Hello, I must be going!

by Reed Farrel Coleman

Hello, I must be going! Hellos are always so much easier than goodbyes. And the fact that I am composing this farewell letter during the final week of my tenure isn’t making the task any easier.

Between my duties at MWA, my career, and my family, this last year has been a bit of a blur and I am certain that after a few months to reflect on it, I will be better able to focus on the things that were accomplished, as opposed to missed opportunities.

Having said that, I can assure you that the representatives you have elected as Board President, chapter presidents, and At-Large Directors — and the officers they, in turn, elect — care deeply about the organization and the individual members.

Passion is probably not the first word to come to mind when you consider your elected representatives, but it should be. If you could see as I did how hard these folks work, the level of personal sacrifice they make in order to serve you, then you would share the same high level of confidence I have that Mystery Writers of America will continue to flourish.

This commitment, at least during my term, started at the top. Although the presidency of MWA can be a figurehead position, Janet Evanovich rejected that notion right off the bat. In spite of releasing several books this year, she attended nearly every board meeting, made herself available to me whenever I needed to discuss pressing issues or strategy, attended SleuthFest, and threw herself headfirst into organizational matters. Many of the things that may be considered my accomplishments were due in large part to Janet’s guidance and support.

That, and she called me a “stud muffin” from the podium at the Edgar Banquet last year.

I also owe special thanks to Bob Williamson, Noreen Wald, Charles Todd and Margery Flax, our Treasurer, Secretary, Parliamentarian, and queen, respectively. Their sage advice and counsel served me well.

In the coming years you should see the fruits of the board’s labors. By next year at this time, MWA’s state-of-the-art website should be one of the most highly visited book sites on the net.

We have formed an alliance with a nationally syndicated

Recipe for a novel

By James W. Hall

“Mediocre writers borrow; great writers steal.” So said T.S. Eliot. He wasn’t encouraging plagiarism, but was distilling into a sentence a general approach that all writers use — whether they are conscious of it or not — to develop their craft.

In all the centuries before there were coast-to-coast creative-writing programs, ordinary folks had been learning to write poems, novels, plays, and stories quite well.

Though I’ve been teaching in a university writing program for 35 years and am absolutely certain that the service we provide to aspiring writers is of an overall benefit to many, I am equally certain that attending an academic institution to learn to write a novel is not necessary. Nor is it necessary to read how-to books on plot or character or the use of setting.

Everything a writer needs to learn her craft is sitting on her own bookshelf at this moment, just waiting to be plundered.

This may sound like heresy. A writer, and writing teacher,
The 2007 MWA National Board of Directors met for the first time on January 20. The board’s new officers are Daniel J. Hale, Executive Vice President; Frankie Y. Bailey, Secretary; and Bob Williamson, Treasurer. New MWA President Nelson DeMille also attended the meeting.

Retiring board members include TTD Chair Steve Brewer, who provided this Board Report each month. Many thanks to Steve for his fine work and leadership during the redesign of the publication this year.

As new TTD Chair, I’m looking forward to working with Editor Beth Tindall and Assistant Editor Annie Chernow, and can only hope to fill Steve’s size 11s.

--Sandy Balzo

IMPORTANT NOTICE
If you use mwa_org@earthlink.net to send e-mail to the National Office, please change your contact information to mwa@mysterywriters.org. The Earthlink address will no longer be valid starting Feb. 1, 2007.

“Hello, this is Hollywood calling. We loved your book. We’re thinking a movie for the big screen or maybe a series for the little screen.” What author doesn’t dream of receiving such a call? Unfortunately, for most of us, the Hollywood connection seems so elusive.

If you’re one of the many who would like to learn the ins and outs of Hollywood, come listen to Rona Edwards and Monika Skerbelis, co-authors of the critically acclaimed book, *I Liked It, Didn’t Love It: Screenplay Development from the Inside Out*. These director/producers have had more than 25 years’ experience in the film industry, having worked in development for major studios (Universal, 20th Century Fox, Paramount) and have had movies produced with VH1, ABC, USA, HBO, Lifetime, CBS, Warners Bros. and many others. The show airs on Tues., Feb. 13 at 8 p.m. Central.

Closely related to the Hollywood theme is the Broadway connection. Broadway personality Zev Buffman has joined forces with Angela Lansbury and other authors to revive great mystery plays and screenplays. This show will air on Tues., March 13 at 8 p.m. Central.

