



SISTERS IN CRIME 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
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue
Irvine, CA 92618

For more information: www.ocsistersincrime.org

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Sunday, October 28, 2012

Reader's Forum at **2:00 p.m.** Topic – Mysteries, Cozy versus Hard-boiled.

Speaker's Presentation at 3:00 p.m. – Jill Amadio

OC SinC member Jill Amadio will speak about her experiences as a ghost writer. Jill Amadio is an author, biographer, journalist, and ghostwriter. She wrote the best-selling *Gunther Rall: Luftwaffe Ace and NATO General*, and co-authored and collaborated on several books including *A Moment in Crime*; *My Vagabond Lover: An Intimate Portrait of Rudy Vallee*, and *Help! I've Hired a Lawyer!* She has ghostwritten several memoirs,

autobiographies, and a true crime. Her humorous essay on her experience ghostwriting a mystery ran in the Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine. A Cornishwoman, Jill has been a reporter in four countries, and worked for the London Sunday Dispatch, the Bangkok Post, the Spanish-American Courier, Gannett Newspapers, and Asian Symphony. She wrote an auto column for Entrepreneur for 20 years and was an investigative reporter for the Connecticut Sunday Herald. She has been a panelist at writers conferences including Bouchercon, Left Coast Crime, and others. Jill is based in Dana Point, CA where her amateur sleuth, exiled Brit gossip columnist Tosca Trevant, is busy solving crimes and forcing her home-brewed mead on reluctant neighbors.

NOTE:

The final two meetings of the year will be held on Nov 11 and Dec 16 (Holiday party at Mystery Ink.)

***** Dec. 16th is a new date. *****

Please mark it on your calendars.



Reminder from Gita: If you want to have a book raffle at each meeting, please bring your gently used mysteries to donate to the cause. We need to replenish our supply of books for the coming year. Thank you in advance and happy reading!





PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Dear sisters and misters:

Sorry I had to miss the last meeting. I was ill, and am feeling much better now.

I had hoped to present the following topic at the writer’s forum—reviews. I first came across the question of spurious reviews when I was asked to join a group called Authors Promoting Authors, and was asked to put a favorable review on Amazon, etc. for a poorly written book in a genre I never read. The next one was a group called Authors Promoting Authors, asking for a favorable review for a book with less plot and character development than the label on a vinegar bottle. They seemed innocuous enough, no worse than award nominees soliciting votes for awards at conventions.

Then it escalated, until the New York Times published an article titled “The Best Book Reviews Money Can Buy”, about professional favorable reviewers who charge \$10 per review, and will write a hundred enthusiastic and ecstatic reviews, circulating the information in all the right places, professing that your book is stunning and gripping, lyrical and compelling. The worst of these was Gettingbookreviews.com, an enterprise of Todd Rutherford. Check out a blog by Beth Groundwater, and the article in NYT on August 26.

Then there is sock puppetry, using false on-line identities to talk up their own work and attack any competition. They are usually authors themselves, but people are also for hire. Check out the September 3 blog by Ruth Dudley Edwards.

Now for some good news. Mystery Writers of America has announced a competition for the annual Helen McCloy-MWA scholarships, in which 2 mystery writers will win up to \$500 each to cover registration and tuition for writing workshops, and

courses. Check out the website [http://mysterywriters.org/?q=Awards Programs](http://mysterywriters.org/?q=Awards+Programs).

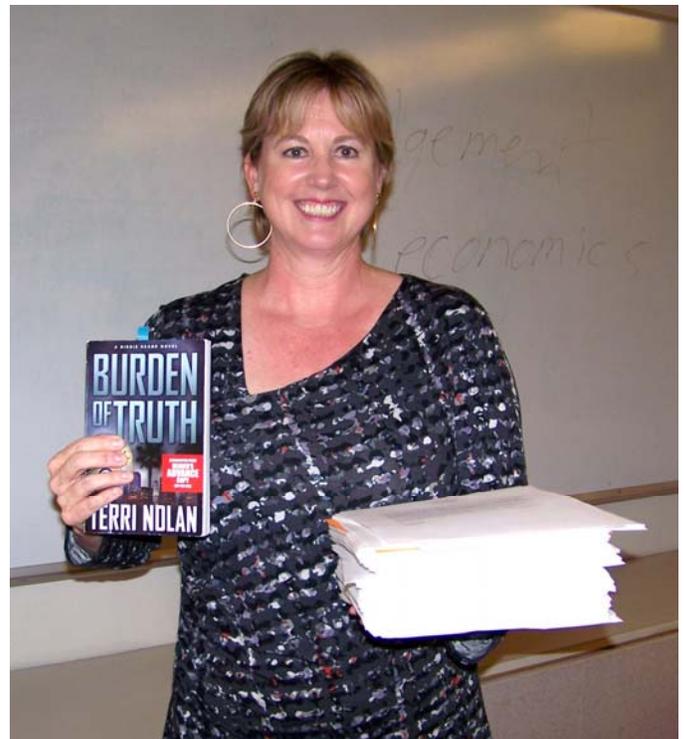
And Poisoned Pen has opened a new Young Adult division. They intend to publish only one book per quarter in the first year, and after that, will probably publish more. Go to their web site and read all about it.

