



The
MARCH

of CRIME

Inside this issue

[President's Rap p 2](#)

[Editor's Corner p 3](#)

[Fresh Blood p 3](#)

[Over the Transom p 4](#)

[Member Appearances p 6](#)

[Shamus Submissions pg 7](#)

[Pandemic Notes p 10](#)

[Last Word p 11](#)



SoCalMWA congratulates the 2021 Edgar Award and
Left Coast Crime Award nominees!

Edgar Awards

The [75th Annual Edgar Awards](#) will be celebrated on April 29, 2021.

BEST NOVEL

DJINN PATROL ON THE PURPLE LINE by Deepa Anappara

BEFORE SHE WAS HELEN by Caroline B. Cooney

THURSDAY MURDER CLUB by Richard Osman

THESE WOMEN by Ivy Pochada

THE MISSING AMERICAN by Kwei Quartey

THE DISTANT DEAD by Heather Young

BEST FIRST NOVEL

MURDER IN OLD BOMBAY by Nev March

PLEASE SEE US by Caitlin Mullen

CATHERINE HOUSE by Elisabeth Thomas

WINTER COUNTS by David Heska Wanbli Weiden

DARLING ROSE GOLD by Stephanie Wrobel

BEST PAPERBACK ORIGINAL

WHEN NO ONE IS WATCHING by Alyssa Cole

THE DEEP, DEEP SNOW by Brian Freeman

UNSPEAKABLE THINGS by Jess Lourey

THE KEEPER by Jessica Moor

EAST OF HOUNSLOW by Khurram Rahman

SoCalMWA Discussion Group

- Member introductions
- Ideas for book launches & other book promotion
- Publishing insights & tips
- Book deal announcements
- Blog post promotion & discussion
- Book reviews
- Support & Networking
- And more!

[SUBSCRIBE HERE](#)



The President's Rap Sheet

Jessica Kaye

Hello, February.

Folks in colder climates can scoff at us when we say it is cold out but it *has* been cold. It snowed in Pasadena! That should be sufficient proof of winter, even for mystery writers.

February is not without its charm. It is the shortest month and so procrastination gets short shrifted, and Punxsutawney Phil, the world's most famous groundhog, will appear or not and foretell the weather. As a bonus, on February 15 we solve the mystery of how low heart-shaped candy prices will go.

It has been a busy time for award nominations. Both the Edgars and Lefty Award nominations just came out. The Edgars will be announced April 29 and the Lefty Awards on April 10.

It is wonderful to see the work of writers recognized but always a little nicer to see our own on the lists. For the Lefty Awards, congratulations to both **Ellen Byron** and **Jennifer Chow**, who are nominated for Best Humorous Mystery Novel; **Dianne Freeman** is nominated in the category of Best Historical Mystery Novel; **Matt Coyle** and **Rachel Howzell Hall** are both nominees in the Best Mystery Novel category.

Our Chapter's Edgar nominees include **Kwei Quartey** for Best Novel and **Paige Shelton** for the Mary Higgins Clark Award. Congratulations to you both!

Our call for members to tell us how they are faring with their art during the pandemic brought **John Morgan Wilson's** contribution. Please [keep sending your thoughts, advice, efforts, successes, anything you wish to share](#) as we continue to, for the most part, stay safe and stay home.

Jessica Kaye

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: [Jessica Kaye](#)
VP: Jennifer Younger
Treasurer: [Sarah M. Chen](#)
Secretary: [Travis Richardson](#)

Board of Directors

[Fred Andersen](#)
[Gay Toltl Kinman](#)
[Terri Nolan](#)
[August Norman](#)
[Edward Arno](#)
[Ona Russell](#)
[Nancy Cole Silverman](#)

Mystery Writers of America
 Southern California Chapter
 2140 N. Hollywood Way #7304
 Burbank, CA 91510

Contact: info@socalmwa.com
 Website: <http://socalmwa.com>
 Twitter: [@socalmwa](#)

[Like us on Facebook](#)



The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

As we head into the second month of 2021, vaccine schedules are delayed but more and more people are getting vaccinated. There is light at the end of this very long tunnel and I find myself wondering what habits and routines we've begun during the pandemic that might stay with us after it's over.

