

The Public Safety Writer

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2

Summer 2005

Membership in New Organization Grows

We're very pleased to report a steady stream of new memberships now that we've evolved the former Police Writers Association into the Public Safety Writers Association. As you'll see later on in the newsletter, our members represent a wide range of experience in the public safety field and come from all over the country. All have expressed enthusiasm for the organization and are looking forward to opportunities to share their expertise and network with other members.

Please look through this website for a lot of updated information in the newsletter, on the conference page and on our "tips" page. If you have any "tips" you'd like to share, please contact us.

As you'll see from a later article about the conference, plans are now firming up. The conference will be held in Las Vegas March 23-26 at the Boardwalk Hotel and Casino located right on the Las Vegas strip. Check out the Conference page on this website for details.

We're also updating our listserve, a members-only service that you'll be sure to want to take advantage of. If you have questions about the listserve, please contact our webmaster, Tim Dees at tdees@policewriter.com.

Annual Conference to be held in Las Vegas

Our annual conference will be held in Las Vegas, March 23-26, 2006 at the Boardwalk Hotel and Casino. The conference will begin with a reception Thursday evening, March 23. We're still firming up the exact agenda, but a tentative agenda can be found on the Conference page of this website. At this point, we're very anxious for your input. What topics would you like to have covered? Are there areas of expertise you have and would be willing to share as one of our presenters?

Although the exact schedule is still not set, we do know we'll be offering concurrent sessions. One series of presentations will be intended for those primarily interested in writing fiction. A second series of presentations will be intended for those primarily interested in writing non-fiction. Joint sessions will present information we think everyone will want to know: options for publishing and how to market yourself and your writing. Additional options will include how to create a website and/or blog and how to effectively manage your writing as a business.

There will also be opportunities to present your work for peer review and to talk one-on-one with successfully published writers.

Our conference bookstore will be open throughout the conference. You are invited to bring your books to sell.

Additionally, on Friday and Saturday afternoons, time will be allotted for conference participants to give brief readings from their works and participate in a book signing.

The conference will include lunches on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, but all evenings will be free so you can enjoy the sights and sounds of Las Vegas.

The awards banquet for the writing competition will be held Sunday noon.

Writing Competition Open to All Members

Writing Competition winners will be announced at the conference (you don't have to be present to win, but it would be a lot more fun if you were). The rules, deadlines and applications for the competition are now available on this website (click on [Writing Competition](#)) to give you plenty of time to work on your entry.

Committees Now Being Organized

We're also recruiting members willing to serve on the committees necessary to make all this happen. Committees include: membership, conference, newsletter and writing competition. If you'd be willing to serve on any of these committees or have any questions about any of this, please feel free to contact Marilyn Olsen at molsen@policewriter.com.

The Website is Always There for You

All members will receive a quarterly newsletter, however a vibrant organization like ours often has late breaking news that occurs more often than quarterly. We are fortunate to have member Tim Dees as our webmaster. Tim and the board are dedicated to keeping the website as up to date as we possibly can. To that end, we will also need your help. Just published a book? Just got an article published? Know about a new public safety organization or publication that you don't see listed? Let us know.

Or do you need some help with your manuscript? Looking for a publisher? Need an agent? Just need a little moral support when writer's block hits? If the website itself doesn't have the information you need, chances are one of our members will. Contact us and we'll see if we can help. The website is available to you wherever you are, 24-7.

www.policewriter.com. (Yes, although we've changed the name of the organization, we still have the old domain name. We also have the domain names www.publicsafetywriter.com and www.publicsafetywriter.org, both of which point to this same site.

Please Join Us!

Membership in the Public Safety Writers Association is open to all new and experienced, published and not yet published authors interested in law enforcement topics and other public safety professionals (sworn and civilian) including fire, emergency medical, search and rescue and related fields and those who write about them.

Membership applications are available on this website. Just click on *Join*. Please mail yours in today!