See you at the next meeting.

Best,
Aileen



MEETING ROUNDUP



“If at first you don’t succeed...”



This could be the motto for mystery writer Terri Nolan. At the September meeting, Terri, a past president of OC SinC, shared the story of her ten-year journey to publication. She even brought along a stack of 158 rejection letters she accumulated along the way. After whittling her 800-page novel down to a respectable 85,000 words, she found an agent and a publisher, and *BURDEN OF PROOF* goes on sale early next year. Congratulations, Terri!

Terri's writing life started at age 10, when she learned that Joseph Wambaugh, an LAPD officer just like her Uncle Larry, had published a book. Terri declared to her parents, "One day, I'm going to write police stories too." But the road to publication was a rough one. Though she continued to write while she worked and raised a family, she really got serious about it when a new job didn't pan out and she found herself at the proverbial fork in the road. She negotiated a deal with her husband to stay home and write for a year. A year later, she renegotiated for two more years, then another two. After eight years her husband told her to get a job.

She never gave up. She learned that finding an agent was a numbers game. "All it takes it one person to connect with and you're on your way." Of course, she made her share of mistakes. She pitched a novel before it was done and formatted her book incorrectly. But, after a few false starts, she connected with an agent who recommended she work with an editor. That experience proved to be golden; after implementing the suggested edits, Terri signed with that same agent, who then sold her book to Midnight Ink.

Perseverance is key in publishing, as Terri's experience clearly shows. You've got to keep writing, never give up and...

...try, try again.

THERESA SCHULTZ



WORDSMITHING

STORMY WEATHER: PART ONE

It was a dark and stormy night— Oops! I can see your eyes rolling. No wonder. That opening phrase of Edward Bulwer-Lytton's 1830 novel, *PAUL CLIFFORD*, warns: Watch Out! Purple Prose Ahead. It's also given rise to the myth that starting a story with weather is taboo. Yet Raymond Chandler's classic short story "Red Wind" opens:

There was a desert wind blowing that night. It was one of those hot dry Santa Anas that come down through the mountain passes and curl your hair and make your nerves jump and your skin itch. On nights like that every booze party ends in a fight. Meek little wives feel the edge of the carving knife and study their husbands' necks.

The first sentence's final words (*that night*) alert us that something has happened. The second sentence reveals the menacing nature of the event through the rhetorical device known as *polysyndeton*: "many connectors." Normally we put a comma between each item in a series, and a conjunction only before the last item. Chandler's use of extra conjunctions (*and curl, and make*) breaks that expected stylistic pattern, heightening the dramatic impact of each phrase. The next two sentences imply through analogy that whatever happened was deadly. Anxious to know the gory details, a reader keeps reading.

Echoing Chandler, Janet Fitch begins her 1999



novel, WHITE OLEANDER:

The Santa Anas blew in hot from the desert, shriveling the last of the spring grass into whiskers of pale straw. Only the oleanders thrived, their delicate poisonous blooms, their dagger green leaves. We could not sleep in the hot dry nights, my mother and I. I woke up at midnight to find her bed empty. I climbed to the roof and easily spotted her blond hair like a white flame in the light of the three-quarter moon.

"Oleander time," she said. "Lovers who kill each other now will blame it on the wind."

From the first sentence things are dying. In the second sentence, Fitch employs the opposite rhetorical device of polysyndeton, *asyndeton*: "without connectors." Also going against standard style, *asyndeton* tightens prose, accelerating pace. The disparate pairing of *delicate* with *poisonous* ups the tension; so does "dagger green." But what color is that? "Silvery green, knife-edged leaves" might have been more realistic, but daggers are quick, sharp and surprising, so Fitch invents a color to keep pace with that murderous image. Readers feel the heat and the violence it portends. And keep reading.

