

BLOODLETTER

New York /Tri-State chapter of Sisters in Crime

Winter 2009/2010

She Left This Note . . .

Whew! It's hard to believe I've been president of this chapter for half a year already. That's due to our active, overachieving membership! Lots of good things are happening in our chapter, including using your suggestions to plan programs that are fun and informative. The officers, board members, and I have been working to improve the ways we communicate with each other and the world. Our first change was the recent move to paperless postcards for meeting announcements, and member response has been great! By sending these cards electronically we save the chapter a ton in printing and postage – our largest recurring expense after meeting room space – and still give you the option of printing your own hardcopy.

Additionally, we're updating the website frequently. The amount of terrific member news and events means our front page is always changing. Bring it on! Fresh content creates more traffic, so the more information we share, the better the website is for promoting everything the chapter and members are doing. The posts are also simultaneously published on Facebook (find and friend us with my name or the chapter's) and Twitter (using NYSinC or New York Sisters in Crime.) We're building features as we go, so take a look at www.nysinc.org, and let us know what you think!

The last part of our communication strategy is emphasizing our members-only Yahoo Group. Once you're a "member", you just activate your "profile" to select the frequency and type of messages you'd like to receive. You can be in on all the chat, or limit yourself purely to chapter-supplied event announcements. We'll be combing the member list to be sure everyone is a Yahoo Group member and knows how to set up their personal preferences. One of the reasons we like this tool is the ease of sending emails to the whole group with a single e-mail address: SinCNewYork@yahoogroups.com. Another benefit is the Files section, a place to keep multimedia for members, such as copies of the by-laws or meeting minutes, and video or audio from meetings (it's coming!) We hope to increase the chapter's value for our remote and busy members, so they can better participate even when not able to attend.

Our next big project is the chapter anthology. The board and officers are working on final submission guidelines and detailed planning. We're spending significant time up front to make sure the anthology will be an equal pleasure for contributors, booksellers, and readers. Updates on submissions are coming soon and will be widely broadcast. The preliminaries: 4,000 words or less, criminal focus if not necessarily murder, and a setting within the five boroughs. We're keeping the name *Murder New York Style*, highlighting the seldom-seen or backstage view of this wonderfully diverse place.

I could say more, of course. There are so many thanks and congratulations to share, and exciting things ahead, but you can always check the website!



Cheers, Clare Toohy

Poison Pen Musings . . .



I've finished my book and now I'm working on rewrites and revisions. This is actually the fun part. There's less brain strain and I can work faster because I'm not facing the infamous blank page. I'm finding I actually enjoy this and could make a career of revising, but alas, in order to have a career, I'll have to keep doing original writing.

At a recent seminar I attended at the Mid-Manhattan Library I learned just how important this part of this process is. The panel for "How to Get Tales of Murder and Mayhem Published in a Deadly Market" were in agreement on one element: a clean manuscript is a good manuscript. Careless misspellings and simple grammar mistakes are an immediate turn off, and having been a magazine editor in my former life, I know how quickly this stuff can turn a "maybe" manuscript to a "no-way" manuscript.

I've also worked on book manuscripts and one that stands out strongly in my mind was written by the editor of a well-known Southern magazine. If I told you its name, you'd be astonished at what I found – the first page of the book, which of course is half a page as a new chapter, had five misspelled words in it. I'm afraid that didn't help my attitude as I worked on the rest of the book.

These things sounds silly, and we all know we've heard this over and over, but according to the two editors and two agents on the panel, it still occurs all the time – in cover letters and submissions. With computers that check spelling and grammar mistakes for you, it seems amazing that this still happens.

Here's a little secret I learned while working as a freelance proofreader for a publisher: read the text backwards, and you'll be amazed at how quickly the mistakes will jump out at you. It takes a lot of time, but it will mean your work will be clean and as mistake free as possible.

Leigh Neely has written a fantasy mystery and is currently editing and revising her manuscript. All her published work is in magazines, but she hopes to change that soon.

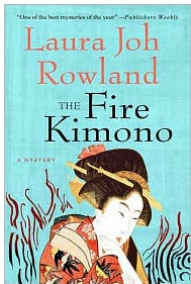


Bloodletter is your newsletter, and I hope you'll send me any announcements, events, or writings you'd like included. I reserve the right to edit and refuse to publish, but with this talented group, it shouldn't be a problem. Send everything to leighneely@yahoo.com and please include photos if you have them.

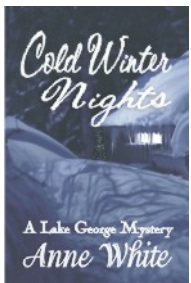
MURDER, THEY WROTE . . .



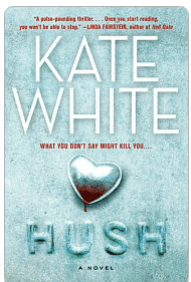
Member Peggy Ehrhart is celebrating the release of her first book, *Sweet Man is Gone*, as an audio book. As is the custom, Books in Motion gave the novel a new title, *Blue Murder*, and a new cover. Andrea Bates performs Peggy's work and is adept at providing the voices for various characters. Peggy did note that she found it amusing that Andrea gave a character described as "looking" like a Swedish model a Swedish accent. This means you can now purchase Peggy's book in print, on Kindle through Amazon, and as an audio book from Books in Motion. The second book in the Maxx Maxwell series will be out in January 2011.



