

Sisters
in
Crime †

SISTERS in CRIME
CROAK & DAGGER
ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER



THE NOOSE LETTER

Volume IV, Number 6—November 2008

†Expert Testimony†

From the Prez

These are the last remarks I get to make from our bully pulpit. Look elsewhere in this issue for our 2009 slate of candidates for the 25 November election and final book reviews for this year, uncharacteristic slams of respected authors sloughing off less than mediocre efforts on the reading public.

What I really want to say is how much writers everywhere, New Mexicans in general, and I in particular will miss legendary author Tony Hillerman, who died on 26 October.

Tony not only opened up the genre of ethnic sleuths to a whole host of authors and the reading public, he also popularized the notion that Indian culture is worth studying and that the kinds of crimes that offend other cultures plague the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, and Pueblo tribes as well. Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee perfectly complement each other and will take their places in the canon of mystery literature alongside Sherlock Holmes, Auguste Dupin, Hercule Poirot, and Miss Marple.

New Mexicans have been rightly proud of their adopted son from Sacred Heart, Oklahoma. Farm boy, war hero, GI Bill college student, journalist, editor, professor, head of a journalism department that ought to bear his name, best-selling author, and father to six children, Tony personified the ideals of a self-made man. He would be the first to note that had he not gone to war and been gravely wounded, he would not have written the letters

home that he did, letters that ultimately led to his being set on a career in writing.

Many friends of Tony will have gathered at the fifth annual Hillerman Conference, Focus on Mystery, earlier this month. Since you won't be there to hear all their remembrances, let me tell one that applies to us all. I was in Tony's den/office/writing space admiring his awards and the many foreign editions of his works. Hoping to ask him for a blurb for one of my manuscripts one day, I asked about all the blurbs he had received when he just started out, from giants in the mystery field at that time.

It embarrassed him. "I could never repay all those kind words for a beginner. We never can pay back upstream for the generous deeds of established authors who have helped us. All we can do is return their favors downstream, helping those who are just pushing off from the bank."

Bookshelves are filled with the works of novices Tony helped. Family, faith, journalistic excellence, and a generous spirit mark the man whose portrait hangs among seven other Notable New Mexicans in the Albuquerque Museum. Go see Tony's picture and admire the twinkle in his eye. We'll all miss that. ♦

—Rob Kresge

Don't Miss It!

Tuesday, November 25, at 6 p.m.

November's speaker will be Jackie Lynn (aka Rev. Lynn Hinton, pastor of St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Rio Rancho) who is the author of the Shady Grove Mystery Series published by St. Martin's Press. Her most recent book in this series, *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* came out this summer. *Jacob's Ladder* appeared in June of 2007 and *Down By The Riverside* was released in the spring of 2006.

Under her real name, Lynn is a regular columnist with The Charlotte Observer, the author of several nonfiction works, and a series of inspirational women's novels known as the Hope Springs Trilogy.

The program for the December meeting will be an "Author's Roundtable" to give our local mystery writers an opportunity to announce/describe their works in progress. Contact Rob Kresge if you'd like to take part so we know how many authors will come. (By the way, any holiday goodies anyone wants to bring will be gratefully received!)

The Albuquerque Croak & Dagger chapter of Sisters in Crime welcomes mystery fans, readers, and writers who want to enjoy felonious fun, absolutely criminal companionship and sensational speakers.

Meetings are held in the police briefing room of the James Joseph Dwyer Memorial Substation, 12700 Montgomery NE (one block east of Tramway). Unless otherwise noted, programs are free and open to the public.

Don't Forget to Vote!

Yes, we know you did on November 4. This election is for next year's slate of Croak & Dagger officers. See page 9 for details.

Check Out the Croak & Dagger Website for all your Croak & Dagger information needs.
www.croak-and-dagger.com

- Upcoming Programs
- 2008 Meeting Schedule
- Membership Form
- Speakers Bureau
- Links to Mystery Websites & Websites for Your Favorite Croak & Dagger Authors
- *The Nooseletter* Archive



Sisters in Crime was founded in 1986. *The purpose of Sisters in Crime shall be "to combat discrimination against women in they mystery field, educate publishers and the general public as to the inequities in the treatment of female authors, raise the level of awareness of their contribution to the field, and promote the professional advancement of women who write mysteries."*

