



ORANGE HERRING  
Sisters in Crime  Orange County



***MISSION STATEMENT***

To promote the professional development and advancement of women crime writers to achieve equality in the industry.



***MEETING PLACE***

Irvine Ranch Water District  
15500 Sand Canyon Avenue  
Irvine, CA 92618

For more information and directions, visit:  
[www.ocsistersincrime.org](http://www.ocsistersincrime.org)

Following are the dates for the remaining OC SinC meetings in 2013. Please mark your calendars.

June 23  
July 28  
August 25

September 15  
October 27  
November 24  
December 15



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**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**June 23rd at 3:00 p.m.** – **Jim Pascoe** and **Tom Fassbender**, co-authors of *By the Balls: The Complete Collection*, the 15th anniversary edition of UglyTown's Bowling Alley Murder Mystery. Jim and Tom created and previously owned UglyTown Publishing.

**At 2:00 p.m.,** **Marlyn Beebe**, a librarian from Los Alamitos, a reviewer and blogger, will lead our forum.



**MEETING ROUNDUP**

At our May writer's forum, librarian and mystery lover, **Marlyn Beebe** discussed book reviewing and trends in literature. Marlyn belongs to Crime Fiction Collective, a group of authors, reviewers, and editors whose blog offers book reviews, updates on thriller fiction, digital publishing, and essays on such subjects as the travails of writing.

In her personal blog, "Stuff and Nonsense," Marlyn deals with lighter literature, such as cozies. About two months before their books are released, authors send her copies to review; she receives as many as thirty to seventy-five per day. Marlyn refuses to publish reviews of books she doesn't enjoy. For her, a book must be well-written and grammatically correct. She is turned off by books that are too technical and have a large cast of characters. Her reviews are posted on Facebook and Twitter with a link to the author and to the publisher.

Authors who self-publish will be happy to know that she is open to reviewing their books.

As for trends: According to publishers, a new category is New Adult—ages 18 to 25—between high school and career. Some adult books reach down; others, such as Harry Potter or the Hunger Games, defy generations. Cults, Vampires, Zombies are big and sometimes combine with classic literature, resulting in such strange bedfellows as "Pride and Prejudice and Zombies."

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Our guest speaker, **Naomi Hirahara**, writes the Edgar Award-winning series featuring amateur detective and Japanese gardener Mas Arai. An atomic bomb survivor and reluctant amateur sleuth, Mas Arai is based on Naomi's late father. (Naomi readily admits that when she was growing up, she was embarrassed that her father was a gardener. She later learned that after World War II, one out of ten Japanese-American men became gardeners because they were starting over, after being removed from their homes during wartime.)

Fifth in what she describes as a literary crime series, *Strawberry Yellow* is set in the strawberry fields of Watsonville, CA, where the young Mas first arrived from Hiroshima in the late 1940's. The now semi-retired gardener returns for a funeral and gets entangled in a murder...or possibly two. Hirahara explained that Strawberry Yellow is a disease that affects fruit and can wipe out an entire crop.

Naomi is a visual person and for her, voice and plot are important. She likes to create puzzles and mystery. Different braids run through her stories. Her first braid is character. Another braid involves misdirection, sending the reader off following clues that don't pan out. The arc of the mystery is another braid that includes withholding information and releasing it at the right moment, to build tension. A writer can also have "strands" within braids...sub-themes, etc.

Naomi's books are peppered with Japanese words. She purposely does not provide a glossary to these terms (though you can find some of them on her website at: [naomihirahara.com](http://naomihirahara.com)). She feels most are understandable via their use and context within the text.

Naomi's debut book was *Summer of the Big Bachi*, and her third, *Snakeskin Shamisen*, won the Edgar for Best Paperback Original. A former editor of the largest Japanese American newspaper in the U.S., she also has released nonfiction works. A number of her short stories have been included in various anthologies and published through Top Suspense Group. An exciting NON-fiction project has been officially approved. She is to document Terminal Island from 1920-1942 for the Port of Los Angeles. She asks, "If you know of any existing oral histories, maps, publications, interesting photographs in a drawer or album somewhere, or of former residents who can share compelling stories, let me know!" (Email: [bachi@naomihirahara.com](mailto:bachi@naomihirahara.com).)

