



ORANGE HERRING



Sisters in Crime  Orange County

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2010 is coming in for a landing, clearing the runway for 2011. We always look hopefully into the future. What's the alternative? I'd much rather be hopeful: hopeful that the recession recedes. Hopeful that book sales rise. Hopeful that new authors will get their chance at the table.

We're pretty hopeful in the OC, too. We've got some exciting things happening come January and February with our Forensics Fest. And who knows? It could become a regular thing. Jan Burke is coming in January and a slew of forensic folks will be here on a panel in February. And it just goes on from there with authors and speakers entertaining and informing us throughout the year. We're looking at a Raymond Chandler tour and getting together with the San Diego Chapter and all sorts of things for 2011.

But I'm saddened that our longtime newsletter editor, Linda Smith, will be leaving us. Linda is a pretty savvy gal and just recently received her master's degree. We will miss her greatly. Those are big shoes to fill but we will very much need someone in our membership to step up to the plate and become the new newsletter editor. Linda said she'd be happy to help anyone learn how to do it. It's fun and fulfills a great service to the organization. There is nothing like becoming involved for would-be authors. It gets you noticed and it's one more thing you get to include on your resume. Believe me, it matters.

Please remember that this is your chapter. It is what we make it. If we all work together, we can expand and welcome new members and guests. We now have a shiny new brochure that we can leave at libraries, senior centers, city halls, local bookstores, civic organizations, even houses of worship. Any place people like to talk about books. And that is what we are about, after all. Books, and the promotion of authors. Let's look ahead this year and think of new ways we can achieve the goals of

Sisters in Crime. Don't think just because you are not a writer we don't need your support. We couldn't be writers if we didn't have readers. Your suggestions and your help are always welcome.

I hope to see you all at the holiday party, which this year is, appropriately, at a bookstore.

Happy Holidays!

*Your President,
Jeri Westerson*



SISTERS IN CRIME MISSION STATEMENT:

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



MEETING PLACE:

Irvine Ranch Water District
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue
Irvine, CA 92618

For more information: www.ocsistersincrime.org

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12TH

IPM: Holiday Party at Mystery Ink Bookstore:
potluck and election of officers.
Goldenwest Plaza
7176 Edinger Ave., Huntington Beach, CA 92647
RSVP: secretary@ocsistersincrime.org
Or phone: (714) 960-4000.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16TH

2PM: Reader's Forum
3PM: Jan Burke, author of Irene Kelly mystery series, will talk about the state of forensics in America. An expert on crime labs and how they operate, she will talk about the aftermath of death and the current state of death investigations in the U.S. and how they can affect the living.



MEMBER EVENTS:

Jeff Sherratt:

Detour to Murder tour (A Film Noir Mystery Novel)
10-12 December
11am-8pm
Meet & Greet Book Signing
@ Barnes & Noble
1800 Rosecrans, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

16 December
11am-8pm
Meet & Greet Book Signing
@ Borders, Rancho Cucamonga
12370 S Main St, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91739

18-19 December
11-8pm
Meet & Greet Book Signing
@ Borders Yorba Linda
22401 Old Canal Rd, Yorba Linda, CA 92887

Jeri Westerson:

***January 8, 2011**—American Library Association Midwinter Conference. On a panel at 11-11:45 “California Girls” with Naomi Hirahara, Dianne Emley, Sue Ann Jaffarian, moderator Hank Phillippi Ryan. And at 3-3:45pm, Laugh or I’ll Kill You with Vicki Doudera, Dianne Emley, Rosemary Harris,

moderator Sue Ann Jaffarian.
San Diego Convention Center For more info
email: kwilliams@ala.org

Mystery Ink December Holiday Specials!