The Line Up

Rob Kresge – President –
rkresge777@comcast.net

Secretary/Treasurer – Cheri Stow –
cheri3j@yahoo.com

Programs/Publicity – Ruth Jimenez –
rcbrojim@yahoo.com

Membership – Jonathan Sacks –
jsacks@pobox.com

Website Technical Support Manager – Sarah Schwartz –
schwartzse@comcast.net

Library Liaison – Pari Noskin Taichert –
ptaichert@comcast.com

Nooseletter Editor – Linda Triegel –
newsette@earthlink.net

Murder in Old Town – An Albuquerque Mystery

(Thanks to our terrific October speaker, Paula Paul, for this morality tale for writers)

By eight in the morning, the sun had already begun to spread itself like melted butter across the city, oozing through the streets and alleys, only to be congealed into islands of brittle dry air in the buildings of downtown Albuquerque.

Police detective Ruth Jimenez spent little time in the artificial arctic climate of the main police station. She was a woman of the streets. The mean streets. Where danger, neglect, disillusionment and death lurked. You never knew what you were going to find around the next corner.

Like yesterday. She'd found another one lying dead in the parking lot behind the library. It had been brutally ripped, its edges tattered, pages blown away in the wind, its first page stained with coffee and there was a tire mark on the back where someone in the parking lot had run over it. It had been dead a long time. Its life-giving printer ink had already started to pool and rigor mortis had set in. The guys in OMI were going to have a hard time identifying this manuscript. Only a few words were legible. Something about a murder in Old Town.

Jimenez knew she wasn't supposed to get emotionally involved, but every time she saw one (and this wasn't her first by any means) she couldn't help thinking that if it just could have made it past the hot summer, maybe by winter it could have been transformed into something someone would want to curl up with in front of a fire, on some dark and stormy night.

But that was yesterday. Jimenez was off the streets today. She'd been called into one of those air-conditioned islands that was police headquarters. She made her way up the stairs to the chief's office on the second floor. (Chief Rob Kresge, you see, was a second-story man).

"You wanted to see me, Chief?" she asked as she entered his office.

"Have a seat, Jimenez," Chief Kresge growled without looking up from the papers he was signing. "I want to ask you about that dead manuscript you found yesterday." Kresge was a tough, no-nonsense kind of man who always got right to the point. Jimenez knew he'd seen his share of dead manuscripts, too, but he never talked about it or showed any emotion when another one came up. Maybe he'd seen too many. Maybe he'd had one of his own die.

"Yeah, the manuscript," Jimenez said. "We got an I.D. yet?"

"OMI's working on it," Kresge said, pushing the stack of papers aside to glare at Jimenez. "There was no cover page, so we got no title and no author's name."

Jimenez shrugged. "Probably blew away. Those things happen you know. I figure some writer dropped it in the parking lot without knowing it. The poor thing had been run over and ripped. It was in pretty bad shape. I could hardly read it. Tough to die in an accident like that."

"This was no accident, Jimenez. This manuscript was murdered."

Jimenez's eyes widened. "What do you mean, murdered?"

"Doc says there are signs the manuscript had been tortured."

"Doc?" Jimenez said. "You mean Dr. Jonathan Sacks, the head of OMI?"

The chief nodded. "Said he's pretty sure the whole thing had been locked in a drawer for a couple of years. Hadn't seen the light of day in a long time. That kind of thing can kill a manuscript, you know.

Jimenez shook her head. "But who would do a thing like that?"

"That's what I want you to find out," the chief said. "I'm assigning Rudolph from over in vice to work with you.

"Rudolph?" Jimenez asked. "You mean Penny Rudolph?"

Chief Kresge nodded. "She's the best we've got."

“But she’s got her own manuscripts to work on,” Jimenez said.

“You afraid she’ll outshine you, Jimenez?”

“No, of course not. It’s just that—”

“No excuses, Jimenez. Now get to work.”

Rudolph was waiting for her in the car. She was another tough cookie who would probably make chief someday if she survived the vice unit. Jimenez had worked with her before and knew how unrelenting she could be once she got her teeth into a good case, and this was without a doubt a good case. Tortured by being left in a drawer! There was still some innocent spot in Jimenez’s soul that made her not want to think there really were people like that.

Police work, like writing, can be tedious. Jimenez had learned that the hard way, and she had a hunch Rudolph had learned that lesson, too. They started in the library, asking librarians and patrons alike if they’d ever noticed anyone carrying around a manuscript. There were plenty that people remembered, even some with coffee stains, but nothing anyone could remember about a crime in Old Town. Then they asked if anyone had noticed a manuscript falling to the ground on the parking lot. No one remembered anything.