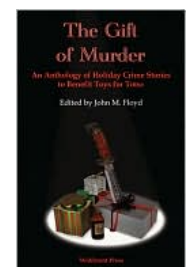
In a recent *Wall Street Journal*, David B. Rivkin, Jr. offered his selections for the five best historical mystery novels, and *The Fire Kimono*, by chapter member Laura Joh Rowland, is one of the selections. This title is in her long-running series about Sano Ichiro, a samurai detective in early 18th century Japan.



Annie White's fifth book in the Lake George Mystery series is *Cold Winter Nights* (Hilliard and Harris) and, for the first time, she sets the story in winter to include a holiday concert, a New Year's Day Polar Bear Plunge— a real event— in which almost 1,000 people dash, dive or creep into the freezing cold Lake George waters, skiing at Gore Mountain, and a Mardi-Gras type Carnival on the Ice complete with a masked murderer.

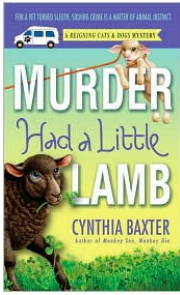


Kate White's first thriller, *Hush*, with her new publisher HarperCollins, is in bookstores now. *Hush* marks Kate's entry into a whole new genre. Set in the world of fertility clinics and hailed as a "pulse-pounding, chilling, and provocative" read, it's the story of an ordinary woman who flees the scene of a brutal murder and realizes it's not just the law that is hunting her.



Liz Zelvin's "Death Will Trim Your Tree," from the Toys for Tots anthology, *The Gift of Murder*, has been nominated for an Agatha award for Best Short Story. It's available on her website at elizabethzelvin.com to read or download free. Her latest book, *Death Will Help You Leave Him*, is in stores now.

MURDER, THEY WROTE . . .



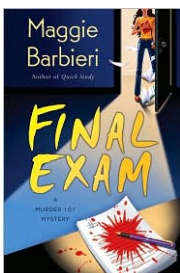
Bantam released the 8th title in Cynthia (Blair) Baxter's paperback series Reigning Cats and Dogs. Veterinarian and amateur sleuth Jessica Popper's latest adventure is titled *Murder Had a Little Lamb*.



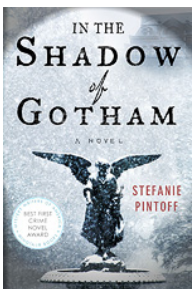
Kenneth Wishnia's latest novel, *The Fifth Servant*, is a Jewish-themed historical mystery that takes place in Prague, 1592. On the eve of Passover, in the fragile safety of the Jewish ghetto, a Christian girl is found in a local shop with her throat cut. As a Christian mob grows restive outside the gates, a newly-arrived Talmudic scholar from Poland pleads the shopkeeper's innocence to city officials, and is granted three days to conduct his own investigation amid the murky religious and political currents of this fascinating place and time.



Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine also published Ken's short story, "Between Minkhe and Mayrev," starring some of the same characters as his novel. It appears in April's issue.



Maggie Barbieri's 4th installment in her Murder 101 series, *Final Exam*, was just published by St. Martin's. St. Thomas University is a small school in the Bronx, and when a residential director goes missing near semester's end, English Professor Alison Bergeron moves into his room for a most unwelcome subbing job. It's the hidden drugs in the toilet that finally get Alison's cop boyfriend, Detective Robert Crawford, interested in helping her figure a way out of dorm detail.



Stefanie Pintoff's debut, *In the Shadow of Gotham*, began with an award from St. Martin's Minotaur which included publication. Since then, she's been nominated for Mystery Writers of America's Edgar Award, as well as a Romantic Times Readers Choice Award, and Malice Domestic's Agatha Award to boot!

Sisters in Crime (affectionately SinC, pronounced sink) was founded by a handful of women authors at the 1986 Bouchercon convention. Since then, we've grown to over 3,600 members in 48 chapters worldwide. As authors and readers, publishers and agents, librarians and booksellers, men and women, we share a love of the mystery genre and are united to offer each other networking, advice, and support.

The mission of Sisters in Crime is to promote the professional development and advancement of women crime writers to achieve equality in the industry.

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Moderator
Peggy Ehrhart, Member-at-Large
Cynthia Blair, Member-at-Large

Website:
www.nysinc.org – local chapter
www.sistersincrime.org – national
organization

Meetings are usually held the third Thursday of the month at the Muhlenberg Public Library in Manhattan, 209 W. 23rd Street.

Join us to socialize at 6 p.m., with the business meeting and program from 6:30 till 7:45. Afterward, members often choose to gather for dinner at a nearby restaurant. Library meetings are free, open to the public, and guests are cordially invited to attend.

In the event the meeting date or time is changed, it will be noted on our website.

