

*Sisters  
in  
Crime*



Heart of Texas  
Chapter  
[www.HoTXSinC.org](http://www.HoTXSinC.org)

**HOTSHOTS!**  
May 2009

### 2009 Officers

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*Sisters in Crime is an international organization of women and men whose purpose is to promote mysteries written by women and to combat discrimination against them. Speakers include published mystery authors and technical experts who help writers craft better mysteries, and readers enjoy what they read. Meetings are free and open to all.*

For more information, check out the Sisters in Crime website at [www.hotxsinc.org](http://www.hotxsinc.org)

## Texas Mystery Month

**Sunday, May 3, 2009**

2:00 p.m.

**Panel Presentation:**

**Go Green! Read (or Write) an e-Mystery  
and Save a Tree!**

**Sunday, May 17, 2009**

2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**The Fifth Annual Barbara Burnett Smith  
Aspiring Writers Event  
and Presentation of the  
2009 Sage Award  
to  
Micqui Miller**

Westlake Barnes & Noble bookstore  
located in The Village at Westlake shopping center  
at the southeast corner of Loop 360 and Bee Cave Road  
512.328.3155

For details about these meetings and other  
Texas Mystery Month events, please turn to Page 2.

*This meeting is free and open to anyone who enjoys writing  
or reading Mysteries: Whodunits, Cozies, Thrillers, Suspense, True Crime.*

### Upcoming Chapter Programs

**June 14 - P. J. Nunn, Breakthrough  
Promotions - What You Don't Know  
About Book Promotion**

**July 12 - Val Smith - The Internet:  
Spies, Criminals and Saboteurs**

**August 9 - Chapter Indoor Picnic/  
Potluck - Presentation by David  
Heavener, Actor, Teacher,  
Filmmaker, Singer and Songwriter**

For more program previews, please turn to Page 4.

**Sunday, May 3, 2009**  
2:00 p.m.

**Go Green! Read (or Write) an e-Mystery  
and Save a Tree!**

*Panelists*

**Sylvia Dickey Smith, Author**  
**Rie Sheridan, Author and e-Editor**  
**Dindy Robinson, Texas e-Publisher**

**E-reader Demonstration by**  
**Author Lynn LaFleur**

From a panel discussion moderated by HoTxSnC member and author, **Micqui Miller**, you'll discover how more and more mainstream publishers, as well as small presses, are enthusiastically embracing e-publishing. Among the benefits to readers – instant access 24/7, the capacity to store a bookshelf full of books in one lightweight, hand-held reader, and in most instances, at attractive retail pricing.

HoTxSnC President **Sylvia Dickey Smith**, whose *Sidra Smart Mysteries* are available in print as well as electronic download, will discuss the pros and cons of e-publishing from an author's perspective.

Local award-winning author and freelance editor, **Rie Sheridan**, will share some of the differences between writing for an e-press and a traditional publisher. Rie recently spent time on staff at Mundania Press, an e-publisher based in Ohio.

**Dindy Robinson**, owner/publisher **Swimming Kangaroo Books**, a Texas-based e-publisher, will share some of the challenges facing the e-industry.

We will also be demonstrating a variety of e-readers, including Amazon's new Kindle 2. **Lynn LaFleur**, who writes for Avon Books (HarperCollins) as well as one of the world's largest e-publishers, Jasmine-Jade Enterprises, will demonstrate how quick and easy it is to instantly download your favorite mysteries.

While not claiming to replace bricks-and-mortar bookstores, e-publishing is the wave of the future, and one that will help keep our planet green!

**Micqui Miller** is an award-winning author of romantic suspense and the editor of **HOTSHOTS!**, the newsletter of the Heart of Sisters in Crime/Heart of Texas Chapter.

**Sunday, May 17, 2009**  
2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**The Fifth Annual Barbara Burnett Smith  
Aspiring Writers Event and  
Presentation of the Sage Award**

In 1999, the President of the Sisters in Crime/Heart of Texas Chapter, **Laura Call**, surveyed member authors to see how the Chapter could help showcase Texas Mystery Writers. **Texas Mystery Month** was the result.

Now, in partnership with the **Barbara Burnett Smith Mentoring Authors Foundation**, the **Barbara Burnett Smith Aspiring Writers Event (BBSAWE)** has become one of the highlights of Texas Mystery Month.

Join us on Sunday, May 17, for the fifth annual event, during which the Barbara Burnett Smith Mentoring Authors Foundation will present the Third Annual Sage Award to **Micqui Miller** in recognition of her outstanding spirit of service in mentoring, sharing and leading others in the mystery writing community.



The award is given in memory of the late Barbara Burnett Smith, a dedicated mentor, the 2000 President of National Sisters In Crime, and whose mysteries set in Purple Sage, Texas live on in our hearts and on our bookshelves.

The Event will continue with a "Murder in Four Parts," the "Best Worst First Line of a Mystery," and the introduction of the twelve Mentor Authors and Aspiring Writers participating in this year's BBSAWE. The event will conclude with a signing by Ms. Miller.

*This free event is open to the public and will take place at the Westlake Barnes & Noble bookstore, located in The Village at Westlake shopping center, at the southeast corner of Loop 360 and Bee Cave Road. Contact: 512.328.3155.*

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Visit [www.hotxsinc.org](http://www.hotxsinc.org) for more information about Texas Mystery Months events, or e-mail [hotxsinc@yahoo.com](mailto:hotxsinc@yahoo.com).



**News and  
Announcements**

**Alana Moynahan Rosshirt  
October 1933-January 2009**

We send heartfelt condolences to HoTxSnC member, author **Jack Rosshirt** and his family, on the passing of his beloved wife, Alana Moynahan Rosshirt.

Alana, who lived on four continents, traveled in 50 countries, and loved Austin best, died January 16 at home from cancer. She faced death with grace and humor, at one point telling her son, "I just tore up my dentist's notice; there are positive aspects to everything!"

Memorials may be made to Hospice Austin, 4107 Spicewood Springs Road, Austin 78759, and Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556.

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**Out and About with our members...**

**David Ciambrone, Sc.D., FIOF** will be appearing and signing at the following events. If you're in the area, please stop by and say hello!



**May 1 - 4:00 p.m.** - Presentation as part of the *Georgetown Library Author Series*

**June 20 - Hard Boiled Heros and Cozy Cats Mystery Conference**, Dallas, TX

**Texas Mystery Month Events**



**Thursday, May 7 - 7:00 p.m. - Writing Dynamic Dialogue - L. C. Hayden.**

*Location:* Georgetown Library, 402 W. 8th Street - Georgetown, TX 78626

*Contact:* Richard Groves  
512.931.7620 - San Gabriel Writers

League, Joy Nord - [rnord@austin.rr.com](mailto:rnord@austin.rr.com)

**Friday, May 8 - 6:30-9:00 p.m. and Saturday, May 9 - 9:30-11:30 a.m. - How to Write a Mystery - L. C. Hayden**

*Location:* Barnes & Noble Westlake - #P860 - 701 South Capital of Texas Highway - Austin TX 78746  
*Contact:* 512.328.3155 - [crm2757@bn.com](mailto:crm2757@bn.com) - Sisters in Crime Heart of Texas Chapter - [hotxsinc@yahoo.com](mailto:hotxsinc@yahoo.com)

