



ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER – SISTERS IN CRIME

THE NOOSELETTER

Volume XI, Number 5 — September/October 2017

†The President's Corner†

Welcome to another astonishing edition of The Nooseletter! We have lots going on, so dive right in.

THE GREAT LIBRARY ADVENTURE: IT'S A PARTY! FOR US! BE THERE! Write it on your hand (and get it on your calendar)—OCTOBER 12, 5:30 p.m. We are being fêted by the Rio Rancho library system, at their Loma Colorado branch. There will be Killer Desserts courtesy of the library, plus tables for us to sell and sign (donate one of your books if you want table space).

But wait! There's more! We will also be presenting a panel on (of course) our favorite ways to kill people. Pat Wood will be speaking for the cozy/traditional writers, Charlene Dietz for the historicals, Judith Van Gieson for the contemporary/New Mexico locations, and Janet Greger for international/thriller-tendencies. We'll also be on display all month (covers only, until their new display case arrives). The Great Library Adventure rollicks on to the Tramway library for November, and we're negotiating for gigs at Bernalillo, the new Edgewood library, at Belen, and other venues on into 2018.

OUR BANNER YEAR: The Actual Banners. If you have author events (readings, signings, etc.) coming up, don't forget to get yourself on the schedule to borrow one of our SinC banners. These are 2'x4' vertical canvas banners featuring the SinC logo. The other banner will be on the road most months, as part of the Great Library Adventure. When it isn't on the road it will be up for grabs also.

THE MAIL BAG: Are You Up for International Adventure? A flyer arrived in our PO box from the Ardent Writer Conference, with details of a 9-day writer's retreat next August at a manor house near Oxford, England. Applications and deposits are due by December 31. Interested? The flyer will be on the counter at our remaining general meetings for this year.

THE MAIL BAG II: Treats from Our Big Sisters at SinC. SinC is winding up its 30th Anniversary year in October. Our recent bag of free stuff from them includes a big handful of member pins, lots of the updated member benefits flyers, and bookmarks. These will also touch down at upcoming meetings.

NOVEMBER: VOTE, VOTE, VOTE. At our annual general meeting (Nov 28) we'll not only elect 2018 officers but will also vote on updating our Bylaws. Watch for bulletins.

*Mysteriously,
Ann Zeigler, President*

Don't Miss It! Tuesday, September 26, at 7 p.m.

Mike Langner, a host of KKOBB Radio and expert on RF (radio frequencies), will talk about how they can be dangerous when one is exposed to them.

Mike's interest in technology began when he took his family's alarm clock apart in his basement at age 6. His interest eventually led him to become part-owner of a couple of Albuquerque radio stations. Now retired, Mike still has lots of stories to tell about his adventures in broadcasting and as a ham radio enthusiast!

Coming Up...
Tuesday, October 24, at 7 p.m.

A Halloween surprise!



Come to the October meeting for another intriguing/haunting/spooky treat in the way of a speaker. We never disappoint!



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
- 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

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Noose News

Rob Kresge writes: My best wishes to all the members of Croak & Dagger. Our twins are now 6 months old and are not yet talking or walking, but they burble happily and can sit up and roll around. Maddie and Sam are always aware of the other one and are sweet together. When he hits the computer, Rob is working on the seventh (and last) Warbonnet Historical mystery in the series. Look for it!

Linda Triegel has just been notified that her submission to the nonfiction class of the 2017 Albuquerque Museum Author Festival's Writing Contest has been selected for Finalist Honors. Linda's entry was an excerpt from her *American Women Writers at Home*, a guide to the homes of well-known American women writers which are open to the public.

The Winners of both the fiction and nonfiction contests will be announced at 3:00 p.m. on November 11, 2017, at the Festival at the Albuquerque Museum in Old Town (see below). The winning submissions will be read by published authors and the winning authors will be recognized at that time.

