



The 3rd Degree

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA

JUNE/JULY 2026

BEYOND THE PAGE MARGINS:

HOW WRITERS CAN EXPAND OUR REACH, IMPACT & INCOME

BY MARK MCNEASE

I've known what I wanted to do with my life since I was 10 years old, starting with short stories written in spiral notebooks. I can't attest to the quality of them since I don't remember them, and I didn't keep the notebooks. But a child who loved to read, and who found books to be magical, knew that he wanted to tell stories himself.

Sitting at my desk in the pre-dawn hours making up worlds and the people who inhabit them has been part of my daily routing for decades, and until recently was accomplished before I went off to punch a time clock as someone's employee. When I stopped working for other companies three years ago, I needed to find ways to generate an income and participate in the community I was suddenly freer to join. I don't have a teaching degree, and never had any interest in standing in front of a classroom, grading papers on the weekends, or being responsible for the education of young minds.

I've been doing book events for years and my favorite part is the audience engagement after the excerpts have been read. I was told many times that I was good at talking to audiences, and that I should consider doing something with that. I finally accepted they may be right, and pursued the path I'm on now.

A friend had started teaching thematic journaling (Guided Autobiography) after taking a 10-week program to become certified. That's how it began for me. Since then I've developed and offered workshops in journaling, fiction writing essentials, character creation, and self-publishing.

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WORKSHOPS AND TEACHING: WRITERS CAN LEARN AND EARN, *continued from previous page*

What You Already Know Is Worth Something

Mystery writers understand structure at a fundamental level. We know how to foreshadow, misdirect, and plant information without revealing its purpose. We know how to manage multiple timelines. We understand pacing in an intuitive way because it's central to writing the page turners we aim to offer. (For me the five most rewarding words I can hear from a reader is, "I couldn't put it down.")

And while I believe we cannot teach innate talent, we can teach skill, technique and writing essentials. There are people everywhere who want to learn them.

The question isn't whether we have something to offer. The question is where, and how, and to whom.

Workshops: Where Expertise Becomes Engagement

Teaching writing is not a lesser version of doing it. I've worked with writers at every level, in formats ranging from one-on-one book clients who I've helped edit and publish their books, to ongoing writers groups and how-to workshops. The range of topics available to mystery writers is wide: structure, the mechanics of suspense, POV, and how to maintain the momentum of a story. These are questions that active writers deal with every day, and the participants who show up to learn them are curious, engaged, and grateful for someone who has actually done the work.

Library programs, community centers, writing conferences, and continuing education programs at local colleges are all looking for instructors with real-world credentials. A published mystery novelist is not a generic writing teacher. That specificity is an asset, and a selling point.

Beyond the Classroom

Workshops are one avenue we can take. Podcasting is another that many writers have tackled. Substack is yet another way to reach people interested in the writer's path, and a good way to grow the kind of audience that often provides workshop attendees and book clients. Newsletters occupy similar territory. A weekly or monthly letter about the writing life, the genre, the books we're reading and writing can keep people interested in what we do and the books we write.

Panels and literary events, both in person and online, offer another form of engagement. MWA and its chapters provide natural entry points, but local libraries, book festivals, and community organizations often welcome authors who are willing to appear without a guarantee that their latest title will sell a hundred copies that afternoon.

Why It Matters Beyond the Money

Income is real, and I won't pretend it isn't part of the conversation. Workshops pay. I run several library groups that pay me from the libraries' budgets, and I'm as grateful for them as I was when I was a child with my first library card.

Writers who teach or facilitate groups and workshops often report that they return to their own writing with renewed clarity. The questions participants ask have a way of cutting through the fog. And the sense of being useful

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WORKSHOPS AND TEACHING: WRITERS CAN LEARN AND EARN, *continued from previous page*

to someone other than the muse at my shoulder in those early morning hours at a keyboard is something special — an added sense of purpose.

Where to Begin

Start with what you know best. Create and offer a single workshop through your local library, bookstore or community group. Say yes to the panel you've been turning down. Start the newsletter you've been drafting in your head for two years. [Launch a Substack](#), a platform that has given new life to long-form blogging.

The skills you've spent your career building don't belong only on the page. They belong in the room, at the microphone, in the conversation, wherever writers gather and the work of making stories continues.

The margins of a writing life are wider than most of us use. Expand them and your life.

[MARK MCNEASE](#) is the author of the *Kyle Callahan Mysteries*, the *Marshall James Thrillers*, the *Maggie Dahl Mysteries*, and three books in the horror genre — with a new one, *Devil's Wood*, coming this fall. Learn more about his writing, workshops and writers groups on his [website](#).