To listen to these shows, dial toll-free 866-212-0875 from USA, or 866-212-7554 from Canada, or 978-964-0049 Direct Global Toll. When prompted, punch in the participant passcode: 7629501#. During the last fifteen minutes of the show, I’ll open all lines so that my guests can receive questions from you, the listeners. You can also e-mail questions and suggestions for future guests and topics to ontheair@mysterywriters.org.

Last month’s show brought us co-publishers Kate Stine and Brian Skupin of Mystery Scene. They revealed information important to the entire mystery community. The MWA Members Only website has archives of this show and others. L. C. Hayden’s last mystery, *What Others Know*, was a Left Coast Crime Award Finalist. Her newest book, *Why Casey Had to Die*, was a December 2006 release.
When someone you know leaves us, someone who was talented, who overcame and who was in the last and most important analysis, a good person, you can’t believe it. Barbara Seranella, award-winning, bestselling mystery writer died this past January at the not-so-old age of 50 as she waited for her third liver transplant.

You can — and I would suggest you do if you haven’t — read one of Barbara’s novels featuring the hard-nosed Munch Mancini to pick up on the similarities between the character and the writer. Barbara made no secret of her past and, indeed, had triumphed over it to be clean and sober and productive.

In addition to her fiction, an essay she wrote for the L.A. Times that ran as her New Year’s resolution on December 31st really gives you an idea of the kind of woman Barbara was.

“These days I exist in a state of grace. I don’t get angry; there’s no one I argue with. Nothing is a big deal. I’m not worried about my career or signs of aging. I feed the birds and watch them eat. In my lack of hustle, mysteries have been solved.”

Now that’s tough. No pretense. No “woe is me” — just that straightforward manner that marked her style of writing and how she lived her life.

When she told me about her condition at Left Coast Crime in El Paso, I was the one tearing up, not her.

So not to contradict the departed, but for me the mystery still remains: Why did she have to die? Where’s the cosmic fairness in that?

I’m going to miss you, Barbara.
We all are going to miss you.

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Oceanview Publishing is currently accepting submissions of book-length adult fiction and non-fiction from new and established authors. Send a 750-word synopsis and the first 30 pages of the manuscript via e-mail and follow the guidelines on the publisher’s site. Agented or nonagented submissions will be considered. The review process takes 90 days. Books on the Oceanview list include South Beach Shakedown by Don Bruns, The Perfect Assassin by Ward Larsen and Death Angel by Martha Powers.

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Authors Ink Books will accept e-mail queries, but sample chapters or full manuscripts will only be accepted in hard copy via the postal service. By mail, send a query letter with the first three chapters, or 50 pages of printed text plus a chapter by chapter summary. Include your marketing ideas in an outline or a detailed proposal. (Decisions will be based on your writing, however.) Turnaround is six weeks, and an exclusive look is requested.

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New England Crime Fiction Contest

In memory of Al Blanchard, co-chair of the first three New England Crime Bake Conferences, NEMWA President, and member of Sisters in Crime, the New England Crime Bake Committee is sponsoring its third annual short crime fiction contest.

The prize is $100 plus publication in Level Best Books’ fifth anthology of crime fiction. The story must be a crime story by a New England author OR with a New England setting, previously unpublished (in print or electronically), must not be more than 5,000 words in length, and may include the following genres: mystery, thriller, suspense, caper, and horror, but no torture/killing of children or animals.

This is a blind contest with NO entry free. The deadline for submissions is April 30, 2007. It is okay to submit the same story again, provided it has not been published in the meantime. It is also okay to submit more than one story. The winner will be a guest of the Crime Bake Committee at the New England Crime Bake, held every year in mid-November, where the award will be presented in person.
Q. It's almost tax time! I do all my writing at home. Is it worth taking a "home office" deduction? And what other deductions may I take?

A. Although the IRS carefully scrutinizes home office deductions, they are permissible if you strictly follow IRS guidelines.

Briefly, your use of the business part of your home must be exclusive and regular, AND the business part of your home must be one of the following: a) your principal place of business, or b) a place where you meet or deal with clients or customers in the normal course of your business, or c) a separate structure (not attached to your home).