Craig Johnson writes: *The Western Star* hits the rails this month, and I've got a ritual that I perform. My wife has a store in Sheridan, Wyoming—The Bucking Buffalo Supply Company—and every year before I go on tour I wander in and go through the racks and pick out a new shirt, a ceremony that my wife takes part in, in her attempts to dress me up a bit.

She says that since I've arrived as a moderately successful author that I need to sometimes dress the part, and that I should remember a piece of general advice that my good friend, Margaret Coel, a stylish individual herself, gave me at the beginning of my career. "People are making an effort to come out and see you and buy your book, you should be presentable."

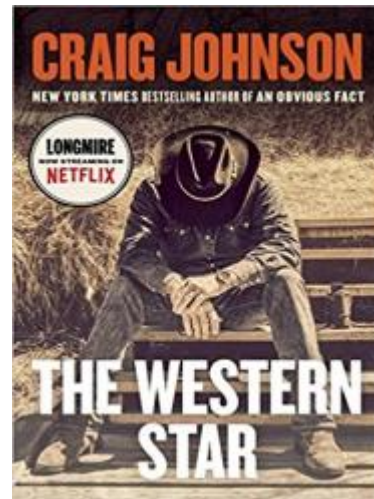
I think they were ganging up on me. Pulling my choice from the hanger, I shrugged off my chambray shirt and slipped on my choice,

snapping the buttons and turning to look at my loving wife, confident and proud of the advancements I've made over the years in evolving into a more sophisticated, suave, and debonair author on tour. "How do I look?"

"Like you just escaped from a chain gang."

See you on the trail,

(I'll be the one with the number on my back.)



The second annual **Author Festival** November 11, sponsored by the Albuquerque Museum, will showcase local writing talent.

The finest of the New Mexico writers' scene will gather at Museum November 11 to share their experiences, sell merchandise, and sign books for their fans. Whether you are a mystery addict, a hard-core sci-fi fan, or a history buff you'll be amazed at the diversity of writers working across a range of genres, who call New Mexico home.

The 2017 Author Festival is a collaboration to benefit participating artists and the educational programs at Albuquerque Museum.

Authors participating this year are Joseph Badal, Sue Boggio & Mare Pearl, Janet Brennan, Steve Brewer, Don Bullis, Rani Divine, Ashley Gallegos, Nasario Garcia, Melody Groves, Steve Havill, Betsy James, Robert Kidera, Nancy Owen Lewis, Jane Linskold, Rory McClanahan, David Morrell, Ana Pacheco, Paula Paul, Gail Rubin, Margaret Tessler, James Tritten, Neecy Twinem, Ross Van Dusen, Robert E. Vardeman, and Patricia Wood.

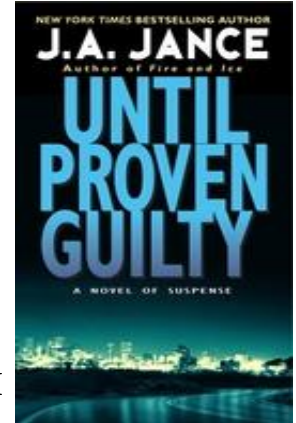
So Where Do You Find your Characters?

by J.A. Jance

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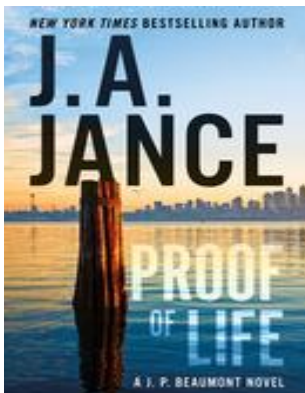
Occasionally people will ask me where J.P. Beaumont came from, and I'll answer, "I met him on a train. Thirty plus years ago." That's the truth, or at least it's more or less the truth.

What really happened is this. It was March of 1983. For months I had been spinning my wheels trying to write what would eventually become *Until Proven Guilty*, Beaumont #1. My kids were still in elementary school, and it was spring break at Seattle Public Schools. I put them on a bus to go to Camp Orkila on Orcas Island in the San Juans, and then I put myself on a train to go to Portland to spend a few days with Carol Wray, a friend from my life insurance days in Longview and Pe Ell. I boarded the train in Seattle with a stack of blue-lined notebooks and a fistful of ball point pens.



