

*Sisters
in
Crime*



Heart of Texas
Chapter
www.HoTXSinC.org

HOTSHOTS!
August 2009

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Sisters in Crime is an international organization of women and men whose purpose is to promote mysteries written by women and to combat discrimination against them. Speakers include published mystery authors and technical experts who help writers craft better mysteries, and readers enjoy what they read. Meetings are free and open to all.

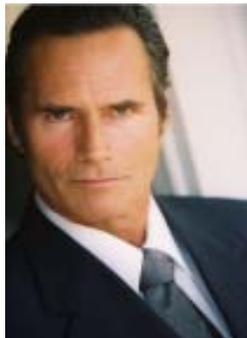
For more information, check out the Sisters in Crime website at www.hotxsinc.org

Sunday, August 9, 2009
2:00 p.m.

David Heavener
Presents

*Crime in Cinema:
It's a Killer Getting It From the Page
to the Marquee*

Westlake Barnes & Noble bookstore
located in The Village at Westlake shopping center
at the southeast corner of Loop 360 and Bee Cave Road
512.328.3155



David Heavener has written, directed, produced and starred in over 30 motion pictures and has distributed hundreds more.

He has worked hand in hand with such Hollywood greats as Academy Award winner Martin Landau, Academy Award nominees Tony Curtis, Sally Kirkland and Karen Black.

Many of his movies have aired on HBO, Showtime and USA Network. After David's recent film, *Dawn Of The Living Dead*, was released on DVD, it was on Wal-Mart's top 10 list of DVD sales for 12 consecutive weeks.

(Please note, the Chapter Indoor Picnic/Potluck, originally scheduled for August, has been moved to the October meeting.)

This meeting is free and open to anyone who enjoys writing or reading Mysteries: Whodunits, Cozies, Thrillers, Suspense, True Crime.

September Spotlight Member

Author and HoTxSnC member **Joan Upton Hall** will be spotlighted in the September edition of *HOTSHOTS!*



News and Announcements

The American Crime Writers League presents *Murder Past, Murder Present*, coedited by HOTxSnC member **Jan Grape** and **R. Barri Flowers**, with an introduction by **Jan Burke**.

The anthology will be published by *Twilight Times Books* and released September 15th.

HOTxSnC members with stories in the anthology are *Pure Pulp* by **Bill Crider**, *A Jury of His Peers* by **Jan Brandon**, *Monstrosity* by **Julie Wray Herman**, and **Jan Grape's** story, *The Crimes of Miss Abigail Armstrong*.

For more information about *Murder Past; Murder Present*, please turn to Page 4.

The 3rd Annual Short Story Writing Contest.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Library and the Bedford Public Library

Guidelines:

- Original work of fiction
- Permission for publication by the Library
- All genres eligible with the following provision:
no explicit sex and/or violence
- Minimum entry age - 17 years old
- Staff members of the Bedford Public Library, officers of the Friends of the Bedford Library, members of the Library Advisory Board or any of their immediate family members may not submit entries

Prizes:

- 1st Place**—\$100, free registration to the 2010 Writers Conference sponsored by the Friends of the Library, and name on plaque
- 2nd Place**—\$50 and name on plaque
- 3rd Place**—\$25 and name on plaque

For information on submission qualifications call Jeanne Green at 817.952.2372 or visit www.bedfordlibrary.org.

HOTxSnC Writers Retreat Fundraiser

Mystery author and HOTxSnC member **Russ Hall** has graciously agreed to donate his time and expertise to lead a late summer writing workshop/retreat with all proceeds going directly to our chapter.

Russ worked for more than twenty-five years as an editor for major publishing firms, ranging from Harper & Row to Simon & Schuster to Pearson. He has had more than a dozen books published, including a series featuring Esbeth Walters and a previous collection of short stories featuring the Blue-Eyed Indian, which won the **Nancy Pickard Mystery Fiction Award**. Two hardbacks in the Blue-Eyed Indian series, *Bones of the Rain* and *South Austin Vampire*, come out in 2010.

This is a rare opportunity to learn first hand from a man who's certainly "been there and continues to do it." *Attendance will be limited to the first fifteen applicants. If you are interested in attending, or for more information, please contact Chapter President Sylvia Dickey Smith at sds@suddenlink.net.*

Vallie Fletcher Taylor



Vallie Fletcher Taylor will host a breakfast on August 4th in honor of HOTxSnC author member **Joan Upton Hall** at Indian Mountain Ranch near Hico. Joan is the featured speaker for the August 3rd meeting of Hico Historic Preservation Society.

Jan Williford, who serves as the society's secretary, met Joan when she accompanied Val to a HOTxSnC meeting and learned of Joan's book about old Texas jails. The Hico jail is a part of this collection.

Also attending the evening meeting and breakfast at Val's home are Joan's traveling companions **Sylvia Dickey Smith** and **Joy Nord**.

Vallie and HoTxSnC member **Dolores Sullivan** at Vallie's July 25th book signing at the Storie Book Cafe in Glen Rose, Texas.