For most writers, the key is the “exclusive use” test: You must use a specific area of your home only for your writing, although the area used for writing can be a room or other separately identifiable space — the space need not be marked off by a permanent partition.

You do NOT meet the requirements of the exclusive use test if you use the area both for business and for personal purposes, e.g. using your den to write and also watch television. If, however, you dedicate a section of your den exclusively to your writing, that exclusive area (by square footage) may satisfy the test.

The amount of the deduction is based on the ratio of business usage to non-business usage of your entire home.

For example, if 15 percent of your home or apartment is used for writing only, then 15 percent of all household expenses, including electric, rent, heating, repairs, insurance, and tips to your mailman, are deductible.

Homeowners also can take a depreciation deduction. For more information, see IRS Publication 587, Business Use of Your Home, which can be obtained online at www.irs.gov.

Other Deductions. Of course, writers also can deduct on their Schedule C of Form 1040 all “ordinary and necessary” business expenses, but “necessary” does not mean “indispensable.” Some common expenses that writers may deduct include office and computer supplies, postage, writer’s workshops and conferences, duplicating and printing, magazines subscriptions, insurance, telephone and Internet service, business use of a car, advertising and promotion costs, travel, parking and tolls, and professional organization dues.

If property you acquire for business use is expected to last more than one year, however (a desk, bookcase, computer or printer, for example), there are special rules you must follow to depreciate the property, explained in IRS Publication 946, How to Depreciate Property.

But You Can’t Deduct For Non-Payment. Writers frequently sell stories and even novels to publishers that go out of business or otherwise don’t pay. There is a very common misconception that this is a “bad debt” for which the writer may take a deduction. Not so! In fact, according to the IRS, in Publication 334, Tax Guide for Small Business, “Cash method taxpayers normally do not report income until they receive payment. Thereafter, they cannot take a bad debt deduction for payments they have not received or cannot collect.”

Daniel Steven is Chairman of the MWA Contracts and Grievances Committee and a publishing and media attorney. This column provides general legal information; consult an attorney for application of the law to your specific circumstances. © 2007 Daniel Steven

Reed’s goodbye

Continued from Page 1

participating in a contest to award a contract to an unpublished author.

We have formed an alliance with a nationally syndicated radio show that features MWA guest authors on an almost-weekly basis. And this show is being developed for television.

Within the next few months, the MWA Books in Print guide will be out and made available to book sellers and libraries. It will also be a useful tool for MWA at BEA, the Miami Book Fair, and the like.

MWA’s presence at book fairs and conventions will continue to grow as we sponsor entire mystery tracks. We will likely be entering into sponsorship agreements with major corporations in order to expand the organization and its influence in the publishing community.

But not everything we’ve done is on the grand scale. We have taken a much more proactive stance toward our local chapters by encouraging them, with both words and funds, to develop local events. For example, this past year marked the premier Killer Nashville Convention run by the SEMWA Chapter under the guidance of Clay Stafford.

We have allotted over $10,000 to the Author Enrichment Fund, the aim of which is to help our affiliate members take the next step to publication and active membership.

We have increased the number of pages in The Third Degree and the newsletter has changed the focus to more writer-relevant material. We’ve also enhanced its look.

The board’s other good works are just too numerous to list. Before I go, I want to remind you all about the upcoming Edgar Week. We’ve selected the great Stephen King as Grand Master. TV personality Al Roker has graciously agreed to host the banquet. Kris Montee and Kelly Nichols (PJ Parrish) are going to produce an amazing show.

Please come out and show your support for the organization. Ultimately, what we do on the board will succeed or fail based upon your level of involvement and support. Please volunteer, answer the questionnaires, send in your dues promptly.

It was a rare honor to serve the organization and I thank you all.

Reed Farrel Coleman’s newest Moe Prager book, Soul Patch, will be released in May 2007.
Florida
SleuthFest Law & Order will be held April 19-22 in Miami Beach, with guests of honor bestselling author Linda Fairstein and Rene Balcer, producer/writer for Law & Order. Registration costs increase Feb. 15. Visit www.sleuthfest.com for more information.

Mid-Atlantic
The Mid-Atlantic Chapter has a full schedule planned for February and March. On Feb. 6, former prosecutor Linda Fairstein will thrill our Chapter dinner audience.

