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**Bouchercon 2017**  
**Passport to Murder**

October 12 – 15  
Toronto, Canada

[More info](#)

**Annual SoCalMWA  
Gumbo Party**

Saturday, October 7  
6 p.m.



**Reserve your spot now!**

The annual SoCalMWA Gumbo Party, graciously hosted once again by Master Chef **Bill Fitzhugh** and his wife Kendall, will be held on Saturday, October 7, starting at 6pm. Join us for great food, great company, and—perhaps best of all—Craig Westerson's famous home-brewed ale.



This is a truly unique event—arguably our most popular of the year!—and it's absolutely free for members. So come out and enjoy a night under the stars with your fellow SoCalMWA members.

Wine and soft drinks will be available; feel free to BYOB.

Email [rsvp@socalmwa.com](mailto:rsvp@socalmwa.com) for the address and additional details. Members and plus-ones only, please.

We hope to see you there!

**Save the Date!**  
**Tam Luncheon**  
Program TBA  
Sunday, November 5  
Doors open at noon



## The President's Rap Sheet

*Elizabeth Little*

This year—possibly because I've been so busy, but probably because I'm beginning to panic about being on the far side of my 30s—I've caught myself greeting each new month with a dawning sense of horror. "Where has this year gone!" I sputter, newly incredulous each time, as if I'd never before contemplated the passage of time.

Fortunately October's a little different, because I'm actually excited about this one. There's so much to look forward to: the Gumbo Party, Bouchercon, and a wide variety of writing-related events throughout the area—plus the chance to con my kid into wearing a Halloween costume that will embarrass him deeply when he's older.

I know it's a long trip for some of us, but if you think you might be able to make it to this year's Gumbo Party, I can't recommend it highly enough. It's a wonderful evening and a great way to meet your fellow chapter members.

And I know it's an even longer trip for all of us, but still I hope I'll see many of you at Bouchercon in Toronto later this month. Nearly all of my closest friends in the mystery community are people I first met at Bouchercon, and it's quickly become one of the highlights of my year. Even though it's heavily attended by authors, Bouchercon is still billed as an event for fans, and that's how I'd suggest any new attendees approach it: Don't think of it so much as a place to sell yourself as it is an opportunity to engage with authors you admire and to expand your reading horizons.

But I also know that we're not always up for long trips. So one of our goals on the board in the coming months is to brainstorm ways to give our members a chance to meet up and talk shop in a venue much closer to home—wherever that home may be. If you live in San Diego, Orange County, or Arizona (or anywhere outside Los Angeles) and would like to help us plan casual monthly meet-ups for SoCalMWA members—or have any ideas for how we might do so—please contact me at [president@socalmwa.com](mailto:president@socalmwa.com). The board takes very seriously its responsibility to serve all our members, not just those in LA, and we would very much welcome and appreciate all input and feedback that might allow us to do so.

Until next month,  
Elizabeth

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

**President:** Elizabeth Little  
**VP:** Paul D. Marks  
**Treasurer:** Sarah M. Chen  
**Secretary:** Travis Richardson

### Board of Directors

Shannon Baker  
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Craig Faustus Buck

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 Southern California Chapter  
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## The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

Recently, I joined a gym. Turns out, it was the best thing I could've done for my writing. Not because working out gives me more energy and confidence (though it does). Mostly it's because I go early to write for a couple of hours in their cafe before starting my workout. I'd probably get better coffee at a place devoted to that very thing, but given the results I've seen in the three weeks since I made this change, I'm willing to drink what they give me.

My point isn't that you should join a gym, too. But if you're in a rut and need a change, now might be the time to do it. Most people think of the New Year as a chance to re-boot their routines, but why not Fall? Works for me.

As for *The March of Crime*, we've got a jam-packed issue this month. Many thanks to our contributors, including **Gina Star Pollack**, who did a marvelous job [writing up](#) the recent MWA-U event featuring MWA president Jeffery Deaver. Patricia Smiley and Elizabeth Little provided [photos](#) of the event, and **R.N. Crane** [wrote a synopsis](#) of OCSD's Citizen's Academy Class. It has me wondering if my local sheriff's department offers a similar class.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at Bouchercon this month. And if you're new to the conference and you're feeling shy, seek me out.