Other authors weigh in on the benefits of teaching and workshoping:

"I enjoy teaching courses at the Osher Institute because of the sense of community we develop. My perceptive students frequently notice details that make a profound difference and add to the experience. It's the ultimate focus group and energizes me!"

— [NEV MARCH](#),

Murder in Old Bombay and the *Captain Jim* and *Lady Diana* historical mystery series.

"Being a fiction teacher and workshoping student's pages helps me keep that editing side of my brain turned on and exercising, which in turn helps me with editing my own work."

— [LEV ROSEN](#),

The Disaster Gay Detective Agency

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT: SCRIVENER DISCOUNT

Writers need tools to create. One popular software solution created specifically for authors, screenwriters, and researchers is Scrivener. The team at [Literature & Latte](#), the makers of Scrivener and Scapple have teamed up with MWA to offer our members an exclusive discount.



MWA members will receive a 20% discount on Scrivener for macOS and Windows when purchased through their site, at <http://www.literatureandlatte.com/>

Members will use the discount code MYSTERY at checkout to receive the special savings from Literature & Latte.

Get writing!



INSIDE PUBLISHING WITH NEIL NYREN



A DOUBLE DOSE OF INSIDE PUBLISHING

WHEN SPY FICTION BECAME SPY FACT

During my career, I edited plenty of novels dealing with international intrigue — books by Tom Clancy, Daniel Silva, Clive Cussler, Frederick Forsyth, Jack Higgins, Alex Berenson, and W.E.B. Griffin, among others. But an anniversary that happened a few months ago had me thinking about the day spy fiction became spy fact for me.

I come from a family of librarians. My father ran the library in Lexington, Mass., and my mother ran the library in Concord — so, you know, we had that whole Revolutionary War thing pretty well sewed up.

As a youngster in the early '60s, I often served as a page in one or the other of those libraries; in Lexington, my father's number-two guy was an army veteran, a nice man, friendly but professional. I used to hang around his desk to chat sometimes, and, yes, I know, I was the boss's son, but he truly didn't seem to mind.

One of the things he was particularly proud of was a sprawling diorama of the Battle of Lexington that he'd designed and built himself. For many years, it was featured in the front of the library, until being moved to the city's official visitors' center. You can [find it there right now](#), in fact — it's got pamphlets and everything.

And then, one day, my friend was gone. When I asked, my father just said he'd moved on to something else, and didn't elaborate. I never heard anything more about him — until close to three decades later. I was in my office at Putnam, when the phone rang. It was my father. "If the press calls," he said, "don't talk to them."

"Umm, okay. About... what?"

"About Bill Buckley."

And that's when I found out that my friend Bill had not only been in the army, but done other things for the government as well. When he'd disappeared, it was to go to South Vietnam to run operations for the CIA. That was the "something else." I don't know the specifics. I'm sure I don't want to.

Then, when the war concluded, he moved around to different posts, finally ending up as the CIA chief of station in Beirut, at that time one of the hottest, most unstable places on earth. There, he knew everything about everybody.

And there, in March of 1984, he was kidnapped by Hezbollah.

It created an uproar within the government, especially for CIA director William Casey, who became immensely concerned about what Buckley might reveal under the torture that was certain to come. In fact, it's since been reported that Buckley's kidnapping was one of the inciting incidents that helped lead to the arms-for-hostages operation that would later be known as Iran-Contra. But none of that helped Bill. He died in captivity. His remains were not recovered until 1991.

The whole thing shook me up for a while, and I found it difficult to reconcile the man I had known with the man I was reading about. Then, in the late '90s/early 2000s, Tom Clancy collaborated on a series of memoirs by some of the commanders of the first Gulf War — Desert Storm — and I edited them. One of those commanders was Major General Carl Stiner, who'd run special ops during the war. He was a pleasant, mild-mannered man who probably knew 20 different ways to kill you. Stiner knew the Mideast well, and in an early chapter he sent me, he recounted how he'd warned the Beirut station chief Bill Buckley that he was in danger — and that Buckley had told him, "My guys are good. They say I'm okay." Stiner said he regretted not pushing it harder.

I was floored by this sudden reappearance, and immediately wrote Stiner about my own little story. He replied with other personal reminiscences that were not in the book. One of them was about a time that Bill pulled out

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A CONNECTION ACROSS TIME AND WORLDS, *continued from previous page*

something to show Stiner. It was a photograph, Stiner said, of something he was particularly proud of... a diorama he'd built himself of the Battle of Lexington.

And in that moment, my Bill — and his — finally became one.