Bookends! Bookmarks! Book Lights! Reading Glasses! Greeting Cards! Plus Kid's Books, Signed 1st Editions, Novelty Items! And...
40% off our Collectible Hardback Section (excludes signed and 2010 Releases)

Mystery Ink Bookstore
(across from Goldenwest College)
7176 Edinger Avenue
Huntington Beach, CA 92647
(714) 960-0620



UPCOMING EVENTS:

***March 24 -27, 2011**
LEFT COAST CRIME
Santa Fe Springs, New Mexico
leftcoastcrime.org



OC SINC ELECTIONS

We'll be having board election at the Holiday Party, so everyone needs to be there. Candidates are:

President: Jeri Westerson
VP: Patricia Wynn
Treasurer: Rob Northrop
Recording Secretary: Jill Amadio
Corresponding Secretary: Terri Nolan
Members at Large: Debbie Mitsch, Aileen Baron, Doug Lyle

On top of this, a newsletter editor is needed. I will be going away sometime in the next few months. That means that whoever takes over will have my help to get them started. After that, I will also be available via e-mail for consults. Consider this vital chapter link. *Linda L. Smith, Editor/Publisher*



CALENDAR 2011

Two-Month ForensicsFest

January 16th – 2 pm Reader's Forum, 3 pm, Jan Burke talks about the state of forensics in America.

February 20th – 2:30 pm (no forum) Forensic Panel including D.P. Lyle, Dr. Judy Myers Suchey, forensic anthropologist, Gary Bittner of ServPro crime scene clean-up and Michael Streed, police sketch artist.



Orange County's Sisters in Crime First ForensicsFest 2011

Bloodstains tell tales, so do fingerprints, clothes and everything in and around the crime scene. And let's not forget autopsies. Crime writers and mystery fans are invited to delve into the mysteries of the science of death when the Sisters in Crime Orange County chapter kicks off the New Year with a two-month ForensicsFest in January and February.

Orange County's best-selling author Jan Burke, whose latest Irene Kelly thriller, *Disturbance*, comes out in April, is an expert on crime labs and how they operate. On January 16, she will talk about the aftermath of death and the current state of death investigations in the U.S. and how they can affect the living.

On February 20, the ForensicsFest continues with a star-studded panel of Orange County experts in their fields to discuss their specialties. They include nationally-acclaimed Dr. Judy Myers Suchey, forensic anthropologist, who works with the U.S. Department of Justice and other law enforcement authorities on identifying and dating human remains, including cold cases.

Award-winning author Dr. D.P.Lyle, forensics consultant to crime writers and television shows and author of *Howdunnit: Forensics* and other books, will describe his latest cases and how he incorporates his scientific knowledge when writing his own thrillers.

Michael Streed, at SketchCop Solutions, is a police, military and government sketch artist whose

talents can create a suspect's facial features so precisely his work has resulted in the capture of many, many criminals. He'll talk about some of his most successful sketches and cases.

And how about cleaning up after the cops, let alone the killers? The fourth February panelist is Gary Bittner, of ServPro, a specialist in crime scene and trauma clean-up. He'll describe his work when wearing a Hazmat suit to remove blood and body fluids off walls, carpeting, furniture and floors.

The January 16 OC Sisters in Crime meeting starts at 3 p.m. The February 20 meeting starts at 2.30 p.m. Both meetings are moderated by OC SinC president Jeri Westerson and open to the public at no charge. Free refreshments. Irvine Ranch Water District Offices, 5600 Sandy Canyon Avenue, Irvine, CA 92618. RSVP: secretary@ocsistersincrime.org.



THE WRITER'S BOOKSHELF Laurie Thomas

Happy Holidays, Wordsmiths. Here's a book to add to your Wish List: *The Fire in Fiction: Passion, Purpose, and Techniques to Make Your Novel Great*, by literary agent Donald Maass, ISBN 978-1-58297-506.

Unlike other professional agents, editors, and authors dispensing writing advice, Maass does not believe that commonly taught principles--show don't tell, tight writing, or even a strong central conflict--are the keys to creating great novels. Instead, he makes an excellent case that page-turners spring from micro-tension and from the author's passion to tell the tale. Moreover, he insists that passion can be a technique as easy to use as any other in a writer's tool kit. It's not magic, he says, but craft. Using examples from a wide range of contemporary genres, Maass explains how to fire up your fiction.