Edgar®-winning author Dan Stashower will read from his newest book, The Beautiful Cigar Girl, on Feb. 19 at a joint event with Chapters: A Literary Bookstore.


Award-winning author Laura Lippman will be featured at Chapters: A Literary Bookstore on Mar. 19. The Hon. William S. Cohen, former Secretary of Defense, and his wife Janet Langhart Cohen, will speak at our dinner on Mar. 27.

Midwest
Under the leadership of new Midwest Chapter Board member Larry Sweazy, the January meeting was held in Indianapolis, with 31 people attending.

In February, there are two meetings. The first will be in Chicago at the Love is Murder (on Dark and Stormy Nights) convention. Our speaker will be Ken Bruen. As always with Ken, we anticipate a most interesting presentation. This meeting will be held on Sun., Feb. 4 at 10:00 a.m., and one does not need to register for the convention to attend.

There will also be a meeting of the Twin Cities area contingent. New Midwest Chapter Board member Jess Lourey has arranged for Minnesota-based publisher Midnight Ink to host an MWMWA meeting at its Woodbury (suburb of St. Paul) offices on Feb. 13, from 7-9 p.m. Midnight Ink will be providing food and drink as well as the speakers. Alison Aten, their head of publicity, and acquisitions editor Barbara Moore will be among those available to present and answer questions about publishing and publicizing.

New England
On Tuesday, Feb. 6, MWA New England will welcome speaker Casey Sherman. Casey’s true crime thriller, Search for the Strangler, chronicles the author’s 12-year re-investigation into the murder of his aunt Mary Sullivan — the youngest and last victim of the Boston Strangler. Was she murdered by Albert DeSalvo? Did he actually commit any of the crimes to which he confessed? Sherman reveals new information that could answer the questions once and for all.

Sherman is the senior writer at CBS4 News and a contributing writer for Boston Magazine. He’s been profiled in The New York Times, Newsweek, and People Magazine. He has also appeared on dozens of television programs, including The Today Show and America’s Most Wanted.

New York
As Jane K. Cleland assumed the chapter presidency, she announced the recording of all speaker programs. The podcasts are available on the chapter’s new website as MP3s.

Jane has appointed Charles Benoit as the first chair of our new Library Relations Committee to build ongoing, useful, strategic relationships with librarians throughout our region.

Also on the New York regional board are incumbents Jason Starr and Jim Weikart and second termer, the Hon. Andrew J. Peck. Elected to a first one-year term are Jillian Abbott, E. W. Count, and Peggy Ehrhart. Elected to a first two-year term are Alafair Burke, Kevin Berean, Chris Grabenstein, Robert Knightly, and Tim McLoughlin.

Leaving the board after 2 two-year terms are G. Miki Hayden, Madeline Weitsman, and Barry T. Zeman.

Northern California
In March, we’ll hold our next meeting as usual at John's
I found myself not paying nearly as much attention to the novel that lay open on my desk. Because the novel unfolding on my computer screen was taking possession of me.

I think of this process now as being like the booster rocket that pushes the heavy payload off the ground and propels beyond the pull of gravity, then when it's served its purpose it drops away and the space capsule (your own novel) continues on its own course, and finds its own orbit.

This finished novel became Under Cover of Daylight and it was published by W.W. Norton in 1987. It was reviewed favorably, sold more copies than most first novels do, and it started a career in novel writing that I'm still engaged in 20 years later.

About a dozen years ago when I decided to try to teach a novel writing course in the MFA program at Florida International University, I used this same approach.

The course was titled, “Writing Your First Novel.” Rather than rely on one of the many fine fiction writing textbooks that are out there (Janet Burroway's Writing Fiction being the best of the lot), I had each student spend a couple of weeks deciding on a particular novel they would use as their model.

That's the first issue we discussed, and it's a crucial step in this process. For some beginning writers there's no doubt in their mind when it comes to selecting a model. They know and love a particular book with such passion that it stands apart from all other books they've read in its influence over them.

For other beginning writers choosing a model for their own work can get confusing. They like so many books, admire the abilities and styles and skills of so many different writers that picking one out of that huge assortment is a daunting task. But it must be done to follow this method.

Of course, we are all influenced by many of the books we've read. We admire certain writers for certain aspects of their craft, and other writers for completely different skills.