I miss in-person events but I've also really enjoyed the virtual events that have become necessary over the past year. Even before the restrictions, I'd been slow to involve myself in the Northern California writing community, preferring, instead, to keep up my activities with Southern California. That's been difficult since I now live so far away and, ironically, the pandemic has made it much easier for me to see and interact with my Southern California writing friends. The same goes for events outside of California. I'd like to see these virtual meetings continue.

The same goes for online learning opportunities. Organizations like MWA have always offered webinars to its members, but for some reason, it took the pandemic for me to be proactive in actually attending them. Now, whenever I see one that is of interest to me, I add it to my schedule and consider it a part of my work day when I can. I'll definitely keep that up.

I also ended my gym membership. As beneficial as it was to me in the last few years, there is something about gym culture that just doesn't jive with me and now that I've stepped away from it, I'm reluctant to get back into it. Thankfully, I live in a town with a fantastic trail system for biking, walking, and running and I've begun to explore them as an alternative to all that time I spent in the gym.

One thing I can't wait for? Besides hugging my family and friends, I'm itching to go to a cafe to spend a few hours writing. [What about you?](#)

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

Join the SoCalMWA Discussion Group

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

NATIONAL OFFICE

Mystery Writers of America
1140 Broadway #1507
New York, NY 10001
t. 212.888.8171
f. 212.888.8107

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

FRESHBLOOD

SoCalMWA welcomes its new members

Ada Bright



Ada has lived all her life in Southern California, which makes her intolerant to any weather above or below 76 degrees Fahrenheit. She got degrees in English and Art from Westmont College and has a very nice husband who did not give any of their three kids his blue eyes despite being asked very nicely. There is nothing she loves more than a good, subtle love story developed in the middle of a mystery adventure... well, except cake. She also really loves cake. She has written two Jane Austen Adventures with Cass Grafton under Canelo Escape and is looking to publish her own romantic suspense novel in 2021. Insta: [@adacakes](#) Twitter [@missyadabright](#).

OVER the TRANSOM

Elaine Ash served as freelance development editor on *THE WAYWARD SPY* by Susan Ouellette, recently rave-reviewed by *Publisher's Weekly*. A one-day marketing promo by CamCat Books resulted in the highest pre-orders overall for this debut espionage title. Ouellette is an ex-CIA analyst turned novelist.

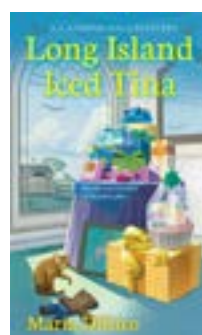
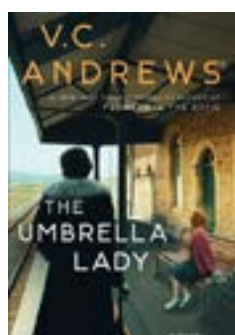
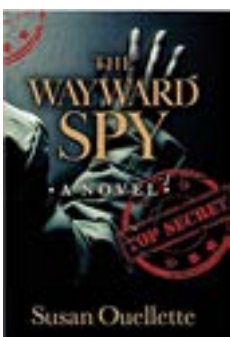
Amnon Kabatchnik mourns the passing away of William Link, at 87, on December 27, 2020. Link, an Emmy and Edgar award-winning author, and creator of “Columbo” and “Murder, She Wrote,” had warmly endorsed Kabatchnik’s series *BLOOD ON THE STAGE*. “A most enjoyable and eminently readable journey through theatre as it relates to mysteries. Reference books not to be missed. It is a brilliant analysis gem that should be in readable distance of every theatre lover’s bookshelf.” Link and his wife Margery Nelson attended the signing of a Kabatchnik book, which took place at the Geffen Playhouse in Los Angeles.

Andrew Neiderman’s V.C. Andrews’ Landry series about identical twin girls set in the Cajun world and New Orleans will air in four movies on Lifetime, March 20, 22, 27, 28. Neiderman was consultant on the films. Neiderman’s V.C. Andrews novel, *THE UMBRELLA LADY* will be published by Simon and Schuster, Gallery on February 2. Neiderman has been writing V.C. Andrews for over 35 years.

