



ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER – SISTERS IN CRIME

THE NOOSELETTER

Volume XI, Number 3 — May/June 2017

†The President's Corner†

Dear Sisters and Misters—

Wow, have we got great new opportunities and new benefits for you!!

Our 10th anniversary year as a nonprofit association, and Sisters in Crime's 30th anniversary year are rocketing along. We're happy that you're joining in the felonious fun. Party plans are in progress, honoring our founders. Mark your calendars for the August meeting. We're applying for grants from SinC to pay for the party, including special treats for all attending founders. In addition to the ongoing grant program from national, there is special additional money available for celebrations featuring SinC's anniversary. We'll take it!

The major upcoming thrills feature Laura Metzler of the Tony Hillerman branch library, our May speaker. Laura will answer our most critical questions: how we can get our books into libraries, and how we can keep them there. We'll learn about Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication and other important information we need to know, and steps we need to take during the publishing process. And, of course, other sneaky tricks.

Speaking of all things library, we'll be "on the case" at the East Mountain (Tijeras) library during June. We also are finalizing our visit to the Moriarty library, which sent representatives to the literacy event in April to issue us an invitation. We're also developing the plans for a fall series of events at the Rio Rancho/Esther Bone libraries. The discussions include a panel discussion by our writers, as well as a book display at Esther Bone and a covers-only display at Rio Rancho. Individual speaker gigs are also under consideration.

If you want to join in the library adventures and I don't already have your books, contact me at the email address in the "Line Up" info box on page 2 of

this Nooseletter and let me know where you'd like to meet to hand off copies of your books. Also email me high-res photos of your covers (and a mug shot, if you'd like) for the covers-only events. If you have bookmarks, we can use those also.

As a special benefit to our members, one of the Albuquerque-Bernalillo library system librarians has asked us to send her (through your leadership gang) email copies of flyers for our new mystery/thriller/suspense/cozy/otherwise criminal books. The librarian will not only print and post the flyers in the Featured Local Authors space at that branch, but will also send the electronic flyers on to other librarians who are interested in boosting local authors. This is a permanent benefit for our members, not a one-off. What a deal! Send me your flyers for the moment, while the board decides on a permanent process for handling this great benefit.

And just a reminder of one of your newest benefits from Sisters in Crime—a nationwide library promotion for our members. Check the SinC website under Member Benefits for details on how you can participate in this fabulous benefit.

More news is coming about another major freebie from Sisters in Crime. We will have an event next spring or summer featuring a visit by Jan Burke. This visit is completely at SinC's expense.

As befits a SinC chapter, we're all about promoting you. Enjoy!

*Mysteriously,
Ann Zeigler, President*

Don't Miss It! **Tuesday, May 23, at 7 p.m.**

Librarian Laura Metzler from the Tony Hillerman branch will be our next speaker. She will talk about how to get our books into the libraries—and more! (See the President's Message above!).

Coming Up...
Tuesday, June 27, at 7 p.m.

Our June speaker will be Christine Barber, who won the 2007 Tony Hillerman Award for best first novel set in the Southwest for *The Replacement Child*, the first of now three books in her Gil Montoya mystery series set in Santa Fe.

Christine will discuss the West Mesa case and compelling reasons to believe that there is another burial site. What might a killer look for in a burial location? Maybe Croak & Dagger members can help figure out where it is!



Sisters in Crime was founded in 1986.

The mission of Sisters in Crime shall be "to promote the ongoing advancement, recognition, and professional development of women crime writers."

And our motto is: "SinC up with great crime writing!"



Sisters in Crime **Guppies**

SinC Guppies is an online writers' support group. Guppies share a passion for writing mysteries and a common goal of getting published.

Subgroups represent cozies, noir, psychological and romantic suspense, and thrillers. The Mystery Analysis Group is a book discussion group aimed at discussing the craft, and the AgentQuest group can help with writing queries and synopses. For more information, check them out at www.sinc-guppies.org.

Check out the Croak & Dagger Website (www.croak-and-dagger.com) for all your Croak & Dagger information needs:

- Upcoming Programs
- 2011 Meeting Schedule
- Membership Form
- Speakers Bureau
- Links to Mystery Websites & Websites for Your Favorite Croak & Dagger Authors
- *The Nooseletter* Archive

REMEMBER: All the above provide opportunities for free publicity for members. Contact our website maven, Susan Zates (address below) for more information or with an idea for a blog article. Get your name out there wherever you can!