So no, there's nothing intrinsically wrong with weather openings. Fine prose can make any subject fascinating. Inventing analogies and new colors may be tougher, but polysyndeton and *asyndeton* are two simple rhetorical devices every writer can add to their toolkit. And when your grammar checker yells at you to add or subtract a conjunction, you've got a couple of fancy Greek words to shout right back.

LAURIE THOMAS



MEMBER EVENTS

New member **Dmitri Ragano's** novel, THE VOTING MACHINE, was recently released last month and is available through Mystery Ink.

"It's election season in Las Vegas and someone is murdering voters. Two local activists from opposite ends of the left-wing/right-wing extreme are killed inside electronic voting machines. They die from a rare poison that enters their bloodstream just as they are set to cast ballots in a crucial Nevada Senate race. Temo McCarthy is summoned by the FBI to assist their investigation. He knows the murder victims through his work as a campaign volunteer in a bitterly contested voter registration drive. As the case unfolds, the FBI links the killings to a broader terrorist attack on the general election. Temo realizes that he alone holds the key to finding a ruthless and brilliant killer who is determined to sabotage the vote and provoke a national crisis."

Fireship Press has accepted **Jack Martin's** fifth Alphonso Clay Civil War mysteries, "Hail Columbia." It should be published by January.

"It is the summer of 1869. The Ku Klux Klan, funded and directed by former Confederate generals Nathan Bedford Forrest and Wade Hampton, is spreading chaos through the recently conquered South. Northern government agents (carpetbaggers), Southern sympathizers with the Union (scalawags), and the recently freed black population are being subjected to a reign of terror that civil authorities and the U. S. Army seem



powerless to end. At the same time, robber barons Jay Gould and Jim Fisk are engaging in a covert plan to control the market for gold. President Ulysses Grant tasks his most trusted investigator, Major Alphonso Clay, to investigate the Klan and provide the President with evidence that would allow the power of the Klan to be broken, without igniting a new Civil War.”

Past president **Jeri Westerson** has a busy month ahead as she promotes her fifth Crispin Guest medieval mystery, BLOOD LANCE, which will be released Oct 16.

On **Sunday, Oct 14**, she'll make a presentation at this year's medieval-themed Mission Viejo Readers' Festival at **1:15 pm** in the Jacaranda Room at Oso Viejo Park and Norman P. Murray Community and Senior Center, 24932 Veterans Way, Mission Viejo. With convenient, free shuttle service from the Mission Viejo Library at 100 Civic Center, parking is a breeze, as the library will closed the day of the event.

On **Tuesday, Oct 16 at 7:30 pm** she'll kick off the release of BLOOD LANCE at Mysterious Galaxy Bookstore, with medieval munchies and mead! 2810 Artesia Blvd., Redondo Beach, CA 90278. 310-542-6000.

Then on **Saturday, Oct 20 at noon** she'll be at Mystery Ink, 8907 Warner Ave. #135 Huntington Beach, CA 92647 (714) 960-4000.

Saturday, Oct 20 at 5 pm is the official BLOOD LANCE Book Launch, at Vroman's Bookstore, 695 East Colorado Blvd., Pasadena. Medieval food! Mead! Champagne! Dueling knights! This is the party to end all parties! And it's free!

Sunday, Oct 21 at 2 pm is Book Carnival 348 South Tustin Street, Orange, CA 92866 714-538-3210.

Saturday, Oct 27, 9:30 am –Soroptimist International of Brea/La Habras 8th Annual Authors Brunch, Alta Vista Country Club 777 E. Alta Vista Street, Placentia, CA 92870.\$50.00 per person, prepaid. No payments at the door. Tickets include brunch, authors' presentations, and book signing. Authors will sign their books purchased at the Authors Brunch. For more Information, please contact them at sibrealahabra@gmail.com.

Sunday, Oct 28, Jeri will be at the Tournament of the Phoenix in Poway, CA, as a guest of friends at the Chivalry Today Educational Program. Come find her at the Chivalry Today booth near the Western martial arts arena where she'll be signing copies of Blood Lance. See more at <http://www.tournamentofthephoenix.com/>



MYSTERY INK NEWS

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

In Store Events:

Saturday, October 20th, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Jeri Westerson - Launch Party! Cake! Medieval Food! Crispin Guest?

