

**Sisters
in
Crime**



Heart of Texas
Chapter
www.HoTXSinC.org

HOTSHOTS!
July 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, July 12, 2009

2:00 p.m.

Val Smith

Presents

The Internet:

Spies, Criminals and Saboteurs

**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**



Val Smith has been involved with computer security since he was seven years old and wrote a simulation of the movie *War Games* on his Tandy Color Computer. Since then he has founded and participated in many projects including an open website for virus and malware research, a company that analyzes cyber criminal infrastructures and a framework for developing and using computer exploits.

Mr. Smith has presented numerous technical papers on computer security issues at conferences and instructions such as: *Blackhat*, *Defcon*, *the Pentagon*, *FBI Infraguard*, *Boston Source* and many others.

Most recently he has exposed a series of widespread web attacks by Chinese and Russian hackers, including their home IP addresses and the mechanics of how they steal information from unsuspecting computer users.

This is definitely a meeting you won't want to miss!

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



**News and
Announcements**

Bravo, Robin Allen!



2008 Aspiring Author **Robin Allen** has signed with Kimberley Cameron of the Reece Halsey Literary Agency to represent her first mystery, **If You Can't Stand the Heat**. Karen Swartz MacInerney was Robin's Mentor Author that year.

Russ Hall

Russ will be signing and presenting at the following events. More information to follow.

September 13th - 6th Annual Mike Blakely Fandango, Luckenbach

October 31st-November 1st - Texas Book Festival, Austin

November 13th - University of Texas Forum, Thompson Conference Center on campus, Austin, 11 a.m.



Micqui Miller



Micqui Miller, was featured, along with romance author **Ann Whitaker**, in an article titled, *Local Authors Have the Write Stuff*, in the July 2008 edition of *Waco Today*, a slick monthly

publication of the *Waco Tribune Herald*. You'll find the article and photos at: <http://www.wacotrib.com/today/content/wacotoday/stories/2009/06/24/06252009wacWTauthors.html>

Sylvia Dickey Smith



Sylvia Dickey Smith reports completion of her latest novel, a mainstream women's historical fiction set during WW II. She is busy marketing the work to literary agents and is excited over the positive results she is receiving.

A War Of Her Own transports the reader to a time and place when the whole world is at war. Desperate people caught in the backwater of the Great Depression flock to sleepy little Orange, Texas, a town in the middle of social revolution. The population soars over 700 percent as a result of jobs-for-the-taking at the local shipyards. Folks have money to burn, but with little to spend it on or a place to lay their heads. Except for the distant war, times are good. Production output of dreadnaughts, destroyer escorts, and P-T boats break all records. Signs announce, *If you work here, YOU KNOW you're good*. Gypsies camp out around open campfires. Shantytowns spring up to accommodate the severe housing shortage. Beds rent by the hour, the sheets still warm from one body when the next body crawls in. Frenetic, hectic, and exhilarating. Life is good for everyone – except Bea Meade, who fights another war, and the enemy resides within her.

Keep an eye out for *A War Of Her Own*

Vallie Fletcher Taylor

Friday, July 10 - 6:30-8:30 p.m., Vallie Fletcher Taylor will appear at Berkman Books in Fredericksburg for a talk and signing on *Eyes in the Alley*.



Saturday, July 25 - 1:30 p.m., she will be at the unique Storie Book Cafe in Glen Rose, Texas.

Vallie was also featured in the June 11 issue of the *Glen Rose Newspaper* regarding her talk and signing of *Eyes in the Alley* at Sugar Moon Antiques on June 20.

Excerpt from

Blame it on the sunshine

by Emma Brockes and Oliver Burkeman

guardian.co.uk © *Guardian News and Media Limited 2009*

The relationship between heat and aggression is one that most of us recognise in our own fluctuating tempers; over a hot summer, irritation caused by the heat has been cited by psychologists as a factor in the seasonal rise in violent crime. Where one person might bicker more forceably with his partner in hot weather, the aggregate unease felt by an entire community might, on an airless summer night, result in a flashpoint that wouldn't have happened on a rainy one in winter.