Welcome New and Renewing Members

The Public Safety Writers Association is pleased to welcome the following new and renewing members:

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Dennis Griffin of Las Vegas, NV. Denny is a long-time member of the Police Writers Association. He was a 20 year-veteran of law enforcement in New York State. His first novel, *The Morgue* was published in 1996. Since then he has published five other mystery/thrillers, *Red Gold*, *Blood Money*, *Killer in Pair-A-Dice*, *One-Armed Bandit* and *Pension*. His first non-fiction effort, *Policing Las Vegas – A History of Law Enforcement in Southern Nevada*, has just been released. His second non-fiction work, *The Battle for Las Vegas – The Law versus the Mob*, has been accepted for publishing. The book tells the story of the Tony Spilotro era in Las Vegas from 1971 to 1986. It will be released in late 2005 or early 2006.

Marshall Frank of Melbourne, FL. Marshall is a retired captain of the Miami Dade Police Department where he spent the majority of his career working homicide. He is author of five books, *Beyond the Call*, *Dire Straits*, *On My Father's Grave*, *Call Me Mommy*, and *Frankly Speaking*. He has also written more than 300 editorial articles and short stories.

James B. Benson, Jr. of Anaheim, CA. James is a retired US Marine Corps CID Agent. He was awarded the J. Edgar Hoover Medal for Outstanding Career in Law Enforcement and numerous USMC awards for outstanding investigative work. He has published two books of poetry, *Devotion in Blue* and *Lawman's Lament* and a work of non-fiction, *Marine Corps Detective*.

Meghan Bailey of Milwaukee, WI. Meghan is a deputy sheriff

with the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office. She is editor of the Milwaukee Deputy Sheriff's Association monthly newsletter, *The MDSA Star*.

Martin A. Gonzalez of Liberty, NY. Martin is a retired officer in the New York Police Department and a US Navy veteran.

Breck Porter, Jr., of Galveston, TX. Breck designs and manages websites for police departments and police associations as well as serving as editor of a police newspaper with a monthly circulation of 20,000.

James P. Weiss of Palm Harbor, FL. A long-time Police Writers Association member, Jim is a retired Brook Park, OH police lieutenant. He also served in the infantry and combat engineers Active Army Reserve. He has just completed his first murder mystery, *Body in the Bayou*. In addition he has published hundreds of articles in *Law and Order*, *Tactical Response*, *The Police Marksman*, *Police Fleet Manager*, *Oklahoma State Trooper* and *Florida State Trooper*.

Book Reviews

Each issue of The Public Safety Writer will contain reviews of books by our members and others we think our members might enjoy. If you'd like to have your book reviewed in The Public Safety Writer, please send a copy of your book to: Public Safety Writers Association, 2024 Falcon Court, Bellingham, WA 98229.

Hot Shots and Heavy Hits: Tales of an Undercover Drug Agent

by Paul Doyle

Northeastern University Press

220 pp.

Paul Doyle is now a retired Special Agent in the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs and the Drug Enforcement Administration. His book tells the story of many of the cases he worked from his days as a rookie through his rise up the ranks of a bureaucracy whose wide-ranging activities involve dealing with some of the most unpredictable and dangerous criminals in society, people who, as an undercover agent, he came to know all too well. His book is a no-nonsense, first-person account of the double, shadow life he was forced to live – pretending to be one of society's most destructive of all criminals while in actuality an enforcer of the law. And, perhaps, most difficult of all, having to also be able to maintain a normal, everyday relationship with friends and family.

Excerpt from the chapter, "Chinatown."

The symptoms of withdrawal were painfully obvious. Tootie's nose would run, and she would rub it nervously, as all junkies do when the effects of the heroin started to wear off. Then she would break out in cold sweats and suffer the dry heaves. Tootie told me that her body hurt all over, and she said the pain was indescribable. She was not the crying type, but her eyes would fill up and the tears would fall uncontrollably. She would cry, shake and tremble until she could get that needle in her arm again. Watching her go through this hell was painfully sad, and the worst part of all was my own helplessness. I couldn't help her a bit. No one but the "candy man" could ease her pain. I will never forget scenes like this. They are etched in my mind forever, everyday scenes in the drug ravaged life of the heroin addict. I developed a feeling for every last junkie because, as an undercover agent, I witnessed their helpless condition. I came to see them as the ultimate victims. They were victims of their addiction and dependence on heroin, and they were preyed upon by the drug pushers and sought after by the police. The junkies were society's real losers.