Mystery Ink is hosting the Orange County Launch



Party for Jeri Westerson's latest Crispin Guest novel, BLOOD LANCE: A MEDIEVAL NOIR. In BLOOD LANCE, an old friend of Crispin's, another disgraced knight, must joust for his life. A relic, the Spear of Longinus – the spear that pierced the side of Christ on the cross and believed to make those who possess it invincible - must be found. Crispin is caught between rebellious factions in King Richard's court, an old friend's honor, and the true ownership of the spear.

Outside Events:

Tuesday, October 23rd

Martin J. Smith - Pen on Fire Salon

www.barbarademarcobarrett.com

Sunday, October 28th

O.C Sisters in Crime meeting –

www.ocsistersincrime.org

Contact us to order your Personalized Signed Copies of **Michael Connelly's** new novel, THE BLACK BOX. (714) 960-4000

www.events@mysteryink.com

Mystery Ink Bookstore:

www.mysteryink@hotmail.com



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



Gather 50 of the best male mystery

- Gather 50 of the best male mysterywriters in North America.
- Mix generously with hundreds of devoted readers.
- Stir in the thrill of each guest being seated at a table with an author.
- Sprinkle in an often-hilarious one-minute “commercial” from each writer
- Fold in three first-class major speakers: **Joseph Finder** **John Lescroart** **James Rollins**
- Toss in an amazing bookstore and a lively autographing session.
- Blend four outstanding male high school student writers chosen by their schools.
- Coat with the Irvine Marriott's famous mushroom soup (and other delights).
- Simmer from 8:30 to 4:00 until thoroughly gratified.

The Result?

Men of Mystery

**Winner of MWA RAVEN
Award**

**Saturday, November 17, 2012
at the
Irvine Marriott Hotel**

Every attendee will share a table with one of our writers who come from all over the US.



Many of our favorites from Southern California will be featured, including: Tyler Dilts, Joel Fox, Thomas Greanias, Bob Hamer, Darrell James, Les Klinger, Ken Kuhlken, Dick Lochte, Dennis Palumbo, Gary Phillips, James R. Preston, Thomas Sawyer, Stephen Jay Schwartz, and Stephen Woodworth.

We will have several local debut authors, including: Bob Davey, David Freed, Andrew Kaplan, Christopher Allan Poe, Travis Richardson, and William Sewell.

Previous Headliners Bob Levinson, Thomas Perry, and Sheldon Siegel will also be present.

Our Men come from a variety of professions, and their books portray a multitude of protagonists. And we have finalists and winners of prestigious awards, including: MWA Edgar, Anthony, Shamus, Nero Wolfe, Barry, Pulitzer, and Left Coast Crime Eureka!

Visit our excellent website www.menofmystery.org to learn more and to register – only \$70 (or \$75 with PayPal) – to join this unique adventure.



Sisters in Crime/Los Angeles and SoCal Mystery Writers of America welcome both members and non-members to the 2013 California Crime Writers Conference for a weekend of workshops geared to the needs of both emerging and established mystery writers.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Sue Grafton and Elizabeth George

AGENDA

- Two days of workshops and breakout sessions
- Four tracks for writers: Business, Craft, Crime, Nuts & Bolts
- Agent & Editor cocktail party
- First Five Pages-manuscript critiques
- Live Auction and Raffle
- Noir Movie Night

WHEN **June 22-23, 2013**

WHERE **Hilton Pasadena**

168 S. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Established in 2009, CCWC is a biennial writers conference dedicated to education and support.

For more information, visit

www.ccwconference.org

ABOUT SINC/ LOS ANGELES

Sisters in Crime (SinC) is an international



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Sisters in Crime  Orange County



organization dedicated to supporting writers in the mystery genre. The Los Angeles Chapter (SinC/LA) was founded in 1989 and is a non-profit organization. For more information, visit <http://sistersincrimela.com/>

ABOUT MWA/SO CAL

Mystery Writers of America, Inc. (MWA) was established in 1945 for the purpose of promoting and protecting the interests and welfare of mystery writers and to increase the esteem and literary recognition given to the genre. The Southern California (SoCal) Chapter of MWA covers members in California and Nevada below the 36th parallel, as well as all of Arizona and Hawaii. For more information on MWA/SoCal, visit <http://www.socalmwa.com/>



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

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

If you have events coming up or announcements you want to make, let us know. Please send your contributions and suggestions to:

Ocsinc.newsletter@gmail.com.

The deadline is the 1st of each month!



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Sisters in Crime  Orange County



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: