

# CAPITOL CRIMES

*Sharing the thrill of mystery.*

FEBRUARY 2023

## From the President

### Happy Lunar New Year!

Lunar New Year snuck up on me. One minute the Year of the Tiger — my year — loomed auspiciously ahead as I happily Tweeted my writing hopes and dreams for 2022.

And just like that, I was stuffing red envelopes again.

With no clue what predictions were in store for Year of the Rabbit, I did what any good, fourth-generation, half-Chinese/half-Japanese American would do — I Googled it.

Turns out, rabbits are a symbol of peace, prosperity, and ... longevity, something I've been thinking about a lot lately.

Sustaining a writing career through the ups and downs of the publishing industry is no easy feat.

I recently had the privilege of participating in a Zoom call with Edgar Award-winning author [Naomi Hirahara](#), one of my longtime favorites. I discovered *SUMMER OF THE BIG BACCHI* one afternoon at Borders, and her series about a mystery-solving [Issei](#) gardener sparked an idea for a manuscript I'd eventually write — twenty years later.

Over the course of her career, Hirahara has penned three mystery series on top of numerous non-fiction and children's books. Her historical mystery, the New York Times Bestseller *CLARK AND DIVISION* won the 2022 Mary Higgins Clark Award.

So I was shocked when she told us she's had four literary agents. (The changeovers were mostly due to retirements, but still ... finding one agent is hard enough.)

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“BTW, I’ve also been orphaned six times!” Hirahara wrote when I emailed asking permission to include her story here. “In other words, I’ve lost my acquiring editor six times.”

Talk about ups and downs.

We can also take inspiration, and learn a thing or two about perseverance, from developmental editor and award-winning author of *THEY COME AT KNIGHT* [Yasmin Angoe](#), who will be leading the three-day, in-depth [Capitol Crimes Writing Retreat Oct. 26-29](#).

On the verge of [giving up her dream](#) of being a published author after years of rejections, she almost deleted her application for the [Sisters in Crime Eleanor Taylor Bland Award](#). (Submissions for the \$2,000 grant for crime fiction writers of color are open through March 31.) But she hit send anyway — and won.

A year or so later, the cover of her critically-acclaimed debut *HER NAME IS KNIGHT* was on the billboard at Times Square.

USA Today bestselling cozy mystery author [Ellen Byron](#) will be talking to us about the organics of outlining at our meeting on Feb. 18. According to her website, she is an award-winning playwright and a “non-award-winning TV writer of comedies like *WINGS*, *JUST SHOOT ME* and *FAIRLY ODD PARENTS*.”

I can’t wait to hear what secrets to sustained success Ellen, a multiple Agatha and Lefty award winner, may reveal.

If you’re like me, and you didn’t accomplish everything you set out to do in 2022, that’s okay. Google predicts the Year of the Rabbit will be the year of hope.

And here at Capitol Crimes, longevity is the name of the game.

—Jennifer Morita, President



## Upcoming Events

### **MEET THE AUTHOR – TERRY SHEPHERD**

Tuesday, February 07, 2023 @ 7:00 PM (PT) • Zoom

### **THE ORGANICS OF OUTLINING with ELLEN BYRON**

Saturday, February 18, 2023 @ 1:00 PM (PT) • Zoom

### **COPS & WRITERS: HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER**

Saturday, March 25, 2023 @ 1:00 PM (PT) • Zoom

### **CAPITOL CRIMES WRITERS WORKSHOP with YASMIN ANGOE**

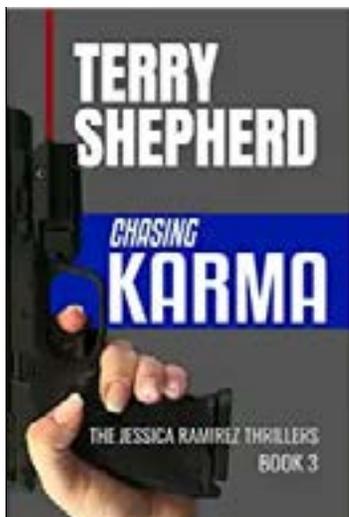
October 26-29, 2023

Mercy Center Auburn, 535 Sacramento Street, Auburn CA

Visit [www.CapitolCrimes.org](http://www.CapitolCrimes.org) for details and to register.

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## Chapter News



### MEET THE AUTHOR

Join us as Terry discusses the third installment of the Jessica Ramirez Thrillers as Jess comes face to face with destiny.

A hostage drama with a psychopath turns out to be the tip of an iceberg of intrigue and deception that leads our Jess and Ali to a secret with international implications.

America's favorite "badass Latina cop," is back with the ensemble cast readers have come to know and love. And whenever Jessica is doing the chasing, the twists and turns never stop.

Terry Shepherd created Detective Jessica Ramirez in 2019, publishing his thriller Chasing Vega in 2020. Chasing the

Captain appeared in August of 2021. Jess will appear in the short story, "Traction" in the 2023 Malice in Dallas Anthology. Her thrillers have been translated into Spanish and are also available as audiobooks. The third installment in the trilogy, Chasing Karma debuts January 13th, 2023.

Terry is also a prolific book narrator and audio-artist, hosting the popular Authors on the Air podcast. He and his wife, Colleen, co-wrote Juliette and the Mystery Bug, teaching kids how to protect themselves from Covid-19. Colleen and Terry live and write on the ocean in Jacksonville, Florida.

[TerryShepherd.com](http://TerryShepherd.com)

Register for Meet the Author Zoom link [here](#).



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### THE ORGANICS OF OUTLINING WITH ELLEN BYRON

Like pantsing, outlining is organic— just at another point in the process. In this webinar, Ellen Byron shares how she translated her experience writing outlines for hit TV series into penning outlines for award-winning mysteries.

Learn about dramatic structure, "loglines," and turning notes into a beat sheet you can grow into a full outline —always keeping in mind that there's no right or wrong to the process. There's only what works best for you.

Ellen's Cajun Country Mysteries have won the Agatha Award and multiple Best Humorous Mystery Lefty awards. She also writes the Vintage Cookbook Mystery series, and the Catering Hall Mysteries under the name Maria DiRico. Ellen is an award-winning playwright and non-award-winning TV writer of comedies like Wings, Just Shoot Me, and Fairly Odd Parents, but considers her most impressive credit working as a cater-waiter for Martha Stewart.

<https://www.ellenbyron.com/>

Be sure to sign up for our February meeting with Ellen Byron by clicking [here](#).



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## Chapter News



[Robin Burcell](#), [James L'Etoile](#) and [Adam Plantinga](#) have decades of law enforcement experience under their belts from hostage negotiations to taking criminals off the streets of San Francisco and Lodi.

Jim even did time behind bars at a maximum security prison — as an associate warden, of course.

They're also award-winning crime writers.

Who better to teach us how to get away with murder?

Join Capitol Crimes for our Cops & Writers panel on Saturday, March 25 at 1 PM (Pacific Time) via Zoom.

Jim will moderate the wide-ranging discussion of police procedurals, creating law enforcement characters and how writers get the authentic details right — or really wrong.

Register for the March meeting Zoom link [here](#).

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### NEW YEAR, NEW BOOKS FOR THE CAPITOL CRIMES VIRTUAL BOOKCASE

It's time to clear out our shelves and make room for new books – yours!

We're updating the virtual bookcase on our [homepage](#), and we're looking for a few new titles to add. One-click on any cover in the revolving slideshow will take visitors to the author's preferred online bookseller. If you would like to support local, independent bookstores, [bookshop.org](#) is a great option.

Current Capitol Crimes members can submit one book to be featured by completing [this form](#). Be sure to send an image of your book cover in a separate email to [capitolcrimes@gmail.com](mailto:capitolcrimes@gmail.com)

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## Chapter News

### MEET THE AUTHOR APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR 2023

February marks the launch of Meet the Author hosted by our beloved past president Penny Manson.

Every other month Penny will chat with Capitol Crimes authors on Zoom about their latest books and writing careers.

[Meet the Author](#) is more than a book club. It's a chance to speak with published writers, find out what inspires their stories and characters, and learn about their writing processes and pathways to publication.

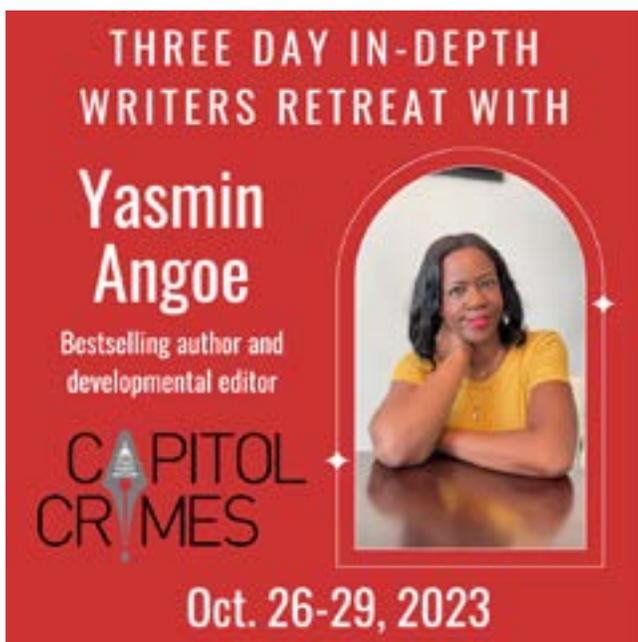
Questions from the audience give readers the chance to explore the hidden layers between the pages, making it a great way to introduce readers to new authors.

Any authors who are **Capitol Crimes members in good standing** may apply to be a featured guest on Meet the Author by filling out this [form](#). Any full-length book traditionally or self-published will be considered. Priority will be given to authors with a book release in 2023.

Meet the Author is typically held at 7 PM Pacific Time on the second Tuesday of alternating months. We have openings available for April, June, August, October and December of 2023.

Authors must be available to attend the full meeting to answer questions from the audience and a Zoom rehearsal prior to the event.

For more information, please email us at [CapitolCrimes@gmail.com](mailto:CapitolCrimes@gmail.com).



[Yasmin Angoe](#), developmental editor and bestselling author, will spend three packed days with writers who want to go in-depth with their craft.

This retreat is limited to 15 attendees. Attendees will receive individual critiques of up to 10 pages from Yasmin, an individual consultation with her about the work, five in-depth craft sessions, and time to write and share work with fellow attendees. Lodging and meals are included at the beautiful Mercy Auburn Retreat Center. Learn more [here](#).

**REGISTRATION  
OPEN NOW!**

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## Member News

### CAPITOL CRIMES MEMBERS AT NOIR AT THE BAR DURING LEFT COAST CRIME

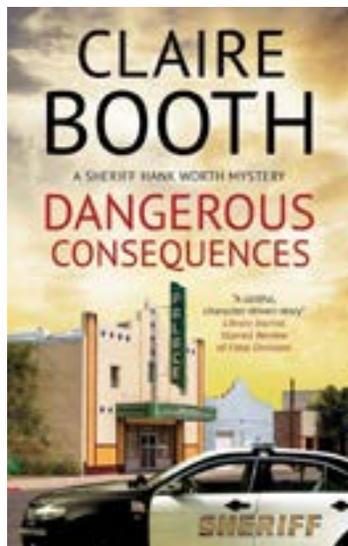
Tucson Noir at the Bar

Just in time to kick off [Left Coast Crime!](#) Join a collection of crime writers at The Firetruck Brewing Company at 6:30 p.m. on March 15th. This free event will feature nine amazing authors. They include:

Laurie R. King  
Matt Coyle  
Curtis Ippolito  
Meredith Hambrock  
A.J. Devlin  
**Claire Booth**  
**Patrick Whitehurst**  
**Richard Meredith**  
S.M. Freedman



Hope you will all attend and support these talented authors!



### “Dangerous Consequences” makes Kevin Tipple’s Top Books of 2022

<https://kevintipplescorner.blogspot.com/2022/07/my-favorites-of-2022-so-far.html>

I have long been a fan of the Sheriff Hank Worth series. Back in late May, I told you about the new one titled *Dangerous Consequences: A Sheriff Hank Worth Mystery* by Claire Booth. My review began with, “As *Dangerous Consequences: A Sheriff Hank Worth Mystery* by Claire Booth begins, the ripple effects of the recent termination of several deputies, continue. New staff is being brought in while some of the still employed old guard continue to work from within against Sheriff Hank Worth and Chief Deputy Sheila Turley. The rot within the department still lingers, but getting rid of the rest of the folks who need to go is not going to be easy.” The rest of my spoiler free review can be found [here](#). This is another series I strongly recommend reading in order.

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# Member News

## From Patrick Whitehurst -

In 2022 I began writing dark tales for Adrenaline Shot Comics and am pleased to announce I will script an audio tale for the publisher in the coming months. Each story is hosted by the fiendish Mistress Morphine and features a short story designed to chill the blood!

A link to my last comic book script can be found here! [https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/adrenaline-shots-new-sci-fi-horror-anthology/adrenaline-shots-presents-creatures-and-screamers-/viewer?title\\_no=49273&episode\\_no=196](https://www.webtoons.com/en/challenge/adrenaline-shots-new-sci-fi-horror-anthology/adrenaline-shots-presents-creatures-and-screamers-/viewer?title_no=49273&episode_no=196)



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**You're invited to: "Writing the Mystery - A Conversation with Q & A"** with authors **Rae Franklin James** and **Karen A. Phillips** presented by [Friends of the Woodland Public Library](#)

Saturday, February 25, 2023 @ 2pm

Woodland Public Library, Leake Community Room  
250 1st Street, Woodland, CA 95695

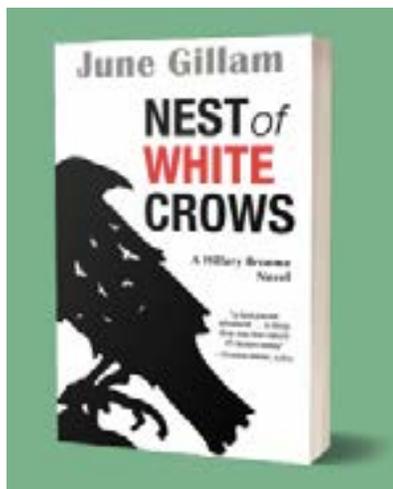


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## From Lorie Lewis Ham -

Two more new Mysteryrat's Maze Podcast episodes up this month! One features something a bit different, an excerpt from a Sci-Fi novel that has a mystery side to it, "The Path" by Peter Riva, read by local actor Terrance Mc Arthur <https://mysteryratsmaze.podbean.com/e/the-path-by-peter-riva/>

And the other one features the mystery short story "Owl Be Damned" by Nikki Knight <https://mysteryratsmaze.podbean.com/e/owl-be-damned-by-nikki-knight/>



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## From June Gillam -

The murder mystery launch party for [June Gillam's Nest of White Crows](#) will be featured Friday, Feb. 17, at 11:30, at the [2023 San Francisco Writers Conference](#), in "The Unconventional Book Launch," a presentation by Isidra Mencos, writer, editor, writing coach.

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## Member News

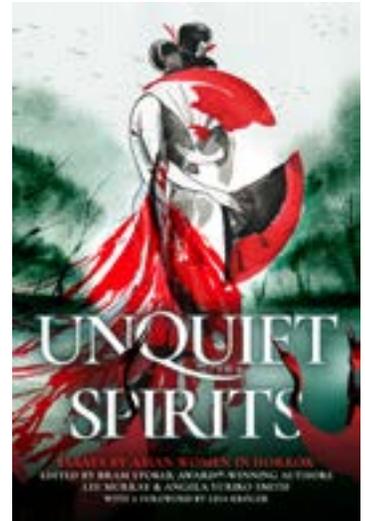
### From Tori Eldridge -

Tori Eldridge includes insights from her own Chinese ancestry and ninja training in her personal essay “The Agency of Modern Kunoichi: Women of Ninja Stealth and Perseverance” published in *UNQUIET SPIRITS: ESSAYS BY ASIAN WOMEN IN HORROR*, February 14th by Black Spot Books. This unique collection of 21 personal essays explores themes of otherness, identity, expectation, duty, loss, and—ultimately—to understanding and empowerment. Available in hardback, paperback, and e-book wherever books are sold.

Facebook: ToriMEldridge or ToriEldridgeAuthor

Instagram: writer.tori

Twitter: ToriEldridge



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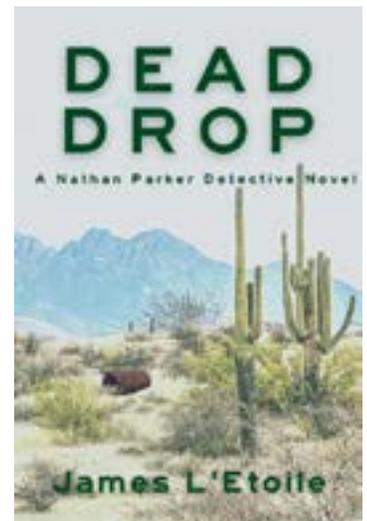
### From James L’Etoile -

James L’Etoile’s *DEAD DROP* was nominated for a Lefty Award in the Best Mystery Novel category. The Lefty Awards will be presented at the Left Coast Crime conference in Tucson, AZ on March 19, 2023.

Instagram: @authorjamesletoile

Twitter: @jamesletoile

Facebook: @AuthorjamesLetoile



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### From Donna Del Oro -

My publisher has released to Amazon.com/Donna Del Oro Books my short story as a Kindle version for \$1.29: *LUCKY JOE* by Donna Del Oro

Is one ever too old to learn an important lesson? Joe is a smart guy in his seventies who should know better. But he’s bored to death, feels neglected, and goes in search of adventure. Unfortunately, he gets more excitement than he has bargained for and ends up looking up the barrel of a handgun. Will he survive his latest boredom-cure?

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## In Other News

### Just in Time for Valentine's Day - Spice up Your Writing

Join SinC-CV for a VIRTUAL presentation about adding a little bit of romance and a lot of suspense to your writing with our experts: Mary Burton, Tracey Livesay, Avery Flynn, and Lisa Dyson. This will be from 7-8:30 PM on **Thursday, February 9**. This will be open to all Sisters in Crime members. Please register by sending an email to: SinC\_CVa@yahoo.com, subject line: Yes! I want to attend Spice up Your Writing.

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### Sisters in Crime Canada West - Breaking into the Film Industry

Saturday, February 18, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. Pacific Time

Retired homicide detective and coroner Garry Rodgers shares his journey from being a bestselling crime author to how he scooped his upcoming Netflix TV crime series. Come prepared to take notes and ask questions about how to break into the film industry with your own books.

Register for Breaking into the Film Industry [here](#).

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### ITW is awarding two separate scholarships for ThrillerFest 2023:

- One scholarship to a BIPOC author writing a thriller manuscript featuring a BIPOC protagonist
- One scholarship to an unpublished author who is writing a mystery/thriller novel (80 to 100K words)

Each scholarship recipient will receive a \$1,000 stipend and a free pass to attend ThrillerFest XVIII, which takes place May 30 - June 3, 2023 in New York City. Applications must be submitted by March 20, 2023.