For instance, I think of John D. MacDonald, the creator of Travis McGee, as an incredibly good writer of action scenes. When two men are fighting, his descriptions of the physicality of the events is nearly without parallel. Ross Macdonald is great with faces and expressions and eyes. James Lee Burke is fantastic with weather, and Elmore Leonard is the master of dialog. Sue Grafton has a voice, wry but tough, that I dearly love. And on and on.

But when it comes to choosing a model for your first novel, you MUST, focus on only one. More than that confuses the issue.

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Recipe
Continued from page 6

The novel you choose should be one that will sustain your long-term interest. (That sometimes won’t become clear until you’ve tried out this method for a month or so.) It should have been commercially successful (though not necessarily a blockbuster). It should have been written within the last 50 years or so. (Times and fashions change so radically, and it can be dangerous to choose a book that was popular in some bygone era, but seems silly in our current one.) And the book you choose should fall in your comfort zone. (You don’t want to pick a Tom Clancy novel as your model if you have no patience for research, or don’t already possess a vast storehouse of information about some area of expertise.)

Hemingway had Sherwood Anderson’s stories open on his desk when he struggled to write his own first stories. He was convinced he could write at least as well as Anderson. He stole a great deal from Sherwood Anderson and were it not for using Anderson as his model, many of the stories in *In Our Time* (Hemingway’s first collection of short stories) could not have been written.

Great writers steal. Which means they don’t simply take someone else’s work and slap a fresh coat of paint on it. They take someone else’s work and digest it fully, absorb it into their own chemistry and what was once Sherwood Anderson is transformed into something all new, totally fresh, with only the faintest echoes of the original.

Several students in that long-ago class went on to publish novels. All of them are still publishing novels today, even in a very competitive marketplace.

I’m not trying to take any credit for their success. They learned to write their novels the old-fashioned way, the way writers have always learned to write. They didn’t study literary theory. They didn’t analyze Aristotle’s *Poetics* to learn to plot their novels.

They sat down with a pre-existing version of the thing they wanted to do, and studied it till they knew it inside and out and could use that model to support them through the long and difficult stages of composition, until they were ultimately able to give birth to their own creation.

*James W. Hall is the author of 14 novels, the most recent of which is Magic City (March 2007). He lives in South Florida and North Carolina.*

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**SAMPLE: Opening chapter**

Using the model described, here is how my own first chapter of *Under Cover of Daylight* might be outlined:

**Opening Chapter -- Who, what, when, where**

- **10-12 ms. pages:** (2500 words approximately) It is important to have this in mind at the outset so you can pace yourself to the first breaking point.
  - **Two characters**
  - **The season of year; the weather**
  - **The historical moment:** What year?
  - **Establish location:** general -- South Florida; more specific -- Key Largo; and even more specific -- the main character’s room
  - **Establish central dramatic conflict:** The WHAT that drives the story
  - **What actions take place?** These should be the actions which will ripple through the rest of the novel
  - **WHY these actions take place:** the psychological reasons the people behave as they do will come later and be part of the suspense and mystery as the reader discovers more and more about why the main character did what he did. Many of the other events of the rest of the story are also direct consequences of this initial action. A stone thrown in a still pond, the ripples spread through the entire story.
  - **Establish the specific work (job) of central character:** My character ties fishing lures for a living. Ideally this job should have some metaphorical connection with other aspects of the story.
  - **The two characters should speak to each other for at least one page.**
  - **The two characters should struggle, physically and psychologically.**
  - **They should touch each other.**
  - **There should be uncertainty about who will prevail.**
  - **The outcome of this struggle should be violent and unexpected.**
  - **A death will occur.**
  - **The consequences of this struggle should be what propels the psychology of the main character and the rest of the action of the novel.**
  - **A seed should be planted in this opening scene:** A shadow character who may have witnessed the violent event that will flower into a major aspect of the storyline.
Edgar® nominees

**Best Novel**
The Pale Blue Eye by Louis Bayard (HarperCollins)
The Janissary Tree by Jason Goodwin (Sarah Crichton Books/FSG)
Gentlemen and Players by Joanne Harris (HarperCollins - William Morrow)
The Dead Hour by Denise Mina (Hachette Book Group - Little, Brown and Company)
The Virgin of Small Plains by Nancy Pickard (Random House - Ballantine Books)
The Liberation Movements by Olen Steinhauer (St. Martin's Minotaur)