MURDER IN THE BAYOU BONEYARD, **Ellen Byron’s** sixth Cajun Country Mystery, has been nominated for Left Coast Crime’s Best Humorous Mystery Lefty Award. *HERE COMES THE BODY*, which Ellen writes under the pen name “Maria DiRico,” was chosen as a Best of 2020 by the blog *Carstairs Considers*. *LONG ISLAND ICED TINA*, the second book in the series and the one with the a kitschy cozy title she’s extremely proud of, launches February 23.

Donis Casey is pleased to announce that her twelfth novel and second Bianca Dangereuse Hollywood Mystery, *VALENTINO WILL DIE* (Poisoned Pen Press/Sourcebooks) is scheduled for release in all formats on February 2. Who tried to kill the world’s greatest lover? As Rudolph Valentino lies dying, his dear friend and screen idol in her own right, Bianca LaBelle, promises him she will find out who is responsible. *Publishers Weekly* says “Lovers of old movies and Hollywood gossip will have fun.”

John Shepphird’s short story “Complimentary Stay” appears in Volume 2, Issue 2 of *Down & Out: The Magazine* edited by Rick Ollerman. Under the watchful eye of high-pressure salesmen, Dave and Catrina’s only requirement for the two free nights at a luxury Palm Springs resort is attending the three-hour timeshare presentation. But not everything is as it appears.



OVER the TRANSOM

Lady Gone Missing by **Gary Phillips** and Manoel Magalhães is out now. Set in 1957 Los Angeles, follow PI Sam Cairo after a buddy from the Army comes to him to find his missing fiancé in an occult mystery comic strip online at the [Aces Weekly archive](#). There is a fee but you get the whole story plus five other complete strips.

OUTSIDE THE WIRE, the second in **Patricia Smiley's** Pacific Homicide series has just been released as an audiobook, narrated by **Harley Jane Kozak**. It's available at [Audible.com](#) along with PACIFIC HOMICIDE (book 1) and THE SECOND GOODBYE (book 3). *Kirkus Reviews* on OUTSIDE THE WIRE: "Smiley's second LAPD entry moves the plot as deftly as she moves the reader, with lots of action and just enough heart." For more information, visit [patriciasmiley.com](#).

Jennifer J. Chow's first Sassy Cat Mystery, MIMI LEE GETS A CLUE, has been nominated for a 2021 Lefty Award for Best Humorous Mystery by Left Coast Crime.

Martin Roy Hill's latest Peter Brandt mystery thriller, THE FOURTH RISING, was named 2020 Best Mystery by the Best Independent Book Awards Association. THE FOURTH RISING is the third book in the Brandt series and involves a vicious murder that leads to a decades-old conspiracy to raise a new Nazi Fourth Reich. Martin's sci-fi mystery, "Paandor's Box," was published in the fall edition of *Pulp Adventures*.

THE DOWN AND OUT, a crime-caper by **Lawrence Maddox**, comes out February 1. It's an installment of Frank Zafiro's A Grifter's Song, a series of fast-moving crime novellas that feature Sam and Rachel, two con artists who carry on a steamy romance while on the run from the Chicago mob. In THE DOWN AND OUT, Sam and Rachel take on Hollywood. **Sarah M. Chen** (author of the Anthony-nominated & IPPY award-winner, CLEANING UP FINN) calls it "a smart, sexy caper that takes the reader on a heady ride through the cutthroat glitz of Tinseltown to the grimy back alleys of Skid Row." From Down & Out Books. Available [here](#).

The You-Solve-It mystery "A Conventional Murder" by **Peter DiChellis** appeared in *Mystery Weekly Magazine* (January 2021).

BLIND VIGIL, the seventh book in **Matt Coyle's** Rick Cahill crime series, has been nominated for a Lefty Award for Best Mystery Novel.



Member APPEARANCES

Sheila Lowe will be the SinC/LA reader on February 7. On the 10th she will speak to a women's university group on Zoom. Notably, this was the last group Sheila spoke to in-person at the Madonna Inn as the pandemic was gearing up last March. The good news: the 130 ladies, crammed into the banquet room for lunch, bought all the books she took with her. The other news: she brought home something that looked a lot like a mildish case of covid—that was before masks.