AND: All members are invited to join the Croak & Dagger Yahoo group, an online gathering place for mystery writers. Join in! Log on to C&D's web page (www.croak-and-dagger.com) and click on the link to moderator Nancy Varian for instructions. Exchange news and information about mystery books, movies, etc., as well as online courses.

The Line Up

President – Ann Zeigler –
annzl@centurylink.net
 Vice President – Pat Wood –
pwood73@comcast.net
 Treasurer – Joan Taitte –
joan.taitte@gmail.com
 Secretary – Margaret Tessler –
maggie.abq.nm@hotmail.com
 Membership – Pat Wood
pwood73@comcast.net
 Hospitality – Janet Greger –
JANET.GREGER@comcast.net
 Programs/Publicity – Rita Herther –
RMHerther@aol.com
 Website Manager – Susan Zates –
smzates@yahoo.com
 Member-at-Large – Joan Saberhagen –
jsabe@berserker.com
 Nooseletter Editor – Linda Triegel
newsette@earthlink.net

More 2017 Writers Conferences – Still Time to Register!

For more information, click on the links to check them out online.



July 11-16

Thrillerfest 2017, Grand Hyatt, New York City.

ThrillerMaster Lee Child, 2017 Silver Bullet Award recipient Lisa Gardner, and the authors of ITW's new anthology *Match Up*. "Join us for the FBI workshop, Master CraftFest, PitchFest, and more. For information, go to: www.thrillerfest.com.

July 20-23

Pacific Northwest Writers Association (PNWA) annual conference. Numerous panels, workshops, and special "master classes" in the art and business of writing all types of fiction and nonfiction. For details: <http://www.pnwa.org/>.

August 12

Suffolk Mystery Authors Festival, at the Center for Cultural Arts, Suffolk, Virginia. One-day festival includes book signings, fan meet & greets, as well as a New Author Expo, multiple workshops, and moderated panel discussions. Go to: <http://www.suffolkmysteryauthorsfestival.com>.

August 24-27

Killer Nashville, Embassy Suites, Nashville, TN, features breakout sessions for smaller group interaction, a moonshine and wine tasting, agent/editor roundtable, pitch sessions, a mock crime scene designed by law enforcement professionals, the Guest of Honor Dinner and Awards Banquet, film previews, and live music performances. Click on: [Killer Nashville](http://www.killernashville.com)

September 7-10

Annual **Book Passage Mystery Writers Conference**, Corte Madera, California. "This Conference has a strong tradition of great authors and teachers. It covers everything mystery writers need—from developing ideas and writing skills to finding a publisher. Participants work closely with mystery writers, agents, editors, and publishers as well as investigators and crime-fighting professionals. For more: <http://bookpassage.com/mystery-writers-conference>.

October 11-15

Bouchercon, Sheraton Centre, Toronto, Canada, this year offering local tours, ghost walks, a day trip to the Niagara wine country, and a Nero Wolfe Banquet. American Guest of Honor: Megan Abbot; Canadian Guest of Honor: Louise Penny; International Guest of Honor: Cristopher Brookmyre; Toastmasters: Gary Philips & Twist Phalen. For more: <http://bouchercon2017.com>.

October 20-22

Magna cum Murder, Ball State University, Indianapolis, IN. **Guest of Honor**, Terence Faherty; **International Guest of Honor**, English crime **Andrew Taylor**. For more information, go to: <http://cms.bsu.edu/Academics/CentersandInstitutes/EBBall/MagnaCumMurder.aspx>.

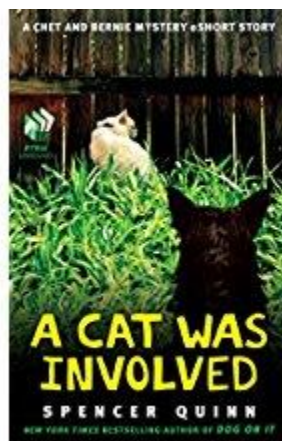
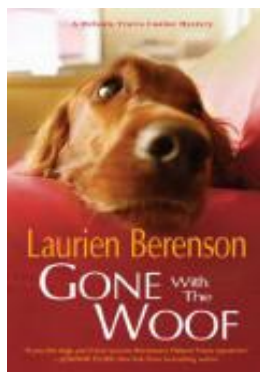
MYSTERIES FEATURING DOGS

There are plenty of mysteries featuring cats in some way, usually as protagonists—Koko and Yum-Yum in Lillian Jackson Braun’s Jim Qwilleran series, and Rita Mae Brown’s Sneaky Pie Brown leap to mind. However, while cats have officially (I read somewhere...) taken over as Americans’ most popular pet, dogs of all breeds are holding their own, even in mystery novels.