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](mailto:themarchofcrime@gmail.com)

**Join our SoCalMWA  
Yahoo! Group**

Email [SoCalMWA-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:SoCalMWA-subscribe@yahoo.com) to join (members only)

# FRESH BLOOD

SoCalMWA welcomes its new and returning members:

Diann Adamson  
Jennifer Ashley  
Hal Bodner  
Evelyn Cirincione  
Robert Loudon  
Patricia Wallmark



## OVER the TRANSOM

**P Moss's** latest novel, *VEGAS TABLOID*, will be released October 3 by Squidhat Press. A twisted, fast-paced thriller about a wisecracking con man and his sideshow troupe of small-time criminals who accidentally become the most popular performers on the Las Vegas Strip. Suddenly rich and famous, life is great for these Runyoneque social delinquents until they find themselves at the center of a deadly corporate cover-up. Armed with little more than street smarts, this band of neo-noir misfits fights an uphill battle against a vicious billionaire, a perverted cop, and betrayal from within, racing the clock not only to save themselves, but to prevent the biggest mass murder in American history.

**Jeri Westerson** is launching a brand-new urban fantasy series, *BOOKE OF THE HIDDEN*, releasing on Halloween! *Publishers Weekly* said of it, “Readers sad about the ending of Charlaine Harris’s *Midnight, Texas* trilogy will find some consolation in *Moody Bog*.” And *Romantic Times* gave it five stars, “*BOOKE OF THE HIDDEN* is paranormal romance perfection!” [See related event info here.](#)

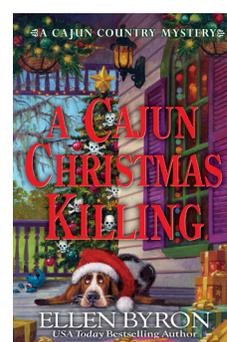
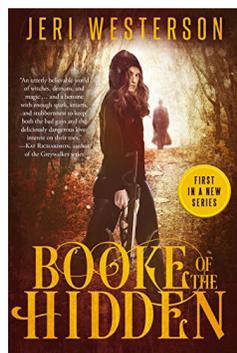
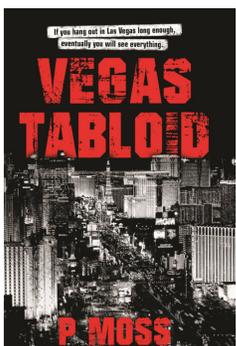
**Paul D. Marks's** story “Bunker Hill Blues” appears in the current (Sept./Oct.) issue of *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine*. It is the sequel to Paul’s Macavity-nominated and Ellery Queen Readers Poll Award–winning story “Ghosts of Bunker Hill.”

*IT’S ALL IN THE STORY*, a short-story anthology from the Southern California Writers Association edited by **DP Lyle** will be out October 21. [Details here.](#)

**Shannon Baker** announces the release of the second in the Kate Fox mystery series with *DARK SIGNAL* on October 17 (Forge). Kate struggles to get her life in balance and get a rein on her new position as Grand County Sheriff, when a death on the BNSF Railroad interrupts. She’s the only one who thinks it might not be an accident, and she scrambles to find the killer before he strikes again.

**Ellen Byron's** third Cajun Country Mystery, *A CAJUN CHRISTMAS KILLING*, will be released on October 10.

*INVASION OF THE SCORP-LIONS*, the third *Monstertown* Mystery in **Bruce Hale's** Disney-Hyperion series for young readers, will make its spooky bow on Halloween.



## OVER the TRANSOM

KILLING MALMON (Down & Out Books), a crime fiction anthology edited by *Crimespree Magazine's* Dan and Kate Malmon, will be released on October 19. Thirty writers, including SoCalMWA members **Sarah M. Chen**, **Danny Gardner**, **S.W. Lauden**, **Josh Stallings**, and **Holly West**, were given one guideline: Dan Malmon must be killed. All proceeds from this collection will benefit the MS Society.

