

**Sisters  
in  
Crime**



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

**HOTSHOTS!**  
October 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)

Please join us on  
**Sunday, October 11, 2009**  
beginning at **2:00 PM**  
for our  
**Annual Indoor Picnic/Potluck**  
at the home of **Dave and Kathy Ciambrone**  
and  
Featuring a presentation by  
**HOTxSinC President and Best Selling Author**  
**Sylvia Dickey Smith**  
**ON HEN'S TEETH, SNUFF AND**  
**BOOK PROMOTION**



"If I tell you a hen dips snuff, you'd better look under her tongue! The same goes if I tell you book promotion can be fun," says **Sylvia Dickey Smith** when she discusses her very different approach to marketing her books.

"Without a doubt, writers obsess and stress about marketing," Sylvia says. "Likely that's because selling or not selling books affect whether or not we get another book contract. But don't let that scare you away from a new way of approaching the activity."

Join us at **HOTxSinC's October In-door Picnic** where **Sylvia Dickey Smith** will tell us about how she came to the conclusion that life was way too short and writing way too much fun, to allow marketing to leave her feeling negative about the whole process. So, by an act of her will, she reframed the process and ran smack into the law of attraction. *When we have fun we attract people to us.* At our October meeting, she hopes to stimulate new ideas and approaches that will help you market your books.

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For directions to the **Dave and Kathy Ciambrone's house**, and the day code for the security gate, please see **Page 4**.



**News and  
Announcements**

**Applause, Applause!!**



**HOTxSinC** President Sylvia Dickey Smith's latest novel, historical fiction titled *A War Of Her Own*, won the **Lifetime Achievement Award** at the **Houston, Texas Writers' Guild Fall Workshop**.

Congratulations to **HOTxSinC** member **Dolores Sullivan**, whose short story, *The Mooney Files, Tales of a Catvocate*, won First Place in the *Third Annual Short Story Contest, sponsored by the Friends of the Library and the Bedford (TX) Public Library*.



Dolores was awarded a cash prize, complimentary registration to the 2010 Writers Conference sponsored by the Friends of the Library, a certificate, and her name engraved on a plaque alongside the previous winners and on permanent display at the Library.

Dolores, an Aspiring Author in the 2008 Barbara Burnett Smith Aspiring Writers Event, entered the contest after reading about it the August 2009 edition of **HOTSHOTS!**

**HOTxSinC** member **Val Taylor** reviewed her book, *Eyes in the Alley*, for members of the Bibliophiles Book Club on Wednesday, September twenty-third. This group of women has been meeting together for more than 40 years in San Antonio. Originally formed by a group of doctors' wives, the club has expanded over time to include other women who are dedicated readers. Their September meeting was held in a private home located in San Antonio's Castle Hills area.



**HOTxSinC Writers Retreat Fundraiser**

**Opening Doors In New York Or  
How to Conquer the Giants!  
Workshop and Retreat**

**Saturday, November 14, 2009**

**9:30 AM-3:30 PM**

**Georgetown, Texas**

**Led by Russ Hall**

*Geared toward published and unpublished authors seriously seeking New York publication*

**FEE: \$50**

Award winning mystery author and **HOTxSinC** member **Russ Hall** has graciously agreed to donate his time and expertise to lead a writing workshop/retreat with all proceeds going directly to our chapter.

Russ worked for more than twenty-five years as an editor for major publishing houses, 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.

This is a rare opportunity to learn first hand from a man who's certainly "been there and continues to do it." *Attendance will be limited to the first twenty (20) applicants.*

**Fee includes workshop, beverages and snacks. Please bring a bag lunch.**

**For a more information and reservations, please contact Sylvia Dickey Smith at [sds@suddenlink.net](mailto:sds@suddenlink.net).**

News & Announcements - Continued from Page 2

**Out and About with our Members**

**DAVID CIAMBRONE, Sc.D., FIOF**

**\*Fridays - October 2-November 6:**

Teaching Mystery writing classes at the Georgetown Public Library, Georgetown, TX.

**\*Wednesdays - October 28-December 2:**

Teaching writing at The University of Texas-Austin.