In March, it had been 42 years. I poured one out for you, Bill.



INSIDE PUBLISHING WITH NEIL NYREN



A DOUBLE DOSE OF INSIDE PUBLISHING

WHO WAS THAT? EH, NOBODY...

In 1986, I received a letter from the White House counsel's office. The year before, Ronald Reagan had read *The Hunt for Red October*, informally pronounced it "the perfect yarn," — and I'd included that citation on the back cover of Clancy's next book, *Red Storm Rising*, along with review quotes. I was gently chided. The President could not make endorsements, I was told, please remove it from later editions. We did.

The letter writer was the Associate Counsel to the President, a lawyer named John Roberts, who went on to become, oh, the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

That had happened to me before, an interaction with a little-known person who would become a very notable figure (see previous page of this *TTD*). Had it happened to others? Was it just me? I decided to ask a few MWA colleagues. Some of them replied, "Yes, Neil, just you." "My life has been too boring," said **Lisa Gardner**. But others had stories to tell.

For **Hank Philippi Ryan**, those stories involved her family. "My dad was in the artillery in World War II," she said, "and his best friend and army buddy was a kid from his high school." They were captured together, and, while imprisoned, would trade cigarettes for writing paper. What her father wrote there, we don't know, but his buddy's became the basis for *Slaughterhouse Five* — because he was Kurt Vonnegut.

Hank's husband tells a story, too. While in college, he answered a job posting to do research work, and found himself in a room with other students. One of them ignored the work entirely and spent all day drawing intricate copies of a \$10 bill with his ballpoint pen. "Are you an artist?" her husband asked. "No, more of a singer," said the guy. He and his friend Paul had a band named Tom and Jerry, and they had high hopes for it. In fact, they did have a minor hit. But when Art Garfunkel and his pal Paul changed the band's name, though....

Brad Parks has a different story. In 2001, he was a sportswriter for the New Jersey *Star-Ledger*, and one day he interviewed the backup quarterback for the team opposing the Jets that week. The starter was injured, and the backup was a nobody, a sixth-round draft pick who had played only part-time in college — and he sure was good-looking. "My lede was about how he came into our interview 'carrying his broad shoulders, dimpled chin, and perfectly symmetrical face, looking like the factory model for tall, dark, and handsome.' My buddies ragged on me for having a crush on him."

Turns out, Tom Brady could play football, too.

Tom Straw's story spans decades. In high school in L.A., he was asked to shepherd a school assembly speaker, a young guy who was the lowly weekend anchor at the NBC affiliate there. As fate would have it, years later, Straw himself was working for NBC in St. Louis, when the same guy walked in to do a voice-over for the *Nightly News*.

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INSIDE PUBLISHING: BRUSHES WITH FAME, *continued from previous page*

By then, he was no longer lowly. He was the White House correspondent traveling with Gerald Ford, but he remembered Straw. And 25 years after *that*, and by now a famous author as well, who was standing next to Straw's table at a charity banquet? "Mr. Straw," said Tom Brokaw, "always a pleasure to see you."

I'll end with one more story from Straw. As a 10-year-old in the early 1960s, he lived in the Boston suburb of Weston, and his older brother had a classmate named Mark who used to come over to the house every once in a while — though Tom was deemed too young and definitely too uncool to hang out with them, which annoyed him. One morning, his brother yelled from the kitchen, "Come quick, Mark's dad's on the *Today Show*!" Still smarting from the cold shoulder, Tom took one look, snarked "Big deal," and walked out.

"Who was Kurt Vonnegut to me, anyway?"

That Vonnegut guy sure did get around, didn't he?

Got a story yourself? You can send it to me, if you like. Now, excuse me, that fellow from 1986 is on the *Nightly News* again....

Neil Nyren is the former EVP, associate publisher, and editor in chief of G. P. Putnam's Sons; the winner of the 2017 Ellery Queen Award and the 2025 ITW Thriller Legend award; and a contributing writer to the Anthony/Agatha/Macavity-winning How to Write a Mystery. He can be reached at nsnyren@gmail.com.



FORENSIC FILES Q&A WITH D.P. LYLE MD



SHOT IN THE CHEST AND ARM – NOW WHAT?

Q: In my story, a police officer is shot while sitting in her patrol car. The assailant fires through the open passenger window, using a .38 caliber S&W. The officer's upper right arm is hit twice. One round lodges in her humerus. A second misses the bone and hits an artery before entering just below her armpit, where it splinters two ribs and punctures a lung. Rounds three, four, and five hit the officer's body armor when she pitches forward. The sixth never leaves the chamber.

