle Art of Poison***

WHEN: Sunday, June 22, 2008 11:00 a.m.

WHERE: Sportsmen’s Lodge
12833 Ventura Blvd
Studio City, CA 91604

WHAT: Champagne Brunch

Come for a conversation between forensics specialist and Macavity Award-winner, **Doug Lyle, M.D.**, and **Dr. David Ciambrone**, scientist, novelist, and author of *The Poisons Handbook for Writers*. Bring your forensic medical and scientific questions to what promises to be a fascinating meeting.

Doug Lyle, M.D. is the Macavity Award-winning and Edgar Award-nominated author of the nonfiction books *Murder and Mayhem: A Doctor Answers Medical and Forensic Questions for Mystery Writers*, a compilation of the most interesting questions he has received over the years, and *Forensics For Dummies*, an in-depth look into the world of forensic science. His published fiction includes the thrillers *Devil’s Playground* and *Double Blind*.

He has worked as a story and technical consultant with many published authors as well as with the writers and producers of several popular television shows, including *Law & Order*, *CSI: Miami*, *Diagnosis Murder*, *Monk*, *Judging Amy*, *Cold Case*, *Peacemakers*, *House*, *Medium*, and *1-800-Missing*.

Dr. David Ciambrone is a scientist, oceanographer, archaeologist, professor, magician, and author living in Georgetown, Texas. He has degrees in chemistry and chemical engineering and has been a professor of engineering and business management. He has been a consultant on poisons and forensics to police agencies and consults on chemical biological weapons preparedness.

In addition to *The Poisons Handbook for Writers*, Dave has published five Virginia Davies Mysteries and three management books. He writes a science column, “Ask Uncle Dave,” for the *Williamson County Sun*.

Transom Notes

New Releases and Deals

Robert Fate launched his latest Baby Shark novel, *High Plains Redemption*, at Mystery & Imagination in Glendale on May 17. www.robertfate.com. Scarecrow Press will publish New York City transplant **Amnon Kabatchnik**'s first two books. *Sherlock Holmes on the Stage* recounts the plot, production data, and critical reception of plays by Arthur Conan Doyle. *Blood on the Stage* covers plays of crime, mystery and detection produced between 1900-1925 (it's the first in a set). amnon@bway.net. **Robert S. Levinson**'s seventh crime novel, *In the Key of Death*, has made the L.A. Times bestseller list. Bob's *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine* short story from last year is the title piece of the new anthology, *A Prisoner of Memory and 24 of the Year's Finest Crime and Mystery Stories*, while his play, "Murder Times Two," premieres mid-June at the International Mystery Writers Festival. <http://robertslevinson.com>. **Thomas Perry**'s latest novel, *Fidelity*, was released by Harcourt on May 12. <http://www.thomasperryauthor.com>. *The Natural Selection*, the second in **Ona Russell**'s Sarah Kaufman 1920s historical mystery series, will be released July 1st from Sunstone Press. This murder story is set in Tennessee against the backdrop of the Scopes "Monkey" trial. <http://onarussell.com>. *The Olive Horseshoe*, **Ben Small**'s second novel was recently released. He's since been criss-crossing the country doing signings and radio interviews, including one in Australia. www.benssmall.com. **Patricia Smiley**'s novel *Cool Cache*—fourth in her Tucker Sinclair series—will be released June 3 www.patriciasmiley.com. **Nathan Walpow** is publishing his fifth Joe Portugal novel — one piece at a time. *Bad Developments* appears on www.fourstory.org, an affordable housing advocacy site that Nathan edits. There's a new installment every week. www.walpov.com. **John Morgan Wilson** has closed a deal with Bold Strokes Books to reissue his first four Benjamin Justice mysteries, including *Simple Justice*, his 1996 Edgar winner for Best First Novel. <http://johnmorganwilson.com>

Awards and Events

DP Lyle announced that the First Annual MWA Crime Fiction University in New York was a great success. www.Dplyle.com. **Robert L. Hecker**'s 10th novel, *Murder by Proxy*, took 1st place in the prestigious EPPIE awards (electronic and print). His two character play "Borderline" opened at the Stage Theater in Fullerton in April, and his one act play "Mrs. Invisible" is due to open in L.A. in May. RobtHecker@aol.com. **Anthony Flacco**'s book *The Last Nightingale* is one of five nominees for Best Paperback Original for 2007 by the International Thriller Writers Association. www.anthonyflacco.com. **Twist Phelan**'s short story "A Trader's Lot" from *Wall Street Noir* has been nominated for a Derringer Award. <http://twistphelan.com>

Classes

Dennis Palumbo has a signing and mini-mystery writing workshop at the Writer's Store on June 7 at 5 pm. 2040 Westwood Blvd., L.A. For info: 310-441-5151. www.dennispalumbo.com. **Gay Kinman** announces her new classes: Critique Sessions for Writers for ages 18+ on July 12, 10-12 noon, and for under 18's on August 1, 10-12 noon. She'll also teach Beginning Writing for Fiction and Non-Fiction Writers, covering POV, Characterization, Narration, Description, Dialog, and more. To register: www.cityofalhambra.org.