**Best First Novel By An American Author**
The Faithful Spy by Alex Berenson (Random House)
Sharp Objects by Gillian Flynn (Crown - Shaye Areheart Books)
King of Lies by John Hart (St. Martin's Minotaur - Thomas Dunne Books)
Holmes on the Range by Steve Hockensmith (St. Martin's Minotaur)
A Field of Darkness by Cornelia Read (Warner Books - Mysterious Press)

**Best Paperback Original**
The Goodbye Kiss by Massimo Carlotto (Europa Editions)
The Open Curtain by Brian Evenson (Coffee House Press)
Snakeskin Shamisen by Naomi Hirahara (Bantam Dell Publishing - Delta Books)
The Deep Blue Alibi by Paul Levine (Bantam Dell Publishing - Bantam Books)
City of Tiny Lights by Patrick Neate (Penguin Group - Riverhead Books)

**Best Critical/Biographical**
Unless the Threat of Death is Behind Them: Hard-Boiled Fiction and Film Noir by John T. Irwin (Johns Hopkins University Press)
The Science of Sherlock Holmes: From Baskerville Hall to the Valley of Fear by E.J. Wagner (John Wiley & Sons)

**Best Fact Crime**
Strange Piece of Paradise by Terri Jentz (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)
A Death in Belmont by Sebastian Junger (W.W. Norton and Co.)
Ripperology: A Study of the World's First Serial Killer by Robin Odell (The Kent State University Press)
The Beautiful Cigar Girl: Mary Rogers, Edgar Allan Poe and the Invention of Murder by Daniel Stashower (Dutton)
Manhunt: The 12-Day Chase for Lincoln’s Killer by James L. Swanson (HarperCollins - William Morrow)

**Best Television Episode Teleplay**
The Closer - “Blue Blood,” Teleplay by James Duff & Mike Berchem (Turner Network Television)
Dexter - “Crocodile,” Teleplay by Clyde Phillips (Showtime)
House - “Clueless,” Teleplay by Thomas L. Moran (Fox/NBC Universal)
Life on Mars - Episode 1, Teleplay by Matthew Graham (BBC America)
Monk - “Mr. Monk Gets a New Shrink,” Teleplay by Hy Conrad (USA Network/NBC Universal)

**Best Television Feature/Mini-Series Teleplay**
Conviction, Teleplay by Bill Gallagher (BBC America)
Cracker: A New Terror, Teleplay by Jimmy McGovern (BBC America)

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Continued from Page 5

Grill in San Francisco, Dashiel Hammet's old haunt. Visit our website for details (www.mwanorcal.org) on our guest speaker either from the field of law enforcement, forensics, ballistics, or maybe even a Sacramento FBI agent.

Northwest

MWA-NW's board spent the month of January putting the finishing touches on plans for its co-sponsorship of Left Coast Crime in Seattle, including Friday night's special underground tour. We're looking forward to seeing you all there, so please stop by the MWA table and say hello!

Rocky Mountain

For our Feb. 8 meeting Troy Cook, the author of 47 Rules of Highly Effective Bank Robbers, will discuss his book and how it was recently optioned for a movie. Since our chapter president has been on a speaking/arresting acquaintance with some rather ineffective bank robbers, this should be an interesting session.

If any of our chapter members will be in the Denver area during one of our meetings (say for a book signing), we definitely encourage them to drop in. They might even end up being our featured monthly speaker at that meeting.

Southeast

SEMWA recently held elections for four board member positions. Members re-elected Clay Stafford as SEMWA chapter president. Sallie Bissell of Asheville, NC, will replace Linda Black as a board member and SEMWA newsletter editor. Chester Campbell was re-elected Western Area representative for another two-year term. Finally, Cathy Pickens of Charlotte, NC, is the newly elected Publicity/PR Coordinator.

Southern California

MWA SoCal has lost its longest serving member, Patricia Matthews (1927-2006). Patricia, an active member, joined MWA in May 1965. By the time she died on Dec. 7 last year from complications due to congestive heart failure, she'd written 45 novels published in her own name, in the names of Patty Brisco and Laura Wylie, and several in collaboration with her husband Clayton Matthews.