As the train pulled out of the King Street Station, I said to myself, "What if I wrote this book from the detective's point of view?" I pulled out a notebook and a pen and wrote: "She might have been a cute kid once. That was hard to tell now. She was dead." In the course of the next five days, I worked almost around the clock. I ate when I was hungry; I slept when I was tired; and the rest of the time I wrote—30,000 words by hand! (No computer at the time.) I had blisters on my writing fingers that required bandages.

So, when I met Beau, I was indeed on a train. Where was he? At a crime scene on the back side of Magnolia Bluff, investigating the homicide of a child. But from the moment I wrote those words, I was at the crime scene with him; seeing what he was seeing; walking in his shoes; hearing what he said; and hearing what he thought. We've been together as author and character ever since. When it's time to write another Beau book, it only takes a few pages for me to be sucked into his orbit. I love the things he says, but more than that, I love the things he thinks—the little mental asides that are like private jokes he shares only with me and my readers. Does that sound a little schizophrenic? As Beau would say right about now, "Bite me."



Last week in Cannon Beach, someone asked me, "Which of your characters has more of you in them than the others?" The real answer is that all of them have some, but remember, J.P. is my literary first born.

He and I share a birthday—October 27, 1944. He gets seasick on boats and turns green on the Teacups at Disneyland. Guess where that came from? He had a mother who sewed his "homemade" clothing on a treadle Singer Sewing Machine. The same thing happened to me. And when you read *Proof of Life* (due out SEPTEMBER 5 at a bookstore near you!!!) and discover Beau has a soft spot for clam strips from Chinook's at Fisherman's Terminal, guess what? I love them, too.

So when it's time to write a Beaumont book, it's like slipping on a comfortable old shoe. It fits in all the right places. There aren't any unexpected rough spots that give me blisters. I can write far into the night and feel like I'm communing with an old friend, someone whose every politically incorrect foible is perfectly understandable and whose mistakes are forgivable as well.

That's how I felt as I wrote *Proof of Life*, and that's how I'm hoping my readers will feel as they read it, too. And for those of you out there who are J.P. Beaumont virgins and who have never read any of these books before? That's okay, when you finish with this one, I hope you'll go back and read the others. I hope you'll find you have a lot of catching up to do!

One last word to my audio readers. In a career that spans more than three decades, I've had several changes in narrators as far as audio editions are concerned. For audio readers, the narrator becomes the characters, and changes are tough on everyone. Some of my narrators have been great—Gene Engene comes to mind—and some have been not so great.

Mispronunciation of common geographical words is especially irksome to local-yokel readers. Gila Bend—pronounced Gee Lah instead of Hee La. And don't even bother mentioning all the possible manglings of Puyallup or Sequim! This time when a previous narrator retired, and for the first time ever, my publisher sent me samples of work from several different narrators.

Together Bill and I together settled on Alan Sklar, and he's the reader for both the novella *Still Dead* and *Proof of Life*. I'm happy to say that in the course of doing the recording sessions, he sent me numerous e-mail inquiries about possibly troublesome words.

So enjoy catching up with my old friend, J.P. It turns out he's still kicking, and so am I.

PS: As many of you know, our Cannon Beach trip was interrupted by a quick trip to KillerNashville, a writer's conference where I had been nominated for an award. I had asked for my fans to vote for me for the Reader's Choice awards, but given my history with that kind of thing, I wasn't exactly holding my breath.

It was my second visit to KillerNashville. I was the guest of honor there in 2009 and guest of honor at Bouchercon in Long Beach in 2014, but the last time I was nominated for an award was 1992 at Bouchercon in Toronto for Hour of the Hunter. I didn't win.