Articles

Sheila Lowe's interview for the L.A. Times on the handwritings of the presidential candidates led to several additional radio and magazine interviews. She's just returned from her hometown, London, where she lectured on Antisocial Personality Disorder and showed the handwritings of famous murderers www.claudiaroseseries.com. **Jeri Westerson** has an upcoming article in *Crimespree* magazine titled "Raymond Chandler and Me." <http://www.jerwesterson.typepad.com>

Compiled and edited by Sheila Lowe

The Crime Calendar

Mayhem in the Midlands—May 22-25, Omaha, NE, <http://www.omaha.lib.ne.us/mayhem/index.html>

Crimefest—June 5-8, Bristol, UK www.crimefest.com

Murder in the Grove—June 6-7, Boise, ID, www.murderinthegrove.com

Bloody Words—June 6-8, Toronto, Canada, bloodywords.com

International Mystery Writers Festival—June 12-22, Owensboro, KY <http://www.newmysteries.org/>

Hardboiled Heroes & Cozy Cats—June 13-14, Dallas, TX, <http://www.mwasw.org/>

Deadly Ink—June 20-22, Parsippany, NJ, www.deadlyink.com

Book Passage Mystery Writers Conf.—June 26-June 29, Corte Madera, CA <http://www.bookpassage.com/content.php?id=44>

Thrillerfest—July 9-10, New York, NY, <http://www.thrillerwriters.org/thrillerfest/>

West Hollywood Book Fair—Sept., W. Hollywood, CA, www.westhollywoodbookfair.org/

Killer Nashville—Aug. 15-17, Nashville, TN, www.killernashville.com

Bouchercon 39—Oct. 9-12, Baltimore, MD, <http://www.charmedtodeath.com/>

Cape Fear Crime Festival—Oct., Wilmington, NC, www.capefearcrimefestival.org/

Magna cum Murder—Oct. 24-26, Muncie, IN, www.magnacummurder.com

The Great Manhattan Mystery Conclave—Oct. 31—Nov. 2, Manhattan, KS, www.manhattanmysteries.com

New England Crimebake—Nov. 14-16, Lowell, MA, <http://crimebake.org/index.htm>

Tony Hillerman Writers Conference—Nov., Albuquerque, NM

TWO YEARS AWAY, BUT NEARBY: Left Coast Crime 2010

Jan Burke and Lee Child will be the Guests of Honor at "**Booked in LA**," aka Left Coast Crime, at the Omni Hotel in downtown Los Angeles from March 11 to 14, 2010. Janet Rudolph will be feted as Fan Guest of Honor with Bill Fitzhugh serving as Toastmaster.

The event features three tracks of panels and presentations, including one tailored to published writers, as well as local crime-related tours, special events and a charity auction. Early registration is available until June 30, 2008 at a discounted rate of \$180.

Launched in 1991 by mystery fans, Left Coast Crime is held annually at a city in the West. Awards presented include the Lefty for the year's most humorous mystery and the Dilys which is given by the IMBA to the author of the book they've most enjoyed selling.

For more information and to register online, visit www.leftcoastcrime.org and click on the link to 2010.

THE MARCH OF CRIME



MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA

**Southern California Chapter
12021 Wilshire Blvd. #506
Los Angeles, CA 90025**

The March of Crime is the newsletter of the Southern California Chapter/Mystery Writers of America
Editor: Eric Stone

To submit material for *The March of Crime*, email the editor at editor@socalmwa.com
To advertise in *TMOC*, visit our website at www.SoCalMWA.com for information.

Mystery Writers of America *Southern California Chapter*

12021 Wilshire Blvd., #506, Los Angeles, CA 90025
323-319-6MWA (6692)

Email: info@socalmwa.com

The Web of Crime: www.socalmwa.com

President

Les Klinger

Board of Directors

Deborah Atkinson, Dianne Emley, Bill Fitzhugh,
Naomi Hirahara, Linda Johnston, Doug Lyle M.D.,
Kris Neri, T. Jefferson Parker, Pamela Samuels-
Young, Patty Smiley

Ex-officio: James Lincoln Warren



Mystery Writers of America
1140 Broadway, Suite 1507, New York, NY 10001

Phone: 212.888.8171 / Fax: 212.888.8107

Email: mwa@mysterywriters.org

Website: www.mysterywriters.org

The MWA logo and awards name "Edgar" are protected marks of the Mystery Writers of America, Inc., and are used in all issues of *The March of Crime*

THE MARCH OF CRIME NEEDS A NEW EDITOR AGAIN

That's right, I've just got too many other fish to fry: the third book in my series coming out in the fall, a deadline on the fourth book, another book project in the works, a possible paperback of my very first book and a busy summer bearing down upon me fast.

This isn't such a terrible job, really. And it is quite rewarding in the gratitude you'll receive and friendships you can make from the SoCal MWA membership. (Even if there's no money in it.)

So, please somebody, slide on over and take the wheel. I'll do what I can to help in the transition, and I might even write an article or two for you, if you want, in the future.

You can volunteer by emailing me at

editor@socalmwa.com

Thanks (see, the gratitude is starting already),

Eric