**Friday, May 15, 5:30 p.m. - Setting the Mood for Mystery**

*Panelists:* Rosemary Poole-Carter, Betty Gordon, L.B. Cobb, Laura Elvebak, Diana Driver, Gordon Payne

*Location:* Katy Budget Books, 2450 Fry Road, Houston TX 77084

*Contact:* Stacy Morris - 281.578.7770 - [marketing@katybooks.com](mailto:marketing@katybooks.com)

**Saturday, May 16, 3:00-4:30 p.m. - Using Local Resources in Mystery Writing**

*Panelists:* Sylvia Dickey Smith, Moderator; Joan Upton Hall, Micqui Miller, Dave Ciambrone

*Location:* Hill Country Book Store, 719 S Main Street, Georgetown, TX 78626

*Contact:* Margarite Holt - 512.869.4959 - [hcbookstore@suddenlinkmail.com](mailto:hcbookstore@suddenlinkmail.com)

**Tuesday, May 19 - 7:00 p.m. - Mystery Writing Panel**

*Panelists:* Sylvia Dickey Smith, Moderator; Diane Fanning, Karen MacInerney, David Ciambrone, Susan Rogers Cooper, Val Taylor, George Wilhite

*Location:* Book People - 603 North Lamar Boulevard - Austin, Texas 78703

*Contact:* Alison Kothe Nihlean - 512.472.4288 Ext. 207 - [events@bookpeople.com](mailto:events@bookpeople.com)

**Saturday, May 23 - 5:00 p.m. - Texas Mystery Author Panel**

*Panelists:* Betty Gordon, Sylvia Dickey Smith, Nancy Glass West, Susan Rogers Cooper, Laura Griffin, Rosemary Poole-Carter, LB Cobb, Vallie Taylor

*Location:* Murder by the Book - 2342 Bissonnet Street - Houston, TX 77005

*Contact:* David Thompson - 713.524.8597 or toll free: 888.424.2842 - Fax: 713.522.7945 - [david@murderbooks.com](mailto:david@murderbooks.com)

## News &amp; Announcements (Continued from Page 3)

**How successful mystery authors really spend their time...**

Not dreaming up red herrings to trick readers into thinking they know whodunit...not spending hours studying crime scene photos, blood spatter patterns, or bullet trajectory. They spend it on the road, near and far, because they know the real work begins *after* they've typed THE END!

No better example of this than HoTxSnC Chapter President Sylvia Dickey Smith, who spent most of April on the road, speaking and signing at events as diverse as a PirateCon in Louisiana to the Friends of the Library in Emory, TX, and who will redouble her efforts in May! And while keeping that hectic schedule, she's managed to write *Dead Wreckoning*, the third book in her Sidra Smart Mystery Series...host an internet radio program, *Murder She Writes*... create a fabulous trailer for *Dead Wreckoning*...mentor an Aspiring Writer, and serve as Chapter President.



View a hair-raising, frighteningly enjoyable video preview of *Dead Wreckoning*, the third book in the Sidra Smart Mystery Series by Sylvia Dickey Smith at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_n8hpJMTN6k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_n8hpJMTN6k)

*Sylvia's upcoming events*

**May 2** - Bayou Writers Group, Lake Charles, LA

**May 3** - Sisters in Crime, Heart of Texas Chapter

**May 16** - Hill Country Book Store mystery panel, Georgetown, Texas

**May 19** - Mystery Panel, Book People Bookstore, 7:00 p.m. Austin, TX

**June 5** - Georgetown Public Library, Georgetown, TX

**June 20** - Hardboiled Heroes & Cozy Cats, MWASW Chapter, Dallas, TX

**June 25** - Mixer at Sundown, Greater Orange Chamber of Commerce, Orange, TX

**Murder She Writes** - an internet radio show featuring your favorite women mystery authors who talk about what it's like to write in a male-dominated genre. What inspires them, where they get their ideas for plots, and what it takes to be a successful author in today's competitive market. Tune into:

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/MurderSheWrites>

to meet the following guests:

**May 4** - Glynn Marsh Alam

**May 11** - Pat Brown

**May 18** - Jane Finne

**May 25** - Betty Webb

**Upcoming Chapter Programs**

(Continued from Page 1)

**September 13** - Author Joan Upton Hall -  
*Location, Location: Where Characters Come to Life*

**October 11** - Sylvia Dickey Smith - *Marketing for Fun and Profit*

**November 8** - Jim Bryant - *Sherlock Holmes, Mysteries and Statistics*

**December 12** - Field Trip: Docent-led Tour of the Edgar Allen Poe Exhibit at the University of Texas - Harry Hunt Ransom Humanities Research Center

**January 10, 2010** - Pat Ricks - *History: The Greatest Mystery*

**February 14** - T. B. D.

**March** - David Ciambrone - *Sherlock Holmes, the Man. Who is he?*

**FRIDAY, MAY 29** is the deadline for News, Reviews, Announcements and Articles for the **JUNE 2009** edition of **HOTSHOTS!**

Send info to Micqui Miller at  
[micquim@yahoo.com](mailto:micquim@yahoo.com)



**2009 Barbara Burnett Smith Aspiring Writers Event**  
**Sunday, May 17, 2009**  
**2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.**  
at the  
**Barnes & Noble Bookstore**  
**In The Village at Westlake Shopping Center**

**Welcome**

*Sarah Ann Robertson*  
2009 Texas Mystery Month Coordinator

**Tribute to Barbara Burnett Smith**

*Sylvia Dickey Smith*  
2009 HoTxSnC President

**Presentation of Third SAGE Award**  
**Barbara Burnett Smith Mentoring Authors Foundation**  
to  
**Micqui Miller**  
*Gary Petry and W.D. Smith*

**Murder in Four Parts**

**Introduction of Esteemed Mentor Authors and Valued Aspiring Writers**

*Mentor Author*

David Ciambrone, Sc.D., FIOF  
J. F. Constantine  
Susan Rogers Cooper  
Helen Ginger  
Jan Grape  
Joan Upton Hall  
Russ Hall  
Julie Wray Herman  
Karen Swartz MacInerney  
Sylvia Dickey Smith  
Vallie Fletcher Taylor  
George Wilhite

*Aspiring Mystery Writer*

Gale Albright  
Catherine Quay  
Heidi Anna Johnson  
Lisa Carroll-Lee  
Diane Holmes  
Melisa Waters  
Jennifer Old  
Lorie Shaw  
Caroline A. Shearer  
C. L. Phillips  
Anna Slade  
Ricardo White

**Best Worst First Lines of a Mystery Story**

**Refreshments and Book Signing**

**Mentor Author/Aspiring Writer One to One Consultations**

**Closing**

*Sarah Ann Robertson*

**Meet the Mentor Authors and Aspiring Writers of the  
Fifth Annual Barbara Burnett Smith Aspiring Writers Event**

**Mentor Author:** David Ciamborne, Sc.D., FIOF     **Aspiring Writer:** Gale Albright



Dr. David Ciamborne is a retired executive, scientist, Oceanographer, professor, magician, US Treasury Commissioner and author living in Georgetown, Texas. He has published five mysteries in the Virginia Davies Series, *Laguna Treasure*,

*Napa Nights*, *Pelican Cove*, *Castle Finlaystoke* and *Left at Georgetown*. His newest book, *San Gabriel's Secret*, features sleuth Adam Thomas. However, Ciamborne is presently working on a new Virginia Davies novel. Dr. Ciamborne has woven his background in police procedures, magic, science and engineering into the stories.