This time in Nashville, however, I made up for lost time, walking away with not just one but three awards. Clawback won a Silver Falchion (a broad-bladed slightly curved sword of medieval times) award for Best Thriller Adult Fiction. That one is from attendees at the conference. Clawback also won the Reader's Choice Best Thriller—that one was voted by my fans. I also won Reader's Choice Best Author. (Another one voted on by fans.) Obviously my fans came through for me. Thank you to EVERYONE who made that possible.

*PSS: For autographed bookmarks, send a **business-sized** SASE to me at:*

*P.O. Box 766
Bellevue, WA 98009-0766*

7 Common Mistakes Regarding Autopsy Reports

by Dr. Judy Melinek

Excerpted from: <https://www.forensicmag.com/article/2015/09/7.>

When a breaking news case involves a sudden, unnatural or violent death, journalists will often get a copy of the autopsy report. Autopsy reports can be daunting to read if you have not been trained in medicine. Because of this, reports in the media can be confusing or misleading to the public.

Here, then, are some definitions and guidelines for anyone reading or writing about death investigations, and especially members of the media, should hopefully find useful. Remember that forensics is complicated, and sound bites are few. Always keep in mind that you are exploring a story about a dead human being. You owe it to that person—and to your audience, and to the public record—to get the details of the death investigation rigorously right.

A coroner is not the same thing as a medical examiner

Both a coroner and a medical examiner perform forensic death investigations—examinations into the circumstances of any death that is sudden, unexpected or violent. The crucial difference is this: A coroner is an administrator or law enforcement officer, and a medical examiner is a doctor.* A medical examiner is a forensic pathologist, a physician with specialized training in death investigation. In a medical examiner's office, a doctor called the chief medical examiner is in charge of both the death investigation and overseeing the autopsies performed by other doctors. The terms aren't interchangeable.

Do not confuse cause and manner of death

Cause of death is the disease or the injury that killed the person: heart disease, appendicitis, stab wound, etc. Manner of death is a classification of the cause of death that is separated into five categories: natural (for disease), accident, suicide, homicide or undetermined. It is incorrect to say “the cause of death was natural” or “a motor vehicle accident” because that means you are conflating cause and manner. It would be better to write “the manner of death was natural” or that “death was caused by trauma from the motor vehicle accident.”

Homicide is not the same thing as murder

Homicide means “death at the hand of another.” Intent is not a factor—only a volitional act is required. It's up to the district attorney to determine whether it is in the state's interest to charge the defendant with murder or manslaughter, or not press any charge at all. Even if the DA does not press charges, or the defendant is prosecuted but acquitted, that fatal event is still a homicide. But it is not a murder. Calling a homicide a murder does not fall within the purview of the agency performing the forensic death investigation. That's a job for the DA, judge or jury.

Don't confuse the autopsy with the death investigation

The autopsy pathologist can only tell so much from a dead body. Trying to figure out the cause of death from a dead body alone without knowing anything about the scene, circumstances, or medical history of the decedent would be like a surgeon coming in to perform surgery on an unconscious patient without the benefit of a physical exam, medical records or X-rays. So do not expect the release of any information about an autopsy on a high-profile case—especially if it's a homicide—as soon as the autopsy is done. The autopsy is just one piece of a long process that results in a cause of death determination.

'Pending' is not the same thing as 'inconclusive'

In many news reports when the autopsy is complete but the medical examiner has sent out specimens for additional testing, or needs more time to review the police reports or medical records, the preliminary determination after the autopsy will be that the case is “pending.”

“Pending” means you have to wait for the results. It does not mean “we don’t know.” It does not mean that the autopsy findings were “inconclusive.” Something is inconclusive when you cannot draw conclusions about it after all the information is available.

The autopsy doesn't 'show' or 'tell' you anything. The expert does.

“The autopsy showed five gunshot wounds to the body, two at close range, and a single stab wound.” No, the autopsy didn’t show that. The forensic pathologist determined it. It is his or her professional opinion of the autopsy findings. A different forensic pathologist might look at the same evidence and determine, based on the position of the body, that the five gunshot wounds were created by only three rounds. Two were bullet re-entries. And the stab wound isn’t a stab wound. It’s actually a therapeutic artifact—a hole created by the doctors in the hospital, during their attempt to save the decedent’s life.