My questions:

1. Where could round two end up if I don't want the officer to sustain additional organ injuries?
2. What blunt trauma might she sustain from the rounds that hit the body armor?
3. What sensations would the officer feel both during and soon after being shot? How would those express physically (sweating, panting)?
4. Would she experience numbness and cramping in her right hand soon after the injury to her upper arm?
5. How would a trauma center initially handle an incoming gunshot victim? How would an officer be treated differently?
6. What would be involved in her recovery, both inpatient and outpatient? How long would recovery take? Would a lingering tingling in her right hand be reasonable to expect?

A: The injuries you describe literally come in 1000 different flavors, so it's impossible to cover all contingencies here. Gunshot wounds (GSWs) are each unique, but I'll give you some information regarding the specifics of the most likely circumstances in your scenario.

The second round would most likely remain within her chest, though it could exit, producing an exit wound. It could go either way. You described it striking the ribs and puncturing one of the lungs, so depending upon the type of ammunition and weapon, it may have lost enough velocity to remain within the chest. That can happen with almost any caliber weapon and any

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FORENSIC FILES: THE PATH OF A BULLET, PAIN AND RECOVERY, *continued from previous page*

type of bullet, but leaving the body through an exit wound would be more likely with a high-powered rifle or handgun and with jacketed or partially jacketed bullets. But, anything is possible, so you can have the bullet exit or remain in the chest and either way would work.

Typically there are only minor injuries from gunshots striking body armor. It depends on whether it is the hard-shell type or the softer Kevlar type but regardless the injuries are usually some degree of bruising in the area of impact. This might produce discomfort for a few days, but that's about it.

She would obviously experience some shock and pain — but many people who have suffered GSWs say that the pain does not come until several minutes later. Sometimes longer. This likely occurs because nerves in the area suffer “shock” and might not respond properly for a minute or two. Striking the bone would be more painful, so she would experience significant pain in her shoulder and ribs. Bones are always painful when they're damaged, fractured, or shattered.

With her rib injuries and the collapse of her lung, she would obviously feel short of breath as well as sweaty and anxious. She might also cough, which would be very painful, and might cough up some blood since there would be bleeding into the airways.

Her major threat to life is not the collapse of the lung, as we have two of them and can do just fine with only one functioning properly. Unless the bleeding into the lung was severe enough to fill both lungs. Here, her survival would require immediate and effective treatment. Stick with one damaged, or blood-filled, lung and you'll be fine.

But, the injury to the artery in her upper arm is potentially deadly. Depending on the entry point, the artery involved could be the brachial, axillary, or subclavian artery.

These are large arteries, and bleed profusely. This means she could slip in the shock and die in only a few minutes without proper care. At least that's possible. It is also possible that the artery is simply nicked, and the bleeding not that severe. If significant enough, she would become weak, dizzy, cold, and slip into shock. Again, this comes in a 1000 flavors.

Her arm would be useless initially, simply because there was bone damage, likely some nerve damage, and, if the artery was severely damaged, a lack of blood flow to the arm could alter its usefulness. Her movements would either be absent or minimal and not likely well coordinated, strong, or effective.

Once she reached the emergency department, pressure would be applied to the wound to control the bleeding until the repair could be undertaken. This pressure would have begun in the field by medics or her fellow officers. She would be given IV fluids and blood and placed on oxygen via a mask. She might require intubation (the introduction of a breathing tube into her trachea) and placement on a ventilator depending upon how well she was breathing and whether she was conscious and able to ventilate on her own. Again, almost anything is possible.

She would be taken to the operating room where the chest would be opened, the bullet removed if it is still within the chest, and the lung repaired. She would also undergo the placement of a chest tube (thorocostomy tube), which is a plastic hollow tube that is placed in the space between the lung and the chest wall, passed out through the chest wall, and sutured in place. It is then attached to a suction device that removes any residual blood, applies negative pressure to keep the lung inflated, and allows the injury to heal. Once the defect in the lung injury heals and seals completely — usually takes a few days — the chest tube is removed.

The arm might also undergo surgical repair, and, in fact, this might be done first in the case of a damaged artery since that is the major threat to her life. If so, once completed, her chest wound would then be addressed.

She would likely be in the intensive care unit for a few days and then in the hospital for a few more days. After discharge, she would undergo rehab for many weeks or months. How well she did, how quickly she recovered, and what residual problems she had again is highly unpredictable and depends upon the exact nature of the injury.

If the damage was only to the bones, muscles, and the artery, she would more or less regain 100% function. However, if the nerves were damaged, she might suffer permanent disability in the form of weakness, numbness, and reduced coordination and ability to do fine tasks.