If you missed the July meeting, you missed a gem!

Another large crowd heard **Val Smith, CEO of Attack Research LLC**, a firm specializing in advanced computer security research and consulting, share some interesting and important information about the challenges facing each of us every time we turn on our computers, leave comments on a blog, visit webpages, order something off eBay, or take advantage of all those great "free" services we receive from Google, Yahoo, Facebook, and others.



No one will dispute what computer technology has done to enhance our lives over the past four decades. But there's a darker side to cyber space that is leaving us vulnerable to attack in both our personal and professional lives, as well as the security of our nation. As a country, we are dangerously vulnerable to threats from our perennial enemies. Mr. Smith sees this on a daily basis as one of the consultants providing security to, among other clients, the Dalai Lama, whose national communications system is under attack by the Chinese government around the clock. The same tactics were employed by Russia in their skirmish with the Republic of Georgia.

For more information about Attack Research LLC, visit: <http://www.attackresearch.com>.

Individuals, organized crime and terrorist networks, both in the United States and abroad, have embraced computer hacking, fraud and theft as a means of expanding their power bases and profit margins with less dangerous (to them), faster, more efficient, and bloodless crimes. At this time, the U. S. government spends almost nothing protecting our cyber borders and has shown little interest in maintaining more than a defensive posture.



Terrorist attacks on our power grids and financial system would cripple us faster than all the weapons of mass destruction we've spent billions defending against in the last two

decades. And just for the fun of it, do a little research into Mr. Putin's background and you'll find it's heavily weighted in all facets of information technology.

These are only a few of the points Mr. Smith touched upon during his presentation. He also covered the lighter side of computer security and debunked many of the supposed myths we've all heard about. He presented his information in a casual, conversational style, sprinkled with humor and backed up with slides and documentation. While many of the things he shared were cause for concern, this was not a "Henny Penny, the sky is falling" session. It was a fascinating and informative discussion that left us more knowledgeable about managing the choices we face each time we turn on our computers.

Upcoming Chapter Programs*(Continued on Page 5)*

September 13 - Author Joan Upton Hall - *Location, Location: Where Characters Come to Life*

October 11 - Chapter Indoor Picnic/Potluck - *Sylvia Dickey Smith - Marketing for Fun and Profit*

November 8 - Jim Bryant - *Sherlock Holmes, Mysteries and Statistics*

December 12 - Field Trip: Docent-led Tour of the Edgar Allen Poe Exhibit at the University of Texas - Harry Hunt Ransom Humanities Research Center

Murder Past, Murder Present

ISBN: 160619206X

ISBN-13: 9781606192061

Format: Paperback - 280 pp

Publisher: Twilight Times Books

Pub. Date: September 28, 2009



An anthology of original mysteries written by award-winning authors of the American Crime Writers League

R. Barri Flowers and Jan Grape, Editors

A list of contents

Introduction by Jan Burke

"Murder Past, Murder Present" by R. Barri Flowers

"For the Love of the Grape" by Kris Neri

"A Jury of His Peers" by Jay Brandon

"Dead on the 4th of July" by Meg Chittenden

"American Notes" by Edward Marston

"Calamity" by Shirley Kennett

"Coffee & Conversation" by John Lutz

"Karma" by Candace Robb

"Pure Pulp" by Bill Crider

"Oñate's Foot" by Betty Winkelman

"A Hint of Mint" by Taffy Cannon

"Loose Ends" by Ed Gorman

"He Hated Cats" by Pari Noskin Taichert

"Mr. Wonderful" by Melinda Wells

"The Final Nail" by Robert J. Randisi

"Zena Bennett & The Angel of Death" by Claire McNab

"The Exquisite Burden of Bones" by Noreen Ayres

"Talk To Me" by Twist Phelan

"Monstrosity" by Julie Wray Herman

"Murder on Ice" by Robert Scott

"The Amish Country Market Murder" by Valerie Malmont

"The Crimes of Miss Abigail Armstrong" by Jan Grape

From the Editors

Welcome to the first American Crime Writers League mystery anthology.

Founded by Robert Randisi and Ed Gorman in the late 1980s to bring together professional mystery authors in a private forum to exchange ideas, the American Crime Writers League is still going strong in the 21st century as a writing organization for serious and proven writers of mystery fiction.

Now seemed like a perfect time to put forth an anthology of original mysteries written by internationally bestselling, award-winning authors of the ACWL.

As the title reflects, the stories are all murder mysteries that take place in the past, present, or even both. Readers will find an eclectic group of intriguing Americana tales of mystery and suspense that will offer something for everyone.

Many of the contributors have already made names for themselves, with numerous mystery awards and nominations, including Robert and Ed, John Lutz, Meg Chittenden, Bill Crider, Taffy Cannon, and Jay Brandon.

Others are establishing themselves as talented mystery authors, such as Taffy Cannon, Twist Phelan, and Pari Noskin Taichert.

In all, this is an amazing group of authors and their collective imaginations in creating page-turning, truly unforgettable mystery stories will speak for themselves.