Though she wrote suspense thrillers and contributed stories to Alfred Hitchcock's, Ellery Queen's and Mike Shayne's Mystery Magazines, she was best known for her historical romantic fiction. A number of her romances sold in the millions of copies. In an interview for Contemporary Authors (a biography series available for download on Amazon.com), Patricia said, "To bring pleasure and escape and mental stimulation to others is not an insignificant thing."

In happier news, our monthly programs are back on track. February's luncheon will feature a dialog/interview/chat between two eminent Sherlockians: chapter member Charles Higham, author of The Adventures of Conan Doyle among many other books; and newly sworn-in chapter president Les Klinger, an Edgar® winner for The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes.

In mid-February the MWA SoCal Board is meeting for a one-day retreat to discuss how to further improve and energize the chapter, with an emphasis on outreach to the community and ways to include some of the chapter's farther flung members in our activities.

Southwest

Members of the Southwest Chapter continue to look forward to their annual conference, Hard Boiled Heroes and Cozy Cats, to be held June 15 -16 in Dallas. The keynote speaker will be bestselling author David Morrell, creator of John Rambo.

At their January meeting, The Houston area members welcomed Ray Hill, the creator, host, and producer of The Prison Show, which was voted Houston's Best Talk Radio Show, 2006. Hill discussed the "Woodlands Ten" case about the 1991 murder of Paul Broussard in Houston, and what has happened to the young men convicted of the crime. Ray also spoke about life within the Texas prison system.

Dallas and Fort Worth area members had a good time at their holiday Happy Hour in December held at the Trinity Hall. For more information, please see the Southwest Chapter web site (www.mwasw.org).

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-- Brenda Novak
Bestselling author of Dead Silence (July 2006)

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Stonecreek Media
identity by design
Edgar® nominees

Continued from Page 8

**Best Television Feature/Mini-Series Teleplay, continued**

**Messiah: The Harrowing**, Teleplay by Terry Caflina (BBC America)

**Secret Smile**, Teleplay by Kate Brooke, based on the book by Nicci French (BBC America)

**The Wire, Season 4**, Teleplays by Ed Burns, Kia Corthron, Dennis Lehane, David Mills, Eric Overmyer, George Pelecanos, Richard Price, David Simon & William F. Zorzi (Home Box Office)

**Best Motion Picture Screen Play**

**Casino Royale**, Screenplay by Neal Purvis, Robert Wade & Paul Haggis, based on novel by Ian Fleming (MGM)

**Children of Men**, Screenplay by Alfonso Cuarón, Timothy J. Sexton, David Arata, Mark Fergus & Hawk Ostby, based on a novel by P.D. James (Universal Pictures)

**The Departed**, Screenplay by William Monahan (Warner Bros. Pictures)

**The Good Shepherd**, Teleplay by Eric Roth (Universal Pictures)

**Notes on a Scandal**, Screenplay by Patrick Marber (Scott Rudin Productions)

**Robert L. Fish Memorial Award**

**William Dylan Powell** *“Evening Gold”* - EQMM November 2006 (Dell Magazines)

**Simon & Schuster-Mary Higgins Clark Award**

**Bloodline** by Fiona Mountain (St. Martin’s Minotaur)

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**fresh blood**

January 2007

**ACTIVE**


**FRITZ-COPE**, Michelle NOCAL *The Tunnels* (Mira Books) June 2007

**GRAY**, Penny NE *Everything to Prove* (Harlequin) April 2006


**LUKASIK**, Gail MW *Destroying Angels* (Five Star) March 2006

**NOVAK**, Brenda NOCAL *Dead Right* (Mira Books) February 2007


**ROWSE**, Sharon CORR *No Job for a Gentleman* (Carroll & Graf) 2007


**WILEY**, Michael FL *The Last Strip Tease* (St. Martin’s Press) Fall 2007

(Fresh Blood, continued)