For example, he agrees it's impossible to create a character that will appeal to every reader, but points out that it is possible to show the profound effects that characters have upon one another. By drawing on your own experience of those who have affected

your life significantly, you can make fictional relationships memorable, causing readers to care about your novel's people. Similarly, to turn a setting into a character, show the cast reacting to it. If they believe a locale is magical, inspiring, or dangerous, so will the reader. In the same way, a plot that initially strikes us as preposterous gradually becomes plausible if its characters address each objection to an improbable fact or situation. When the skeptics in the story become convinced, so do readers.

As to conflict, like most of my colleagues, I've been guilty of spreading the mantra that because today's readers are impatient, a writer must grab them by the hair before the first sentence is out, haul them through three or four hundred pages of ever escalating mayhem, until "The End" leaves our Dear Reader swooning on her purple chaise in satisfied exhaustion.

While it may be true that current readers are restless, the standard advice to avoid prologues, backstory, long set-ups, etc., isn't necessarily the solution to keep them engaged in a novel. What is? Maass calls it micro-tension--conflicting emotions or ideas in every sentence so the audience wonders not how the main conflict will be resolved at the end of the book, but what will happen in the next few seconds. While he doesn't recommend that every novel open with fifty pages of set-up, he notes that some books benefit, particularly thrillers with outrageous premises. Using micro-tension, you can make anything--weather, landscape, backstory, even atmosphere--riveting.

But authorial passion is what Maass most often finds missing in unpublished, as well as many published novels. "What is the truth," he asks, "that you most wish the rest of us would see?" A burning desire to tell your readers what you have to say or have experienced, gives your novel power. To express passion effectively, he ends this chapter, as he does all the others, with a series of probing exercises. They're well worth the time and effort because many result in material you can plug right into your manuscript. Though he fails to caution against author intrusion, and occasionally gives contradictory advice (most noticeable in the chapter on narrative voice), in the main, Donald Maass offers a different perspective on how to make your

novel great.

A COOL ARTICLE

The following link takes you to an important article about publishing. While you're reading this, think about how these changes affect an author's income and chances for getting published. Enjoy.

<http://www.bostonreview.net/BR35.6/roychoudhuri.php>



TELL US WHAT YOU REALLY THINK

Very little in this life cannot be improved upon. And, since we are writers and avid readers, we must have some ideas about how this newsletter could be better. Let us know. Also, if you have events coming up, let us know that, too. We want to support our members in their literary endeavors, attend signings and other events.

Send your contributions and suggestions to:

Linda Smith: softpoet@yahoo.com

Deadline for January newsletter is January 5th.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Yes. It's that time of year again. Time to pay your dues and renew your membership. Local dues are \$25 for the year, and National dues are \$40 for the year. To expedite things, I've attached the chapter's application. Simply fill out the form, following all directions, and send it or bring it to our next meeting. Below is the URL for National's mail-in membership form.

<http://www.sistersincrime.org/associations/10614/files/SinC%20Membership%20form%20MMP.pdf>

SISTERS IN CRIME ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER

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

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

Membership
Sisters in Crime, Orange County
P.O. Box 53132
Irvine, CA 92619-3132

MEMBERSHIP FORM

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

New Renewal

Name:
Address:

Day Phone:

Evening Phone:

Email:

I am a (check all that apply):

Mystery Writer Published Unpublished

Writer in other fields Published Unpublished

Screenwriter

--Produced: Features TV/Cable Other

Reviewer Agent Bookseller Librarian Reader

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

Publicity Refreshments Speakers Raffle Other:

Sisters in Crime Orange County – December 2010 News



UPCOMING MEETING:

December 12th at Mystery Ink Bookstore

1 pm: Holiday Party

Goldenwest Plaza

7176 Edinger Ave.

Huntington Beach, CA 92647

RSVP: secretary@ocsistersincrime.org

January 16th at the Irvine Ranch Water District

2 pm: Reader's Forum

3 pm: Jan Burke, author of Irene Kelly series, talks about the state of forensics in America.



Look inside to find out more... or visit www.ocsistersincrime.org

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