So when you get your hands on an autopsy report, call a forensic pathologist and ask for professional guidance in putting it into plain English. There’s a good reason that forensic pathologists go to court to interpret their findings to juries—those findings can be obscure to anyone not trained in our very narrow and specialized field, and the conclusions we come to in forensic death investigations are important.

The first legally-mandated autopsy done by the coroner or ME's pathologist is an independent autopsy. Everything else is not.

Independent” means not influenced by anything or anyone. During that first autopsy, the forensic pathologist collects trace evidence, has photographs taken, and makes incisions into the body that literally alter the evidence. Even if this pathologist were to face political or bureaucratic pressure to interpret the findings a certain way, the physical evidence of the first forensic autopsy will become public record and will be used in court. Any pathologist hired by attorneys, the decedent’s family, or anyone else to perform a second autopsy is not “independent.” He or she is a retained expert. That means if his findings are not helpful to the family’s attorney, they don’t have to disclose them. At all.

Forensic pathologists are doctors, not police officers and are not in the business of covering up for anyone. While they may rely on good relationships with the police department in order to get the information they need to do their job, they are committed to doing that job properly, for very good reasons—if they do not, they will either lose that job, or ruin their relationship with their own boss (the Coroner or medical examiner) in order to please an outside agency (the police).

Dr. Judy Melinek is a forensic pathologist and does autopsies for the Alameda County Sheriff Coroner's office in California. Her New York Times bestselling memoir *Working Stiff: Two Years, 262 Bodies, and the Making of a Medical Examiner*, co-authored with her husband, T.J. Mitchell, is now out in paperback. She is the CEO of PathologyExpertInc.

*Note from Gloria Cassale: In some states, the “coroner” is appointed by the governor. The person may be a physician or not (usually not). In those states, although the coroner has the state law supporting the appointment, they may not be a law enforcement officer



"IT WAS A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT"; THE RAIN FELL IN TORRENTS—EXCEPT AT OCCASIONAL INTERVALS, WHICH IT WAS CHECKED BY A VIOLENT GUST OF WIND WHICH SWEEPED UP THE STREETS (FOR IT IS IN LONDON THAT OUR SCENE LIES), RATTLING ALONG THE HOUSETOPS, AND FIERCELY AGITATING THE SCANTY FLAME OF THE LAMPS THAT STRUGGLES AGAINST THE DARKNESS."

— [Edward George Bulwer-Lytton, Paul Clifford \(1830\)](#)

Welcome to the annual and ongoing fun fest known as the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest. Conceived to honor the memory of Victorian novelist Edward George Earl Bulwer-Lytton and to encourage unpublished authors who do not have the time to actually write entire books, the contest challenges entrants to compose bad opening sentences to imaginary novels. Bulwer was selected as patron of the competition because he opened his novel *Paul Clifford* (1830) with the immortal words, "It was a dark and stormy night." Lytton's sentence actually parodied the line and went on to make a real sentence of it, but he did originate the line "The pen is mightier than the sword," and the expressions "the almighty dollar" and "the great unwashed." His best known work, one on the book shelves of many of our great-grandparents, is *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834), an historical novel that has been adapted for film multiple times.

As has happened every year since the contest went public in 1983, thousands of entries poured in to the 2017 contest, not just from the United States and Canada but from such far-flung locales as England, Wales, Ireland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Botswana.

The winner of the thirty-fifth Lyttoniad is Kat Russo from picturesque Loveland, Colorado. Kat describes herself as having twenty-six years of experience in covering social awkwardness with humor and stories about her cats. She spends her time working in outdoor retail and at a wildlife rehabilitation center while trying to figure out how to use her art degree. Her winning entry:

THE ELVEN CITY OF LOSSTII FACED TOWERING SEA CLIFFS AND ABUTTED ROLLING HILLS THAT IN THE SUMMER WERE COVERED WITH BLANKETS OF FLOWERS AND IN THE WINTER WERE COVERED WITH BLANKETS, BECAUSE THE ELVES WANTED TO KEEP THE FLOWERS WARM AND DIDN'T KNOW MUCH AT ALL ABOUT GARDENING.

