

# The Public Safety Writer

Volume 4  
Spring 2007

## 2007 Conference Huge Success

Though our numbers were small, we couldn't have asked for a better conference. Here are some comments by those who attended:

*A few months back I was given the opportunity and joined this group. I was correct in assuming it was what I am all about. This also was an opportunity to meet my publisher in person in a social way. Not only was my book, "Code Two 'n' a Half" well accepted, but my wife Ruby June and I were made more than welcome. I am proud to be a part of this group.*

*Respectfully,  
**Bill Wilhelm***

*Huzzah to the Queen! My second PSWA conference turned out to be even better than the first, now that I've gotten to know more of the members. The speakers were great, their subjects apt and the schedule left plenty of time for Q&A and, of course, great schmoozing. Stimulating friends, great food and the vibrant city of Las Vegas at our feet...what could be finer?"*

***Billie Johnson,**  
Oak Tree Press.*

(Billie filled in as a speaker when one of the presenters was unable to come and did a fantastic job.)

From **Sarah Cortez**, who gave a terrific presentation on working with editors,

*One of the greatest pleasures of our group is the on-going friendships and support.*

Another new member, **Sunny Frazier**, wrote the following article about the conference:

### WHAT HAPPENED IN VEGAS

by Sunny Frazier

It was my first PSWA conference. My friend and mentor, **Marilyn Meredith**, encouraged me to join because of my ties in law enforcement via the Fresno County Sheriff's Department. I worked records, warrants, and eleven years as an assistant to an undercover narcotics team, which means riding herd on a group of alpha-males. Could the life of a writer be more dangerous and exciting?

Yes.

I've been to many mystery conventions and conferences, trying to blend in. As soon as I entered the Las Vegas Hotel and spotted **Denny** and **Keith**, I knew I'd found my "people." The feeling of acceptance grew with each person I met. Okay, having a Queen\* lead the group threw me, but I've adjusted.

I sometimes may have given the wrong impression, or possible the real me came out without filters. But I found a comrade-in-arms with **Michelle**, a friend right out of my ex-Navy days. I've nicknamed her Flamingo after the Gangsta tour. And I'd still like to hear her sing karaoke. And **Johnny**, who soaks up info like a sponge—he's become Johnny Squarepants.

The final words from **Marilyn M.** after I won the award for Best Novel for "Fools Rush In," was "Make sure you announce it." So, I came home and posted it to all of my writing groups, to authors who have supported me in the past. People like J.A. Jance, Carolyn Hart, Denise Hamilton and Robin Burcell wrote and congratulated me. Many asked for more info on the organization.

I'm proud that Marilyn introduced me to all of you, I look forward to the group expanding. I know many people in law enforcement and writing about law enforcement need to know about PSWA. There are many stories waiting to be written and read.

(\*Queen refers to **Marilyn Olsen**, our fearless leader.)

## NEW BOOK LAUNCHED AT PSWA CONFERENCE

**William Wilhelm**, new member, launched his book, *Code Two and a Half*, at the conference. This is from the back cover:

Being a police officer in a big city is having a front row seat to the greatest show on earth. I was a police officer for the great city of Los Angeles from 1953 to 1973.

Even among law enforcement officers, motor cops are somewhat of a minority and most police departments don't even have them...but it was the only job I ever had that I didn't have to push myself out the door each time I went to work.

Retirement was the thing that eventually separated me from it. So, I invite you to come along with me and share one cop's view of one heck of an interesting career in the "City of Angels."

The book is available at Amazon and <http://www.oaktreebooks.com> , plus Ingram Book wholesales so that readers can ask for it at their favorite bookshop.

## NEW MEMBER PRODUCES MOVIE

Siren is the title of the new movie produced by **Gene Kelly**, who joined PSWA at the conference. To learn more about the project visit:

<http://www.sirenthemovie.com>

The movie received rave reviews at the Sundance Film Festival. Congratulations, Gene!

## WRITING CONTESTS FROM OAK TREE PRESS

Oak Tree Press sponsors three annual writing contests, and the winner of each is published!!

Our Dark Oak Mystery Contest is now in its ninth year. Novels of all mystery genres, from cozy amateur sleuths to hard-boiled detectives on the mean streets, are eligible.

Timeless Love, our romance novel contest, is open to novels of all romance genres, from sweet to supernatural.

Coptales, our imprint for stories of and by law enforcement professionals, considers fiction and non fiction including memoir.

Contest fee is \$35.00 per manuscript submitted, payable to Oak Tree Press. The contests are open to authors who have not been published in the genre in past 3 years, and material not previously published in any medium. For consideration, novels must be presented in an easy-to-read font, double spaced on one side of bonded white paper, 80,000 (or so) words max, pages numbered, unbound, and mailed in a manuscript box. Entries will not be returned unless accompanied by SASE and adequate postage.

Entries will be accepted through July 31, 2007, and the winners will be announced at Prose in the Park, Oak Tree Press's first annual writers' conference set for September 14-16, 2007.

More information can be seen at our website: [www.oaktreebooks.com](http://www.oaktreebooks.com), or request a brochure by sending SASE.