It looked like a dead end until Dr. Sacks came up with information about the tire mark. It came from a Bridgestone Potenza RE750. But what good did that do? There must be thousands of cars in the city with Bridgestone Potenza RE750s. Another dead end. The next thing to do was to call publishers all over the country to ask if they’d ever received and rejected a manuscript having to do with a crime in Old Town.

Fat chance that would bring any results! Have you ever tried to talk to an editor? They’re always in a meeting or else they’re away at some conference, or they’re “working at home today.” At least that’s what the receptionist says. You don’t know what the editor says, because you never ever get to talk to an editor.

You get a form letter—*rejecting* your request. But Jimenez and Rudolph didn’t give up. They kept sending out those requests. Finally, Rudolph went to a writer’s conference and got a ten-minute appointment to talk to an editor.

The editor remembered something. A manuscript about a crime in Old Town. Yes, she had rejected it. It didn’t meet their needs, but she had wished the writer luck in placing it elsewhere. OK, so it was a form rejection. No, she didn’t remember the author’s name, but now that she thought about it, the manuscript did show promise. It needed a little rewriting, though.

In the meantime, Jimenez was back at the library parking lot, looking for something she might have missed. That’s when the bag lady showed up. Said her name was Stow. Cheri Stow.

“You looking for something?” the bag lady asked, leaning heavily on her grocery cart. “If you are, you won’t find much here. Go over to the park. You’d be surprised the stuff people leave lying around. Look at this,” she said, pulling a ski jacket out of her cart. “I’ll bet this hasn’t been worn more than once or twice.”

“That’s not the kind of thing I’m looking for,” Jimenez said, shocked that she had been mistaken for a bag lady.

“Well, listen to you!” Cheri Stow said. “Beggars can’t be choosers, you know.”

Jimenez was incensed. “I’m not a beggar.”

“Then you’re a writer.”

“Why would think I was a writer?”

“You have that hungry look. So you’re either a beggar or a writer. You’re not a beggar, so you’re a writer.”

“I’m a cop!” Jimenez shouted, feeling insulted.

“A cop?” There was a frightened look in the bag lady’s eyes. “I didn’t take that six-pack. It just fell off the shelf and landed in my shopping cart.”

Jimenez ignored her. She was still feeling insulted at someone saying she looked like a hungry writer.

Cheri Stow the bag lady studied her in silence for several seconds. Finally she spoke in a quiet, timid voice. “I was here when that manuscript fell out of that woman’s briefcase.

“What manuscript?”

“You know what manuscript. The one with the coffee stain and the tire mark. The one about a crime in Old Town.”

Jimenez felt more excited than she’d felt in days. “I’m taking you in for questioning.”

Rudolph was waiting at the police station when they arrived. “I found an editor who remembered the manuscript,” she said when she saw Jimenez.

“And I found a bag lady who may be able to identify the author.”

Cheri Stow the bag lady was exhausted after five hours of sweating under a hot light while she was being questioned by the tough and grizzled Chief Kresge.

“Can’t we stop,” she asked, “I want a beer.”

“Not until we get all the answers we need,” the heartless and unrelenting Kresge said. “Now tell me everything you know.”

“I already told you everything I know. I saw the woman, the writer, in the library a lot when I go in there to get out of the heat and take my nap. She looks up stuff. Used to be mostly names of editors and publishers she finds in *Writers Marketplace*. She sent that manuscript out four, maybe five times.

“How do you know this? The chief asked.

“She told me,” the bag lady answered.

“What else did she tell you?” the chief, who never gives up, asked.

“That she got rejections all five times.”

“Only five?” The chief had that look on his face. Like he was on to something.

“Did she ever go to a writer’s conference?” Rudolph asked.

The bag lady’s answer was short. “Nope.”

“Ever try to get an agent?”

“Once. She got turned down.”

“Just once?” asked the chief.

“Just once,” Cheri Stow said. “Said she was starting to feel insulted by everybody rejecting her.

“Did she ever try rewriting? Ever belong to a critique group?” Kresge asked.

“Tried a critique group once. Said they had no right to tell her she needed to change things. Said they wouldn’t know good writing if it hit ‘em in the face.”

“Then what happened?” Kresge asked, turning the heat light up a notch.