There are, of course, “classic” mysteries that feature dogs, like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*; Dashiell Hammet’s series with Nick and Nora Charles and their dog, Asta; and Mary Stewart’s *Gabriel Hounds*, set in Lebanon and featuring Sulukis.

Below are some current mysteries series featuring dogs, whether as Faithful Companion, or even the narrator of the story. Authors are listed alphabetically, with a brief description of the main character, the dog, and the series, if the books are a series.

—Linda Triegel (from an original idea by Suzanne Fellman Jacob of Delaware Valley SinC)



Cynthia Baxter writes about Jessica Popper, a veterinarian with two dogs: Lou, a one-eyed Dalmatian and Max, a tailless Westie. The series, called *Reigning Cats and Dogs*, includes *Right from the Gecko*, *Murder Had a Little Lamb*, and *Putting on the Dog*.

Carol Lee Benjamin has published 9 books (*This Dog for Hire* and others) featuring Rachel Alexander, a private investigator and therapist, and her pet pit bull, Dashiell (aka Dash), a certified therapy dog who is permitted entrance anywhere and so goes everywhere with Rachel.

Laurien Berenson’s main character, Melanie Travis, travels to dog shows with her standard poodle, Faith. There are 21 books in the series so far, including *A Pedigree to Die For*, *Murder at the Puppy Fest*, and *Wagging Through the Snow*.

Rita Mae Brown, in addition to her Sneaky Pie Brown cat mysteries, writes the Mrs. Murphy series featuring a Corgi named Tucker, a cat named Mrs. Murphy, and their postmistress companion, Mary Minor “Harry” Haristeen. Her most recent title is *A Hiss Before Dying*.

Melissa Cleary has written the Jackie Walsh and Jake series of 11 books, including *In the Doghouse* and *The Maltese Puppy*. Jackie is a professor of film history; Jake is her German Shepherd companion.

Susan Conant writes the Holly Winter series. Holly is a dog magazine article author and part-time sleuth. She has two Alaskan Malamutes, Rowdy and Kimi. There are now 20 books in the series (most recently *Sire and Damn*), most set in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Conant is also a writer for dog magazines in “real” life.

Waverly Curtis is the joint byline for the mystery writing team of Waverly Fitzgerald and Curtis Colbert. The main characters in their Barking mystery series, which takes place in Seattle, are Investigator Geri Sullivan and Pepe Sullivan, “Chihuahua extraordinaire.” Titles include *Dial C for Chihuahua*, *The Big Chihuahua*, and *The Chihuahua Always Sniffs Twice*.

Krista Davis writes the Paws and Claws mystery series, including *The Ghost and Mrs. Mewer*, *Murder She Barked*, *Murder Most Howl*, and *Mission Impawsible*. Recipes for owners and pets are included.

Patricia Guiver authors the Delilah Doolittle Pet Detective series, including *The Beastly Bloodline* (Perseverance Press). Watson, a Doberman Pinscher, is Delilah’s faithful companion and fellow pet problem solver. These are set in southern California. Delilah is a transplanted Englishwoman.

Gerald Hammond wrote the John Cunningham stories set in Scotland. Cunningham is a retired British army non-com who established a kennel of field-bred English Springer Spaniels. No one Springer is featured in the series but Cunningham’s wife’s Labrador, Jason, figures prominently in the middle part of the series. Titles include *The Scottie Barked at Midnight*.

Joan Hess’s *Roll Over and Play Dead*, *Out on a Limb*, and 18 other cozies feature bookstore owner Claire Malloy pet-sitting for two basset hounds, Nick and Nora.

Jonnie Jacobs published 6 books about Kali O’Brien, junior partner in a San Francisco law firm and Loretta, an English Springer Spaniel, including *Witness for the Defense* and *The Next Victim*.