He has been past vice president of Sisters-in-Crime; a member of Mystery Writers of America, President of the San Gabriel's Writer's League, member of Writers' League of Texas, Williamson County Coroners and Austin Mystery Writers.

Dr. Ciamborne also writes a helpful hint newspaper column under the name "Ask Uncle Dave" for the *Williamson County Sun*, and has also published three best-selling management books which have sold at home and internationally.

*For more about Dave's book, please see Page 18.*

Gale Albright is a long-time Austin resident and University of Texas staff member.



She has a B.A. in English Writing and Rhetoric from St. Edward's University. Several of her short stories were published in *Sorin Oak Review* and *New Literati* (St. Edward's literary journals) and *Blackacre*, the literary journal of the University of Texas School of Law.

Her first novel, *Eve*, won the Writers' League of Texas manuscript contest in the Young Adult category in 2008. She is currently working on *One Small Monkey*, her first mystery novel.

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***One Small Monkey***  
**By Gale Albright**

In 1976, young Austin singer-songwriter Jessup Conyers is convicted of murdering his wife. When he gets out of prison twenty years later, he asks his daughter Lyric to help him prove his innocence.

Lyric, a law student at the University of Texas, investigates Austin's '70s hippie culture looking for clues to a murder suspect. UT law professor Lamar Houston, her mother's killer, fears that Lyric will expose his criminal past. When Houston tries to murder Lyric, Jessup rescues her. Houston confesses to the murder. Lyric decides to become a legal advocate for prisoners' rights.

***Mentor Author:* J.F. Constantine**



J.F. Constantine is a classically trained artist whose forte is portraiture. J.F. first began receiving art instruction from her maternal grandfather who was also a portrait artist, and whose father was a portrait artist, and so on up the family line. J.F.

majored in Art at the University of Texas at Austin.

J.F.'s father was a mechanic with whom she frequently worked in the garage. He restored Classic Mustangs, raced cars and educated J.F. on the finer points of auto mechanics, welding and driving. Consequently, J.F. has a love of IndyCar racing, fast cars with a standard gearbox, and a definite Need for Speed.

J.F. dreamed of being a writer since the age of 5, and was previously published by a major house in trade paperback, but is now writing a new series which will be published by a new publisher (to be announced soon). J.F. writes crime fiction.

By day, J.F. Constantine works in the Legal Department of a Fortune 50 company.

*For more about J.F.'s book, please see Page 18.*

***Aspiring Writer:* Catherine Quay**

Catherine Quay read *Telling Lies for Fun and Profit* by Lawrence Sanders and thought that writing mystery fiction would make an interesting second career. She has fun practicing her craft but has yet to see any profit.

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***Death of a Silly Housewife***  
**By Catherine Quay**

In the spring of 1939 as political alliances are fracturing around the world, Washington D.C. housewife Irma Calvin is shocked when violence enters her world. Irma finds a woman garroted with drapery cords in a locked ballroom. The obvious suspects belong to Washington's staid and politically connected Foreign Institute and its Women's Auxiliary. But when the police focus their attention on a mild mannered porter rather than ruffle the feathers of the prominent government officials, academicians and foreign diplomats that make up the Institute's membership, Irma has no choice but to get involved to see that justice is done.

***Mentor Author:* Susan Rogers Cooper**



Susan Rogers Cooper is half 5<sup>th</sup> generation Texan and half Yankee, but claims to be mostly Texan.

She is the author of twenty mystery novels in three series: the Milt Kovak series, the E.J. Pugh series, and the Kimmey Kruse series. Critically acclaimed by the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, among others, she was nominated for an Edgar award by the Mystery Writers of America in 1998 for Best Paperback Mystery of the Year for her E.J. Pugh novel *Home Again, Home Again*. Her newest Milt Kovak novel, *Shotgun Wedding*, came out this spring, and her newest E.J. Pugh, *Romanced to Death*, was released in the winter of 2008.

Susan lives in the Austin area.

*For more about Susan's books, please see Page 19.*

***Aspiring Writer:* Heidi Anna Johnson**

Heidi Anna Johnson is a linguist. She manages a digital archive at the University of Texas and lives and writes in Austin.



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***Black and White and Dead All Over***

*A cozy mystery novel*

**By Heidi Anna Johnson**

Penelope Trigg moves to Lost Hat, Texas to open a photography studio and to find herself as an artist. When she gets a blackmail letter from her Internet service provider for some nude figure studies she submitted to a contest online, she finds herself being dragged into a brouhaha that embroils the whole town.

Penny figures out the scam and confronts the blackmailer, but he dies at her feet – poisoned with photography chemicals. To keep herself out of jail and find the murderer, she has to dig every skeleton out of every closet in Lost Hat.

**Mentor Author: Helen Ginger**



**Helen Ginger** is a freelance novel editor, with an informational and interactive blog for writers and a weekly e-newsletter that has been going out to subscribers around the globe for ten years. Helen's first nonfiction, *TechCareers:*

*Automotive Technicians*, is due out in May 2009.

Her second in the *TechCareers* series, *Avionics Technicians*, is currently with TSTC Publishing.

She coaches writers on the publishing industry, finding an agent, and polishing their work for publication. An adept speaker, she has presented at Story Circle Network's National Conference, Writers' League of Texas' Agents & Editors Conference, Baylor University and Mary Hardin-Baylor University.

She is an owner-partner and Women's Marketing Director for Legends In Our Own Minds®, which specializes in creative networking opportunities for companies and groups. With her experience in the business world, her knowledge of the publishing industry and her desire to help writers achieve their dreams, she has redefined the concept of freelance editor to include teacher, coach, and advisor.

*For more about Helen's books, please see Page 20.*

**Aspiring Writer: Lisa Carroll-Lee**

**Lisa Carroll-Lee** has a BA in English and an MA in Comparative Literature. She recently completed a collection of short stories set in the past, present, and future of Central Texas. She is currently working on her first novel. She lives on the north shore of Lake Travis with her husband and two geriatric dogs.

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***The Notable Diary of Miss Irmalinda Suarez Johansen-Johnsten, Adventuress***

**By Lisa Carroll-Lee**

It is 1835. Utopian schemes blossom across Europe. A strange coterie of philosophers, scholars, and minor nobility, calling themselves Freethinkers, decides to build an ideal community in Central Texas. They speak Latin, reject religion, slavery, and social hierarchy. They think these are perfect pioneering qualifications.

Into this eccentric group comes Irmalinda Johanson-Johnston, confirmed spinster and scholar of the Mystical Arts, Eastern and Western. She travels to Texas to join the Freethinkers, where she becomes both potential murder victim and accused murderess and must match wits with Classicist fortune hunters, myopic Texas Rangers, cross-dressing Mexican bandits, and Gothic apparitions.

**Mentor Author: Jan Grape**



**Jan Grape's *Austin City Blue*** (Five Star) was nominated for an Anthony award for Best First Novel and she was given a special Shamus award by the Private-Eye Writers of America in 2002. Winner of both an Anthony for Best Short Story and

a McCavity for Best Non-fiction, she's also been nominated for an Edgar, Agatha & Shamus.

