



September 2010

CRIME REPORT

Table of Contents

Page 1 Meeting Notes
 Page 2 Letter from the Editor
 Page 3 Tidbits from the President
 Page 4 Member News
 Page 5 Thoughts on Writing
 Page 6 Self Editing: Punctuating Dialog
 Page 8 Readers' Group Meeting Report; Readers' Group 2010 Booklist
 Page 9 Event and Contest Announcements
 Page 11 Writer Quotes; List of Officers

Meeting Notes

September 7, 7:00PM

**Rediscovered Bookshop
180 N 8th St, Boise, ID**

Be sure to join us at our first meeting the Rediscovered Bookshop's new downtown location. First hour of parking is free in the downtown lots (or free after 6:00 at the meters).

Last month's meeting was our annual movie night at The

Flicks. I had never seen *The Third Man*. It was an interesting movie and the more I thought about it the more I wondered why there aren't more good stories like that these days.

Our speaker for September is **Gwyneth Bledsoe**, a local first time novelist. She will be discussing her new book, *Death Before Breakfast*, and what it took to get it published.

[www.gwynethbledsoe.com/category/death-before-breakfast]

Blane Holden
Crime Report Editor
Boise, ID 83709



Letter from the Editor:

Blane Holden



Welcome to the September 2010 edition of the Crime Report.

It's that time of year when we start sensing real change. Summer is still fighting to hang on for one final hurrah; leaves are still green, but you can sense the autumn colors coming; school is starting back up, so buses are everywhere. It's a good time of year for reflection and planning.

I've been reading Catherine Price's *101 Places NOT to See Before You Die*, and wondering about my various life lists and what I still want to get done.

As a writer, my first thought was: *why didn't I think of writing this?* My next thoughts (after *this is really funny!*) were about getting it in gear and writing my great American novel (or at least a decent short story).

We all make lists, consciously or not, of what we want to get done, see, experience, and this is as good a time as any to dust off those lists and take inventory of where we are or still want to go.

I hope you all take a break this year and enjoy the changing seasons. And, remember to have a great September!

... Blane

In this issue:

Welcome our guest columnist Roger Doering and be sure to check out what your fellow chapter members are up to in the Member News and the Events & Announcements sections. There are also some great events coming our way in the next few months.

Submissions:

Please email articles, news, suggestions, and questions to:
pincEditor@gmail.com

Be sure to indicate if you have included any attachments.

Articles are due by the 21st of the month *prior* to the issue in which they will appear. For example, if you are writing an article for the April issue, it is due to the editor by March 21st.

Members who contribute to the newsletter will be entered in a drawing for a \$20.00 gift card.

September Quotes

"Writing is not a job description. A great deal of it is luck. Don't do it if you are not a gambler because a lot of people devote many years of their life to it. I think people become writers because they are compulsive wordsmiths."

—Margaret Atwood

"Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart."

—William Wordsworth

"The pages are still blank, but there is a miraculous feeling of the words being there, written in invisible ink and clamoring to become visible."

—Vladimir Nabakov

"I never met an author that was sorry he or she wrote their book ... they are only sorry they did not write it sooner."

—Sam Horn

2010 Officers Partners in Crime

President —
Victoria Blue

Vice President —
Ken Marks

Treasurer —
Jane Trust

**Secretary /
Newsletter Editor —**
Blane Holden

Member-at-Large —
Sally Fielder

**Partners in Crime meets at
7:00 PM on the first Tuesday
of each month at:
Rediscovered Bookshop
180 North 8th Street
Boise, ID**

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Free Writing Workshop

Borderline Publishing will host a writing series to be held throughout the Treasure Valley. The remaining sessions are:

September 18 @ Fairview Ave.
Hastings: From Good to Great

October 16 @ A Novel Adventure: Hook and Brand

Each class is held on a Saturday from 10:00-noon.

An accompanying workbook is also going to be offered at \$10 for those interested.

Author and Borderline Editor Angela Meuser will instruct the classes along with a variety of guest authors.

Angela's experience includes studying journalism at the University of Oregon, an assortment of nationally published articles, and two upcoming novels.

For more information, visit www.borderlinepublishing.com or call Angela at 475-4950.

Rediscovered Bookshop, has reopened at their new downtown Boise location:

180 North 8th Street
(208) 376-4229

Special Events: *Thursday, September 2*

Diane Hammond, author of *Seeing Stars* and *Hannah's Dream*, will be touring Boise and signing copies of her books.

Friday, September 10

Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators hosts their annual writers conference and opening night is a book signing beginning at 7 PM. This year's authors: Chris Crutcher, *Crazy Horse Electric Game*; Kelly Milner Halls, *Dinosaur Parade*; Sydney Salter, *Swoon at your own Risk*; and Laura Bingham, *Alvor*.

Friday, September 24th celebrate the debut books by local writers **Valerie Robertson** and **Kathy Hurley**. Beginning at 7 PM, Val will read from *Blade's Edge* and Kathy will read her story "The Truth One Sees" from the anthology *Warrior Wisewoman 3*.