Cheri’s face turned white in spite of the burning light. “I . . . , I don’t know,” she said.

“Was this gang related?” Rudolph asked.

The chief turned to her in surprise. “Why would you ask her that?” he asked.

“There’s this notorious street gang. Goes by the name of Croak and Dagger. They’re into stuff like that.”

“No gangs were involved!” the Bag Lady said. She was almost in tears by now.

Kresge gave her a menacing look. “How do you know that?”

“I’m not saying another word without a lawyer present,” said the bag lady.

“You’re not a suspect,” Kresge said.

“I want a lawyer,” Cheri insisted.

“All right,” Kresge said. “Jimenez! Get her a public defender.”



“Don’t want no public defender,” Cheri said. “I want the best criminal lawyer in town. I want Linda Triegel.”

“Triegel’s expensive!” Kresge said, shocked.

“I won’t talk without Triegel.”

Triegel looked the part--slick and professional, loaded with diamonds, Louis Vuitton handbag, Gucci suit.

“Give my client immunity or she doesn’t talk,” Triegel said.

“Immunity from what?” Kresge asked.

“Don’t try to hang that six-pack theft on her.”

“You’re tough, Triegel,” Kresge said.

“It’s that or nothing,” Triegel countered.

Kresge didn’t like deals, especially not with slick lawyers like Triegel, but this was important. He gave the bag lady immunity, knowing that six-pack theft would forever be on his conscience.

“All right, I’ll sing,” the bag lady said. “After the critique group thing and the agent rejection, she . . . , she . . . ”

Rudolph and Jimenez leaned in closer. The chief’s eyes widened. “Go on,” the chief urged.

“She . . . she mblmblmbl . . . ”

“What? Speak up! I can’t hear you,” Kresge bellowed, not being a particularly touchy-feely or sensitive kind of guy.

“She t-t-t-tortured it,” Cheri said.

“Tortured it how?” the chief demanded.

“She put it in a drawer until it died of neglect,” Cheri said. By now she was crying. “I know that’s criminal. I know I should have come forward sooner. But I was scared.”

“Will you testify to that knowledge of torture in court?” the chief asked.

“Not without immunity,” the slick and professional Triegel said.

“She’s already *got* immunity, Triegel,” the chief roared.

“She won’t be implicated or prosecuted for her knowledge of this horrible crime. You don’t guarantee that, she don’t talk.”

“Doesn’t,” Kresge said.

“What?” Triegel looked confused.

“The verb must agree with the subject. “She *doesn’t* talk.”

“You’re darned right she doesn’t. Not without immunity,” Triegel said.

In the end, the bag lady sang. The author was convicted of death by neglect. She had refused to keep sending the manuscript out. She refused to listen to the suggestions of professionals. She refused to rewrite. She let rejections get her down. She refused to attend meetings or conferences where she could learn what editors were buying or to learn by reading critically and studying best sellers. In a word, she gave up. Sadly, she was convicted of first degree murder by neglect and failure to pursue a dream with every fiber of her body.

She’ll have a second chance if she wants it, though. It’s up to her.

Oh, yes, they learned her name. And you know who you are. ♦

NOTICE

Complimentary meal tickets for Wecks will be raffled off at the November meeting. All those who attended the Mystery Dinner are eligible for the drawing.

The Mark of the Pasha: A Mamur Zapt Mystery by Michael Pearce. Poisoned Pen Press, 2008. 200 pp (HC)

It's the end of 1918: World War I has ended, the Versailles Conference is beginning, and independence and nationalism are the watchwords in many countries and colonies – including British-ruled Egypt. The Khedive “rules” Egypt, but every minister and many lower-level government officials have British advisors. However, many Egyptians, including some of the ruling elite, want to throw out the British and the Khedive and have elections and self-government.

In this environment, an assassination attempt on the Khedive creates many problems for the Mamur Zapt, the head of the Khedive's Secret Police, and his three-person office. One of these complications is that the Mamur Zapt is Gareth Owen, a Welshman who served in the British Army in India and is married to a Pasha's daughter.

The book follows the Mamur Zapt, who has few resources and limited authority, as he works his way through both the British and Egyptian bureaucracies to determine who is responsible for what political intrigue and to stabilize the situation. In addition to a good mystery, the book also provides a good description of the politics and culture of this turbulent period, but with a sense of humor rather than preaching about history.