As you can see there are many options, and I've only touched on a very few of them, but this should give you a great deal to work with as you plot your story.

DP LYLE, MD *This question originally appeared in More Forensics & Fiction by DP Lyle*

VITAL SIGNS

APRIL 2026

BOOKS

Traci Hunter Abramson, *Staged Evidence*, Shadow Mountain

Ashley-Ruth M. Bernier, *The Bush Tea Murder*, Crooked Lane Books

Susan M. Boyer, *Trouble's Turn to Lose*, Stella Maris Books

Dori Hillstead Butler, *The Old Dogs Club*, Candlewick

Dori Hillstead Butler, *Hazel Helps Out*, Candlewick

Sandra J. Cady, *A Game of Luck*, Black Rose Writing

Lynn Cahoon, *Confessions of an Amateur Sleuth*, Kensington Cozies

Joslyn Chase, *Cincher's Waltz*, Paraquel Press

Maddie Day, *A Poisonous Pour*, Kensington Books

Matt Goldman, *Liar's Creek*, Minotaur Books

Heather Graham, *A Cruise to Die For*, MIRA

Jordan Harper, *A Violent Masterpiece*, Hachette – Mulholland Books

Molly Harper, *A Cute Little Murder*, Penguin Random House – Berkley

Edwin Hill, *What Happened Next*, Amazon Publishing – Thomas & Mercer

R. Franklin James, *One Too Many*, Camel Press

Stacy Johns, *Who Knew the Ridpath Girl*, Sourcebooks – Poisoned Pen Press

Leslie Karst, *Murder, Local Style*, Severn House

Libby Klein, *Gimme Shelter*, Kensington

Lisa M. Lane, *Murder at the Gasworks*, Grousable Books

Mary Lawrence, *Fool*, Red Puddle Print

Ed Lin, *The Dead Can't Make a Living*, Soho Crime

Jon Lindstrom, *Hollywood Payback*, Crooked Lane Books

Michael Livingston, *The Name of the Cat*, Lulu.com

Jess Lourey, *The Verdant Cage*, Entangled Publishing

Rick Mofina, *One Second Away*, Random House – Doubleday

Joseph Moldover, *To the End of Reckoning*, Penzler Publishers – Mysterious Press

Alan Orloff, *The Family Biz*, Level Best Books

Anne Perry & Victoria Zackheim, *Death Times Seven*, Penguin Random House – Ballantine

Douglas Preston & Aletheia Preston, *Paradox*, Forge Books

Spencer Quinn, *Cat on a Hot Tin Woof*, Minotaur Books

John Sandford, *Revenge Prey*, Penguin Random House – G.P. Putnam's Sons

Sam Siciliano, *She Reincarnate*, Isola Curiosa Books

Faye Snowden, *A Killing Breath*, Flame Tree Press

Wendy Corsi Staub, *The Lost Season*, Amazon Publishing – Thomas & Mercer

Matt Witten, *51%*, Level Best Books

Gwendolyn Womack, *The Last Labyrinth*, Amazon – 47North

Erica Wright, *The Museum of Unusual Occurrence*, Severn House

Caleb Wygal, *Death in Surfside*, Franklin/Kerr Press

SHORT STORIES

Andy Boyle, "My Battery Is Low and It's Getting Dark," *Inner Worlds, Issue 10*

Paul Doiron, "Blaze Orange," Minotaur Books

Frank Mallia, "The Process Server," *Thriller Magazine*

VITAL SIGNS

MAY 2026

BOOKS

Kelley Armstrong, *An Ordinary Sort of Evil*, St. Martin's Press

Dori Hillstead Butler, *King & Kayla and the Case of the Stolen Starfish*, Candlewick

Christine Carbo, *The Confession Artist*, Amazon Publishing – Thomas & Mercer

Michael Connelly, *Ironwood*, Hachette Book Group – Little, Brown and Company

Susan Dennard, *Two for Joy*, HarperCollins

Carmela Dutra, *Hot Wings and Homicide*, Crooked Lane Books

Alex Finlay, *The Anniversary*, Minotaur Books

Carol Floriani, *Invitation to Murder*, Crooked Lane Books

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VITAL SIGNS, *continued from previous page*

Alison Gaylin, *Robert B. Parker's Booked*, Penguin Random House – G.P. Putnam's Sons

