



CRIME TIMES

Arizona Mystery Writers

January 2009

To promote mystery writing in Southern Arizona



Happy New Year!

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a great holiday. Don't forget, it's time to renew your membership to Arizona Mystery Writers. Please bring a check for \$25 made out to AMW at the next meeting on January 10, 2009.

Another option is to mail your check to AMW at

Arizona Mystery Writers
P. O. Box 35591

Tucson, AZ 85740

Next AMW Meeting- January 10, 2009

January 10, 2009

10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Workshop- Jan Pope will work with us on Plot Development.

Speaker- Jude Johnson-writer -more information [click here](#)

Review of December 2008 Workshop

Review written by Karen MacLeish

The scene was set by Karen MacLeish and Eric Hertwig-

It was going into the fourth month of the grand jury session. Friendships and enmity had been formed. On this day, jurors were preparing to convene following the lunch break.

With notebooks in hand, our creative mystery writers began writing-

Table 1: Marci Martin, Ellie Nelson, Molly McKinney, Mary Ann Hutchison, Vija Lipin and Terry Ambrose told the story this way...

As the jurors return from lunch, Ms. Courage falls to the floor. Pandemonium ensues. Courage is dead in seconds. Mr. Magnet restores order and questions the others. He notices froth coming from the mouth of Ms. Courage. Mr. Portales, who has traveled a lot in his business recognizes the symptom as Black Mambo Snake venom.

Mr. Thoven says he witnessed an argument between Ms. Pylon, Ms. Clanton and Ms. Courage. Pylon and Clanton deny an argument and begin pointing fingers. Ms. Alright says she is an avid reader of the obituaries and remembers reading about the death of Wally Thoven, grandson of juror B. Thoven. News articles told that Ms. Courage is a nurse at the hospital where Wally died. B. Thoven is an acclaimed musician, dresses flamboyantly and always wears a pin he was awarded as Best Conductor." As Mr. Magnet interviews Thoven, the pin slips and Magnet notices the discoloration on the pointed shaft. Mr. Thoven had gotten revenge against Nurse Courage, whom he felt had been negligent in the death of his grandson.

Table 2: Myrtle Nord and Carol O'Mahoney told this story...

A love triangle had formed between Ms. LaPlant and Mr. Magnet and Mr. Portales. Ms. LaPlant and Mr. Portales plan a love vacation in Italy when the jury is dismissed, although she is still in love with Mr. Magnet.

Mr. Magnet hears a rumor about LaPlant and Portales and asks the lady to meet him in the lunchroom. He declares his love for her and pleads with her not to leave him. She tells him to "Shove off," that it's all over between them. "Portales has money," she declares. Magnet is just a security officer. Magnet shoots her with a silencer on his weapon, and stuffs her body into the cupboard under the sink. Ms. LaPlant is absent when roll is taken. Perhaps she didn't return from lunch.

Thursday morning, Ms LaPlant is still missing. Ms. Pylon enters the lunchroom to heat some soup. She smells a strange odor and opens the cupboard door. Ms. LaPlant's arm falls out. During the ensuing investigation, Ms. Pylon reveals that Ms. LaPlant had purchased sexy underwear from *Fredericks* and confided her plans for the trip to Italy with Mr. Portales.

Table 3: Rae Schlesinger, Stella Clancy, Mary Bellin, Jackie Edwards, Gail Gibbs and Kay Lesh told this story.....

Juror Portales was in the men's room. Ms. LaPlant, who had been his secretary until recently, had found out that Senor Portales was spending money on Ms. Pylon, with whom he was having an affair. Ms. LaPlant follows Portales into the men's room and confronts him. They argue. She leaves the men's room. Mr. Byker sees her exiting and asks what she was doing in the men's room. She points toward the

women's room and barks, "Crowded."

Byker enters the men's room and sees Portales with his face in the toilet. He's dead.

Mr. Swimmer, who was in the other stall and heard the argument, is, himself, in love with Ms. Pylon, so he helped Portales die while he was vomiting into the toilet. Swimmer mingles with the other anxious jurors.

Mr. Magnet and Ms. Ohnsay are able to solve the crime. They'd been intentionally placed on the jury as undercover to gather evidence against Prosecutor Chancy and Court Steno Dahna, who were suspected of changing records to allow certain high level criminals to escape justice.

What a talented group is AMW! Do you suppose that as Mr. Thoven's pin began to slip, he grabbed for it in an effort to prevent suspicion falling on him, and he got stuck with the poisoned pin?

Review of December Speaker

Review Written by Mary Bellin

Jerry Simmons retired after 26 years in the publishing business in New York City. Jerry talked about there being more options to publish a book than ever before. There is self-publishing and e-books besides the traditional form of New York Publishing. The business is downsizing. The big publishing houses aren't making money and the number of books returned because they haven't sold are increasing. Perceptions are changing and self publishing books are getting a different look. For example, William Young in 2005, could not get his religious book published. He went to Kinko's and made copies of his book. He talked to churchs and sold 700,000 copies. He then signed with a big publisher and sold 4 million copies. Now many of the big companies are looking at self-published books that have sold between 3 and 4,000 copies.

Jerry stated that most writers have unrealistic expectations. He will not look at an author's work if the author says one of three things. First, Writing group or friends think my work is the greatest. Second, this is perfect for a movie, and Third, any mention of Oprah.

The bottom line is publishing is a business. Authors must promote themselves. Your personality, not your looks is important for getting out there and talking about your book. The more you understand, the more successful you will be at selling copies. The publishing industry expects to sell 60% of books published. They will ship 1,000 books and expect 600 to 400 copies to come back.

The companies also use "back lists" to make more money than a new book. When John Grisham releases a new book, the publisher makes sure his older books are displayed too.

Jerry gave us a list of Seven Things That Aren't Going to Change in the Publishing Market.

1. Always think of it as a business (package to sell). Writers produce a product.
2. Good story trumps great writing. It is always about the good story. Pulitzers only sell 3 to 4,000 copies,

compared to best sellers that aren't always the best writing.

3. Two parts of being a writer:

a) Learn to improve skills. The more you write, the better you'll be. Your last book should be better than your first.

b) Work with publisher to market. A writer must be savvy about the business.

4. Be a student of the market place. An author needs to walk-in and observe what is on the top list. How are they packaged? This helps when you sign a contract. If you are informed, you can inject self into the process. The art department makes 1,500 books/year only 150 get real attention. If you can select 3 book covers you like- it will help. It is no secret the publishing market is dynamic.

5. There are more options to publish- If you select self-publishing, it needs to look like its a NY publisher. Self published companies based on number of pages are in business to print, not publish.

6. Today, it is easy to get published if you are willing to write a check. It is more difficult than ever to sell books. Editors ask, "What's in it for the reader? What are they getting out of it?"

Readers read for entertainment, to be informed or enlightened.

7. There are no guarantees.

So many people-so many scams selling nothing.

Timing is also important. November is the worst time to launch a new book by an unknown author. Best selling books come out after labor day. First time authors will get lost, 99% of authors don't understand the business.

Jerry stressed he wasn't there to discourage us, but give us a realistic prospective. He did a great job of telling us about the quirks and rules of the industry that all writers need to know before entering the publishing world.

Note from Jerry Simmons

Hello Everyone,

Thank you again for the invitation to speak to your group on Saturday. Each of you signed up for my eNewsletter so I'm attaching a copy . I'm also attaching a copy of my eBook on Marketing. Do not hesitate to contact me with questions.

Happy Holidays,

Jerry D. Simmons

Author, Publisher, Speaker

www.WritersReaders.com

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Author of *What Every Writer Needs to Know About Publishing*

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[Book Fair](#)

Here's some details about the Festival:

The Tucson Festival of Books is a community-wide public celebration of reading and literacy in partnership with the Arizona Daily Star and the University of Arizona. Proceeds from this non-profit event will benefit literacy programs throughout Southern Arizona. The festival will offer lectures, interviews, book signings, poetry readings, panel discussion, writing contests, workshops, children's events. Book sales and more. For a current list of authors visit www.tucsonfestivalofbooks.org. The Festival expects more than 50,000 attendees.

BODIES WANTED FOR MYSTERY ADVENTURE WEEKEND NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

By Carol Dee O'Mahony

Now that we have your attention...

Arizona Mystery Writers is participating in the first-ever Tucson Festival of Books on March 14-15, 2009. We'll have our own booth to show off AMW author's works, conduct book signings and have the biggest membership drive in our history. This is going to be a fabulous two-day event with over 300 authors already committed.

Note- The March 14 meeting of AMW is cancelled. We will all be at the Festival.

Anthology Books

ANYONE who has any anthologies left over, please bring them to the December or January meetings so we can sell them at the Book Festival in March 2009.

Book Sales at Meetings

You may bring your books to sell at our monthly meetings. A table is provided to display the books. All transactions are between the seller and buyer. AMW is not taking any money from the book sale and is not responsible for the books or their sales.

Board of Director Position Open

The position of secretary/membership is open on the AMW Board of Directors. Please volunteer to be a more active part of our group. The duties of the Secretary are to take minutes at our Board Meetings and distribute them via email to the other Board Members. Currently, the Board meets approximately four times a year.

SSA January Meeting

January 18, 2009

11:00 am to 2:00 pm

SSA's next meeting is January 18, 2009.

Romance Writers of Tucson Meeting

January 24, 2009

10:00 am to 2:30 pm

Saguaro Romance Writers' January meeting features literary agent Natasha Kern. Natasha will will teach us how stating a story idea in one sentence jumpstarts the creative process and underpins all subsequent decisions about character and plot. She will also provide us with an overview of what a writer's career can include and how to work with an agent to ensure success. We meet on Saturday, January 24, from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at El Parador Tropical Restaurant in Tucson, 2744 E Broadway Blvd. To reserve a spot, email Crystal Marshall at crystal@crystalcaterra.com. The cost includes lunch: \$20 for SRW members, \$25 for non-members.

Website

Our new member, Terry Ambrose, owns Satori Web Design. Terry has offered his expertise to help me launch this new site. His patience and knowledge has been greatly appreciated. Thank you, Terry. Go to www.arizonamysterywriters.com. We are on the web!

I sent each member of AMW, a WordPress email with a username, password and link to Login to this website. Enter your Name and Password given to you in the confirmation email. If you don't have the email, contact me by email and I'll send it to you.

I am excited to launch this site and hope you enjoy it and use it often. Go ahead and push buttons and view the site. Please feel free to leave comments and your suggestions for content. If you have problems you can always email me .

Make sure you login! I have added many fun facts such as quotes and quizzes. I change them daily and they are only available to members.

Note- If you click on any of the underlined headings in this newsletter you will go to the website.

Enjoy the new site. Mary

Happy New Year!