The second in the Austin policewoman series, ***Dark Blue Death*** was released by Five Star in 2005. Both books are in audio from Recorded Books.

Many of Jan's short stories have been published in Japan and Germany. In 2003 Five Star published a collection of Jan's short stories, titled ***Found Dead In Texas***.

Jan has held office in several mystery writers organizations and currently is President of the American Crime Writers League. Jan and her late husband Elmer owned ***Mysteries and More***, a mystery bookstore in Austin for nine years. Jan currently lives in an RV with her black cats, Nick and Nora, and travels whenever possible.

*For more about Jan's books, please see Page 20.*

**Aspiring Writer: Diane Holmes**



**Diane Holmes** started off writing a very sweet romance. That manuscript used up all her sweetness, and she's been writing about murder, lies, and secrets ever since. But really – what is a story without the threat of death and a few screams? After writing rollicking comedies, black comedies, and even a little campy farce, she has decided to try a more gritty espionage thriller. She currently has 300 Post-it Notes stuck to a plotting wall, some of them cryptically urging her make "something happen here."

Diane has also founded two writers' groups (Central Indiana Professional Writers and Austin Fiction Writers Group), co-owned a publishing company, taught writing retreats and courses, and run contests. Her current passion is hosting write-athons at her house in Spring, TX.

She will be attending the Donald Maass Breakout Novel Intensive in San Antonio this September. She can be contacted at: [diane\\_J\\_holmes@yahoo.com](mailto:diane_J_holmes@yahoo.com).

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***The Countermeasure***  
**By Diane Holmes**

While on forced "vacation" from the CIA, Eddy Reed helps his brother find his stolen laptop before his employer notices it's missing.

Eddy's on the trail of the thief; unfortunately, when he tracks her down, she's lying in a pool of blood and awakens claiming she can't remember who she is.

As things get worse, Eddy finds out that everything his brother told him is a carefully crafted lie. The stakes are higher than protecting a laptop, corporation, or single country. The stakes involve petroleum, world economies, and the espionage perpetrated by those sworn to prevent it.

**Mentor Author: Joan Upton Hall**

Former English teacher, **Joan Upton Hall** is now a freelance author and editor, writing instructor, and speaker. Her manual, *Rx for Your Writing Ills* and “Demystifying Writers’ Demons” column, carried by various writer newsletters, have helped countless writers.

Joan is currently working on a **futuristic mystery** novel, titled *Dream Stalkers* (possible series). She has long been a columnist (travel and humor) for the *Williamson County Sun*. She has published short stories and articles in magazines as diverse as *Texas Highways*, *American Jails*, *The Roswell Literary Review*, and *ByLine* writers’ magazine. Think that’s a split personality? Her books run from historical nonfiction to the paranormal and an urban fantasy novel series, *Excalibur Regained*. See sample chapters and more at: <http://www.JoanUptonHall.com/books.htm>.

Latest review: [http://www.myshelf.com/scifi\\_fantasy/09/shadowofexcalibur.htm](http://www.myshelf.com/scifi_fantasy/09/shadowofexcalibur.htm) - Janie Franz, *MyShelf Reviews*

For more about Joan’s books, please see Page 21.

**Aspiring Writer: Melisa Waters**

With a lifelong love of words, both written and spoken, emerging writer **Melisa Waters** has always loved putting words together. From a young age, pencils, pens and paper were her tools of choice, tools necessary to create the wonderful experience of going through time and space. Those tools were the vehicles she decided to use on her journey through life, those real and imagined worlds we exist in and strive for. She believes in the cyclic nature of words. Life inspires writing and writing stirs life. Melisa is convinced that ultimately, this recurring phenomenon connects people with historical, cultural and other social elements.

For her, writing is more than a pastime, it is a passion. In her works, she chooses to deconstruct identities - identities that are a part of our childhood and adult culture, those parts that we silently challenge about ourselves and others. Writing quite deliberately to discover more about the world, the unknown, and the self, exploring new creative territory is a journey that she is always willing to take. Her current project is a mystery/suspense, titled *When Time Is Never Missed*.

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***When Time Is Never Missed***  
**By Melisa Waters**

Eduardo Carlos Morales was used to being called the Mexican Golden Boy. Practically everything had been handed to him on a platinum platter. His parents, Mexican immigrants who valued education and hard work, made sure their son had a family support system that ensured success.

Caught in a maze of murder and deception, he stands powerless as chaos and controversy begin to destroy everything he has built. Friends, family and foes all begin to merge as “golden boy” Eddie fights to regain control of his life and save those he loves.

**Mentor Author: Russ Hall**



**Russ Hall** lives on the north shore of Lake Travis in Lago Vista.

Prior to spending his time writing, hiking and fishing he worked for more than twenty-five years as an editor for major publishing firms, ranging from Harper & Row to Simon & Schuster to Pearson.

He has had more than a dozen books published, including a series featuring Esbeth Walters and a previous collection of short stories featuring the Blue-Eyed Indian, which won the **Nancy Pickard Mystery Fiction Award**. Two hardbacks in the Blue-Eyed Indian series, *Bones of the Rain*, and *South Austin Vampire*, come out in 2010.

*For more about Russ's books, please see Page 21.*

**Aspiring Writer: Jennifer Old**



**Jennifer Old** began writing short stories in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and started her first novel at 15. She has published several of her 50-plus poems.

She has worked as a newspaper food columnist in Arkansas, editor and feature-writer for two non-profit organizations' newsletters, and reviewed books for a church bookstore.

Jennifer attended Texas State University in the 1970s and is now attempting her first mystery novel using her 10 years of law enforcement experience and the considerable help of mentor-writer-editor **Russ Hall**.

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***The General's Other Secret***  
**By Jennifer Old**

Bill and Judith Davidson get more than they'd bargained for when they inherit his family's estate in historic Eureka Springs. Renovations of the Italianate-style Victorian into a bed-and-breakfast twist into another direction when Bill discovers Civil War secrets his family has kept buried.

Saddled with an inept, small minded, small town sheriff's office, he utilizes his own cop-turned-CPA experiences to prove white-collar crime and murder.

Facing the most dangerous circumstances of his life, he navigates the Ozark Mountains' lakes, treacherous roads, and Civil War history to find out something about himself, love, and the General's other secret.

**Mentor Author: Julie Wray Herman**



One day while **Julie Wray Herman** and two of her neighbors were sprucing up a flower bed, they got to talking about life in general, and people who had upset them in particular. Thanks to a chance

comment from her friend, Becky – the Three Dirty Women Landscaping, Inc mystery series was born. While Julie hasn't actually buried anyone in her garden, she has always found gardening to be a good way to work off frustration, anxiety, and chocolate chip cookies.

Julie lives outside Houston, Texas with her husband, two angelic teenagers, and – at last count – two dogs, three cats, three horses, and the creature who lurks in the pond. When Julie has time, she plans on taking the "All Strays Apply Here" sign down from her front porch.

*For more about Julie's books, please see Page 22.*

**Aspiring Writer: Lorie Shaw**



**Lorie Shaw** grew up in rural Missouri, a place the area news stations refer to as the Heartland, but the locals beg to differ as most of them are way too pragmatic to go in for poetic nicknames. That was probably her first clue that she needed to escape.