Chris Grabenstein, *Cindersmella*, HarperCollins

James Grady, *Shadows on Sidewalks*, Pegasus Crime

Kit Gray, *The Black Cat Detectives*, Crooked Lane Books

Gregg Hurwitz, *The Delivery*, Amazon Publishing – Thomas & Mercer

Lisa Jackson, *Final Instinct*, MIRA

Craig Johnson, *The Brothers McKay*, Penguin Random House – Viking Books

Sam Lumley, *Coastal Views to Die For*, Kensington Books

J. Michael Major, *Specters in the Gallery*, Genius Book Publishing

Jenn McKinlay, *The Summer Share*, Penguin Random House – Berkley

Josh Moehling, *Beneath a Broken Sky*, Sourcebooks – Poisoned Pen Press

Walter Mosley, *Ghalen: A Romance in Black*, Amistad

James Patterson, *26 Beauties*, Hachette Book Group – Little, Brown and Company

James Patterson & Matt Eversmann, *Rocket's Red Glare*, Hachette Book Group – Little, Brown and Company

Louise Penny & Mellissa Fung, *The Last Mandarin*, Minotaur Books

Michael Rigg, *Shadows of Frenchmen*, Level Best Books

SHORT STORIES

Shelley Costa, "Jack McCool and the Turnip Lantern," *AHMM*

Brad Crowther, "Gracie Jane Turns Thirty," *AHMM*

Catherine Dils, "Murder at the Midtown Oasis," *AHMM*

Robert Greer, "More Than a B-Lister," *EQMM*

James D.F. Hannah, "Speed Trap Camera," *EQMM*

Christopher Latranga, "A Matter of Punctuation," *AHMM*

Paul Ryan O'Connor, "Strangers on a Train on a Train," *AHMM*

Bill Pronzini, "The Avenger," *EQMM*

Brenda Seabrooke, "The Adventure of the Unmasked Ball," *Solar Pons, A Year of Mystery 1919*, Belanger Books

Gabriela Stiteker, "The Best and Sweetest Things," *EQMM*

Anne Swardson, "Fried French," *EQMM*

Elysia Whisler, "Legacy," *AHMM*

VITAL SIGNS

JUNE 2026



BOOKS

Rachel Amphlett, *Case Files: Collected Short Crime Stories Volume 2*, Saxon Publishing

Allison Brennan, *Whisper Creek*, Minotaur Books

Rachel Ekstrom Courage, *Death on the Lanai*, Hyperion Avenue

Jenny Dandy, *The Loft at Broadway and 14th*, Level Best Books

Hilary Davidson, *Every Lie I Told*, Blackstone Publishing

Paul Doiron, *Storm Tide*, Minotaur Books

James Ellroy, *Red Sheet*, Alfred A. Knopf

Gillian French, *Restless Bones*, Minotaur Books

Scott Graham, *Great Sand Dunes Massacre*, Torrey House Publishing

David Housewright, *Fear the Reaper*, Minotaur Books

Anna Lee Huber, *A Bitter Cut*, Penguin Random House - Berkley

Gordon Jack, *Poppy Montgomery Gets Even*, Penzler Publishing – Mysterious Press

Claire M. Johnson, *Crookedest Street in the World*, Level Best Books

John Katzenbach, *The Architect*, Blackstone Publishing

Sean Patrick Little, *Wide Open Empty*, Spilled Inc. Press

Isabella Maldonado, *Exit Wound*, Amazon Publishing – Thomas & Mercer

Kimberly McCreight, *Someone Else's Husband*, Alfred A. Knopf

Cynthia Pelayo, *It Came From Neverland*, Crooked Lane Books

Carol J. Perry, *It's About Time*, Kensington Books

David Putnam, *A Gray Cadaverous Dawn*, Level Best Books

Lev A.C. Rosen, *The Disaster Gay Detective Agency*, Sourcebooks – Poisoned Pen Press

Morley Swingle, *Songs from Dead Eyes*, Morley Swingle

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VITAL SIGNS

JULY 2026

BOOKS

Kathleen Barber & Amayah Shaienne, *Sisterhood Above All*, Macmillan – Saturday Books

Robin Burcell, *Clive Cussler The Serpent's Eye*, Penguin Random House – G.P. Putnam's Sons

Valerie Burns, *Murder at First Slice*, Kensington Books

Ellen Byron, *All Aboard for Murder*, Kensington Books

Lynn Cahoon, *Eight Enchanting Elixirs*, Kensington Books

Colin Campbell, *Dark Sugar Bay*, Level Best Books

Kelsey Cox, *Pretty Dead Things*, Minotaur Books

Adrianna Cuevas, *Mischief and Monsters*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Emmeline Duncan, *Hysteria at the Historical Society*, Kensington Books