Diane Kelly sets her Paw Enforcement series in Fort Worth, where police officers Megan (human) and Brigit (German Shepherd) solve crimes in a friendly way that at the same time tackles serious subjects like PTSD, child abuse, and poverty. Titles include *Laying Down the Paw* and *Upholding the Paw*.

C.A. (Carol Ann) Newsome writes the Lia Anderson Dog Park Mysteries, a series of romantic suspense/mystery novels inspired by her mornings at the Mount Airy Dog Park with two former street urchins named Shadda and Chewy (Chewbacca Wonderpup, Master of Confusion), along with a furry piranha named Gypsy Foo la Beenz. Portraits of some of the author’s favorite four-footed friends appear on the covers of her books, which include (in order) *A Shot in the Bark*, *Drool Baby*, *Maximum Security*, *Sneak Thief*, *Muddy Mouth*, and *Fur Boys*.

Spencer Quinn writes the “Chet and Bernie” series, starting with *Dog On It* (2009) and is up to 7 books now. Bernie runs a detective agency. Chet is his dog, and narrator of the series, whose voice is much in the key of Spenser with a nod to Sam Spade, Mike Hammer, and a bunch of noir movies.

Leslie O’Kane (aka Leslie Caine) books feature Allie Babcock, dog psychologist, whose Cocker Spaniel works with her. Titles include *Play Dead*, *Give the Dog a Bone*, and *Woof at the Door*.

Sue Owens Wright’s Cruiser, the Bassett Hound, and his person, Elsie MacBean (“Beanie”) appear in her *Howling Bloody Murder*, *Embarking on Murder*, and other books.

Sisters Mystery History

MAY

1869: Carolyn Wells was born in Rahway, New Jersey. She authored 82 mystery novels.

1904: Margery Allingham, creator of Detective Albert Campion, born in London.

1907: Novelist Daphne DuMaurier (Rebecca) was born in London. She will describe writing a book as “a purge; at the end of it one is empty...like a dry shell on the beach, waiting for the tide to come in again.



JUNE

1893: She wasn't an author but surely the focus of “The Crime of the 19th Century”—Lizzie Borden, the New England spinster and Sunday school teacher, was acquitted of ax murdering her father and stepmother in Fall River, Mass. Even today movies, novels, and television productions question her guilt.

1904: The first female president of Mystery Writers of America, Helen McCloy, was born in New York City. Her leading character was Dr. Basil Willing, an American crime solver who used psychiatry to interpret clues.

1908: She was born Georgiana Ann Randolph in Chicago. Her readers knew her as Craig Rice, author of gangland mysteries. The sleuth character that made her novels popular was John J. Malone, who favored a swig of liquor stored in his office file marked “Confidential.” Her popularity led to a January 28, 1946, *Time* magazine cover and feature story.

1951: Alfred Hitchcock adapted and released Patricia Highsmith's novel *Strangers on a Train*. After more than 60 years this black/white movie starring Farley Granger remains a classic.

2000: Sue Grafton (*A is for Alibi*, etc.) receives the YWCA of Lexington Smith-Breckinridge Distinguished Woman of Achievement Award.

Open Letter to the New York Times

Monday, February 6, 2017

Posted by: Sarah Glass

For thirty years, Sisters in Crime (SinC) has represented women crime writers and has acted as a watchdog for parity in terms of reviews through our monitoring project. The recent decision of the New York Times to discontinue several of their bestseller lists, including mass market paperback and ebook, is a significant blow to authors of crime fiction, at least half of whom are women, and likely more than half in the mass market category. Ignoring the successes of these authors sends the message that these works aren't worthy of inclusion. Though leaders in their designated categories, by choosing to dismiss these achievements, the Times is not only holding other categories in higher esteem, they're encouraging readers to do the same. Sisters in Crime joins RWA in asking the Times to reconsider its decision.

Mystery Mystery Author

This month introduces what ye editor hopes will be a regular feature. Below you will find a short excerpt from one of our C&D author's books. Your job is to identify the author. The purpose of this feature is to familiarize you with our writers while having fun in the process. In order to make this a regular feature, we need excerpts, so please send a short excerpt of your work, without identifying character names (or change the names) to newsette@earthlink.net.

Sammy Johnson wasn't the brightest tool in the kit, and he knew it. He even joked about it. Might as well, everybody else did. But he didn't care. He knew he was a valuable member of the team. In the end, that's all that mattered to him.