Mail submissions to:

*(Contest Name)*

Oak Tree Press  
140 E. Palmer Street  
Taylorville, IL 62568

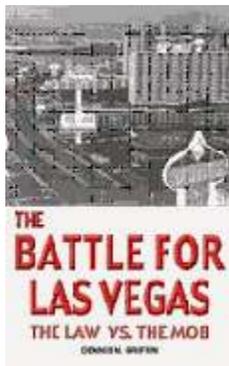
From member, **Sarah Cortez**, the anthology "Windows Into My World: Latino Youth Write Their Lives" will be launched on May 11, 2007 with Andrea White, the wife of Mayor Bill White beginning the program focusing on the contributing authors in the Houston area. This anthology brings together thirty-six young (high school or college-aged) Latinos writing memoir essays about their life experiences. Edited by Sarah Cortez, this volume is introduced by Cuban-American author Virgil Suarez and is published by Arte Publico Press, the world's largest publisher of Hispanic authors.

Dos Gatos Press in Austin, Texas has chosen one of **Sarah Cortez'** poems for the 2008 Texas Poetry Calendar. Visit the website for ordering information, [www.dosgatospress.org](http://www.dosgatospress.org).

## Computer Times Editors Choice Books

Reviewed by Terrance Kibiloski

The Battle for Las Vegas: The Law vs. The Mob, by Dennis N. Griffin



(ISBN 0-929712-37-4), from Huntington Press Publishing, is a great read and a fascinating walk through the history of Las Vegas as you have never seen it before. Forget the glitzy lights and action on the casino floors; the real action was happening behind the scenes, in the penthouses, the offices, the police departments, the bars, and the homes, in Chicago, in Cleveland, in Kansas City, and Las Vegas. While you may be familiar with some of the players like Bugsy Siegel, Lucky Luciano, and Jimmy Hoffa, you will also meet Moe Dalitz, Tony Accardo, Joe

Aiuppa, Lefty Rosenthal, Anthony Spilotro, and many others who fought the battles behind the glitz. This was during the time when the customer was king, long before the corporations came in to make it a family entertainment and convention center. This was the time when Vegas was truly Sin City.

More from **Denny Griffin**:

Frank Cullotta, former mobster and my co-author, and I will be at the Nevada State Museum on June 6 to kickoff our new book, "Cullotta – The story of a Chicago Street Criminal, Las Vegas Mobster, and Government Witness." This will be Frank's first public appearance regarding the book, and security measures will be in place.

The event begins with a signing at 5:30, followed by a panel discussion

of the mob days in Vegas, specifically the Tony Spilotro era.

Joining Frank and me will be retired FBI agent Dennis Arnoldy. Dennis was the Las Vegas case agent for the Spilotro investigations. Jane Ann Morrison, columnist for the Las Vegas Review-Journal, will also be on the panel. Investigative reporter Gerorge Knapp, of KLAS-TV, will serve as moderator. It should be an entertaining evening.

## ON JOINING PSWA

I was working on some promo ideas for my upcoming book, and while doing so I reflected on my writing career. I thought about how things picked up for me after I decided to try my hand at non-fiction. It was then I remembered that none of it would have happened if not for my membership in a writer's group.

It was 2001 and I had been struggling for about five years trying to get my fictions to take off. Another writer I had become acquainted with suggested I join a group he belonged to. At the time it was known as the Police Writer's Association, now the Public Safety Writer's Association.

I joined and attended their conference in Orlando. I met many nice and knowledgeable people, one of whom was a lady named **Marilyn Olsen**. Marilyn mentioned she had retired as a civilian employee of the Indiana State Police and had just completed writing the history of that department. I bought a copy of the book when it came out and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Marilyn's book got me wondering whether anybody had written the history of Las Vegas law enforcement. They hadn't. I contacted Marilyn and told her what I was thinking. She advised me that my first step was to make a proposal to the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department asking for their blessing and cooperation. With Marilyn's guidance I prepared the proposal and submitted it. The rest, as they say, is history.

The information learned and the contacts I made researching that book led to my Vegas organized crime book. That in turn got me in touch with Frank Cullotta, resulting in my next book. But none of it would have happened if I hadn't joined that group and gone to Orlando.

You never know when someone at a writer's group - a member or possibly a guest speaker - will give you an idea or drop a name that will change your career around.

When will that happen for you? I don't know. I can only say that if you don't belong, the answer is never.

--**Denny Griffin**

## MORE MEMBER NEWS

**MARSHALL FRANK's** latest non-fiction book is hot: [Militant Islam in America](#). The book was commissioned by a publisher in Europe to research and write this shocking expose. For more information visit

<http://www.marshallfrank.com> The book is available at amazon.com.

In about a month, **Marshall Frank**'s new non-fiction book of police/homicide memoirs titled [From Violins to Violence](#) will also be available on his website.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR OWN **TIM DEES**, webmaster and board member.

Our own PSWA member/webmaster, **Tim Dees**, is listed on the credits page of a (Jan. 2007)U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), National Institute of Justice (NIJ) publication entitled "[Investigations Involving the Internet and Computer Networks](#)" (NCJ #210798)

Tim served on the Technical Working Group which developed the report to assist in the Investigation of High Technology Crimes. The publication is intended to be a resource for individuals responsible for investigations involving the Internet and other computer networks.

Deputy Assistant Attorney General, David W. Hagy, praised and commended the members of the group..."for long hours of work required to prepare this report and recognize that they did this while still performing their existing duties with their home offices or agencies. Their commitment of time and expertise was invaluable to the success of the project."

Congratulations Tim and thanks for your contributions!

(Anyone having news, an article for the newsletter, or a book review, please email Editor: Marilyn Meredith, 34755 Highway 190, Springville CA 93265, [mmeredith@ocsnet.net](mailto:mmeredith@ocsnet.net))

Send mail to [tdees@policewriter.com](mailto:tdees@policewriter.com) with questions or comments about this web site.  
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