Nicholas George, *A Hearse with No Name*, Severn House

Christina Diaz Gonzalez, *Offside*, Scholastic

Carol Goodman, *Our Marriage is Murder*, HarperCollins

Stacie Grey, *She Had Enough*, Sourcebooks

Bryan Gruley, *River Deep*, Severn House

Sandra Jackson-Opoku, *Savvy Summers and the Po'Boy Perils*, Minotaur Books

Mike Lawson, *McKenna's Guy*, Blackstone

Paul Levine, *Midnight Patriots*, Herald Square

Lawrence Light, *Payback*, Severn House

Rosanne Limoncelli, *Death at King's Cross*, Crooked Lane Books

Sheila Lowe, *The Lies Between the Lies*, Write Choice Ink

Jackie McMahon, *The Cloak and Dagger Club*, Penguin Random House – Penguin

Frances McNamara, *Unpaperd Bedroom Murder in a Nutshell*, Level Best Books

DonnaRae Menard, *Murder at the Horse Auction*, Level Best Books

James Patterson & Mike Lupica, *The Country Road Murders*, Hachette Book Group – Little, Brown & Co.

Gary Phillips, *The Haul*, Soho Crime

Bruce Rule, *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Debutante Detective*, Titan Books

Lisa Scottoline, *This Changes Everything*, Hachette Book Group – Grand Central Publishing

M.J. Soni, *The Masala Chai Mystery Club*, Crooked Lane Books

R.L. Stine, *The Ooze*, Simon & Schuster – Aladdin

Lane Stone, *Crimes and Sins*, Level Best Books

Sheree Stover, *Fugitive Manhunt*, Harlequin

Brian Thiem, *A Death in the Deluge*, Severn River Publishing

Gabriel Valjan, *Four on the Floor*, Level Best Books

Elaine Viets, *Beach Blonde Betrayal*, Severn House

Abbi Waxman, *Deadly Does It*, Penguin Random House - Berkley

David Heska Wanbli Weiden, *Wisdom Corner*, HarperCollins – Ecco

James W. Ziskin, *The Prank*, Level Best Books

SHORT STORIES

Meredith Anthony, "Decluttering," *EQMM*

Kevin Egan, "Tree of Heaven," *EQMM*

Kevin Egan, "Report Card Day," *AHMM*

Wendy Hornsby, "Monday Special," *AHMM*

Tom Larsen, "El Yerno," *EQMM*

Ken Linn, "Bad Combinations," *EQMM*

Paul Ryan O'Connor, "Law of the Jungle," *EQMM*

Gabriela Stiteler, "A Well-Worn Path," *EQMM*

Mark Thielman, "The Case of the Potatoes Au Rotten," *AHMM*

Joseph S. Walker, "Hunters," *EQMM*

Dave Zeltserman, "Alfred & Hitchcock," *AHMM*

Dave Zeltserman, "A Lost Dream," *EQMM*

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FRESH BLOOD

APRIL 2026

ACTIVE:

Nathan Avots-Smith (writing as Sam Lumley) **NORCAL**
Coastal Views to Die For, Kensington Books, June 2026

Christine Eskilson **NE** "Her Last Vinyasa," *EQMM*,
March/April 2026

Jacqueline Faber **SOCAL** *The Department*, Oceanview
Publishing, February 2025

Jakob Kerr **MW** *Dead Money*, Penguin Random House
– Bantam Books, January 2025 (2026 Best First Edgar
Award Nominee)

Efrem Seeger **SOCAL** *The Hunters*, Touchstone Television,
2006

Susan Walter **SOCAL** *Murder at 30,000 Feet*, Blackstone
Publishing, February 2026

AFFILIATE:

Audra Bayes **MA** Attorney

Meg Drennan **MA** Freelance Journalist

Jennifer Kurtz **RM** Cybersecurity Consultant

Michael Luckner **SE** Professor of Writing

David Pyle **RM**

Sally Shivnan **MA**

REINSTATEMENT:

Sarah Bobson **NW** Affiliate

Judy Carlough **NE** Affiliate

Tanya Ferrell **MW** Affiliate

Sandra Furlong **FL** Affiliate

Dennis Humphries **SW** Affiliate

Steven James **SE** Active

Monica Myers **FL** Affiliate

Bruce Singer **NY** Affiliate

Bernard Whalen **NY** Active

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY CHANGE:

Tom Milani **MA** "Mill Mountain", *Best Mystery Stories of
the Year 2026*, Mysterious Press, Fall 2026

MAY 2026

ACTIVE:

Luis Avalos **NORCAL** "A Textbook Example," *Sacramento
Noir*, Akashic Books

Olivia Blackburn writing as Olivia Blacke **MA** *The Key to a
Killer*, Minotaur Books, October 2026