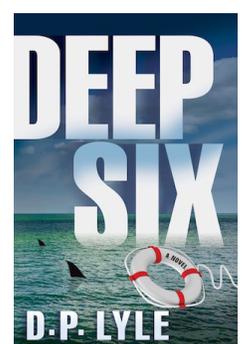
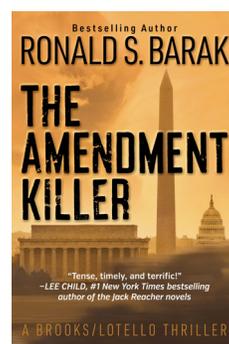
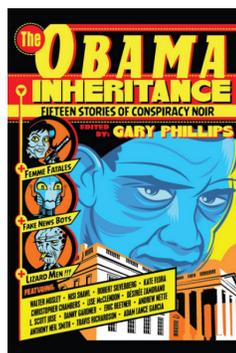
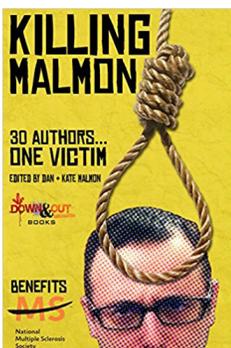
**Gay Toltl Kinman's** two latest short stories—and the end of the VIM series—are now available. In “Vengeance is Mine: The Mask Case,” the VIM PIs travel to Carmel to investigate a strange double suicide. In “Vengeance is Mine: The Cold Case,” an old LAPD friend, willing to pay their high fee, asks the VIM PIs to look into the murder of an LAPD captain, a thirty-year-old cold case.

*Newsweek* named THE OBAMA INHERITANCE: FIFTEEN STORIES OF CONSPIRACY NOIR (Three Rooms Press), edited by **Gary Phillips** and including stories by SoCalMWA members **Désirée Zamorano**, **Danny Gardner**, and **Travis Richardson**, one of [fifteen books recommended by publishers at the Brooklyn Book Festival](#).

**Ronald S. Barak's** THE AMENDMENT KILLER will be released on November 1. “We have your granddaughter. Here’s what you need to do.” So begins a text message forcing a supreme court justice holding the swing vote in a key case to decide whether saving the fate of the nation is worth his granddaughter’s life. Feisty, eleven years old, and diabetic, the youngster has an insulin supply that’s running dry, making the clock even more threatening than her kidnapper. Lee Child calls THE AMENDMENT KILLER “Tense, timely, and terrific!” and John Lescroart deems it “a primer for the commercial legal thriller.”

DEEP SIX, the Shamus-nominated novel from **DP Lyle**, will be available in paperback on November 14.

[More information.](#)

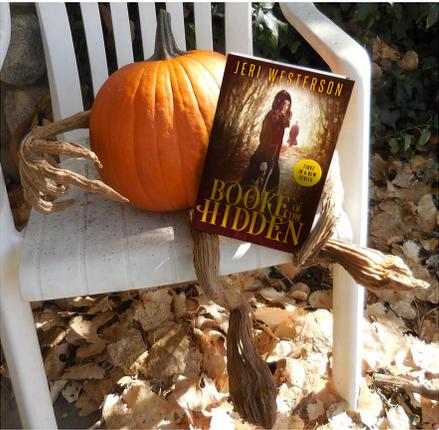


## Member APPEARANCES

Please join **Travis Richardson, Désirée Zamorano, Danny Gardner**, Chris Chambers, Eric Beetner, and editor **Gary Phillips** as they read from and sign copies of their new strange and pulpy anthology, *THE OBAMA INHERITANCE: FIFTEEN STORIES OF CONSPIRACY AND NOIR*. October 24, 7 p.m., Eso Won Bookstore, 4331 Degnan Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90008.