Runner-Up:

ALTHOUGH IN THE RUSTY TACKLE-BOX OF HIS MIND HE YEARNED TO BE A #3 BUCK-TAIL SPINNER, BOB KNEW DEEP DOWN HE MUST ACCEPT HIS CRUEL FATE AS A BOTTOM BOUNCER RIG, FOREVER DESTINED TO SCRAPE THE MUDDY BOTTOM OF THE RIVER OF LIFE.

Tony Buccella, Allegany, New York

Grand Panjandrum's Special Award:

FRANCISCO FRANCO'S WIFE, SEEN SMILING IN ALL THOSE PHOTOS WITH THE SAME BIG HAT ON, WAS ACTUALLY THE BRAINS BEHIND THE DICTATORSHIP, THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS, TORTURE, THE BRUTAL SUPPRESSION, AND SO FORTH, BUT SHE WAS A SHY LADY, EXCEPT WHEN SHE DRESSED UP IN THE BINDING CLOSET FOR FRANCO, WHO LISTENED A-QUIVER TO HEAR WHAT A VERY BAD BOY HE'D BEEN. — John Holmes, St. Petersburg, Florida

Want to join in?

The rules to the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest are childishly simple:

Each entry must consist of a single sentence but you may submit as many entries as you wish. (One fellow once submitted over 3,000 entries.)

Sentences may be of any length **but we strongly recommend that entries not go beyond 50 or 60 words**. Entries must be “original” (as it were) and previously unpublished.

Surface mail entries should be submitted on index cards, the sentence on one side and the entrant's name, address, and phone number on the other.

E-mail entries should be in the body of the message, **not in an attachment** (and it would be really swell if you submitted your entries in Arial 12 font). One e-mail may contain multiple entries.

Entries will be judged by categories, from “general” to detective, western, science fiction, romance, and so on. There will be overall winners as well as category winners.

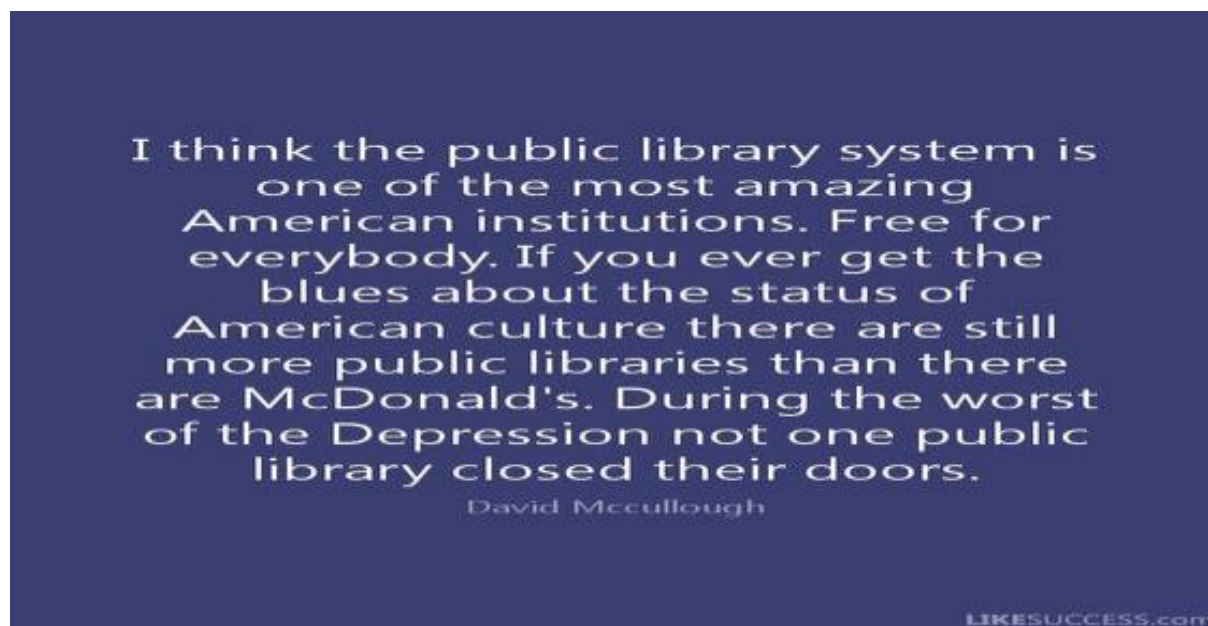
The official deadline is April 15 (a date that Americans associate with painful submissions and making up bad stories). The actual deadline is June 30.