She received a BA in Mass Communications from Truman State University in the mid-Eighties in hopes of becoming either the next Barbara Walters or Erma Bombeck. She veered off that path, however, into the soul-sucking, cubicle-lined world of insurance consulting before happily chucking it in favor of marriage and motherhood.

Lorie finally got serious about her writing aspirations shortly after moving to Leander, Texas at the turn of the current century. She has been published in "Flashquake," and last year, was a finalist in the Writers' League of Texas Manuscript Contest.

For the past five years, she's been working on a novel about mothers and daughters and lies and Las Vegas wrapped up in a shiny, sequined Rat Pack package set in a retirement home for burlesque queens. Even if the book never gets published, the time spent on research has been a blast.

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***Starlight Legacy***  
**By Lorie Shaw**

*What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas...but after forty years, all bets are off.*

Just when Aja French thought her narcissistic mother, Lil, was going to tell her a lifetime's worth of juicy secrets, Aja finds Lil drowned in her bathtub.

It looks like an alcohol-induced accident, but when Aja discovers her mother not only used to be a burlesque dancer in Vegas, but she had a partner – a sister she never told Aja about – Aja starts to believe Lil was murdered.

Her search for answers leads her to the Crystal Swallow Home for Retired Burlesque Queens in the Nevada desert and a big reveal she never imagined.

***Mentor Author:* Karen Swartz MacInerney**



Karen MacInerney is the author of the Agatha-nominated Gray Whale Inn mystery series and the Tales of an Urban Werewolf trilogy; she also teaches writers' workshops and drives a mean carpool. When she's not writing or chauffeuring children, she loves to read, drink coffee, attempt unusual recipes, and hit the local hike and bike trail.

Visit Karen at [www.karenmacinerney.com](http://www.karenmacinerney.com)

*For more about Karen's books, please see Page 22.*

***Aspiring Writer:* Caroline A. Shearer**



Caroline A. Shearer has been writing professionally for over a decade. She is the former Editor in Chief of a statewide magazine and has appeared thousands of times in publications across the United States.

Caroline is well respected for her conscientious approach to the written word and twice has been recognized as a finalist in the prestigious Austin Under 40 Awards.

She is a proud graduate of Texas A&M University, from where she earned a B.A. in Journalism, with a minor in Psychology. At Texas State University, she began a Master's Program in Interdisciplinary Studies, focusing on Children's Literature and Psychology. *Dead End Date* is her first novel.

Visit Caroline at [www.CarolineShearer.com](http://www.CarolineShearer.com)

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***Dead End Date***  
**By Caroline A. Shearer**

Faith Anderson is a lightworker. But even though she's on earth to teach others about love, she has a few lessons of her own to learn. And when her blind date ends up dead in a downtown parking lot – and “alive” as can be in her bedroom – Faith puts her spiritual skills to the test, attempting to prove his death was murder, not suicide. As she stumbles along the case, seeking enlightenment and living “in the moment” all the while, she begins to open her heart to love. Or at least the possibility.

***Mentor Author:* Sylvia Dickey Smith**

**Sylvia Dickey Smith** was born and reared in exotic southeast Texas, the land of Cajuns, cowboys, pirates and Paleo-Indians. She came into this world feet-first, and spent the first half of her life making it up to her

mother. After marriage, she lived on the Caribbean island of Trinidad for seven years before returning to Texas. At 41 she took her first freshman class and fought her way to a BA in Sociology and a Masters in Educational Psychology while raising four children. After that, she worked with non-profit and for-profit organizations within the human services field before embarking on a career as a novelist. Her debut Sidra Smart mystery series has won numerous awards and has achieved best-seller status of her publisher.

*For more about Sylvia's book, please see Page 23.*

***Aspiring Writer:* C. L. Phillips**

**C. L. Phillips** writes from the back porch in a forest of live oaks nestled in downtown Austin, Texas. Each mystery highlights the protagonist solving a gripping murder while caught between opposing forces in a controversial national issue. The stories explore the fragile boundaries between the piously evil and dictatorially good characters acting against their better judgment in pursuit of individual passions.

Visit C. L. at [www.CLPhillips.com](http://www.CLPhillips.com)

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***Inside Out***  
**By C. L. Phillips**

A flawed lawyer faces internal demons as he struggles to save the two most important women in his life – his sister and a former lover.

The sister is accused of murdering her husband, a U.S. Congressman. The Congressman incited a fervent religious war by forcing schools to teach a controversial alternative to evolution and creationism, called Collective Consciousness. Science and religion united to fight Collective Consciousness. The leader of the Collective Consciousness movement is the former lover, and a woman enslaved by an ancient soul that she channels. Who killed the Congressman? Who must the lawyer sacrifice?

**Mentor Author: Vallie Fletcher Taylor**



**Vallie Fletcher Taylor** is a native Texan who has had a long and varied career. "Teaching and writing have always been my favorite pursuits," Taylor says. "That's one reason I enjoy being a mentor so much. It affords me the opportunity to combine skills with experience and pass these things on in the form of a literary inheritance."

Taylor lives on a small ranch near Hico in the North-Central Texas hill country. A Poetry Therapist, she currently teaches classes at the Bosque Arts Center in Clifton one day per week.

"My city friends often ask if country life doesn't get boring," says Taylor. "I tell them that my friends here and I all love to entertain by creating gourmet dinners served with fine wine. So, we don't suffer from being many miles away from dining experiences one can normally locate only in a city. Of course, these gatherings also generate endless captivating conversations. Add a total absence of heavy traffic to scenic surroundings... and I feel like I'm in Heaven!

"I raise goats, which are extremely fascinating animals. Between them and my cats and dogs, there's always something happening within my animal kingdom," Taylor concludes.

*For more about Vallie's book, please see Page 23.*

**Aspiring Writer: Anna Slade**



I come from a long line of hillbillies and farmers. Daddy was a welder who finally settled his family in Texas where most of us kids were born.

My older sister loved to play school and I was her star pupil (my little brother preferred recess). She taught me to read and I never looked back. If you ask me today to name my favorite hobby, I have to scrunch my forehead and try to pick between reading and writing.

My early careers included waitressing and a slew of jobs in small market radio: copywriting, news-gathering, reporting and hosting a live interview program.

My dream was to go to college but times were tough. I finally graduated at 38, a single parent of three. Later I got an MBA.

I became a marketing employee of Shell Oil Company, which transferred me and the offspring to eight different locales over the next twenty years. I traveled internationally and ran a 12-country b2b customer survey before retiring early in 2008. Austin beckoned and I'm having a blast. Chasing dreams. Writing about hillbillies and psychics and people who stretch the definition of normal.

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***Bloodroot Holler***  
**By Anna Slade**

Fifteen years after Sean MacLaren disappeared from the Appalachians, a seven-year-old psychic girl with a profound case of the stutters, Zoe Miller, finds his bones. The next day, the town's crazy lady/Sean's mother Lenna MacLaren, misses her weekly phone call with her grandson Canice in Austin. Canice heads to the hills to find her and gets help from his former girlfriend and Zoe's aunt, Yarrow Cassidy. Zoe leads them to Lenna but the old woman refuses to go home with Canice until he proves her son/Canice's dad was not only innocent of old theft charges but was murdered.