Tidbits from the President

Changing Times

My daughter left for college this week. Wow, what a roller coaster that's been! It's also been a very emotional time for me. I knew this day would come and I've planned and planned for it. Yes, there was excitement, yes there was joy, but there was also sadness.

I walked into her room today to say good morning, only to realize that she wasn't there anymore. I took a few motherly moments to peruse the few remaining items that she'd chosen to leave behind. A pen, some certificates on the wall, several videos, and other odds and ends and I realized—this is it, the beginning of letting go. It's hard on any parent to accept this change, although, from listening to my husband, it's easier on men.

I do know however, that it's going to be extremely painful for me. I remember her first steps, toddling along in the hopes of someday walking on her own. I remember baking

cookies with her, in preparation of one day making her own. I remember teaching her to drive her first car and facing the fear of one day she'd be driving away. Those days are here and I can't decide if I should applaud or cry. Perhaps I'll do a bit of both.

I guess the saddest part for me is the conflict I share in adjusting with a different culture than what I was raised in. As a Hispanic, it is expected that children will return home and live with their parents, with everyone contributing to the family as a whole. Yes, children go to college and yes they get married, but they come back home. They don't just go off on their own. In the American culture it is expected that the child will leave and live on their own.

My daughter was my personal editor and I will miss that as well. She was the youngest person ever to join the school newspaper and served as Senior Editor her last two years of High School. Her comments and suggestions helped me to become a better writer.

I had hoped she would go into journalism, but she told me that

the industry is so volatile that there is less of a future as a newspaper writer than there was ten years ago. She's right.

With our changing times, more of us are going to the internet for our local and international news. We're buying books for our Kindles instead of buying books at the local bookstore.

With all these changes we face as writers, we need to learn to adapt and change with the world, just as my daughter has done.

We need to face the changes and new challenges and come up with new options that allow us to do what we enjoy and want to keep doing. And that is to write.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to go hug my remaining daughter and hope that time slows down just a bit.

Happy writing!

Victoria Blue
President



*** Member News ***

Irene Bennett Brown's *Where Gable Slept* is a summer release from Riveredge Books. Known for her historical novels for children and adults, this is Irene's first mystery.

Irene would like to thank Partners in Crime's manuscript service, Criminal Pursuits, for an extremely helpful critique on the beginning chapters and synopsis of the early version of the book.

For more information visit Irene at www.irenebennettbrown.com

Michael J. Segerdal has just had a piece published in the Foolish Times under the pseudonym Michael John.

Read "How I Learned to Live with Side Effects" online at www.foolishtimes.net

If you have news to share with the Partners in Crime members, please submit it to:
pincEditor@gmail.com.

Can't wait to hear your news!

Announcements: Events and Contests

Idaho Book Extravaganza —The Future of Writing and Publishing

October 22–23, 2010

Silverstone Plaza
3405 E. Overland Road
Meridian, ID

This event is for anyone who has ever wanted to write a book, has written a book or is in the book process. It will feature publishers, printers, literary agents, book designers, bestselling authors, speakers, booksellers, book marketing, social media experts, nonprofit organizations, students and anyone who loves reading, writing, and books.

This is Idaho's first and largest publishing industry show focusing on the trends in writing and publishing which impact business and consumers.

This is your opportunity to build relationships, sell products, find the highest quality designers and

book production specialist as well as understand how publishing trends and the global marketplace impact life and business on every level.

Event FREE to the public.

For more information visit:
idahobookextravaganza.com

Mayhem in the Grove — 2011 —

Formerly "Murder in the Grove," the conference has a long-standing tradition of great talent.

We are in the process of changing the name to "Mayhem in the Grove" as our focus is shifting from just mysteries to include a larger circle of genres.

Guest of Honor:
Paranormal author, Sherrilyn Kenyon.

Friday Master Class:
Screenwriter, Michael Hauge

Mayhem In The Grove 2011,
June 3-5, 2011

www.murderinthegrove.com

Readers' Group Report

by Anne Roberts

This month's selection was **Dick Francis' *Forfeit***. All of his books have horses in them, the hero is always in his mid-30s, dark complexioned, and fighting for justice. He also seems very resilient—like the Energizer Bunny or Bozo the Clown—he keeps getting beat up and bouncing back.

Forfeit is one of his early novels. It is widely known that Francis' wife Mary did a lot of research for his books and probably wrote part of them, too. He later co-authored some books with his son Felix, but they aren't as good.

The line between good and evil is clear: the journalist hero stays with his wife despite her illness, and fights valiantly to protect her and bring the villain to justice. We all cheered when the bad guys drowned! But our hero does have feet of clay: he stays married to his wife, but he can't resist a bit on the side. Who's to say that's wrong? His wife finally accepts it.