**\*Texas Book Festival - October 31-November 1:**  
Book Signing and Staffing Sisters in Crime booth.

**\*Sunday, February 14 - 2:00 PM**  
**Marie Callender's (US183 near the Arboretum)**  
Speaking at the Austin, TX chapter of ASQC on the Effective Transition from Design to Production.

**\*Wednesday, February 10 - 5:30 PM**  
Mystery panel, Sisters in Crime, Austin, TX chapter at the Barnes and Noble at Bee Caves.

**\*Sunday, June 13 - 2:00 PM**  
Presentation on Sherlock Holmes, The Man. Sisters in Crime, Austin, TX chapter at the Barnes and Noble at Bee Caves.



**RUSS HALL**

**\*Texas Book Festival - October 31-November 1:**  
Book Signing and Staffing Sisters in Crime booth.

**\*Friday, November 13, 2009 -11:00 AM**  
University of Texas Forum, Thompson Conference Center on campus, Austin, 11 a.m.

**\*Saturday, November 14, 2009**  
Leader/Facilitator  
**HOTxSinC Workshop & Retreat**  
Georgetown, TX  
9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.



**MICQUI MILLER**

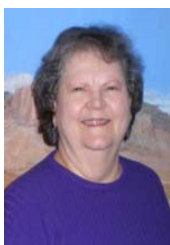


**\*October 8-11, 2009**  
**RomantiCon 2009**  
Richfield OH  
Book Signing October 11

**\*October 31-November 1**  
**Texas Book Festival, Austin,**  
Texas - Signing books at the Sisters in Crime booth.

**JAN GRAPE**

**\*Saturday, October 3rd - 4:30 PM**  
**Murder By The Book**  
2342 Bissonnet Street  
Houston, TX 77005  
Jay Brandon, (San Antonio,) Bill Crider (Alvin, TX,) and **HOTxSinC** member **Jan Grape** (Hill Country of TX) will be signing *Murder Past*, *Murder Present* at **Murder By The Book** in Houston.



This is an anthology of original short stories by members of the **American Crime Writers League (ACWL)** and it is edited by R. Barri Flowers and Jan Grape, President of ACWL.

For more information or directions, please contact Murder By The Book at: (713) 524-8597 / (888) 4-AGATHA / [www.murderbooks.com](http://www.murderbooks.com) / [order@murderbooks.com](mailto:order@murderbooks.com).

**PATRICIA WYNN**

**\*September 30-October 4, 2009**  
**Novelists, Inc. - St. Louis, MO**  
**HOTxSinC** member **Patricia Wynn** will be a featured speaker at the annual **Novelists, Inc.** convention in St. Louis, MO, September 30-October 4, speaking on Small Press. **Novelists, Inc.** is an organization devoted to the needs of multi-published genre authors, the average member having published 16 novels.



For more information visit:  
<http://www.ninc.com/conferences/2009/index.asp>

## October 2009 Chapter Meeting & Indoor Picnic Details and Directions

### About our speaker - Sylvia Dickey Smith



Folks say **Sylvia Dickey Smith** sees everything and misses nothing. She says she was born backwards (feet first and left-handed) and has done most things backwards ever since. At forty, she started college as a freshman and went on to earn a B.A. in Sociology and a M. Ed in Educational

Psychology. She had a successful career as a Licensed Professional Counselor, Vocational Expert Witness, Adjunct Professor, and as a regional director in the for-profit and not-for profit human services field before she retired and began yet another career as an author. She draws on her earlier training and experience as she creates characters in her *Sidra Smart* mysteries, a series set in southeast Texas. *Dance On His Grave*, *Deadly Sins Deadly Secrets* and *Dead Wreckoning* are published. The fourth book of the series, *Dancing With The Devil* is due out July 2010. She conducts a weekly internet radio talk show where she interviews women mystery authors, and writes an online newspaper column that focuses on older authors. A fifth generation Texan she now lives in Georgetown, Texas with her husband, Bill, a retired Army Colonel.