**Mentor Author: George Wilhite**

**George Wilhite** is a native Texas writer whose first novel, *The Texas Rodeo Murder*, combines his love of “writin’ and ridin’” in a fast-paced murder mystery set in the modern world of rodeo. His protagonist is rodeo clown/

college instructor Ira Carter who must find the murderer of his former boss, a rodeo magazine publisher.

Much of Carter’s character comes from George’s own true-life experiences. A bareback bronc rider for 13 years, he also rode bulls and saddle broncs, fought bulls, and was a barrelman and contract acts person. He traveled to rodeos nationwide, including Madison Square Garden, and shot rodeo photos at the International Rodeo Finals, Texas Police Officers Rodeo Finals, and The World Finals.

George began writing short stories his senior year in high school and then in college, became a professional journalist for 20-plus years (including stints as editor of *Rodeo News* magazine and publisher of *Texas Rodeo* magazine). He has published non-fiction articles too numerous to mention, one novel, and several short stories. He founded the Waco Writers Workshop, is the chair of the English Department at Texas State Technical College in Waco, and teaches writing classes at TSTC and Baylor University, specializing in developmental writing for “non-writers.”

*For more about George’s book, please see Page 24.*

**Aspiring Writer: Ricardo White**

**Ricardo White** grew up on the Canal Zone in Panama and immigrated to New York City, did a stint in Vietnam, and later joined NYPD. He majored in journalism at Long Island University in Brooklyn, where his memoir, *Journal of a Paper Soldier*, was first published in LIU’s Confrontation literary magazine.

He was an Op Ed columnist for several publications, including *The Los Angeles Sentinel*, the *UCLA Bruin* and wrote blurbs for *The Los Angeles Times*. He studied theater directing under Ed Cambridge, noted Broadway director, and assisted in several stage plays that were produced for the Marla Gibbs Arts Academy in Los Angeles.

On the flip side of his artistic talents, Ricardo is a graphic artist and has exhibited his work in Los Angeles. His writing passion is screenwriting and he synchronized that into his first novel *Chasing Spirits*. He currently lives in Austin, TX where he’s working on his second novel.

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***Chasing Spirits***  
**By Ricardo White**

*Chasing Spirits* is set in Brooklyn. Willie Pratt, an ex-cop, receives an urgent call from a friend who reveals she went to a psychic who predicted her brother’s death. Pratt visits Sammy Robinson, finds him dead in his apartment, and since dead men hardly ever speak in Brooklyn, Pratt meanders a dark world of restaurateurs to uncover who murdered his friend. Suspicious detectives sniff out underground religious connections, and are sure Pratt did the crime but he finally exposes the ruse – Robinson was murdered from the poison of a puffer fish. Pratt fingers the culprit. The detectives make the bust.

*Mentor Author*  
*David Ciambrone, Sc.D., FIOF*

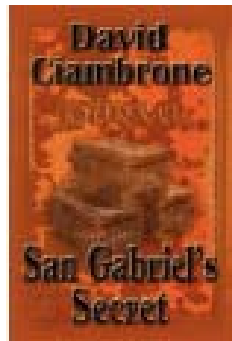


*Mentor Author*  
*J.F. Constantine*

**SAN GABRIEL'S SECRET**  
**By David Ciambrone**

Publisher: L & L Dreamspell  
Release Date: January 2009  
ISBN: 160318080X  
ISBN: 978-1603080801

Nestled on the San Gabriel River in Central Texas' Hill Country, Georgetown is a small town where things are normally pretty quiet. That is, until Adam Thomas, a retired scientist and now writer of a newspaper column for women under the name Aunt Kay, inherits a Confederate soldier's journal and a murder.



Adam and his girlfriend Kathy find themselves the center of dark doings and racing headlong into a fast paced, high stakes adventure to untangle a murderous puzzle, a series of macabre organizations and locate the centuries old San Gabriel Secret.

Visit David Ciambrone at  
[www.davidciambrone.com](http://www.davidciambrone.com)

**DEATH TO THE BONE**  
**By J.F. Constantine**  
*(Coming Soon)*

J.F. Constantine is the author of **DEATH TO THE BONE** starring Melina Nikolaides, a forensic reconstructive sculptor living in Austin, Texas. Melina puts faces back on the dead, but by day, she also teaches art history at the University of Texas. When two of her students find a sack of bones in a dumpster downtown, the students call Melina to see if the bones are human.

Now, the Travis County Medical Examiner needs Melina's help to identify this long-dead victim in order to catch the killer. In spite of Melina's efforts, no ID is forthcoming. What is forthcoming is a nightmare Melina is having about an old ghost story that used to scare her as a child. Melina can "feel" certain things about each victim whose face she rebuilds, but what she feels about the dumpster victim, and the troubling details of her nightmares aren't making any sense. As the victim remains anonymous and the case unsolved, the nightmares soon stop.

Three years later, Melina is standing on the muddy banks of Shoal Creek looking at the dangling arm of a skeleton unearthed by torrential rains. The Travis County Medical Examiner is going to need Melina's help again because this victim has been dead for more than two years. Melina reconstructs the victim's face, but as the police begin to investigate, Melina's old nightmare mysteriously returns. Then, a good friend of Melina's is murdered, a series of arsons begin in Austin, and Melina herself is threatened and in danger unless she can unravel these seemingly disparate crimes, and find the meaning behind her nightmares. In the end, Melina puts all the pieces together, and solves the mystery surrounding a 37-year-old murder and the crimes that followed it. The question is, will she move quickly enough to save the murderer's final target?

Visit J.F. Constantine at  
[www.jfconstantine.com](http://www.jfconstantine.com)

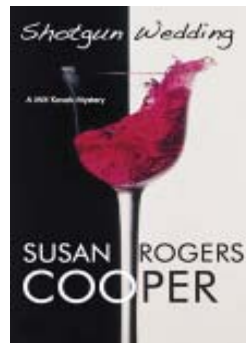


*Mentor Author*  
*Susan Rogers Cooper*

**SHOT GUN WEDDING**  
*A Milt Kovak Mystery*  
**By Susan Rogers Cooper**

Publisher: Severn House Publishers  
Release Date: January 2009  
ISBN: 0727866974  
ISBN: 978-0727866974

Longbranch, Oklahoma. On the happy occasion of the wedding between Chief Deputy Emmett Hopkins and Deputy Jasmine Bodine, all hell breaks loose: the town bank is robbed, a sheriff's deputy is murdered, and a city police officer is left for dead.

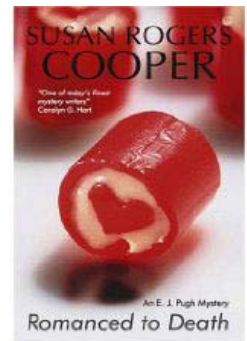


Sheriff Milt Kovak sends the happy couple off on their honeymoon to escape the carnage, little suspecting that it will be complicated by a hurricane, psychotic pirates, and semi-naked hotel employees.