Today's job would be easy. It was a simple "tail and tell" operation. When the boss wanted to keep tabs on somebody, he called Sammy. Sammy prided himself on being good at doing what the boss wanted.

The blond babe would be easy to follow. The boss had given him a snapshot and told Sammy she visited her mother at University Hospital each day between 1:00 and 2:00 in the afternoon. All he had to do was hang around the waiting room, wait for her to show up, visit her mom for half an hour, then tail her when she left. He would send a text to the boss, telling him where she had parked her car. After that it would be up to Eagle Eye Eddie to grab her, and Sammy didn't want any part of that operation. Leave the rough stuff to goons like Eddie. Sammy was happy doing what he did. Easy peasy, right?

So he found himself a really good seat in the waiting room on the floor where Madeleine Walton was currently a patient. The boss had given him all the information. Sammy didn't have to do anything but watch and follow.

He was reading a really cool issue of *Better Homes and Gardens* that he'd found on the stack of old magazines on the corner table. He loved this stuff. He figured on saving up a bunch of money and buying himself a nice little house someday. He'd fix it up, pretty as punch, just like the ones in this magazine. As he flipped through the pages, a card fell out. Sammy picked it up, look at it, and felt a big old grin creeping across his face. Eureka! Now he could get his own subscription and always keep up with the latest stuff. Only thing was, he didn't have what you'd call a permanent address. It was one of the disadvantages of working for the boss. In his line of work, you were always on the move. Oh, well. Maybe someday.

The elevator dinged again, and Sammy looked up to see who was getting off this time. He almost wet his pants with happiness when he saw it was the blond babe. He loved it when a plan came together. He sent the first text message, per instructions, telling the boss "The hen is in the yard."

He knew from his instructions that she'd probably only spend about half an hour in the room visiting her mom. Then she'd come out, and Sammy would go into action. Could there be a better job than this? He didn't think so.

He was so wrapped up in reading an article on how to remove old wallpaper that he almost didn't see Blondie when she came back to the elevator. Fortunately, he looked up just in time to see her push the down button.

He could feel his muscles tensing, like a bobcat crouching for the attack. He tossed aside his magazine, got up, and walked to a spot a few feet behind his prey. The elevator door opened, Blondie walked in, and Sammy slipped in just before the door closed.

Stumped? (You shouldn't be!) Contact the editor for the source of this excerpt!

Reviews

Rob's Random Shots

May Case File Number 1

Lover Man by Dallas Murphy. Pocket, 1988 (PB) (read in the Kindle edition).

This is one part of a three-book bundled promotion. It is the weirdest mystery I will ever read. And I intend to read parts two and three.

Artie Deemer is not your standard amateur sleuth in New York City. In fact, nothing about him is standard. Picture the character Mozzie from *White Collar*. Artie lives a life of leisure, renting out his dog Jellyroll to various film companies. Jellyroll is the most in-demand canine in America for photo ads, commercials, TV shows, and the occasional movie, so Artie has a very sweet, lucrative life indeed.

This is disrupted in the first few pages when Artie learns that his lover, Billie Burke (remember who played Glinda the good witch in *The Wizard of Oz*?) has been murdered. In short order, we have bodies in a bathtub, in a small freezer, threats and mayhem. We get hulking bodyguards, Mafiosi, the FBI, even the CIA. Arson, dognapping threats, Veterans of World War II (we're never given the year this book is set in). And the late Billie's former lovers are apparently legion.

This is a great homage to several mystery-film noir-comic subgenres. And you never know where the author and the characters are headed next. For example, here's a quote: "On the way home, Jellyroll did a second round of business in the gutter and I picked it up with my copy of the day's *New York Post*. A perfect mating of tool to task."

The whole book is like that, never taking itself seriously. With its constant references to World War II aviators and the Mob, the best analogy I can make is that *Lover Man* is like *Catch 22* meets *Goodfellas*. By all means, read this book. ♦

May Case File Number 2

The First Rule by Robert Crais. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2010, 432 pp (PB) (read in the Kindle edition).

Crais has been writing his Elvis Cole, LA PI, series for nearly 20 years. Those books feature Cole's partner, former Marine Recon soldier Joe

Pike, who can be on occasion a one-man wrecking crew.

In this novel, Pike takes pride of place, and Cole is his sidekick. The book opens with a brutal crime scene—Pike's old military friend and his entire family, even an *au pair*, have been brutally murdered in a home invasion. As the book progresses, Pike and we find that the true target was the *au pair* and the family murders were incidental.