We hope you enjoy the anthology and will check out the authors' other published works as well.

The Editors,

R. Barri Flowers & Jan Grape

News & Announcements - Continued from Page 2

Beat the summer heat at COOL RIVER CAFE or SPAGHETTI WAREHOUSE!

Audiences are falling out of their chairs laughing at *Murder on the Movie Set*, our audience interactive comedy whodunit with dinner in which attendees (that's you!) plays extras on a local movie set. When things go terribly wrong and someone suddenly drops dead, it's up to you to solve the crime.

Sunday, August 16 is your last chance to see *Murder on the Movie Set* at Cool River Cafe.

The final fun filled date for *Murder on the Movie Set* at Spaghetti Warehouse are on the following Saturdays:

August 1, August 15, August 29

For more on details on these fun filled evenings, plus information on private parties (including holiday whodunits) visit capcitymystery.com

Upcoming Chapter Programs

(Continued from Page 3)

~ 2110 ~

January 10, 2010 - Pat Ricks - *History: The Greatest Mystery*

February 14, 2010 - *Love Them To Death* - Panel of Romantic Suspense Authors

March 14, 2010 - Author David Ciambrone, *Sherlock Holmes, The Man: Who Is He?*

April 11, 2010 - T.B.D.

May 9, 2010 - T.B. D. and Texas Mystery Month

June 13, 2010 - T.B.D.

July 11, 2010 - T.B.D.

August 8, 2010 - Author Sylvia Dickey Smith, *Jessica Fletcher: Why America Loves Her*

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28 is the deadline for News, Reviews, Announcements and Articles for the **SEPTEMBER 2009** edition of **HOTSHOTS!**

Send info to Micqui Miller at
micquim@yahoo.com

THE UN-COMFORT ZONE with Robert Wilson*Moore Powerful Than You Know*

"Writing is not a job; it's a hobby!" thundered my father when I told him my plans for college. "You need to get a profession: medicine, law, engineering or accounting."

I cheerlessly acquiesced and enrolled in a Pre-Med program, but at the end of my first year, after struggling through Chemistry, I changed my major to Philosophy. When I told Dad, he grunted, "That and a dime will get you a cup of coffee." He passed away shortly after that but his words echoed in the back of my mind for years.

After graduation I searched for a job in writing. At the same time, I wrote short stories like crazy, and sent them off to dozens of magazines. Years passed and I failed to find a job in writing, so I supported myself by waiting tables and bartending. Meanwhile, rejection letters from the magazines began piling up, and I was beginning to get discouraged.

Then one day, I met a friend for a beer in a bar near the campus of my alma mater. When I visited the restroom, some graffiti written on the wall with an arrow pointing to the toilet paper dispenser caught my eye. It read: "Bachelor of Arts Degrees - take only one, please!" Rather than laugh, I grimaced and thought, "Boy, does that sound like my Dad."

Five years had gone by, and other than a few freelance jobs writing advertising copy, I had not made a penny from writing. I was beginning to re-think my life, when I recalled the encouraging words from my ninth grade English teacher.

She had assigned my class with several essays to write. I remembered the glowing paragraphs of praise she wrote in bright red ink at the top of all my papers. There must have been a dozen of those compositions, and just recalling them gave me hope. I thought, "At least one person in the world believes in my writing."

It was just the encouragement I needed, and I doubled my efforts to find work. Soon I was getting a great deal more freelance work. Enough that I was able to quit working in restaurants. Enough to make a down payment on a house. Then whenever I needed a boost in confidence, I would think again of those dozen glowing paragraphs of praise written in bright red ink at the top of my essay papers.

Suddenly everything seemed to gel. I sold my first book; I won several very important advertising awards; and three colleges were asking me to teach a class in copywriting. I was feeling very grateful and once again thought of my ninth grade English teacher and those glowing paragraphs of praise written in bright red ink. I decided to look her up and give her a call.

When I got her on the phone my first shock was that she did not remember me. I was certain I had been one of her favorites. My second was when she told me that she never wrote paragraphs of praise. "There were simply too many papers to grade to write more than a word or two," She said. "I would write 'Nice Work' or 'Good Job,' but never anything more."

Unconvinced, when I got off the phone, I went up to the attic and dug out the box that held my old school work (yes, it's true - I'm a total pack rat - especially when it comes to things I've written!). It took a while, but I finally found those old papers. She was right; there were no paragraphs. And, there was far less than a dozen - only two. About the only thing I remembered correctly was the bright red ink. I did, however, rate more than one or two words. On the first one she wrote, "Nicely written - well thought out." On the other, "Good Sense of Humor!"

Nine words. Nine little words that were so heartening that over the next 15 years they grew into hundreds in my mind. Nine words that motivated me to stick to my dreams. My point? Even the least bit of praise can be powerfully motivating. So, don't keep it in - use your power!

Robert Evans Wilson, Jr. is a motivational speaker and humorist. He works with companies that want to be more competitive and with people who want to think like innovators. For more information on Robert's programs please visit www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com.