If you like the book, you have made a good discovery since it is the sixteenth one in the Mamur Zapt series, which follows the Mamur Zapt from his appointment in 1908 through the changes during the pre-war and war years.

Author Michael Pearce knows the area since he grew up in what was then Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and has also returned and taught there. He is a retired academic, who now writes full time. ♦

—Olin Bray (ohbray@nmia.com)



ROB'S RANDOM SHOTS

November Case File Number One

The Cat Who Dropped a Bombshell by Lillian Jackson Braun, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2006. 191 pp (HC)

The two novels I'm reviewing this issue share a common pedigree. We checked out both of them as books on CD for a recent weeklong trip to Colorado. They are both written by best-selling authors in their fields with huge followings, but they are both highly inferior works which could only be foisted off on legions of fans who already adore their works and buy subsequent books uncritically. Neither Julie and I nor our passengers could stomach these novels and I had to check out written versions from the library to see how they turned out. I was even more disappointed in their denouements.

Braun is a cat lover and this is her 28th “*Cat Who . . .*” mystery. I ought to put mystery in quotation marks, too. Set in fictional Moose County (presumably Maine), gentle inhabitants nose into each other's business, trade cat anecdotes, and appreciate local history. Not much else of note happens. Things unfold at such a leisurely pace, I'm grateful the driver didn't fall asleep while we all nodded off at the saccharine non-events in the novel.

Early on, a granddaughter and her fiancé come to town to visit elderly grandparents, then leave. We learn that the fiancé is an ailurophobe, but must figure out for ourselves that that is a cat-hater. Dozens of pages later, after cute happenings at a town festival and the return of the granddaughter, we learn that the young man was not actually her fiancé and they have broken up. Much, much later, after much ado about many nothings, like cat columns in the local paper, we learn that the old couple has died, one after the other.

This turns out to have been a murder, perpetrated by the false fiancé, but the novel's protagonist does not solve the crime, nor, thankfully, does his cat. Instead we learn that a biologist friend of the granddaughter, who made

an “off-screen” visit to the town (to buy a cat, naturally) determined that the false fiancé had introduced mold spores into the house that eventually caused the deaths and that he has been arrested in California. Never mind that it would be difficult for anyone to prove trans-continental murder by spores, let alone gather enough evidence to make an arrest without visiting the scene, all’s well that ends well and the inhabitants enjoy a round of chuckles.

Rules violated include lackluster pacing, overly indulgent writing, lack of effort by the protagonist (someone else solves the crime), lack of any danger or suspense, and unresolved loose ends like motive. The author even lets her protagonist interview her in an addendum!

I’m sure Ms Braun has devotees in our chapter, and if they would like to challenge this view of her work, I hope they’ll contact the *Nooseletter* editor. ♦

—Rob Kresge (rkresge777@comcast.net)

Key:

PB = Paperback

TP = Trade paperback

HC = Hardcover

November Case File Number Two

The Colorado Kid by Stephen King, Hardcover Crime, 2005, 185 pp (PB).

The number of King fans is legion, but I’ll bet they (and his fans in our SinC chapter) feel the same way I do about this “book.” See that page count above? That’s your first clue that this is an improbable King novel, weighing in at only a fraction of his usual tomes. And this is not a paperback reprint; it’s a first edition. Unable to interest his agent and editors in this long novella, he chose to grace hardcore PIs-sex-and-gore publisher Hardcover with it. In return, the publisher, known for reprints with 1950’s femme fatale covers, found a way to put a fetching damsel on this cover. Check a copy in the paperback section of your local library.

King eschews his usual supernatural or straight suspense style to give us a faintly eerie tale that, like the Braun above, violates every rule of its genre as only a revered author could get away with. The Kid of the title refers to a dead body found on a beach in a customary King Maine setting 15 years before our story takes place. There is no suspense in this novel, no danger, only a growing expectation and wonder that is ultimately frustrated. (**Spoiler ahead; avoid reading further if you intend to read this work.**) The cast is limited to three major players (not counting a visitor and a waitress who walk off at the end of chapter one): two old (really old) newspapermen and their young female summer intern, Stephanie, sexed up for the mildly lurid cover.

The only “action” in present time is a long conversation between the three characters on a veranda in the late summer Maine sun. Granted, the Maine accents are wonderful even on the printed page (even better on CD), but this limits the story to a retelling. Basically, the two old writers recount to Stephanie an unsolved crime on the beach of a nearby island. King gives us his usual meticulous details and sense of place. Late in the conversation, the two men tell her how the unnamed corpse (nicknamed for a Colorado tax stamp on a pack of cigarettes found in his pocket) was finally identified a couple of years after the body was found.