If you can get through that initial brutality (not the actual act, but the police investigation aftermath), this is a complex how-to of how to identify the perps and their leader and his motive, not what you'd expect. The step-by-step investigation and plan to apprehend those responsible is not a police procedure but rather a PI procedural.

I have read nearly all the Elvis Cole novels and the first Joe Pike novel and even met the author in a signing in suburban Virginia 20 years ago. I'm a big fan of Crais and intend to keep reading my way through Cole and Pike, singularly or alone. The Cole novels and couple of stand-alones are much less violent and easier to take than this book. ♦

May Case File Number 3

Livia Lone by Barry Eisler. Thomas and Mercer 2016, 368 pp (PB) (read in the Kindle edition).

This issue's entries seem to share a common theme—enough violence or quirkiness not to be every reader's cup of tea.

Barry Eisler is well known for his John Rain assassin novels, but this book is a departure, volume one of what is so far a two-novel series. Livia (not her name at the beginning of the book) is an early-teen girl from a Thai mountain people's village. She and her younger sister are sold to human traffickers by their parents. Then follows a heart-renderingly vivid description of the abuse the two face being packed into a shipping container in Bangkok and sent to the United State, where they are separated.

The abuse they are subjected will be too graphic for most readers, but I have no doubt Eisler did his research with real victims. Livia has the good fortune to be "rescued" by a wealthy man, the brother of a US Senator from Washington state and, taken into the man's house, faces years of degradation from her "rescuer."

Since the book opens with Seattle police officer Livia taking out a human trafficker, we get alternating chapters in the first three quarters of the

book between Then and Now as she learns judo, finishes high school, changes her name, joins the police, and is able to mete out some measure of justice to her abusers, all the while searching for the whereabouts of her sister. The denouement takes place in Bangkok, a city I spent two years in, and the ending is satisfying and rings true to the place (including luxury hotels I remember).

I don't intend to pursue this subgenre of violent crime novels, but novels of this type are among volumes recommended by Amazon every day. ♦

May Case File Number 4

The Darkest Night by Ron Fassel. St. Martin's True Crime, 2008, 304 pp (PB) (read in the Kindle edition).

This is nonfiction that strikes the author so close to home that it's like he lived through Truman Capote's better known *In Cold Blood*. Casper, Wyoming, native Fassel recounts the story of 18-year-old Becky Burridge and her 11-year-old sister Amy, who were picked up by a pair of unemployed drunks outside a convenience store and offered a ride home. The two assailants took these girls to a high bridge, raped them both and threw them into the river far below. Becky miraculously survived; Amy did not.

Although the verdict was by no means certain, both men were convicted of the rapes, sentenced, and later died in prison. Fassel has put some distance between himself and the worst crime in Casper nearly 20 years ago, but he makes the events come alive for us. He went on to write novels and true crime state-by-state over most of the West. I discovered him this year and have now read three of his more than 20 books. I hope others discover him, too. ♦

May Case File Number 5

Exhume by Danielle Girard, Kindle Original, 2015, 402 pp.

Dr. Anabelle Schwartzman got her degree in Charleston, South Carolina, and fled west to escape a marriage to a psychopath and become the medical examiner in San Francisco. She has a few years on the job now and has friends in the ME's office and among city cops.

One night she's called to a crime scene and discovers the body of a young woman who bears a

strong resemblance to her and finds other clues that make it look like her ex-husband could be the killer. But how can that be? San Francisco Police liaise with their Charleston counterparts and determine that her ex is still in Charleston and could not have committed the murder.

The Amazon blurb on this book got me interested and I stuck with the story through SF investigations, Anabelle's trip home to Charleston, the murder of her aunt with more disturbing clues to her perfectly alibied ex, and eventually to her scary confrontation with him and an outrageous plot device to explain his seeming ability to be on two coasts at once. I can't recommend this book, but other reviewers may have been more generous. ♦

—Rob Kresge (rkresge777@comcast.net)

Key:

PB = Mass Market Paperback

TP = Trade paperback

HC = Hardcover

Rock Paper Scissors by Mattie Dalrymple. William Kingsfield Publishers, 2017, 358 pp (PB)

Patrick and Charlotte Ballard are a young suburban-Philadelphia couple who want a child but can't conceive on their own. Desperate, they go to Vivantem, a fertility clinic run by a husband-and-wife team. She's a physician, he's a great salesman, and the Ballards are thrilled when Charlotte becomes pregnant shortly after starting treatment.