Blown Away: American Women and Guns

By Caitlin Kelly

Pocket Books

315 pp.

\$13

Caitlin Kelly was no stranger to writing when she began the research that would lead to *Blown Away*. A former journalism professor at New York University and Concordia University, she was also an award-winning freelance writer whose work had appeared in *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*. What she didn't know much about was guns. "I guess like most people, I made a lot of assumptions about why women, in particular, would choose to own one." Her research confirmed some of these assumptions, but caused her to reexamine both what she thought she believed to be true about gun ownership among women and what she ultimately found to be true. "My goal always was to be as objective as possible," she said. "I think it's important for people to look at both sides of an issue before they draw conclusions." In researching the book, Kelly interviewed dozens of women, from those who are actively opposed to gun ownership by anyone to women who are gun hobbyists to women who bought a gun as a last resort to defend themselves and their children from an abusive spouse. The book is both scholarly and anecdotal, relating the stories of those whose experiences led them to be on one side or another of this continuing debate.

Excerpt: From the chapter, "The Dark Side."

Why would any woman want to own a gun, or several? Women, social norms still insist, are primarily nurturers and pacifiers, most

interested in compromise, conflict resolution and cooperation. Pointing the barrel of a .38 or a .357 Magnum or a .380 pistol at another human being – or at a paper target or a deer or moose or pheasant – isn't a dream we're encouraged to share. For many people, the words women and guns rest uneasily in the same sentence. Like men, women buy guns for many different reasons: to hunt, to compete, to shoot socially, to protect themselves of their children. There is no "typical" female gun owner. Female gun owners live in Manhattan, New York and Manhattan, Kansas....

According to Department of Justice statistics, three of four American women over the age of 12 will be victims of crime at least once in their lives. More than a third of women will be violently assaulted, raped or robbed in their lifetimes....By the time they think about buying a gun for self-defense, women are simply worn thin by fear, fed up with low-level, life-long anxiety about what to wear, when to travel, what public transit, pedestrian or vehicular routes to take. Who wants to spend one's life calculating who is safe to speak to and smile at – and whom we should walk away from briskly? Yet women do....While carrying a gun won't solve the larger and more complex issues of living within a violent society it is one of the few ways women can level the field if someone large and adrenaline-charged is determined to do her lethal harm.

Women Police: Portraits of Success

By Patricia Lunneborg

295 pp.

\$21.95

Patricia Lunneborg writes a column for Women Police magazine called "On the Road with the Women in Blue." In this capacity, she has had the opportunity to interview dozens, perhaps hundreds, of women who wear a badge and carry a gun. She's learned, and now she shares their stories – their achievements, their frustrations, their hopes for the future of women in law enforcement. "In 1999," she writes in the preface of the book, "women made up 14.3 percent of officers in police agencies with 100 or more sworn personnel, but in 2001, their percentage had declined to 12.7 percent. If we combine small and large agencies, women only represent 11.2 percent of all sworn law enforcement personnel in the U.S., which is dramatically less than the 46.5 percent of women in the labor force." Although women have been accepted, if not welcomed, by police agencies in roles other than clerical support since the 1960s, why is it that their numbers haven't increased in proportion to the increase in women in other professions? This is one of the questions Lunneborg attempts to answer in her book as well as introduce the reader to the reasons the few women on the job have persevered and even prospered in the profession.