Apply for BIPOC Scholarship [here](#). Apply for Unpublished Author Scholarship [here](#). For more information go to: [www.ThrillerFest.com](http://www.ThrillerFest.com) or contact Kimberly Howe at: [kimberleyhowe@thrillerwriters.org](mailto:kimberleyhowe@thrillerwriters.org)

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### Murderous March 2023

New York Times bestselling novelist Deborah Crombie headlines the upcoming Murderous March 2023 conference hosted by the Upper Hudson chapter of Sisters in Crime. The event is ZOOM only on Friday, March 10 and Saturday, March 11.

Crombie's 19th novel in her Scotland Yard series, A KILLING OF INNOCENTS, is due out Feb. 7, 2023. Crombie will also lead a master class on "How to Keep Your Series Alive and Your Readers Coming Back for More."

The two-day conference includes six panels on Saturday: History, Mystery, and Romance; Western Mysteries that Rope the Reader In; Unusual Sleuths; Young Sleuths; and Cozy Mysteries that Feed your Imagination. Another Master Class led by retired Detective Sergeant and bestselling mystery author Bruce Robert Coffin digs into the intricacies of investigation. Author Edwin Hill begins Murderous March 2023 with a workshop on crafting a creative pitch. Cost is only \$15 for the panels on Saturday and \$40 for a Master Class (Sat. panels included). [Register here](#).



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## In Other News

**Mickey Finn: 21st Century Noir, vol. 5**, opens for submissions February 1-28, 2023. Full guidelines here: <http://www.crimefictionwriter.com/submissions.html>

**Murderous March** - March 10 & 11, 2023. Online only. [Click here for info.](#)

**The New York Write to Pitch 2023** LIVE NYC, March 16-19, 2023. [Click here for info.](#)

**Left Coast Crime 2023: "Trouble in Tucson"** – Tucson, Arizona. March 16-19, 2023. [Click here for more details.](#)

**Malice Domestic** - April 28-30th 2023 - Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center in Bethesda, Maryland. [Click here for more information.](#)

**California Crime Writers Conference** - June 10 & 11, 2023. [Click here to go straight to the Registration page.](#)

Save the Date: **SleuthFest 2023** will be July 6-9, 2023. [Click here for info.](#)

**Book Passage Mystery Writers Conference 2023**, July 21–23, Corte Madera, California. [Click here for info.](#)

**Willamette Writers Conference 2023**, August 2-6, online and in-person at the Crowne Plaza in Portland, OR. Many more details to come - [click here.](#)

**Killer Nashville Writers' Conference**, August 17-20, 2023 - Franklin, TN at the Embassy Suites Nashville South / Cool Springs hotel. [Click here for more details.](#)

**Bouchercon 2023: "Murder at the Marina"** August 30 to September 3, 2023 at the Marriott Marquis San Diego Marina, California. [For details click here.](#)

**Sisters in Crime Grand Canyon Writers** proudly present **Fireside Chats! Coming in 2023: March 2** – Helen O'Hare, editor at Mulholland Books, **May 4** – Racheal Herron, "Revising Your First Draft: All the Tools You'll Need." Registration links and exact times of the virtual 2023 Fireside Chats will be announced closer to the event date. [Click here for details.](#)

**Noir at the Bar: Monterey** - Held monthly at Duffy's Tavern in Monterey, it's a great excuse for a trip to the coast! For more information, call Alec Cizak at 831-644-9811.

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Visit [www.CapitolCrimes.org](http://www.CapitolCrimes.org) for details.

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### GOT CONTENT?

Send your press-ready article to: [CapitolCrimes@gmail.com](mailto:CapitolCrimes@gmail.com)  
Put "Newsletter" in the subject line. Due by the third week of the month.  
We will publish the first Monday of the following month.

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