The contest accepts submissions every day of the livelong year.

Wild Card Rule: Resist the temptation to work with puns like “It was a stark and dormy night. “

Finally, in keeping with the gravitas, high seriousness, and general bignitude of the contest, the grand prize winner will receive ... a pittance.

[You may inflict your entries either by electronic or surface mail.](#)



Reviews

September Case File Number 1

Rob's Random Shots

The Edge by Dick Francis. G.P. Putman's (reissue), 2005. 484 pp (HC).

Full disclosure: I met this prolific British horse racing mystery author (and Queen Elizabeth's steeple-chasing jockey in his younger years) at the Borders at Bailey's Crossroads, VA, in 2000. I helped him find his way to the table he'd be seated at, and he admired the tie I'd chosen—many horses galloping. He died the following year and his son Felix has taken up his pen and written several commendable novels including reviving his father's only series protagonist—maimed former jockey Sid Halley. (Try to find the British TV series *The Racing Game*, which features Halley and his sidekick, master of Oriental combat Chico Barnes.)

I've reviewed some of Sir Felix's novels for *The Nooseletter* and I enjoyed this book's departure from the usual haunts of British authors in many train novels. This one takes place aboard a Canadian train filled with horses and their owners and grooms. Tor Kelsey is an undercover agent for the British Racing Authority, which patrols race courses and stables, looking for evidence of cheating in breeding or racing. He's assigned to the train as an actor playing for an audience of race-goers (several races occur as the train travels west, culminating in a big race in Vancouver).

There are plenty of suspicious events, including sabotage of horses and attempting to make the train jump the tracks. Tor even gets a chance at romance, not a staple of Dick Francis's books. This book was every bit as entertaining as the better known Agatha Christie *Murder on the Orient Express*. If you're looking for a different series to read, I'd highly recommend Dick Francis and son Felix, in any order you please. The books are available in audio editions as well. ♦

September Case File Number 2

The 4:50 from Paddington by Agatha Christie. William Morrow, 2004, 224 pages (PB)

Number 8 of 12 in the Miss Marple series, this is another train mystery, or at least it starts out that way. Miss Marple's friend Miss McGillicuddy, while traveling by train near

London, looks into another car of a train standing in a station and sees a man strangling a woman in that car. That train leaves as she quickly rings for a conductor and tells him the story. He doesn't believe her. With that for a premise, her friend confides in Miss Marple, a veteran crime solver.

Several points-of-view shifts later, the steady and determined Miss Marple visits a manor house in which various siblings are quarreling over the expected legacy of their dying father, a staple of the British cozy type of mystery. In an unlikely coincidence, Miss Marple did not have to try to find a missing woman from the train. Another friend found where a body had been cast aside from the train and the mystery of the woman's identity and her unproven relationship with the rival siblings sets the stage for solving this whodunit.

Not a Poirot, but nevertheless well worth your time. ♦

Key:

PB = Mass Market Paperback

TP = Trade paperback

HC = Hardcover

Note: Editions likely to be available at the library or your local used-book emporium are given. Most titles also available as e-books.