### Out and About with Sylvia Dickey Smith

- \* **Saturday, October 17, 2009**  
Writers Club of Pasadena-Pasadena, Texas  
San Jacinto College Central Campus  
All day meeting, speaking at 1:00 p.m.
- \* **Thursday & Friday, October 22-24, 2009**  
Golden Triangle Writers Conference  
Beaumont, Texas.
- \* **Saturday & Sunday, October 31- November 1**  
Texas Book Festival, Austin, Texas  
Signing books at the Sisters in Crime booth
- \* **Saturday, December 5, 2009**  
The Christmas Stroll  
Hill Country Bookstore on the square in  
Georgetown, Texas
- \* **Wednesday, February 24, 2010**  
Hyde Park Reading Club, Austin TX  
Luncheon: 11:30 AM  
Holy Cross Lutheran Church

### Directions & Potluck Details

Once again, Dave and Kathy Ciabrone have agreed to open their lovely home to **HOTxSinC** members for our annual Indoor Picnic/Potluck on Sunday, October 11. Below are directions to the Ciabrone residence and information regarding what to bring. See you there!

*Members are asked to bring appetizers only; hot dogs, Italian sausage, and other main dishes, as well as drinks, will be provided.*

The Ciabrones' address is:

**109 Oak Meadow Drive  
Georgetown, TX, 78628  
Telephone: 512.864.9373**

The one day gate code for the picnic is: **10119**



[Click here to view full map](#)

### From Austin on I 35

Go north on I 35 to Georgetown and exit 261 (TX 29). The Wolf Ranch shopping center is on the west side of the freeway.

Turn left (west) on TX 29 and go 8 miles west. You will see Gabriel's Overlook on the left after Cimarron Hills. There is a traffic light there. Gabriel's Overlook is about a half mile further west on the left. Once you get through the gate go straight to the first stop sign. Turn left. We're the third house on the left, the first one with big stone pillars at the driveway.

**Coming North on US 183** go to Texas 29 and turn **RIGHT**. Go East about 4 miles until you come to Gabriel's Overlook on your right. Then once you get through the gate, go straight to the first stop sign. Turn left. We're the third house on the left, the first one with big stone pillars at the driveway.

## **The Internet: Spies, Criminals and Saboteurs by Val Smith**

*(On Sunday, July 12, 2009, Val Smith addressed our chapter in a presentation titled, The Internet: Spies, Criminals and Saboteurs. We are grateful that Mr. Smith provided us with the following text to share with members who were unable to attend the meetings, or as a refresher for those who did. This information is vital to all of us.)*

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While the invention of the Internet has spawned numerous changes and advances in interpersonal communications, commerce, and technology, the Internet also can be a dangerous place. Computers are increasingly being used for malicious purposes. There is great power in the control of the flow of information, be it financial transactions, trade secrets, or new media.

There are several groups involved in the threats the Internet poses, each with their own respective roles. First there are the victims, such as the average person/computer user or business owner, that are targeted by criminals and others. There are vandals, usually just kids, who attack computers to gain fame, or for fun, or to "publish" various statements. Political groups often use the Internet to communicate their message in various ways, occasionally resorting to illegal activities.

Next are the criminals themselves, often organized crime, who attack computers for various reasons. Also involved are the world's governments, including intelligence and military organizations who use computers and the internet to further their goals. Terrorists are increasingly using the Internet as we will see later in this article. Finally are the unknowns. These are people who attack computers but we don't know who they are or what their purpose is.

According to numerous articles in publications such as Wired, msnbc, Newsweek, CNN, Fox and more, Chinese, Russian and other attackers are consistently attacking computers in the United States. Their targets are industrial secrets, personally identifiable information such as social security numbers, video game accounts and money.

Russian and Ukrainian organized crime groups are heavily involved in hacking computers to make or steal money. They have created web toolkits for automating and making such attacks easier and more prolific.

One of the most common mechanisms attackers are using is to attack vulnerabilities in victims' web browsers as well as the web sites that users trust. There are many variations of attacks, including hacking to gain information useful in manipulating markets, advertisement fraud, spyware and more.

To understand Russia's involvement in cyber-crime, one must look at it in the context of the country and its leader's history. Vladimir Putin began working for the KGB in 1975 and quickly focused on infiltrating computer and other technology companies in order to find opportunities to spy against the US and its allies. Putin focused particularly on a company named Robotron in Dresden, Germany which produced computer systems. Some would say it was the IBM of the Eastern Bloc.