Her new mystery series featuring a female twenty-something LAPD bicycle cop will be released in 2014. First in the series is *Murder on Bamboo Lane: An Officer Ellie Rush Mystery*.

*Many thanks to Cynthia Weitz, Jackie Houchin, and Pat Broeske, all of whom contributed to this article.*



**MEMBER NEWS**



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**Jill Amado's** debut mystery, *Digging Too Deep*, featuring Cornish-cussing Tosca Trevant, will be published by Mainly Murder Press in paperback with a release date of December 1, 2013. She also has a short story that was published May 25 in King's River Life, an online magazine. The story is set in Bangkok, where Jill was a reporter for the Bangkok Post for five years.

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**D. P. Lyle** has been chosen as Guest of Honor (along with Anne Perry) at Killer Nashville in August. Congratulations, Doug!

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Hey sports fans. **Dmitri Ragano's** latest novel, *The Fugitive Grandma*, is now out in paperback... A crime thriller/black comedy/family drama about a boy and his grandma who rob big box retail stores for cash and medicine. Available on Amazon.

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*The Manipulator*, a new ebook thriller by OC SinC member **Michael McQuade**, is now available on Amazon's Kindle, Apple devices, and other ebook readers. In *The Manipulator*, Nathan Foster uses a Congressman, a Mafia connection, and an Interpol agent to track down a terrorist group and a money laundering operation in an attempt to influence the Presidential election.



**MYSTERY INK NEWS**



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Located at: Bridgecreek Plaza  
8907 Warner Avenue, #135  
Huntington Beach, CA 92647  
[714 960-4000](tel:7149604000)

Signed Copies Available: Robert Crais – *Suspect*, Michael Connelly – *The Black Box*, Jesse Kellerman - *Potboiler* (2013 Edgar Award nomination for Best Novel), Earlene Fowler – *The Road to Cardinal Valley*, Robert S. Levinson – *Phony Tinsel*, Cara Black – *Murder in Montparnesse*, Harlan Coben – *6 Years*, Joanne Fluke – *Red Velvet Cupcake Murders*, Dean Koontz – *Odd Apocalypse*

Mystery Ink Bookstore, 8907 Warner Avenue, #135, Huntington Beach, (714) 960-4000, [www.mysteryink.com](http://www.mysteryink.com). Coffee & Wi-Fi now available.



## ***UPCOMING CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, and EVENTS***

### **June 22-23, 2013 – California Crime Writers Conference**

Pasadena, CA. For more information, visit [www.ccwconference.org](http://www.ccwconference.org)

### **August 22-15, 2013 – Killer Nashville**

8<sup>th</sup> Annual Killer Nashville Conference. For more information, visit [www.KillerNashville.com](http://www.KillerNashville.com)

### **September 19-22, 2013 – Bouchercon 2013**

Albany, NY, at the Empire State Plaza. For more information, follow this link: [Bouchercon 2013 | A New York State of Crime](#)



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**Support your local SinC chapter. Buy a lovely mug at the next meeting, and bring your novels for our Sister Share!**



***PLEASE CONTRIBUTE!***

If you have events coming up or announcements you want to make, let me know. Please send your contributions and suggestions to: [ocsinc.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ocsinc.newsletter@gmail.com). **The deadline is the 7<sup>th</sup> of each month!**



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**SISTERS IN CRIME ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER**

**Print and complete this form. NOTE: YOU MUST ALSO JOIN SISTERS IN CRIME NATIONAL TO BE A MEMBER OF THE ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER.**

**Send the completed form with both checks, \$40 payable to Sisters in Crime (National) and \$25 payable to Sisters in Crime, OC to:**

**Membership**

**Sisters in Crime, Orange County**

**P.O. Box 53132**

**Irvine, CA 92619-3132**

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**Please print all information and list your name as you want it listed in the Membership Directory.**

**New**       **Renewal Name: Address:**

**Day Phone:**

**Evening Phone:**

**Email: I am a (check all that apply):**

**Mystery Writer**     **Published**     **Unpublished**

**Writer in other fields**     **Published**     **Unpublished**

**Screenwriter**  
**--Produced:**     **Features**     **TV/Cable**     **Other**

**Reviewer**     **Agent**     **Bookseller**     **Librarian**     **Reader**

**I would like to help with (check all that apply):**

**Publicity**     **Refreshments**     **Speakers**     **Raffle**     **Other:**