Join author **Donis Casey** and host PatZi Gil on Feb 4 at 11 a.m. EST, for a lively discussion about Donis' latest release, VALENTINO WILL DIE, at [Joy on Paper](#), a syndicated radio program for writers and those who dream of writing.

On Tuesday, February 16 at 2 p.m., **Susan Cummins Miller**—author of the Frankie MacFarlane, Geologist, mysteries—presents “Stories in Stone: Writing the Southwestern Mystery,” a Zoom talk hosted by the Friends of the Kirk-Bear Canyon Library, Tucson. An annual Friends membership (\$10) is required for participation. (Join via PayPal using the email address friendskbclibrary@gmail.com.)

Glen Erik Hamilton, former SoCal MWA chapter president, will be appearing with Thriller award-winning author Jennifer Hillier in a virtual event with Book Carnival on Thursday February 11 at 6:00 p.m. PST. Glen and Jennifer will discuss their latest thrillers, A DANGEROUS BREED and LITTLE SECRETS, and the challenges of writing about far-away cities when travel is on lockdown. [More information here.](#)



At ASU'S DESERT NIGHTS, RISING STARS CONFERENCE, February 18-20, 2021, **Karen Odden**, Victorian mystery author, will be teaching the workshop “Crafting Secondary Characters: Beyond Friends, Foils & Foes” on Thursday, February 18, 12:30–1:30 p.m. Well-drawn secondary characters can add nuance, humor, and conflict to a novel or short story. This presentation explores how to develop secondary characters so they sing for themselves while also harmonizing with a main plot line. Referring to their current WIP, participants will have the opportunity to respond to writing prompts and leave with exercises in hand. [More information.](#)

On Wednesday, February 3 at 4 p.m., **Rachel Howzell Hall**, **Pamela Samuels Young**, and **Gary Phillips** will participate in Authors & Their Journeys: African American Mystery & Crime Writers, presented by the Pasadena Library. Presented in Zoom; [sign up here to get the link.](#)

**PRIVATE EYE WRITERS OF AMERICA ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS
FOR 2021 SHAMUS AWARDS**

Following are the categories for the Private Eye Writers of America 2021 Shamus Awards for private eye novels and short stories first published in the United States in 2020.

DEADLINE: Submissions must be postmarked by March 31, 2021. No extensions can be given.

Shamus Committees will forward their final lists to the Shamus Awards Chair by May 31, 2021.

ELIGIBILITY: Eligible works must feature as a main character a person PAID for investigative work but NOT employed for that work by a unit of government. These include traditionally licensed private investigators; lawyers and reporters who do their own investigations; and others who function as hired private agents. These do NOT include law enforcement officers, other government employees, or amateur, uncompensated sleuths.

Independently published books (Indies) may be submitted to the Best Original Paperback P.I. Novel category.

SUBMISSIONS: Please send one copy of each eligible work to ALL members of the appropriate committee. Do NOT submit a book to more than one committee.

There is no application fee and no submission form, as a simple cover letter will suffice. If you have any questions, please e-mail [Gay Toldt Kinman](mailto:Gay.Toldt.Kinman) BEFORE submitting.

BEST HARDCOVER P.I. NOVEL: A book-length work of fiction published in hardcover in 2020 that is NOT the author's first published P.I. novel.

BEST FIRST P.I. NOVEL: A book-length work of fiction, in hardcover or paperback, first published in 2020 and that is the author's first published novel featuring a private investigator as a main character.

BEST ORIGINAL PAPERBACK P.I. NOVEL: A book-length work of fiction first published as a paperback original in 2020 that is NOT the author's first P.I. novel. Paperback reprints of previously published novels are NOT eligible.

BEST P.I. SHORT STORY: A work of fiction of 20,000 words or fewer. Stories first published in an earlier year and reprinted in a magazine, anthology or collection in 2020 are NOT eligible.