A seemingly modest start for a thriller, but there's a good deal of suspense just in the mundane details of Charlotte and Patrick's daughter Lizzy's early life. The Ballards seem over-protective of their only child, but as we find out quickly, with good reason.

Lizzy doesn't get along with her classmates at school, so her parents start homeschooling her. Charlotte begins having mini-strokes that no one can account for. They hire a live-in housekeeper, a taciturn older woman recommended by Gerard Bonnay, the head of Vivantem. They move to a house farther out in the country, where it's quiet and Lizzy won't be upset by teasing.

What's going on here? I won't tell, but getting Lizzy upset can be hazardous to your health. Even Lizzy doesn't realize her lethal power until well into the story, and only after people around her start

dying unexpectedly. With the help of her Uncle Charles, a physician and Patrick's best friend, she begins to unravel the mystery of her lethal effect on certain people.

The ending is exciting, taking place largely in rural Pennsylvania, including Amish country, with plenty of action that Lizzy, 18 by now, takes a believable part in.

Both the main characters and the "walk-ons" are very likeable—except those who aren't, but even the villains are well drawn and not exaggeratedly evil. Why they do what they do makes perfect sense in the context. This was true of the author's Ann Kinnear suspense novels too, the first of which, *The Sense of Death*, was reviewed in this space in May 2015. ♦

—Linda Triegel (ljt23@earthlink.net)

C&D Members!

Your *Nooseletter* wants to hear news of your latest releases, good news of any kind, and all about that terrific mystery you just read. Email news and reviews to the address on page 2.

The Blood Strand by Chris Ould. Titan Books, 2016, 435 pp (TP)

This intriguing new police procedural is set in the Faroe Islands, of all the remote places. That's actually what caught my eye and got me thinking (hmmm...maybe a Napoleonic mystery set on St. Helena...).

Ould is British. I don't know if he has some Faroese or Danish background (the islands belong to Denmark), but he's obviously been to the islands, which makes the setting and characters seem very authentic. His protagonist, Jan Reyná, is a British police detective, who comes to the islands when he learns that his father, whom he's never met as an adult, is dying. Jan really wants to find out more about his mother, Lydia, and why she fled home and husband to live in England.

Being a cop, though, Jan gets drawn into a murder case that doesn't seem related to his family history, and meets a local cop, Hjalti Hentze, who seems to be on his wavelength and lets Jan tag along on part of his investigation.

The story is told from alternating first-person (Jan) and third-person (Hjalti) viewpoints, which works for me. This gives readers an insight into Jan's need to probe his family secrets, but also introduces us to local residents and Hentze's fellow cops in a believable way.

The next novel in the series, *The Killing Bay*, has just been published, and is equally good. A new crime occurs against a backdrop of a traditional whale hunt and outsider protests against the practice, and Jan learns more of his family history. ♦

—Linda Triegel (ljt23@earthlink.net)

Series mysteries:

All reviews by Susan Zates

NOTE: Print publisher noted; most also available (and/or read by the reviewer) in e-format.

The Corpse on the Dike by Janwillem van de Wetering. Soho Crime, 2003, 240 pp (PB)

(Book 3 of the Amsterdam Cops mystery series set in Amsterdam in the late 20th century)

All that detectives Grijpstra and deGier have in common is they partner on homicide cases. Otherwise, they are completely different in personality, style, fashion, outlook, what have you—contrasts making for pleasant entertainment.

In *Corpse on the Dike*, the pair begin to investigate a murder and encounter many eccentric residents of the dike of the title. At first it all seems rather pointless, but they slog on because it's their job. Suddenly, a crime is committed before their eyes. Following up, they uncover a much larger crime operation than they ever would have suspected.

A murder on a dike serves as the proverbial pulled thread that unravels a sweater. Don't expect serious heart-pounding suspense; although violent crime is committed, this is a 'gentle' read, more about the detectives themselves and their bureaucracy than about crime, and nicely seasoned with humor. An enjoyable pastime. ♦

Goodbye, Ms. Chips by Dorothy Cannell. Minotaur Books, 2008, 288 pp (HC)

(12th book of the Ellie Haskell cozy mystery series set in late-20th-century England)

Ellie returns to her boarding school at the request of former schoolmate Dorcas, now games mistress. A sports trophy has been stolen. The school administration wants it found quietly—and quickly! Although she is homesick, Ellie stays at "Old Girls" guest house, enduring and/or entertained by the other guests, until the mystery is solved. She happily enlists the help of her relative Ariel Hopkins

(featured in *Withering Heights*), currently a student at St. Roberta's.