Then there follows an intriguing thread of how the man (a known non-smoker) must have left his Denver office one morning on a tight schedule to get to this Maine beach the same evening to be murdered. Manner of death not clear, clues like cigarettes and a Russian coin in his pocket not resolved. We’ve been led a non-merry chase up until this point but (**spoiler**) King’s three characters do not solve the mystery; the two old men merely pass the story to Steph and hope she’ll have better luck with this cold case some day. King closes the book by explaining that this whole thing was just a discourse on the nature of mystery itself. It certainly sucked me in, but I was appalled that an author of his stature would lead readers on and not deliver.

Reactions? Write a letter to the editor or respond to me. ♦

—Rob Kresge (rkresge777@comcast.net)

NOVEMBER ELECTION

The Croak & Dagger chapter works because of the efforts of dedicated volunteers.

On 25 November, paid-up members of the Croak & Dagger chapter will be able to vote for the top four elective positions of volunteers willing to steer our chapter through the next year. The four primary board members are elected to one-year terms. The whole board—elected officers and appointed volunteers—takes office at the December meeting.

Members who can't attend the November meeting may cast their ballots by emailing the current president, Rob Kresge, at rkresge777@comcast.net **NO LATER THAN** noon on the day of the meeting, 25 November. Ballots will be distributed and counted at the meeting and the results announced at the end.

Write-in candidates are acceptable, but anyone wishing to contend for a position must inform Rob or the Membership Chair, Jonathan Sacks, at jsacks@pobox.com in time for an email reminder of the upcoming vote to be issued the weekend before the meeting. Consider the write-in or contested entry deadline to be midnight, Friday, 21 November.

The slate of officers for 2009 consists of:

Elective Positions:

President / Treasurer – Cheri Stow

Cheri is currently an undergraduate working on a Creative Writing Degree at UNM. She has an Associated Arts degree from Green River Community College of Washington and a certificate from the Institute of Children's Literature. She has written novels, short stories, and poetry.

Vice President – Olin Bray

Retired from Sandia National Labs, Olin worked in information systems, technology planning, and homeland security. He has written three computer books and over 40 conference papers and tutorials. He is a member of both Croak and Dagger and Southwest Writers.

Secretary – Position still open – Volunteer!

Appointive Positions:

Programs/Publicity Chair - Rita Herther

In the 1980's Rita published articles and children's stories. She taught creative and journal writing. After a long hiatus, Rita is now writing a YA novel, short stories and articles.

Nooseletter Editor – Linda Triegel

Current editor of the Nooseletter, Linda also edited the newsletter of her previous SinC chapter in Pennsylvania. A published romance writer, she is now working on a historical mystery.

Membership – Jonathan Sacks

Jonathan has had two careers so far—as an academic research mathematician and as a hi-tech software engineer in the Boston area. He will be teaching math at CNM shortly. Our current Membership Chair, he is working on a second draft of a suspense novel about financial crimes on the electronic international currency network.

Website Technical Support – Susan Zates

Susan and her husband and two Siberian huskies moved to ABQ in 2004 from Orange County, California. She works as a software engineer and is an avid mystery reader, not a writer. She especially loves police procedural, P.I. and forensic genres.

Library Liaison – Pari Noskin Taichert

Pari is the author of the Sasha Solomon mystery series set in New Mexico. She was the first president of the Croak & Dagger chapter and is now a columnist for *The 3rd Degree*, the newsletter of Mystery Writers of America.

Sharing the Web

When forensic medicine succeeds in making it into the courtroom, the evidence is known as a “Visible Proof.” Check out the online exhibition at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/visibleproofs/>, which explores the history and evolution of Forensic Medicine. Take a tour of the virtual exhibit titled “Visible Proofs” and learn about the brilliant innovators who have pushed the boundaries of this particularly dark field of science.

2008-09 MEETING DATES

Tuesday, November 25, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 16, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, January 27, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 24, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 24, 7:00 p.m.

Meetings are free to the public.

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held every fourth Tuesday of the month, at 7:00 p.m., at the James Joseph Dwyer Memorial Police Substation, 12700 Montgomery Blvd. NE, one block east of Tramway.