**Connie di Marco** will be taking part in the Local Authors Showcase at the Buena Vista Branch of the Burbank Library on Saturday, October 21 from 1 to 4 p.m., 300 N. Buena Vista Street, Burbank, CA 91505. [More info.](#)

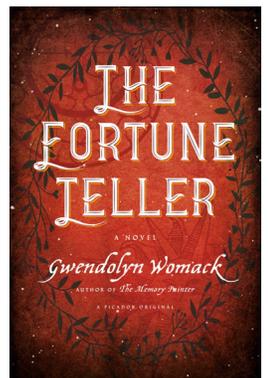
**Jeri Westerson** will be involved in multiple spooky events to celebrate the release of her new novel, *BOOKE OF THE HIDDEN*. First up, the official launches, complete with fabulous spooky fun with munchies, presentation, and amazing giveaways: Saturday, November 4, 4 p.m. – Vroman's Bookstore, 695 E Colorado Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91101/ Sunday, November 5, 3:30 p.m. – Mysterious Galaxy Bookstore, 5943 Balboa Ave #100, San Diego, CA 92111/



Additional events: Saturday, November 11, 3 p.m. – Gatsby Bookstore 5535 E. Spring St. Long Beach, CA/ Sunday, November 12, 6:30 p.m. – Open Book, 19188 Soledad Canyon Rd, Santa Clarita, CA 91351/ November 17, 7 p.m. MST – Poisoned Pen Bookstore, SKYPING with the Sci Fi/Fantasy club! There will be signed books available for sale and some free goodies! Get to the store to get in on the spooky fun. 4014 N Goldwater Blvd, Scottsdale, AZ 85251/ Saturday, November 18, 1– 3 p.m. – Book Barn, 640 Clovis Ave., Clovis, CA 93612/ Wednesday, December 13, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. – Tempe Library, Presentation “The World of the Paranormal: A Look at the History of Magical Books and Demons,” 3500 S Rural Rd, Tempe, AZ/ Saturday, December 16, 1 – 3 p.m. – Mostly Books, 6208 E Speedway Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85712/ Sunday, December 17, 2 p.m. – Wheeler

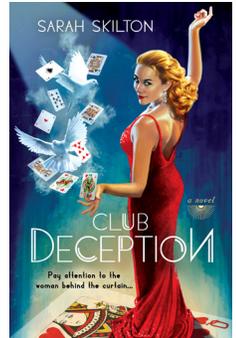
Taft Abbett Library, a presentation “The World of the Paranormal: A Look at the History of Magical Books and Demons,” 7800 N. Schisler Dr. Tucson AZ 85743. Jeri will also be at Ladies of Intrigue, a Sisters in Crime Orange County event on Sunday, October 1, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. – A day of panels and discussion for aspiring crime writers and mystery novelists. / Saturday, October 14, 2 p.m. – Kaufman Brentwood Branch Library. A panel with mystery authors **Rachel Howzell Hall, Nancy Cole Silverman**, and Paula Bernstein, 11820 San Vicente Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90049. Free, open to the public. Books available for sale.

**Gwendolyn Womack** will be reading and signing her latest novel, *THE FORTUNE TELLER*, a mystery revolving around the world's first tarot cards, on Thursday, October 19 at the El Segundo Library from 7 – 8 p.m. and at Pages Bookstore in Manhattan Beach on Thursday, October 26 at 7 p.m.



## Member APPEARANCES

**Sarah Skilton** will sign copies of her new book, *CLUB DECEPTION*, at the Ripped Bodice bookstore in Culver City on Thursday, October 19 at 7:30 p.m. as part of the store's monthly comedy night. This time, however, the festivities will be a combination of magic and comedy, as Sarah's husband Joe Skilton will perform a magic set in celebration of Sarah's magic-themed mystery.

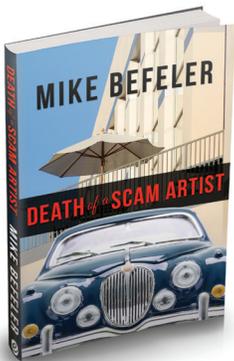


An afternoon of mysterious women! Join **Ellen Byron**, **Daryl Wood Gerber**, and **Shannon Baker** at The Book Carnival in Orange on November 12 at 3 p.m. With this group of wild women, you never know what will happen. But it's guaranteed to be fun.

For anyone in San Diego, **Shannon Baker** would be grateful and oh-so-happy to see you at Mysterious Galaxy on November 9, where she will be talking mysteries with *New York Times* bestseller, Charlie Lovett at 7:30 p.m.