Grace Edinger, writing as Eloise Corvo **MW** *Tunnel Vision*,
Level Best Books

Sharon Roth **MA** "Monster," *Best American Mystery and
Suspense 2024*, HarperCollins

AFFILIATE:

Anne-Marie Amiel **SE** Lawyer

Beth Davies **NE**

Stephen Fagerhaug **MW**

Pat Goggins **NW** Bartender

Bob Gorman **NORCAL** Federal Government Employee

Michelle Hallerdin **FL** Management Consultant

Craig Hartranft **NY**

James Michael Johnson **MW**

Stephen Kelly **MA**

Kellie Konneker **SE**

Davina Kraeger **SE** Realtor

Brian Knatz Marcus **MA**

Michele Molnar **MW**

Mary Ann Roth **FL**

Cindy Seiler **FL**

Ashley Tyler **FL** Copywriter

REINSTATEMENT:

Heather E. Ash **MW** Active

Charlie Donlea **MW** Active

Kathleen Froelich **SW** Affiliate

Steven C. Harms **MW** Affiliate

James Harris **NORCAL** Affiliate

Peter Houlahan **NORCAL** Active

Marc Librescu **SOCAL** Affiliate

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FRESH BLOOD, *continued from previous page*

Nancy Mitchell **RM** Affiliate

James Murphy **NY** Affiliate

Cornelia Read **NY** Active

Alexandra Renwick **SW** Active

Roger L. Simon **FL** Active

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY CHANGE:

Lynn Evanoff **SOCAL** 4 books in the Louise Moscow series, most recent title – *Walking the Cat*, October 2024. Self-Published. Earnings exceed minimum required.

Dennis Murphy **FL** Multiple books in the SPD Blue – True Crime series, self-published

Elysia Whisler **MA** “Legacy,” *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine*, May/June 2026

JUNE 2026

ACTIVE:

Nicole Blades **NY** *Would I Lie to You?*, Crooked Lane Books, April 2026

Rena Koontz **FL** Multiple titles, self-published. Most recent is: *Chasing Justice*

Connor Martin **NY** *The Silver Fish*, Mysterious Press, April 2026

Danielle Trussoni also writing as Danielle Postel-Vinay **NY** *Murder Most Delicious*, Harper Perennial, May 2026

AFFILIATE:

Gayle Clark **FL** Book Coach

Kathleen A. Daly **NE**

Erica Dimka **MW** Teacher

Morgan Hatch **SOCAL**

Mara Hurwitt **MA** Attorney

Alex Medvedev **FL** Office Manager

Julian Phillippi **NY** Administrative Services

Laura Schueneman **FL** High School Math Teacher

Fran Severn **NY**

Hyman Sisman **SOCAL**

Janice Sullivan **NY** Fashion Executive

Vivienne Worthington **FL** Registered Nurse

Vicki Zwart **MW** Content/Video/Podcast Producer

REINSTATEMENT:

Donis Casey **SOCAL** Active

Ivanka Dimitrova **SW** Affiliate

Jennifer Dornan-Fish **RM** Active

Christina Hoag **SOCAL** Affiliate

Steve Hockensmith **NORCAL** Affiliate

Alexandra Jamison **SOCAL** Affiliate

Michael Koryta **MW** Active

Donna McGoldrick **SW** Affiliate

Jennifer Moss **SOCAL** Active

Jack Nerad **SOCAL** Active

Erica Obey **NY** Active

Brendan Reichs **SE** Active

Jane Sevier **NY** Affiliate

Emily Steers **SOCAL** Active

Jo Ben Whittenburg **SW** Affiliate

Dave Zeltserman **NE** Active

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY CHANGE:

Andy Boyle **MW** “The Lord God Bird,” *The Mysterious Bookshop Presents the Best Mystery Stories of the Year 2026*, Penzler Publishing, September 2026

Alice Openshaw **NE** *On the Killer’s Trail*, Crooked Lane Books, November 2026

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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

MARGERY FLAX PRESENTED WITH PRESIDENT'S AWARD AT EDGARS BANQUET



MWA President Lisa Scottoline presented the first **President's Award of Merit** to **Margery Flax** for her longstanding commitment to the organization.

With nearly 24 years as MWA's Executive Director, Margery singlehandedly supports the Board, manages the administrative functions of the office, and communicates with nearly 3,000 members. These critical duties, combined with managing the Edgar Awards Banquet for the past 24 years, are truly remarkable and worthy of recognition.



PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING MARGERY FOR ALL SHE DOES TO SUPPORT MWA'S MISSION.