Even before Putin, Russia was involved in advanced technological operations against the United States. In 1945 a device called "The Thing", which was a passive antenna designed to eavesdrop on classified conversations, was embedded in the Great Seal of the US and presented to the US Ambassador. If it hadn't been for a radio operator accidentally overhearing conversations, it might not have been discovered for many years.

Has Putin given up his interest in high tech espionage since he has left the KGB and taken a leadership role in Russia?

In China there are organizations which can be hired to hack various online e-mail and social networking services for prices as low as \$43 per account. Other Chinese groups are involved in stealing game accounts in order to resell game items on legitimate game market sites. The gaming industry is worth 2.6 billion dollars in China so this is a lucrative business for cyber criminals.

According to some estimates, a single civilian hacker group in China has over 80,000 members, and there are thousands of Chinese sites demonstrating and sharing information on how to compromise computers. One US company has been tracking several large attacks originating from China, including SQL injections against large PC vendors and real estate companies. These sites have thousands of daily visitors and all of them could be potentially compromised.

More importantly, the Chinese government has been accused by several countries of engaging in cyber-espionage, though this is officially denied by the country. It is suspected that the Chinese government has been hacking the Dalai Lama's computer systems as well.

## The Internet: Spies, Criminals and Saboteurs

*Continued from Page 5*

They consider the religious leader and the group that supports him the #1 terrorist organization. E-mail infections, denial of service attacks, and other cyber crime are detected against these computer systems every day.

There is evidence that Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups are also beginning to use the Internet and computer technology to further their goals. There are web sites for publishing terrorist propaganda, sharing hacking techniques and worse. Recently a hacking group in Italy was captured by the authorities. This group was funding Al-Qaeda operations with money gained from their criminal cyber activities.

There is a global war being waged using the Internet and computer technology. In history no wars have been won by pure defense. In WWII the United States did not build a defensive wall and hope it would keep the Nazis out. As terrible as they are, the US built a nuclear weapon and won WWII.

The ability to be faster, more offensive and asymmetric is key in winning a war, even a cyber one. Even better is to win without fighting by economic, diplomatic and other means.

Due to its heavy reliance on technology the US is vulnerable to cyber attacks. Some options to deal with this vulnerability are to make it extremely expensive for adversaries to attack, as well as designing infrastructures that assume compromise and can operate safely and securely anyway.

We need a change in the way we handle this type of technology. Existing laws and policy makers don't adequately cover the new world of cyber attacks, and policy makers often don't understand the underlying technologies involved. Now is the time to change this situation, to create a Manhattan Project for computer security. Hackers often don't have degrees and they use non-traditional methods, which makes it difficult to fit them into existing legitimate frameworks, but they can be directed in a positive way.

It's time to raise awareness and inform those we can of the threats. Political representatives need to be informed of the concern and encouraged to ask for help from the experts. The US has always persevered in any conflict and it is certain to do so with this new realm of cyber threats as well.

### *About the Author:*

Val Smith has been involved with computer security since he was seven years old and wrote a simulation of the movie *War Games* on his Tandy Color Computer. Since then he has founded and participated in many projects including an open website for virus and malware research, a company that analyzes cyber criminal infrastructures and a framework for developing and using computer exploits.



Mr. Smith has presented numerous technical papers on computer security issues at conferences and instructions such as: *Blackhat*, *Defcon*, *the Pentagon*, *FBI Infraguard*, *Boston Source* and many others.

Most recently he has exposed a series of widespread web attacks by Chinese and Russian hackers, including their home IP addresses and the mechanics of how they steal information from unsuspecting computer users.

\* \* \*

### **LATE BREAKING NEWS!!**

Beginning with the November, meeting, the Heart of Texas Chapter of Sisters in Crime will hold their monthly meetings at, MANGIA CHICAGO STUFFED PIZZA at 802 Mesa Drive near the intersection of Spicewood Springs Road.