**Ellen Byron** is celebrating the release of *A CAJUN CHRISTMAS KILLING*, the third book in her award-winning Cajun Country Mystery series, with a launch party on Sunday, October 22 from 4 – 6 p.m. at Catcher in the Rye, 10550 Riverside Dr., Los Angeles, CA 91602. RSVP at [cajuncountrymysteries@gmail.com](mailto:cajuncountrymysteries@gmail.com). It's a cash bar, but there will be snacks and swag. And possibly a short dance routine. Really. Wear sneakers in case you feel like joining in.

**Sheila Lowe** will be appearing at a book club in Ventura on October 2 and at another on the 30th, where in honor of Halloween, some members will dress in costumes from the Forensic Handwriting Mysteries and nibble on goodies inspired by the books. She'll be signing at Mostly Books in Tucson on the 7th. And on the 21st, Sheila will be talking about the books at her fifty year reunion—go Anaheim High Class of 67! She's starting to gear up for the release of *WRITTEN OFF* on November 7.



**Mike Befeler** will be signing and presenting his mystery novel, *DEATH OF A SCAM ARTIST* at Mystery Ink, 8907 Warner Ave. #135, Huntington Beach, CA, on Saturday, October 14, 2017 at 5 p.m.

**Ellen Byron**, **Glen Erik Hamilton**, **Nadine Nettmann**, **Hollie Overton**, and **Wendall Thomas** will be part of the Trivia Night for Mystery Lovers at the Studio City Library on October 26 at 6 p.m. Teams will be four people, plus one author, and the event is hosted by the "All About Agatha" podcast hosts. Registration is recommended but not required.

**Rachel Howzell Hall**, **Joe Ide**, and **Hollie Overton** are on the Fall Mystery Author Panel on October 7th at 3:30pm at the Studio City Branch Library.

**Shannon Baker**, **Nadine Nettmann**, **Phoef Sutton**, **CJ Foxx**, **Tod Goldberg**, and **Dene Low** will be on the Mysterious Ways: Mysteries and Thrillers for Everyone panel at the Las Vegas Book Festival on October 21 at 3 p.m.

## Member APPEARANCES



### Bouchercon 2017 SoCalMWA Member Panel Schedule

If you're attending Bouchercon in Toronto this year, keep an eye out for your fellow SoCalMWA members. Please note this list was compiled from member submissions and therefore is not comprehensive. For a complete listing and description of panels as well as authors appearing in the 20 on the 20 Spotlight Sessions, visit the [Bouchercon 2017 website](#) or the conference program.