**ROMANCED TO DEATH**  
*An E. J. Pugh Mystery*  
**By Susan Rogers Cooper**

Publisher: Severn House Publishers  
Release Date: May 2009  
ISBN: 184751071X  
ISBN: 978-1847510716

Romantic novelist E. J. Pugh is back and in rare form! She has been nominated for a Lady, a coveted award from the American Romance Writers' Association. The convention is to be held in nearby Austin, Texas so E.J. is going and will be sharing a room with bestselling author Maybella LaRue, aka Jane Dawson. Through Jane, E.J. meets a group of mostly well-known writers, all a lot of fun, and all united in their dislike of aspiring but unpublished Angela Barber, the drill sergeant who is in charge of the convention.



Visit Susan Rogers Cooper at:  
[www.myspace.com/susanrogerscooper](http://www.myspace.com/susanrogerscooper)

Mentor Author  
*Helen Ginger*



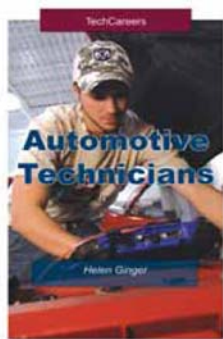
Mentor Author  
*Jan Grape*

**TECH CAREERS: AUTOMOTIVE  
TECHNICIANS**

**By Helen Ginger**

Publisher: TSTC Publishing  
Release Date: June 2009  
ISBN: 978-1-934302-43-9

**Helen Ginger** began writing when she was in grade school. After getting her Master's from Southwest Texas State University, she taught at San Antonio College and Incarnate Word College. She did a stint as the Executive Director of the Writers' League of Texas and is an owner-partner in Legends In Our Own Minds®.



Helen's e-newsletter, Doing It Write, goes out to readers on every continent except the Antarctic. She's looking for someone there. When not writing, she edits fellow authors' books.

When asked to write *Automotive Technicians*, Helen hesitated. After all, she'd somehow gotten through life without ever having to change a tire. She wrote *Automotive Technicians* for those, like her, who want to learn about this career. She met the most interesting people – students who enjoy working on cars, teachers dedicated to their students, employers with years of experience who think there's no better profession, and working techs who love what they do and do what they do with amazing skill. Those are the people you meet in this book and in automotive shops everywhere.

Visit Helen Ginger at:  
Website: <http://helenginger.com>  
Blog: <http://straightfromhel.blogspot.com>  
Newsletter (Doing It Write): <http://helenginger.com/diw.htm>  
Twitter: <http://twitter.com/MermaidHel>

**DARK BLUE DEATH: A ZOE BARROW  
MYSTERY**

*Five Star First Edition Mystery*  
**By Jan Grape**

Publisher: Five Star; 1st edition  
Release Date: November 22, 2005  
ISBN-10: 1594144230  
ISBN-13: 978-1594144233

Austin Police officer Zoe Barrow, first seen in the Anthony award-nominated *Austin City Blue*, is assisting field officers in role-playing for the new police cadets at Austin Police Department's Training Academy. Zoe and fellow training officer, Anne Panzarella, are conducting moving violations stops when a cadet comes running up to say one of the cadets has been killed. Zoe finds herself thrust into a mind-boggling case involving an extremely sick-minded individual who uses a high-powered rifle to execute from a distance, yet who then has an up-close and personal encounter with the body afterward.



As other female APD officers are killed, the FBI is called in to help. Zoe's partner, Sergeant Harry Albright, is scornful of their involvement, while Zoe - as a brand-new homicide officer - welcomes any and all help.

In the meantime, Zoe's husband, Byron Barrow, who remains in a semi-vegetative state, disappears from the nursing home where he lives along with two other patients. This is a scary nightmare for Zoe. Has he been kidnapped for ransom? Or has some "bad guy" she'd put in prison planned to get back at her?

As the body count rises and Zoe and Harry struggle to catch the sniper, Zoe is drawn into a battle of wills with Byron's parents. Can Zoe handle the heat, find the sniper, and survive another tension-filled week?

Visit Jan Grape at [www.Jangrape.com](http://www.Jangrape.com) or  
[www.myspace.com/jangrape](http://www.myspace.com/jangrape)  
You may contact Jan at [Jangrape@aol.com](mailto:Jangrape@aol.com)

Mentor Author  
*Joan Upton Hall*



Mentor Author  
*Russ Hall*

**The Shadow of Excalibur: Excalibur  
Regained Book 2\***  
By Joan Upton Hall

Publisher: Zumaya Otherworlds 2008  
Paperback: 312 pages  
ISBN-10: 1934135003  
ISBN-13: 978-1934135006

In a plague-ravaged future world, King Arthur, reincarnated as Arturo el Rey, has fulfilled his promise to return, and with the help of his wife, Shanna, has established an orderly civilization.



But ancient mistakes rise to tear it all down. Arturo and others must confront the dilemmas from their past lives: the infidelity of Guinevere and Lancelot, a former lover's vengeance, and an illegitimate son's ambition. Will knowledge of those long-ago errors prevent them from repeating, or is the second Camelot doomed as surely as the first?

**What they're saying about the Excalibur Regained Series:**

"In a gritty and surprising revisit to the legend of King Arthur, Hall creates compelling characters faced with the task of finding true love and saving the world." - *M.K. Preston, winner of the Mary Higgins Clark Award for Song of the Bones*

"Arturo el Rey ties very closely with the legend of King Arthur, but also matches it with the end-of-civilization themes found in *Earth Abides* and *The Stand*. I found myself totally enthralled with the storyline." - *Tracy Farnsworth, Roundtable Reviews*

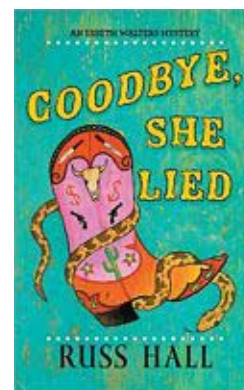
\*Book #1 earned 1st Prize annual award: Writers' League of Texas

Visit Joan Upton Hall at:  
[www.joanuptonhall.com](http://www.joanuptonhall.com)

**GOODBYE, SHE LIED**  
*An Esbeth Walters Mystery*  
By Russ Hall

Publisher: Worldwide  
Release Date: December 2008  
ISBN-10: 0373266561

Feisty retired math teacher Esbeth Walters has proven her mettle as a sleuth, making her unpopular with the local law. But it's the kind of folksy, no-nonsense help a tough Texan named Boose needs to catch the con artists who swindled his elderly momma. As Esbeth investigates, she's drawn into some suspicious retirement-home deaths and the murder of a local man, which was made to look like suicide.



With the unexpected help of former forensic pathologist Gardner Burke, an AWOL rest-home resident, Esbeth's razor-sharp mind tackles a slew of swindlers, mob hit men, a psychopathic nurse and the FBI, all converging on the dusty Texas town of Fearing. And it means Esbeth must now calculate her own odds of surviving double crosses, danger...and sudden death.

Visit Russ Hall at: [www.russhall.com](http://www.russhall.com)

*Mentor Author*  
*Julie Wray Herman*



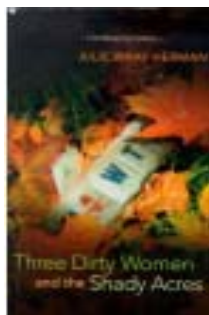
*Mentor Author*  
*Karen Swartz MacInerney*

**THREE DIRTY WOMAN AND THE SHADY ACRES**

**By Julie Wray Herman**

Publisher: Worldwide  
Release Date: January 2006  
ISBN-10: 0373265743  
ISBN-13: 978-0373265749

Korine McFaile's mother-in-law, Dora, has moved in with her due to increased memory problems. Dora's latest fixation is to accuse Korine of allowing "people" into their home to move Dora's things to make her look crazy. Dora is clearly showing the paranoia associated with Alzheimer's — or is she?