In summer, of course, there are naturally more people out on the street; more alcohol is consumed and the opportunity for petty disagreements to occur is amplified. But there is something more. Dr Lance Workman, a psychologist at the University of Glamorgan, has made a link between hot weather and the levels of serotonin released in the brain, a side-effect of which can be heightened aggression. "Violent crime and riots increase as temperatures rise," he has said. "The majority of riots in the USA occur when the temperature increases to between 80 degrees and 89 degrees Fahrenheit. When the temperature goes over 89 degrees, however, riots level off and begin to fall because people become so hot they can't be bothered."

Dr. Richard Michael, an American psychiatrist, has spent years studying the effect temperature has on the crime statistics. In the 1980s, he analysed 27,000 instances of women being abused by their live-in male partners, in accounts provided by refuge organisations. His findings were startling.

The frequency of abuse is closely related to annual changes in ambient temperature," he concluded in his 1986 paper, *An Annual Rhythm in Battering of Women.* "Violence by men toward women increases in summer independently of any major seasonal changes in the opportunity for contact between perpetrator and victim." In a 1983 study, the US National Institute of Mental Health analysed 50,000 rapes in 16 locations. July and August were the peak months in all cases.

Statistics alone, however, are a weak indicator of cause and effect, which are easier to prove in a laboratory. Ehor Boyanowsky, a criminologist at Simon Fraser University in Canada, has spent 30 years researching the effects of heat on the brain. Having noticed that most of the US race riots in 1967 occurred on days with temperatures greater than 80 degrees, he designed a series of laboratory tests that persuaded him of the connection between heat and extreme behaviour.

In one test, a set of volunteers was subjected by a researcher to a series either of insults or compliments. The volunteers were invited to retaliate by administering electric shocks. Those volunteers held in temperatures of 75degrees reacted aggressively when insulted and delivered the shocks; those in temperatures of 91^95^ were so aggravated that they administered shocks even when the researcher was complimenting them. Differences "of formal civility and higher violence rates in the southern states versus greater bluntness and lower violence rates in the north have been observed", he notes. Global warming, he warns, could make the problem even worse.

The link between rising temperatures and general irritability is compounded by dehydration - most of us never drink enough water anyway, but it only becomes evident in hot weather - made worse by overheated offices or air-conditioning systems, which can cause sweltering workers to lose the equivalent of 10 glasses of water a day. Of course, we quench thirst in other ways, too - one of several reasons why public drunkenness, and the crimes associated with it, spiral in hot weather: last year, in London, there were 1,000 more instances of common assault - often linked to alcohol - in July than in January. Adding to the oppressive atmosphere, psychologists have identified a phenomenon they call "summer depression", the opposite of ordinary seasonal affective disorder, brought on by the fading light of winter.

Upcoming Chapter Programs

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

August 9 - Presentation by David Heavener, Actor, Teacher, Filmmaker, Singer and Songwriter

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

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

February 14, 2010 - Love Them To Death - a 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

*A cool summer libation –
The Perfect Margarita!*
from *The Secret Recipes of the Calla Lily Inn* and *Sweet Caroline*
by Micqui Miller

My brother Don and his wife Catherine, who for more than twenty years ran charters off of Fiji on their 106-foot gaff topsail schooner named the *La Violante*, gathered recipes from a number of their guests, who ranged from business executives, stars of the entertainment industry, and folks who loved the sea just like they do.

During one of the long, lazy voyages, their guests set out to create the “perfect Margarita”. Don claims that they tried different variations throughout the cruise and when they’d finally hit upon this one, all guests and crew signed the log book to memorialize that they had indeed created The Perfect Margarita.

The Perfect Margarita

From the Captain’s Log of the Schooner *La Violante*

5 jiggers of Tequila
2.5 jiggers of lime juice
.5 jigger of Triple Sec

About an hour before cocktail time, rub the rim of your Margarita glasses with the flesh/rind of a lime, dip the glasses in salt to coat the rim, and put them in the freezer. When you’re ready to serve, combine the ingredients above into a shaker; shake, and pour over prepared glasses filled halfway to the rim with cracked ice. *Warning – appoint a Designated Driver before taking your first sip. This recipe is not for the faint of heart!*

FRIDAY, JULY 24 is the deadline for News, Reviews, Announcements and Articles for the **AUGUST 2009** edition of **HOTSHOTS!**

Send info to Micqui Miller at
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