We will discuss Norwegian author **Jo Nesbo's *Nemesis*** at our next meeting. Detective Harry Hole has become an international cult figure: "an impossible character, yet impossible not to like...a periodic binge drinker seriously opposed to any type of authority" (from author's website). Join us.

Readers' Group 2010 Book List

January: *Sacrifice*
by S. J. Bolton

February: *Still Waters*
by Nigel McCrery

March: *Dog on It*
by Spencer Quinn

April: *Promised Land*
by Robert B. Parker

May: *The Dark Horse*
by Craig Johnson

June: *The Wrong Mother*
by Sophie Hannah

July: *An Expert in Murder*
by Nicola Upson
100th Reader's Book!

August: *Forfeit*
by Dick Francis

September: *Nemesis*
by Jo Nesbo

October: *The Janissary Tree*
by Jason Goodwin

November: *A Bad Day for Sorry*
by Sophie Littlefield

December: *Merry, Merry Ghost*
by Carolyn Hart

Thoughts on Writing

by Roger Doering

Recently, I was talking with an old friend from the East Coast. We had collaborated on various engineering projects when we worked for the same company.

He asked me how my book was going. I kidded that he and another engineer that we both had worked with had infected me with the "engineering bug". When you work on a design for some critical application, there is no room for error. The controls must operate perfectly the first time and every time.

So what does that have to do with writing? Well if you want to only tell a story, probably nothing. But, if you want to have a story that eventually expects to arrive in some sort of print media, "here in lies" the problem.

Initially you put your thoughts down and it is probably pretty pitiful, but it was exciting to do it. This seems to be the norm.

Then you start to edit the work—and the fun becomes a drudge. This is where the

"engineering bug" shows up. You get rid of all of the gerunds for action words. You change all of those "soft" sentences, the ones with "would", "could", and "should", into forceful driving sentences. You dig and change and edit once, twice and then three times. You change things and change them back, over and over again until you have a love-hate relationship with the thing that was supposed to be a fun idea.

You have engineered your "oeuvre" to death. You are lucky if it still has the heart of your initial attempt.

But, be of good cheer!

If it was of any value for you to write it down in the first place, the heart remains after all of your ruminating and you have learned to present your ideas to someone other than yourself.

And maybe your story will resonate with others, now that it is fully dressed and grown up.

The next time will really be fun to go all the way through. We can only hope.



Self Editing

by Angela Abderhalden

Punctuating Dialog

This month's topic is punctuating dialog. Usually it's the beginning writer that doesn't quite understand how to do this but I recently edited a manuscript where an experienced author made some beginner mistakes. So, I thought I would just touch on this for everyone (and myself) as a review.

- The punctuation always goes inside the quote.

“Dues are due by the end of the month,” the president said.

- The dialogue tag frames the sentence in which it appears.

“My new book will be out soon,” Ken said.

- The period appears after the dialogue tag.

“Let's start the meeting,” Victoria said.

- Other forms of terminal punctuation appear inside the quotes. The dialogue tag still

acts as part of the longer sentence; it is not capitalized.

“No way!” Andrea said.

“Where is the statue of the famous author, Blane Holden?” the tourist asked.

- Terminal punctuation is never followed by a comma.

This is **incorrect**: “Murder in the Grove 2011 will be awesome!,” Valerie said.

- When placed in the center of a long line of dialogue, the tag acts as a pause, surrounded on either side by quotes. Notice that the dialogue tag is punctuated by commas on either side because it appears in the middle of a long, complete sentence.

“Ken, don't forget to find a speaker for September,” Valerie said, “and remember it needs to be interesting.”

- Sometimes the second part of the sentence is treated as an individual unit. In this case, drop the second comma and capitalize the beginning of the second sentence.

“So now we'll move on to the speaker this month,” Valerie said. “Ken will introduce him to us.”

- If two people speak, without pause, or without a dialogue tag between them, it is customary to begin a new paragraph for each speaker. It's not wrong to set them back to back, just extremely confusing. Most publishing is done as a separate paragraph.

“Did you get of the new members dues?”

“Yes. And I gave their email addresses to Blane.”

- Whenever someone new speaks up, indicate the exchange by beginning a new paragraph.

“Make sure that you're getting your newsletter via email. If you haven't been getting this awesome and riveting work of art, you need to let Blane know so that he can correct the problem. It's such a great resource for writers in the Boise area.”

“Can I still get it even though I'm in Maine? I hope so I

wouldn't want to miss any of the exciting news in Boise.”

- If a character speaks for an extended period and you want to begin a new paragraph, it is not necessary to close the quotes at the end of the first paragraph.

“I'm running out of funny things to write in this article dealing with the members of Partners in Crime. So just imagine that this is a really long paragraph of mind blowing and super important information so that I can show you about this kind of punctuation.

“So then when I start a new paragraph I use one quote without closing the previous quote. It is used so that you can break up the speaker's words, so that you give lots of white space on the page. This example is ridiculous but it proves the point that I am trying to make.”

There, the review is over. Sometimes it's the basics that can trip us up. Class is over. The bell has rung.