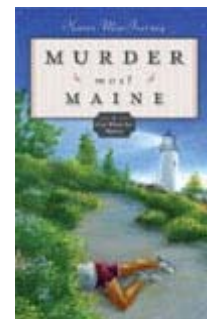
When Dora's old friend, Olan Taggart, dies under the wheels of Dora's car in the drive of Shady Acres, Pine Grove's retirement home, Korine and J.J. find that they are once again embroiled in a murder that strikes too close to home.

Visit Julie Wray Herman at:  
[www.mysterygarden.com](http://www.mysterygarden.com)

**MURDER MOST MAINE**  
**By Karen Swartz MacInerney**

Publisher: Midnight Ink  
Release Date: November 2008  
ISBN-10: 0738713007  
ISBN-13: 978-0738713007

At the outset of MacInerney's entertaining third cozy (after 2007's *Dead and Berried*), innkeeper Natalie Barnes is pleased to be hosting the Lose-It-All Weight Loss retreat at her Gray Whale Inn on Maine's Cranberry Island. Natalie hopes to shed some weight herself since the romance with her shipwright neighbor, John Quinton, is heating up. When the buff corpse of trainer Dirk De Leon, whose regimen included suspicious dietary supplements, turns up near Cranberry Point Lighthouse, the police discover Dirk was poisoned and, to Natalie's dismay, investigate her kitchen. Natalie receives further shocks after John becomes a suspect and another guest is murdered. Adding to the intrigue is the skeleton estimated to be 150 years old that surfaces during the lighthouse's renovation. MacInerney adds a dash of the supernatural, throws in some touristy tidbits and finishes with some tasty diet-right recipes.



Visit Karen Swartz MacInerney at:  
[www.karenmacinerney.com](http://www.karenmacinerney.com)  
[www.myspace.com/karenmacinerney](http://www.myspace.com/karenmacinerney)  
[karenmacinerney.blogspot.com](http://karenmacinerney.blogspot.com)

Mentor Author  
*Sylvia Dickey Smith*



Mentor Author  
*Vallie Fletcher Taylor*

**DEAD WRECKONING**  
By Sylvia Dickey Smith

Publisher: L & L Dreamspell  
Release Date: March 2009  
ISBN-10: 1603181385  
ISBN-13: 978-1603181389

*Sidra Smart's search for an elusive schooner stirs up ruthless smugglers and the spirits of Privateer Jean Lafitte and Pirate Queen Mary Anne Radcliff.*



Newly licensed private investigator Sidra Smart reluctantly takes on the pro-bono case of Boo Murphy, a poor countrified woman accused of murder. When Boo tells her tale of stumbling on the Hotspur, half-buried in a Texas swamp, everyone is convinced she's found treasure worth millions. As Sidra searches for both the schooner and evidence to clear her client, she battles an unknown enemy, and soon discovers they know their business much better than she knows hers.

*What they're saying about about Dead Wreckoning:*  
"Deliciously entertaining, laugh-out-loud funny and fraught with disaster after hilarious disaster, Sylvia Dickey Smith's novel, **DEAD WRECKONING**, is engaging, fast-paced and filled with unforgettable characters. This is one book that won't be collecting dust on your nightstand!" - Deborah LeBlanc, Bestselling author of *Water Witch*

Visit Sylvia Dickey Smith at:  
[www.sylviadickeysmyth.com](http://www.sylviadickeysmyth.com)  
<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/MurderSheWrites>  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_n8hpJMTN6k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_n8hpJMTN6k)

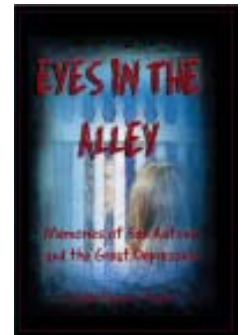
**EYES IN THE ALLEY**  
By Vallie Fletcher Taylor

Publisher: Zumaya Publications  
Release Date: April 2009  
ISBN: 978-1-934135-35-8

To most people, the Great Depression brings to mind shantytowns and fields buried in dust, breadlines and shuttered banks. For young Vallie Fletcher, it was a time when she startled her San Antonio neighbors by jumping off garage rooftops, convinced she could soar into the air.

After all, that's what she did during a near-death experience at age two. It was a time when she looked into the face of a starving child, a face that would haunt her throughout her childhood.

Segregation rules that did not make sense, sharing a classroom with four sets of twins, "medical" treatments and "health" rules that seemed as likely to kill as to cure, music and dance teachers collaborating with mothers who have seen too many Shirley Temple movies trying to turn children into performers – all and more are combined in this fascinating memoir of a time that to many is no more than a notation in a history book in a place where the past is as much a part of the infrastructure as the streets.



Contact Vallie Fletcher Taylor at:  
[vallie46@gmail.com](mailto:vallie46@gmail.com)



*Mentor Author*  
*George Wilhite*

**TEXAS RODEO MURDER**  
**By George Wilhite**

Publisher: Sunbelt/Eakin Press  
Release Date: April 2003  
ISBN-10: 1571687793  
ISBN-13: 978-1571687791

For English Department Professor Ira Carter, it begins with a phone call from his old friend Jake, publisher and owner of the Texas Rodeo Magazine that is disconnected seconds after Ira hears something that sounds like trouble. Concerned, Ira goes off and finds his friend near death from a shotgun blast to the stomach. He survives just long enough to get to the hospital and tell Ira to find J. D.



J. D. was John Davis who had ridden in the rodeo circuit years before along with Ira and a few other good friends. Ira had eventually cut back to just taking pictures at the rodeos and occasionally doing clown performances as his regular job became teaching English at the rural campus of Hill County College. Around the same time, J. D. had crashed his truck into a lake in western Oklahoma and though his body was never found, was presumed dead. His family, a wife and two boys, had moved back to live with her family on a reservation in New Mexico.

With Jake's dying plea in his ears to find J. D. and an address in New Mexico in hand, Ira begins to hunt for J. D. The trail will cross into New Mexico before returning to the rodeo circuit in Central Texas.

Along the way the 34-year-old Ira will have to deal with the fact that others with dark intent are looking for J. D., that clowning at the rodeos isn't as easy as it used to be, and that the sport he loves is changing and not necessarily for the better. All that and the fact that romance can be more difficult than any bull in the ring.

George Wilhite uses his thirteen years of bare back riding, eight years of bull riding, and numerous other years experience in and around rodeos, to create an enjoyable and heavily atmospheric read. By the time he is through, the world of the rodeo comes alive for the reader in every sense. Along the way he also delivers a good mystery, a few twists and turns, some romance, and characters to care about. The result is a good read, guaranteed to entertain, and a great introduction to a sport that one does not hear nearly enough about. This is good stuff and well worth the read.

*From an Amazon review by*  
*Kevin Tipple*

Visit George Wilhite at:  
[George.Wilhite@tstc.edu](mailto:George.Wilhite@tstc.edu)