



It's Halloween, this month's meeting, October, 11, 2008, is filled with Spooks and Kooks. Probably more Kooks than spooks (ha ha), but come any way. You won't want to miss ---



### Workshop- By Mary Bellin

Mary will shine new light on the dreaded subject, **THE QUERY LETTER**. If you want an agent or to send a manuscript to a publisher, the first step is the query letter. Why spend all that time writing the greatest mystery novel and then send out a poorly written Query. To get past the first step, the query must be polished, interesting, and to the point. At the end of the workshop, you will have a finished query letter to send to an agent. What agent??? We'll discuss that too. Tricks and Treats for the best (and worst) query.



### WHO'S THE SPEAKER FOR THE OCTOBER MEETING?

You know him or her well from past meetings, where you enjoyed their camaraderie and great conversation. Is that enough of a clue? Probably not. So, to make it easy on you, I'll direct you to your nearest mirror. Now, do you know who it is?

In place of a speaker, we'll devote the afternoon to talking about the future of AMW and the exciting things that have happened, and will happen, because of, and for, YOU. It's our intention to have two General Meetings a year – one at the beginning and one toward the end.

Your Board of Directors has been busy during the summer and we'd like you to know what's been discussed in connection with upcoming events. We need your input about:

The Endowment Fund and Writing Scholarships

Participation in the Tucson Festival of Books – March 13-15, 2009

Elections for next year's Board

How to promote AMW so our membership will grow

What Workshops would appeal to you? Are you willing to lead one?

What Speakers would you like to hear from?

Did you know that endorphins are released during bouts of creativity? Join us on October 11, and release your endorphins while kicking around some of your great ideas during an informative, and relaxing, afternoon. The writing world is changing. Are you ready to change with it?



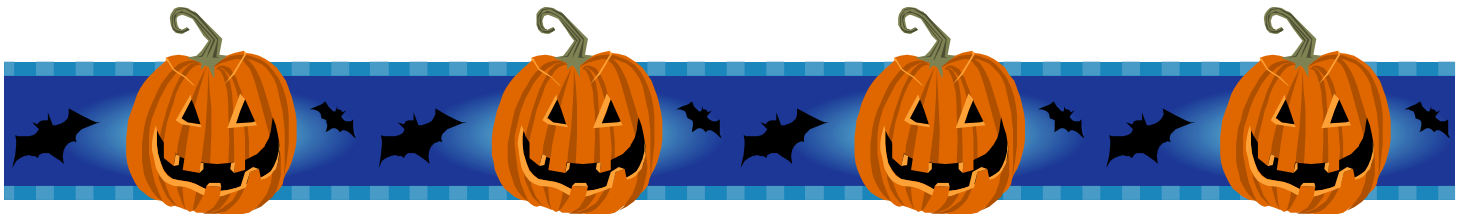
**Don't think you can sleep through this afternoon meeting!**

Time to shake out the old bones and get to the point-

**Your Board of Directors needs your input.**

Don't be surprised when a few Spooks and Goblins are thrown in along the way.

RSVP If you are attending- [newsletter@arizonamysterywriters.com](mailto:newsletter@arizonamysterywriters.com) or 577-7270 (Mary)



### **September 13- Workshop Review- Written by Jan Pope**

Tony Ivins workshop, Turning Mainstream Stories into Crime Fiction, was a resounding success. Attendees, who worked in groups of two or more, were given a Chinese Menu of four steps to creating an intriguing story. Each step had a variety of selections to choose from.

Step 1. Choose from a selection of plot prompts e.g. Eddie Lindstrom has free time on his hands.

Step 2. Identify the story that characterizes your opening i.e. whodunit, the chase, etc.

Step 3. Add the crime of your choice to your story, murder, revenge and so on..

Step 4. Develop a resolution to the main character's conflict.

Given the delicious array of choices that Tony supplied us with in steps 1 & 2, the group came up with some wonderful stories with surprises and sometimes murderous and treacherous delights.

\**Myrtle, Stan and Anne* had a small child trying to catch a stray dog who met her fancy ending up at its home where its masters were a poverty stricken couple who then held the child for

ransom. (Example of outsiders and hidden secrets)

\**Clark* told us about Jack and Jill. They discover the body of her previous boyfriend who was a drug dealer. Jill did not want Jack to know this since he is a cop. Then she learns that Jack was the one who committed the murder. Jill kills Jack and swears off cops and criminals. (Example of hidden secrets,)

\**Karen and Carol* wrote about Jim and Madeleine who go to a museum with their travel group and end up in the wrong travel group. They are standing behind a man with a briefcase who is shot right in front of them. The shooter looks them in the eyes, then escapes, taking the briefcase with him. (Example of outsiders, witness to crime)

This is a sampling, but all the responses were surprising and original and varied from white slavery to diamond thieves, from suspicion of murder to stolen government secrets. The best part of this exercise is that the detailed description, the explanation of how to create a story using this method and the menu selection are ours to keep and use whenever the creativity well runs dry or we just feel like trying something new.

Thanks to Tony for his hard work in creating this great workshop and thanks to those who participated so wholeheartedly to make it a successful morning of creativity.



## SEPTEMBER SPEAKER – BART GRAY

Written by Mary Ann Hutchison

If the choices were: (1) gathering evidence — which may entail leaving your clothes in the garage after being in close proximity to decomp, with Vick's tucked in your nostrils to dilute the smell) — or (2) processing evidence and spending your work day in an air-conditioned lab, in a white smock, which would you choose? Bart Gray, Criminalist in the Arizona Department of Public Safety, chose the latter, and gave us a fascinating and informative tour through his lab, including a brief stop at the gas chromatograph and the mass spectrometer, common tools of his trade.

The difference between what he does and what the fictionalized CSIs do? In the fictionalized world, the CSIs do EVERYTHING – gather, process, and grill the perp. In reality, in Arizona, those who gather evidence, and those who process evidence are separate and apart.

One of the other differences is the time line for processing the evidence. It does take considerably longer to make notes describing the evidence, labeling everything relating to a particular piece of evidence with a unique identification number (which remains with the test tubes and Ziploc bags and anything else used in connection therewith) and, say, test for which of the nine different categories of drugs may be present.

Is there a substance that will kill and leave no trace? Yes, there is. Is there a way to kill someone that is undetectable? Yes, there is. Are there ways to clean a homicide scene so no traces of blood will be found? Yes there are. Is there a best way to destroy all traces of evidence?

Yes, there is. (Answers: ecstasy; air, water, drain cleaners, ammonia wipes; fire).

Are you sorry you couldn't spend the afternoon with us and learn so much more? I'll bet you are. But, if you have any questions for him, you may contact Bart at: [sio2man@grayvilla.com](mailto:sio2man@grayvilla.com). He promised to check this email address and get back to you in a reasonable length of time, and I'll bet he will.

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**News-** AMW now has an official post box.

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### **Board member information:**



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WebMaster-Mary Bellin, [webmaster@ArizonaMysteryWriters.com](mailto:webmaster@ArizonaMysteryWriters.com)

**MEETING INFO:** Second Saturday of the Month- HomeTown Buffet at the northwest corner of Oracle and River roads.

**TIMES:** AMW business meeting for all members 10:00 – 10:15 am, workshop 10:15 - 11:45 pm, Lunch 11:45 – 12:30, Speaker 12:30 – 2:00 pm.

**Cost:** Exact change or check is appreciated, Speaker, Workshop and lunch = \$12.00. Workshop or Speaker Only, no lunch, \$5. Yearly Dues are \$25.

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