#### Thursday, October 12:

**Lee Goldberg** and **Phoef Sutton** will be on the "Mysterious Collaborations" panel at 10 a.m.

**Harley Jane Kozak** will moderate the "East v West" panel at 10 a.m.

**Matt Coyle** will moderate the "Best Paperback Original" panel at 1 p.m.

**Josh Stallings** will be on the "'Recent' History" panel at 1 p.m.

**Les Klinger** will moderate the "Anatomy of Innocence" panel at 2:30 p.m.

**Nadine Nettmann** will be on two panels: "Best First Novel" at 2:30 p.m. and "California Scheming" at 5:30 p.m.

**Joe Ide** will also be on the "Best First Novel" panel at 2:30 p.m.

#### Friday, October 13:

**Danny Gardner** and **Diane Vallere** will be on the "Liar's Panel" at 9:30 a.m.

**Gary Phillips** and **Georgia Jeffries** will be on the "Mixed Media" panel at 9:30 a.m.

**Sarah M. Chen** will moderate the "Best Anthology" panel at 10 a.m.

**Patricia Smiley** will be on the "Dark Side of the Loon" panel at 10 a.m.

**Holly West** will be on two panels: "Wartime and Crime" (moderator) at 11:30 a.m. and "Best Short Story," at 2 p.m.

**Shannon Baker** will be on the "Cultural Immersion" panel at 2 p.m.

# Member APPEARANCES



## Bouchercon 2017 SoCalMWA Member Panel Schedule

### Friday, October 13:

**Matt Coyle** will appear on the “Mysterious Collaborations” panel at 2 p.m.

**Craig Faustus Buck** will be on the “Location, Location” panel at 3:30 p.m.

**Travis Richardson** will be on the “5-Minute Misdemeanors” panel at 5 p.m.

### Saturday, October 14:

**Sarah M. Chen, S.W. Lauden,** and **John Shepphird** will be on the “Best Novella” panel at 8:30 a.m.

**Steph Cha** will be on the “Writers Under 40” panel at 1 p.m.

**Sarah Skilton** will be on the “Fraught with Romance” panel at 2:30 p.m.

**Barry Lancet** will be on the “A World of Thrills” panel at 2:30 p.m.

**Bonnie MacBird** will be on the “Shared Universes” panel at 4 p.m.

**Gary Phillips** and Twist Phelan (toastmasters) will interview each other at 5:50 p.m.

### Sunday, October 15:

**Eva Montealegre** will present her forthcoming novel, *BODY ON THE BACKLOT: RED CARPET NOIR* (Rare Bird Lit) at 10:40 a.m. as part of Bouchercon’s 20 on the 20 Spotlight Sessions.

*SoCalMWA Congratulates*

**Toastmaster Gary Phillips  
and our award-nominated members  
at Bouchercon 2017**

October 27–29, 2017 | PASADENA, CA



WRITER'S DIGEST

# NOVEL WRITING CONFERENCE

Use your exclusive code to save on  
WD's Novel Writing Conference!

3 days of learning, 4 tracks to explore and the opportunity to learn how to produce a tightly crafted novel as compelling to agents and editors, as it is to readers—and it's all backed by nearly 100 years of experience.

Featuring these *New York Times* bestselling authors:



Opening Keynote

**LISA  
SEE**



Central Keynote

**HEATHER  
GRAHAM**



Closing Keynote

**NEAL  
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With tracks dedicated to Craft, Character, Genre and Beyond,  
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**WRITING COMMERCIAL FICTION**  
**MWA-U Master Class with Jeffery Deaver**  
By **Gina Star Pollack**

The hallmark of a true leader is the willingness to take time off from writing and promoting international best-sellers to mentor those who strive to emulate his success. On September 16, MWA President Jeffery Deaver morphed into his alter-ego, Professor of Suspensology, to educate and inspire a group of eager writers and fans of mysteries and thrillers. During the three-hour SoCalMWA workshop, Mr. Deaver presented a detailed framework for crafting a successful page-turner. His enthusiasm, energy, and wry sense of humor kept us on the edge of our seats, motivating us to tell stories that will surprise and thrill readers.

For those of you who were unable to attend the session, the following is a list of nuggets from the extensive curriculum to jump start your next project.

### **General Rules About Writing Fiction**

- Create an emotionally engaging story in which living, breathing characters confront increasing levels of conflict which is ultimately resolved in a largely, but not exclusively positive way.
- Outline your book ahead of time. Stories are about structure, like a symphony with different movements.
- Readers love facts, so research diligently with computers and field trips.
- Write judiciously and avoid clichés. Per Dr. Seuss, “Shorth is better than length.”
- Words are our fuel, so adhere to grammatical rules, hire a copy editor and edit/revise your manuscript many times.
- Writing is a skill that requires ongoing education. Attend conferences, classes, critique groups and join writer’s organizations. Read often and learn from books you love.
- Writer’s block is a myth...but there is idea block. If you’re stalled, it means the story shouldn’t be told or you’re not ready.

### **The Four Elements of a Novel or Story—Plot, Characters, Setting, and Dialogue**

- Create a killer plot that is choreographed with conflicts and raises questions.
- Manipulate, make readers wonder on every page about what’s going to happen next in the crime and soap opera storylines. Delay resolving the conflicts, but not too long. Explain every clue and leave no loose ends.
- Books are constructed like a circle with continuous questions and conflicts, and the end should come around to the beginning to resolve the mystery. There is no “dreaded middle.”
- Use plot reversals to expose the real motives behind the façade and have a surprise ending for each subplot. Play fair and set up the clues early.
- Create risks so that characters are imperiled all the time, but don’t kill all of them off.
- Conceive realistic, fully formed characters that are reactive, not passive. Give them personal quirks and hobbies.
- You should like the protagonist. He/she should have flaws, but readers should enjoy spending time with them. Don’t kill off the protagonist since publishers like a series.
- Villains must be fully fleshed out and have a personal stake in what happens. Since the villain is the hero of his/her own story, we should like them a little.
- Settings should become another character so readers get excited about the location.
- Portray settings through description or through broader sociological observations, like *IN COLD BLOOD*.
- Let dialogue express what’s really going on; use contractions and have characters realistically interrupt each other.
- Every character should have his/her own speaking pattern; be judicious with accents.