**ASSOCIATE**

**LIPIRA**, Vicki MW Publisher/Editor, Great Mystery and Suspense Magazine

**AFFILIATE**

**ABROMOVITZ**, Les FL Attorney

**BENEDICT**, Laura MW

**BETIT**, Paul NE Journalist

**DASHOFY**, Annette NY Yoga Instructor

**EDWARDS**, George MW International Law/Academic Writing

**GRANEY**, Douglas SW

**HEWES**, Robert SOCAL Truck Driver

**JASTRZEBSKI**, Michael FL

**JEHN**, George NY Retired Airline Pilot

**JOHNSON**, Heidi SW Linguist/Activist

**KATZ**, Candace MA Deputy Director, President’s Commission on the Arts & Humanities

**LYNN**, Carol NE Strategic Marketing Consultant

**MACDONALD**, Jedeane RM Technical Editor

**MCCANN**, Dale SOCAL

**MOSA**, Althea NW Retired Police Officer

**PETERSON**, Laurel NY Associate Professor of English

**RICHARDS**, Penny SW Caterer

**SANYAL**, Mary NOCAL Psychotherapist

**SCHAAB**, Susan NY Licensed Attorney

**SMITH**, Wilson SW Mortgage Broker

**SULLIVAN**, Irene FL

**TCHAKOUMI**, Virginie SOCAL Translator

**WALKER**, John NOCAL Education Specialist Cisco Systems

**WARNER**, Wanda MA Former Journalist/Screenwriter

**WELCH**, Leian NY Copywriter

**REQUEST FOR CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP STATUS**

**GRUNER**, Mary MW Affiliate to Active. Two Wrongs (Hard Shell Word Factory).


**PERRY**, Carol NE Affiliate to Active. 2 short stories published by Level Best Books in anthologies plus an additional story published by New England Writers Network.

**WISSEMAN**, Sarah MW Affiliate to Active. The Dead Sea Codex (Hard Shell Word Factory) January 2006.

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February 2007

Books

Cordelia Frances Biddle, *The Conjurer*, St. Martin’s Minotaur
Claudia Bishop, *Ground to a Halt*, Berkley Prime Crime
Lawrence Block, *Lucky at Cards*, Hard Case Crime
Giles Blunt, *By the Time You Read This*, Henry Holt
James O. Born, *Field of Fire*, Putnam
J. S. Borthwick, *Foiled Again*, St. Martin’s Minotaur
Deborah Crombie, *Water Like a Stone*, William Morrow
Robert Dugoni, *Damage Control*, Warner Books
Lisa Gardner, *Hide*, Bantam
Lee Goldberg, *Mr. Monk and the Blue Flu*, Signet
Carolyn Haines, *Fever Moon*, St. Martin’s Minotaur
Charlaine Harris, *Grave Surprise*, Berkley Prime Crime
L. C. Hayden, *Why Casey Had To Die*, Five Star
Steve Hockensmith, *On the Wrong Track*, St. Martin’s Minotaur
Jonnie Jacobs, *The Next Victim*, Kensington
Marne Davis Kellogg, *Perfect*, Griffin
Bob Morris, *Bermuda Schwartz*, St. Martin’s Minotaur
Shirley Rousseau Murphy, *Cat Pay The Devil*, Morrow
Shirley Rousseau Murphy, *Cat Breaking Free*, Avon
Robert B. Parker, *High Profile*, Putnam
Gillian Roberts, *All’s Well That Ends*, Ballantine
Sara Rosett, *Staying Home Is A Killer*, Kensington
Gammy L. Singer, *Hard Luck and Trouble: A Landlord’s Tale*, Dafina
David Skibbins, *The Star*, St. Martin’s Minotaur
Peter Spiegelman, *Red Cat*, Knopf
David Sundstrand, *Shadow Of The Raven*, St. Martin’s Minotaur
Leann Sweeney, *Shoot From The Lip*, NAL/Signet
Charles Todd, *A Long Shadow*, William Morrow
Noreen Wald, *Hurricane Homicide*, Berkley Prime Crime
Allen Wyler, *Dead Head*, Forge

Short Stories

Kris Neri, “Malibu Dreamin‘,” *Gone Coastal Anthology*, Seven Sisters Press, November 2006

Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine, February 2007

Jon L. Breen, “The Missing Elevator Puzzle”
Steve Hockensmith, “Dear Dr. Watson”
Edward D. Hoch, “A Bird In The Sand”

Young Adults/Juvenile Books

Peg Kehret, *Trapped*, Dutton Children’s Books

Stage Play

John Dandola, *The Intercessions Of Father Brown*, Premiere Performance: Saturday, January 27, 2007 at 8 p.m., Seton Hall University’s Theatre-in-the-Round, South Orange, New Jersey

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- A sad farewell
to an old friend
- Tax time have you confused?
- Full listing of Edgar nominees

**photos**

**Your MWA Board**