2021 SHAMUS AWARD COMMITTEES

Best Hardcover P.I. Novel Committee

<p>Chair Colleen Collins 2255 Sheridan Blvd, Unit C #293 Edgewater, CO 80214</p>	<p>O'Neill DeNoux 428 West 25th Ave Covington, LA 70433</p>	<p>Dennis Palumbo 15300 Ventura Blvd, Ste 402 Sherman Oaks, CA 91403</p>
---	---	--

2021 Award Nominees—[continued from pg 1](#)

EDGAR NOMINEES (continued)

BEST FACT CRIME

BLOOD RUNS COAL: THE YABLONSKI MURDERS AND THE BATTLE FOR THE UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA by Mark A. Bradley

THE THIRD RAINBOW GIRL: THE LONG LIFE OF A DOUBLE MURDER IN APPALACHIA by Emma Copley Eisenberg

DEATH IN MUD LICK: A COAL COUNTRY FIGHT AGAINST THE DRUG COMPANIES THAT DELIVERED THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC by Eric Eyre

YELLOW BIRD: OIL, MURDER AND A WOMAN'S SEARCH FOR JUSTICE IN INDIAN COUNTRY by Sierra Crane Murdoch

VERITAS: A HARVARD PROFESSOR, A CON MAN, AND THE GOSPEL OF JESUS'S WIFE by Ariel Sabar

BEST CRITICAL/BIOGRAPHICAL

HOWDUNIT: A MASTERCLASS IN CRIME WRITING BY MEMBERS OF THE DETECTION CLUB by Martin Edwards

PHANTOM LADY: HOLLYWOOD PRODUCER JOAN HARRISON, THE FORGOTTEN WOMAN BEHIND HITCHCOCK by Christina Lane

IAN RANKIN: A COMPANION TO THE MYSTERY FICTION by Erin E. MacDonald

GUILT RULES ALL: IRISH MYSTERY, DETECTIVE, AND CRIME FICTION by Elizabeth Mannion & Brian Cliff

THIS TIME NEXT YEAR WE'LL BE LAUGHING by Jacqueline Winspear

BEST SHORT STORY

“The summer Uncle Cat Came to Stay” by Leslie Elman (*Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine*)

“Dust, Ash, Flight” by Maaza Mengiste (ADDIS ABABA NOIR)

“Etta at the End of the World” by Joseph S. Walker (*Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine*)

“The Twenty-Five Year Engagement” by James W. Ziskin (IN LEAGUE WITH SHERLOCK HOLMES)

BEST JUVENILE

PREMEDITATED MYRTLE by Elizabeth C. Bunce

ME AND BANKSY by Tanya Lloyd Kyi

FROM THE DESK OF ZOE WASHINGTON by Janae Marks

IKENGA by Nnedi Okorafor

NESSIE QUEST by Melissa Savage

COOP KNOWS THE SCOOP by Taryn Souders

YOUNG ADULT

THE COMPANION by Katie Alender

THE INHERITANCE GAMES by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

THEY WENT LEFT by Monica Hesse

SILENCE OF BONES by June Hur

THE COUSINS by Karen M. McManus

[continued on pg 9](#)

2021 Award Nominees—[continued from pg 8](#)

EDGAR NOMINEES (continued)

TV EPISODE TELEPLAY

“Episode 1, The Stranger” —Harlan Coben’s *The Stranger*, written by Danny Brocklehurst

“Episode 1, Open Water” —*The Sounds*, written by Sarah-Kate Lynch

“Episode 1, Photochemistry” —*Dead Still*, written by John Morton

“Episode 1” —*Des*, written by Luke Neal

“What I Know” —*The Boys*, written by Rebecca Sonnenshine, based on the comic by Garth Ennis and Darick Robertson

ROBERT L. FISH MEMORIAL

“The Bite” by Colette Bancroft (TAMPA BAY NOIR)

THE SIMON & SCHUSTER MARY HIGGINS CLARK AWARD

DEATH OF AN AMERICAN BEAUTY by Mariah Fredericks

THE CABINETS OF BARNABY MAYNE by Elsa Hart

THE LUCKY ONE by Lori Rader-Day

THE FIRST TO LIE by Hank Phillippi Ryan

COLD WIND by Paige Shelton

THE G.P. PUTNAM’S SONS SUE GRAFTON MEMORIAL AWARD

THE BURN by Kathleen Kent

RIVIERA GOLD by Laurie R. King

VERA KELLY IS NOT A MYSTERY by Rosalie Knecht

DEAD LAND by Sara Paretsky

THE SLEEPING NYMPH by Ilaria Tuti

TURN TO STONE by James W. Ziskin

GRAND MASTERS

Jeffrey Deaver

Charlaine Harris

RAVEN AWARD

Malice Domestic

ELLERY QEEN AWARD

Reagan Arthur, Publisher—Alfred A. Knopf

2021 Award Nominees—[continued from pg 9](#)

Lefty Awards

The [2021 Lefty Awards](#) will be presented virtually on April 10, 2021.