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## The Business of Writing Commercial Fiction

- Writing fiction is a business, so partner with your agent and publisher to promote your books.
- The market is changing, so consider other publishing venues besides traditional.
- Hire your own PR guru who understands the new market and social networks.
- Expand your creativity off the page to attract a larger audience. Mr. Deaver wrote a country album for one of his novels.

Learning is a change of behavior, and writing is a skill that can be taught and improved upon. We appreciate Mr. Deaver's sage advice, and hope you're inspired to create the best work possible to entertain and astound your readers.

\*\*\*

*If you would like to hear the full presentation, please visit [socialmwa.com](http://socialmwa.com)'s [Members Only](#) section, where you will find audio recordings of Jeffery Deaver's entire presentation as well as downloadable copies of the worksheets he handed out to participants. These materials are free for all members.*



**Gina Star Pollack** is the author of STAR SPANGLED VILLIANS, political allegory of vanity, deceit and murder. She's also completed the first book in a new mystery series featuring an intuitive HR executive/amateur sleuth based upon her career as a VP of HR. Gina is currently seeking representation to publish her innovative mysteries.

## TMOE Needs You!

TMOE is looking for articles (500–700 words) on subjects of interest to SoCalMWA members. This includes craft, marketing, and all aspects of publishing.

Content shouldn't be overtly promotional, but rather instructional or informational. Include a brief bio (100 words or less) and a headshot or cover image.

Send your questions and/or pitches to  
[themarchofcrime@gmail.com](mailto:themarchofcrime@gmail.com)

I look forward to hearing from you!

**You Oughta Be in Pictures**  
MWA-U with Jeffery Deaver Edition



Jeffery Deaver



Jeffery Deaver speaks about writing commercial fiction



L - R: Elizabeth Little, Jeffery Deaver, Debbie Mitsch



L - R: Travis Richardson, Elizabeth Little, Terri Nolan



L - R: Ellen Byron, Nancy Cole Silverman, Patricia Smiley



L - R: Nadine Nettmann, Kristen Kittscher, Jeffery Deaver, Craig Faustus Buck, Sandi Craig



Back, L-R: Nancy Cole Silverman, Jenny Carless Front, L-R: Dan Kelly, Elaine Ash



L-R: Jennifer Moss, Jill Amadio, Kathy Kingston

**Orange County Sheriff's Department  
Citizen's Academy Class**

By **R.N. Crane**

The Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) offers a 3-hour class once a week for a total of 9 weeks so citizens can better understand OCSD. I took the class that completed on September 7. I use the OCSD in my novels and wanted to make sure I was correct. We had 44 people in our class, which is held once a year. Here's a short synopsis of what was covered each week.

### **OCSD Overview**

The OCSD was started in 1889 and serves south Orange County and some unincorporated areas in the north. They are also involved in harbor patrol and airport police operations. The Sheriff's Regional Training Academy, where some of our presentations were held, is located in Tustin at the former Marine Corps Air Station and is used for indoor and outdoor physical training.

### **The Central Jail Complex**

We toured the Intake and Release Center where inmates are processed into the jail and wait to be transported elsewhere. We toured three floors in the Central Men's Jail which houses over 1,400 inmates. We saw where three men escaped earlier this year. One thing I learned: I do not want to be sent there.

### **Dispatch and Patrol Operations**

The Sheriff's office has about 60 people taking 911 calls. Some are legitimate and some are not (one 911 caller wanted an officer sent out to a burger joint because the burgers weren't being made to the caller's liking). Most patrols are in the south Orange County Cities. Many cities in the north are incorporated that have their own police departments.