The majority of the book is Ellie's humorous introspection and vivid imagination, and Ellie's memories from school days. She meets former schoolmates and resolves old issues. Oh and by the way, she eventually finds the trophy. My least favorite of the series. ♦

Sins of the Fathers by Patricia Sprinkle. Avon, 2007 (HC)

(Second book of the Family Tree Mystery series set in the contemporary South)

Katharine Murray is bored and depressed with the task of refurnishing her house after cruel vandals destroyed her possessions (details in book 1). As usual, her husband is away on business. She's happy to get away from the house for a few days to help a friend, Dr. Flo Gadney

Dr. Flo may have ancestors buried on an island off the coast of Georgia. She's been contacted for permission to move the graves, so a developer can build upscale vacation homes. Katharine and Dr. Flo immediately find that a hostile family dominates the island, determined to keep old secrets from being revealed. The nasty, closed-minded patriarch will stop at nothing to get his way.

To discover what really happened a century ago on Bayard Island, Katharine and Dr. Flo must survive continued attacks to continue their research. The story is an entertaining combination of genealogy and mystery. ♦

Embroidered Truths by Monica Ferris. Berkley, 2006, 288 pp (PB)

(Book 9 of the Needlecraft Mystery series set in contemporary Minnesota)

Betsy Devonshire inherited needlework shop Crewel World from her sister. She runs the shop with the help of her gay manager Godwin. When "Goddie" and his lover John fight, and John throws him out (yet again), Betsy offers her guest room.

This time they don't make up; instead John is found murdered, and Goddie is arrested and sent to jail. Betsy can't afford the shocking \$100,000 non-refundable bail fee—so she has to solve the mystery to get Goddie out of jail. She finds out—no big surprise—that John was up to no good.

Tedious story, but with a happy note regarding Lars and Jill. Glad this one is out of the way, on to the next in the series... ♦

Noose News



From **Rob Kresge**:

We are giving thanks for renewed life!

Amanda, Jason, Samuel and Madeline are now safely home together.

Thank you for prayers, concern, and expressions of love.

You helped us all survive!

Karen Pullen Chapter Liaison from National SinC reminds us that September is National Literacy Month, and Sept 8 is National Literacy Day. SinC is a big supporter of libraries, offering We Love Libraries grants, participation in ALA, PLA, Library Champions, and now United for Libraries.

Chapters can step up also. Some ideas: library benefits, read-aloud events in schools, tutoring struggling readers, speaking at literacy fundraisers, and Writers in Schools Program, etc. One easy thing chapters can do is invite a speaker from literacy organizations – for kids or adults, or both – to present a chapter program, increasing awareness of what the organizations do, possibly getting recruits, and perhaps a small fundraising sale or event.

C&D Members!

Your *Nooseletter* wants to hear news of your latest releases, good news of any kind, and all about that terrific mystery you just read. Email news and reviews to the address on page 2.

2016-17 MEETING DATES

Tuesday, May 23, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, June 27, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, July 25, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, August 22, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, September 26, 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 North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center at 7521 Carmel Avenue NE, north of Paseo del Norte and west of Wyoming. Check our Web site, www.croak-and-dagger.com, for schedule changes and upcoming programs.

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. ♦

†*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 and ideas for sources are also welcome.

Deadlines: Publication is every other month, starting in January. Submission deadlines are the last day of the month *prior* to publication: Feb 29, April 30, June 30, Aug 31, Oct 31, and Dec 31.

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. ♦

COPYRIGHT © OF MATERIAL PUBLISHED HEREIN REMAINS THE PROPERTY OF INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS. NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE REPRINTED WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE AUTHOR(S).

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. Come hear our next program speaker and meet the gang. We promise to bring mayhem and murder into your life!

Croak & Dagger members must also be members of the national organization of Sisters in Crime. For information on joining SinC, go to <http://www.sistersincrime.org>. For information about your local chapter, contact our membership chair at pwood73@comcast.net.