September Case File Number 3

Murder at the Brown Palace by Dick Kreck. Fulcrum Publishing, 2003, 225 pp (PB).

This is another departure for me—a nonfiction mystery book given to me on my birthday by our daughter's father-in-law. This volume examines in detail the shooting of Tony von Puhl in the bar of the famous Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, a legendary establishment built in 1892. It was named for a prominent Denver politician, but it is also faced in brown bricks. Last March I got to eat dinner in that very bar with a quartet of Kresge family cousins and their wives, at our annual reunion.

In 1911, the dead man, Von Puhl, was suspected of philandering with a married woman, the reportedly beautiful Mrs. Isabel Springer. In a departure from what you'd

expect, he was not shot by the outraged husband, but by a rival suitor for Mrs. Springer's affections, Frank Henwood, a Denver gambler. Von Puhl died a few days later, and a subsequent trial found Henwood guilty of the crime and he was sentenced to hang.

But the pace of justice was often slow in the West at that time, and years later, Henwood, who had spent several years free, was sentenced to prison terms more than once for parole violations. Henwood died in the Colorado State Penitentiary in 1929.

There was no mystery about who shot whom in this book, but the drawn-out course of justice and the events of that time and the following years make this book every bit as interesting as a standard whodunit. ♦

—Rob Kresge (rkresge777@comcast.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.

Ill Wind by Nevada Barr. Berkley Books, 2004, 309 pp (PB)

In this adventure, peripatetic National Park Ranger Anna Pigeon finds herself the newbie at Mesa Verde in Colorado. She's enthralled by the ancient Puebloan ruins, so unlike her previous experiences, and hopes for a chance to unwind in this different kind of natural paradise.

No such luck. A mysterious illness hits several of the tourists in the park, resulting in the death of a child. A woman resident of the park is stalked by her abusive ex. A friend of Anna's is murdered. Are all these events related, and if so, how?

The story gets off to a bit of a slow start as Anna becomes more aware of the ghosts of the ancients than the natural beauty around her and tries to get her incipient drinking problem under control, which involves middle-of-the-night calls to her sister Molly, a shrink.

But then some nifty characters show up to draw your sympathy: the precocious child of the stalked woman who worries too much until her Aunt Hattie (a Mary Poppins well trained in

child psychology) turn up. About halfway through the book Anna gets an assist from "Fred the Fed," an FBI agent she knew previously (see *A Superior Death*). Fred is a hoot, seemingly a shambles on long legs but unnervingly brilliant at getting to the gist of any situation.

I guess I could have done without the stalking subplot, but all in all *Ill Wind* is just as readable as Barr's previous (and subsequent) Anna Pigeon adventures. ♦

—Linda Triegel (ljt23@earthlink.net)

Wrecker's Key by Christine Kling. Little Brown, 2011, 358 pp (HC).

(Book 4 of the Seychelle Sullivan mystery series set in contemporary Ft. Lauderdale)

Key West has a history of shipwrecks from the 1800s. In the modern day, when a sudden series of wrecks includes the death of a friend, Seychelle becomes convinced there is an evil plot among salvage captains to create work. Competition is fierce, since there are more salvage boats than wrecks.

Of course her idea is dismissed as paranoia, but she knows something is wrong. She follows up red herrings and rules out likely villains, as she meanwhile deals with jealousy over her lover BJ's closeness to her friend Molly, a pending lawsuit about a boat she rescued, and other personal conflicts.

Of course her sleuthing puts her in mortal danger, and she's required to put all her sailing skills to the test, and from seemingly out of nowhere comes a big deep dark secret from her past. I enjoy the series and wish it would not end. It definitely took an unexpected turn in this story. Sadly, it's the end of the series. ♦

—Susan Zates (smzates@yahoo.com)

2017-18 MEETING DATES

Tuesday, September 26, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 24, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, November 28, 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 25 – No meeting
Tuesday, January 23, 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 (Albuquerque) chapter 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. ♦

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