### **Intelligence Operations, CSI, Search & Rescue**

Officers told us how they gather intelligence about public and private criminal and safety threats. The information is sometimes obtained from private citizens.

For CSI, forensic scientists have a portable laboratory (van) where a lot of the analysis can be done on site. A forensic scientist explained to our group the many tools they have at their disposal.

Search & Rescue personnel are composed of deputies and civilians who are trained with dogs that are assigned to them. They do urban and wilderness searches for missing persons and the apprehension of fleeing suspects.

### **Tactical Training Center**

We were shown how to handle and fire a Sheriff's GLOCK 17 automatic pistol. We drove a simulated car through various tactical scenarios. We also used a critical incident simulator, where each person is given replicas of a GLOCK, Taser, and pepper spray. A tactical simulation is run and the user must quickly decide what to do. We toured the hazardous devices section. The officers in the section provide explosive and bomb identification and removal and post-blast forensic services. They have 8 bomb dogs assigned to the airport, court operations, and transportation functions. They can also monitor stadium games and other large venues.

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### **Coroner's Office**

Coroner investigations seek to determine the deceased's identity, cause and manner of death, and time of death. For over two hours, the coroner showed pictures of the types of deaths and the situations that produced them. Some were self-inflicted by mistake. One caused a person's head to come off. Afterwards, we toured the autopsy room. It contained four tables where autopsies could be performed simultaneously.

### **Criminal Investigations Bureau**

We received presentations on Economic Crimes, Homicide Investigations, and Cyber Crimes. Much discussion concerned consumer safety, such as making passwords 12 characters composed of numbers, letters, and special characters. Two factor authentication is best. Also, your most important password is for your email.

### **Tour of Tactical Training Center**

At the training center were several cars, houses, and practice areas for simulated car stops and night problems. Our class was divided into six groups. Two people in each group portrayed officers responding to some problem. One officer was primary and the other was backup. We were taught how to respond to car stops and 911 calls at a person's residence.

### **Graduation**

Graduation was held at the Sheriff's Regional Training Academy in Tustin. Each class member was called on stage to receive a certificate of completion from a member of the Sheriff's Department or Police Department responsible for protecting their city.

For information on next year's class, please email:

[gkrause@ocsd.org](mailto:gkrause@ocsd.org)

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**R.N. Crane** lives in Orange, California. He graduated from UCLA with a Ph.D. and has served as an engineering consultant for several companies, working on vehicle navigation systems. He has published over 100 papers and reports and was awarded a patent. His work gave him the opportunity to visit many countries in North America, Europe, and Africa. He recently retired from engineering to pursue fiction writing. *MURDER IN THE O.C.* is his latest self-published novel. Find out more at [RNCbooks.com](http://RNCbooks.com).

### **IN MEMORIAM**

It is with great sadness that we report that **Jerry Pournelle**, noted science fiction author and a member of SoCalMWA since 1970, passed away on September 8. Jerry was always a warm and welcome presence at SoCalMWA events—a master storyteller to the end. He will be missed. To learn more about Jerry and his work or to post public remembrances, please visit [Jerry's website](#). In lieu of flowers or other memorials, the family asks that well-wishers consider instead a donation to the SFWA Emergency Medical Fund, about which more information may be found [here](#).

## Crime CALENDAR

October 1 – [Ladies of Intrigue, Santa Ana, CA](#)

October 7 – [SoCalMWA Gumbo Party, Los Angeles, CA](#)

October 12 – 15 – [Bouchercon World Mystery Conference, Toronto, Canada](#)

November 4 – [Murder and Mayhem Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI](#)

November 5 – [SoCalMWA Tam Luncheon, Los Angeles, CA](#)

December 10 – [SoCalMWA Holiday Party, Los Angeles, CA](#)

## The LAST WORD

“Maybe damage gives all of us a little character. Like the grapes in Sauternes with Noble Rot, a fungus that drains the water out of the grapes. Instead of destroying them, it produces a very sweet and highly prized wine. Damage could be a good thing.”

—Nadine Nettmann, UNCORKING A LIE