Look for more information in the November edition of **HOTSHOTS!**

### Upcoming Chapter Programs

**November 8** - Jim Bryant - *Sherlock Holmes, Mysteries and Statistics* - **NEW MEETING LOCATION: Mangia Chicago Stuffed Pizza, Mesa Drive near Spicewood Springs Road.**

**November 14** - 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM  
**Opening Doors In New York or How to Conquer the Giants!** *Workshop/Retreat led by award-winning author Russ Hall with over twenty-five years' experience as an editor with major New York publishing houses. Space limited!*

**December 13** - *Field Trip: Docent-led Tour of "From Out That Shadow: The Life and Legacy of Edgar Allen Poe" at the University of Texas - Harry Hunt Ransom Humanities Research Center*

~ 2110 ~

**January 10, 2010** - Pat Ricks - *History: The Greatest Mystery-Three Hours Research for Three Lines. Really.*

**February 14** - *Love Them to Death: Mysteries with Romance Panel* - Panelists: Dave Ciambro, Russ Hall, Micqui Miller, Weslynn McCallister, Sylvia Dickey Smith

**March 14** - Greg Lawson - *The Media, GPS and Serial Killers*

**April 11** - Chief Art Acevedo - *Update on Policing in Austin, Texas*

**May** - Texas Mystery Month

**June 13** - Dave Ciambro - *Sherlock Holmes, the Man: Who Is He?*

**July 11** - Jerry Hurst - *The Evolving Science of Fire Investigation and the Role of Personal Bias*

**August 8** - Sylvia Dickey Smith, Jessica Fletcher: *Why America Loves Her*

**September 12** - Ed Martin - *An Update on the Case of Madelyn Murray O'Hair*

#### **HoTxSinC Booth Texas Book Festival October 31-November 1, 2009**

We are pleased to announce that the HoTxSinC Chapter will again sponsor a booth at this year's **Texas Book Festival**. We have the contract in hand. Please mark the dates of October 31, - November 1, 2009, on your calendar.

All SinC members are eligible to sell their published books at our booth. Please contact Sylvia Dickey Smith at [sylvia@sylviadickeysmyth.com](mailto:sylvia@sylviadickeysmyth.com) to reserve your time slot. This is a great opportunity to meet the public and make new fans. Don't let the opportunity slip away. If you are not yet published, but wish to help work at the booth, let Sylvia know and she'll be happy to put you to work!

**REMINDER:** It is not too early to begin thinking about becoming more involved in **HoTxSinC**. Elections are held in December. All terms are one year, and all seats are open except the President's. The Vice President of Programs is also the President-elect, and steps up to the Presidency at the end of his or her term.

For more information, please contact HoTxSinC President, Sylvia Dickey Smith, at [sds@suddenlink.net](mailto:sds@suddenlink.net).

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23** is the deadline for News, Reviews, Announcements and Articles for the **NOVEMBER 2009** edition of **HOTSHOTS!**

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



## Heart of Texas Chapter/Sisters In Crime

presents

# Opening the Door to New York or How to Conquer the Giants!

An Interactive Workshop and Retreat Led by

## Russ Hall

Award-winning author with over twenty-five years' experience as an editor with major New York publishing houses.

Working with your own proposal, you will learn how to fine tune your work into a riveting first chapter, a killer synopsis, and a cover letter an editor can't resist!

Including an extensive Q & A on how to research publishers to strike a winning match; understand publishing trends that are changing the playing field; whether to write what you love or what they love; answers to what comes first, the agent or the publisher?

### WHEN:

Saturday, November 14, 2009

9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

### WHERE:

Oaks at Wildwood Clubhouse - 30 Wildwood Drive - Georgetown, TX

### FEE: \$50

Includes snacks , dessert and beverages. Please bring a sack lunch.  
(Note: attendance limited to first 20 registrants)

**Registration Deadline & Deadline for Submission of Industry Standard Proposals\*: October 31**

(\*Industry standard: First chapter (double spaced, Times New Roman), 1 page query letter, up to 2-page, single-spaced synopsis.)

Please register ASAP to reserve your place. Proposals can be submitted after registering but not later than October 31!



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Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Proposal Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to: Heart of Texas Chapter/Sisters in Crime

Mail your check and proposal by 10/31/09 to:

Sylvia Dickey Smith  
30 Wildwood Drive, #13  
Georgetown TX 78633

For more information, contact Sylvia Dickey Smith at [sds@suddenlink.net](mailto:sds@suddenlink.net)