(If the substation lot is full, there is more parking available just below the substation, accessed via a driveway below the substation on the right.)

Check our Web site, www.croak-and-dagger.com, for schedule changes.

†Nooseletter Submissions†

Croak & Dagger friends are encouraged to contribute articles, reviews, and essays on aspects of mystery writing *and* reading for publication consideration. Information on relevant conferences or events is also welcome. Especially let us know if you have published a new book or story, or have an upcoming local author event. (Unbridled enthusiasm for your own mystery book is encouraged here.)

Length: Articles should average 500 words, but short items are also welcome.

Deadlines: Publication is every other month, starting in January. Submission deadlines are the 15th of the month prior to publication: Feb 15, April 15, June 15, Aug 15, Oct 15, and Dec 15.

The Living and the Dead: As a general policy, articles and information should focus on living authors rather than dead ones, but that's not set in concrete shoes. Articles about specific historical development of the crime-mystery writing genre, for example, would be welcome.

Submissions: Please submit via e-mail to newsette@earthlink.net, with "Nooseletter" in the subject line.

The *Nooseletter* is distributed to all members electronically. ♦

—Linda Triegel

Summary of Findings

The *Nooseletter* is the internal organ of the Croak & Dagger chapter, Albuquerque, of Sisters in Crime (SinC). Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and editors. ♦

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Still not a member of Sisters in Crime?

\$20/year brings mystery to your life! The Albuquerque *Croak & Dagger* chapter welcomes mystery fans who want to enjoy felonious fun, absolutely criminal companionship, and sensational speakers.

Benefits of membership in the *Croak & Dagger* chapter include a subscription to our *Nooseletter*, close contact with local mystery writers, and fun events with other mystery fans.

You do *not* have to be a member of the national organization to join us. Come hear our next program speaker and meet the gang. We promise to bring mayhem and murder into your life.

Contact our membership chair, at contact@croak-and-dagger.com.

Summary of the Board Meeting Minutes of Sisters in Crime, Croak & Dagger Chapter, ABQ, NM, 7 October 2008

The meeting was called to order by the president at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Jonathan Sacks. Board members present: President Rob Kresge, Secretary/Treasurer Cheri Stow, Membership chair Jonathan Sacks, Programs & Publicity chair Ruth Jimenez, *Nooseletter* Editor: Linda Triegel, and Website Manager Sarah Schwartz.

Old News:

President's Report: Rob reminded us of our December 16th regular meeting. Then he reminded us he would be taking a six-month vacation to Australia (sigh, envy).

New News:

Cheri made several suggestions for improvement on our next mystery dinner, notwithstanding giving lots of kudos and appreciation to Jennifer and Ruth for planning and organizing this year's event. Rob went over the upcoming elections with interest coming in from several members for the positions available.

Secretary's Report: Cheri reported that she'd received an apology letter from Weeks restaurant for the misfortunes of the mystery dinner, i.e., problems with the desert, problems with acoustics, and problems with a vegetarian's choice. Weeks also sent four complimentary tickets for a free dinner. There will be a drawing among the participants of the mystery dinner at the November meeting for these freebies.

Treasury's Report: Cheri reported the quarterly report for July through September. She handed out a printed copy of her report showing expenditures, deposits, and current balance. Expenditures include \$640.49 for our spiffy new projector and \$139.72 for the 2009 bookmarks; income includes new and renewing memberships totaling \$400 (see Cheri for a detailed breakdown).

Membership: Jonathan reported that we gained 4 new members in August, with several renewals.

Programs & Publicity: Ruth reported that Jackie Lynn will be our November speaker. For the December meeting, we will have an author roundtable. This is for published mystery authors or writers who have one manuscript finished.

Speakers are lined up for January, February, and March, including Hillerman Novel Contest winner Christine Barber (*The Replacement Child*) for February. Several suggestions were made for additional speakers, including Steven Murray & Tina Nunnally, translators of Scandinavian works. The incoming Programs chairman will follow up.

Nooseletter: Linda reported getting more info on generating a crossword puzzle and other new features for the *Nooseletter*.

Website: Sarah Schwartz reported that the C&D website is up-to-date. Sarah had also ordered our new 2009 bookmarks and brought a few samples to the meeting. They look great!

Thanks to Jonathan for hosting the meeting and the refreshments of cheese & crackers. The meeting adjourned at 8:50.

—Submitted by Cheri B. Stow, Secretary/Treasurer