BEST HUMOROUS MYSTERY NOVEL

MURDER IN THE BAYOU BONEYARD by Ellen Byron
 MIMI LEE GETS A CLUE by Jennifer J. Chow
 SQUEEZE ME by Carl Hiaasen
 THE STUDY OF SECRETS by Cynthia Kuhn
 THE POT THIEF WHO STUDIED THE WOMAN AT OTOWI CROSSING by J. Michael Orenduff
 SKIN DEEP by Sung J. Woo

BEST HISTORICAL MYSTERY NOVEL

(Bruce Alexander Memorial) for books covering events before 1970
 THE FATE OF A FLAPPER by Susanna Calkins
 A LADY'S GUIDE TO MISCHIEF AND MURDER by Dianne Freeman
 RIVIERA GOLD by Laurie R. King
 THE TURNING TIDE by Catriona McPherson
 MORTAL MUSIC by Ann Parker
 TURN TO STONE by James W. Ziskin

BEST DEBUT MYSTERY

MURDER GOES TO MARKET by Daisy Bateman
 DERAILED by Mary Keliikoa
 MURDER IN THE MENA HOUSE by Erica Ruth Neubauer
 THE THURSDAY MURDER CLUB by Richard Osman
 THE LADY UPSTAIRS by Halley Sutton
 WINTER COUNTS by David Heska Wanbli Weiden

BEST MYSTERY NOVEL

WHAT YOU DON'T SEE by Tracy Clark
 BLACKTOP WASTELAND by S.A. Cosby
 BLIND VIGIL by Matt Coyle
 AND NOW SHE'S GONE by Rachel Howzell Hall
 ALL THE DEVILS ARE HERE by Louise Penny

NOTES FROM A PANDEMIC

It's a sad commentary on my so-called life, but I'm doing pretty much what I've done for nearly 50 years: waking up, pouring a mug of strong coffee, and keeping my butt in the chair. Not long before the China flu became the Trump flu, I signed a contract with a new publisher, ReQueered Tales, to reprint my eight Benjamin Justice mysteries, with one big hitch: I insisted on extensively revising and polishing each one. I've been logging full workdays since, with the first book out and number two coming soon. A real grind, but also a wonderful opportunity to fix some seriously flawed writing, 25 years after it first appeared—in need of a few more drafts. —**John Morgan Wilson**

Shamus Awards—[continued from pg 7](#)**Best First P.I. Novel Committee**

Chair April Kelly POB 5 Ooltewah, TN 37363	James D.F. Hannah 3821 Nanz Ave, Apt 4 Louisville, KY 40207	Clive E. Rosengren 2030 Brookhust St, Apt 3 Medford, OR 97504
--	---	---

Best Original Paperback P.I. Novel Committee

Chair Mary Keliikoa 759 South 74th Pl Ridgefield, WA 98642	David Thompson 17402 Wild Rose Ln Huntington, CA 92649	Matt Coyle 3939 Clairemont Blvd San Diego, CA 92117
--	--	---

Best P.I. Short Story Committee

Chair Andrew S. McAleer 121 Follen Rd Lexington, MA 02421	Ron Katz 2085 Cowper St Palo Alto, CA 94301	Kevin Burton Smith 3053 Rancho Vista #116 Palmdale, CA 93551
---	---	--



The
LAST WORD

“The cacophony from the cheering crowds, the band, and the noisy mobile generator prevented anyone from hearing a distinct gunshot. Evans-Aidoo’s body dropped so suddenly from view that few people noticed anything was wrong.”

—Kwei Quartey, THE MISSING AMERICAN