Excerpt: from a story titled: "I'm a Caretaker"

I'm a caretaker. I worry about others and put others first

frequently. Policing takes an incredible amount of patience and self-discipline. At the same time you have to be able to quickly assess and take action. I don't hold things personally and don't worry about the little things, because 99 percent of the time you're in an adversarial position with someone or something horrific has happened in their life so they need the police. You have to be able to deflect abuse that comes your way because typically it's not intended and it's not personal. What I've experienced is that women are good at knowing their abilities and not relying on physical strength. The guys understand that now. We have, at least within our organization, men who talk and counsel and barter versus laying hands-on. The men have learned and continue to learn from women, sometimes simply from interacting with us, watching, but also from having a true bond, a relationship, with women. However, I don't know if it's just an evolution within the culture if this organization.

Tales from the Bat Cave

By O.J. McLaughlin

230 pp.

Tales from the Bat Cave is the first published book by 34-year Toledo, OH police veteran, O.J. McLaughlin. The book is a series of vignettes, chronicling the author's experiences in Toledo during the 1960s and 1970s. "During this era of police work," said the author, "the officers carried .38 revolvers, did not have portable radios, copy machines, computers and bulletproof vests were the exception rather than the norm. The vests that were worn were old-fashioned flack vests that weighed about 35 pounds."

The book gets its title from a concealed stakeout area under an overpass where the author and his partner could sit undetected to watch for unlawful activity.

Excerpt: From a story called "Down Goes the Door."

One night, while working Unit 4 in the near downtown, we received a dispatch to meet the Metro Drug Unit Officers at the corner of Lagrange and Champlain. When we arrived there, we were informed that we would be going with them on a drug raid. There were approximately six metro officers and two uniform crews assigned to serve the search warrant. The other uniform crew and three Metro Drug officers were assigned to enter the front door of the residence. Our crew, led by Detective Fred Dodgers, and the remaining Metro Drug officers were assigned to enter the back door. We had a prearranged signal and time to be used when were to enter the premises. Detective Dodgers was to call out "Police" loud enough so the crews in front of the residence could hear and then we would count to three before we took down the back door. Remember, this was in the days before they had any type of apparatus to assist you in entering a locked door. The signal went as planned, but when Officer Dodgers hit the door with his shoulder, it didn't give. Fred called out, "Oh shit, hit it O.J." I was

approximately three steps back and I put my shoulder down and hit the door. The whole door came down, doorjamb and all. It sounded like a car or something had hit the house. I went all the way through the kitchen into the counter on the other side of the room, right past the two guys sitting at the table shooting up, before I could stop my momentum. They were so high, they just looked up and said, "What the fuck happened to the door, man?"

NOTE: We'd love to review your book in our newsletter. Please send a copy of your book to: Public Safety Writers Association, 2024 Falcon Court, Bellingham, WA, 98229. Feel free to suggest excerpts.

News from our Members

Books published:

The Con Man's Daughter

Ed Dee, one of the PSWA's favorite conference speakers and writing competition judges, has published *The Con Man's Daughter*. Ed's other books include *14 Peck Slip*, *Bronx Angel*, *Little Boy Blue* and *Nightbird*. For more information go to www.eddeauthor.com.

Bad Tidings and Wingbeat

Marilyn Meredith, award winning author of 14 books, announces *Bad Tidings* the latest in her Rocky Bluff P.D. series. Also recently published, *Wingbeat*, the fifth in the Deputy Tempe Crabtree series. For more information: www.fictionforyou.com.

Burden of the Badge

Nine-year Saginaw PD veteran **Michael East** has just published *Burden of the Badge: A Year in the Life of a Street Cop*. The book documents nearly 1,000 calls over a full year in the life of a patrol officer in Saginaw, Michigan. For more information: www.fire-police-ems.com.

A Proactive Law Enforcement Guide for the War on Terror

Long-time PWA member **Lou Savelli** has published *A Proactive Law Enforcement Guide for the War on Terror*. Lou is also author of *Pocket Guide to Basic Crime Scene Investigation*, *Pocket Guide to Gangs Across America and Their Symbols* and *Pocket Guide to Identity Theft*. To find out more about Lou's books, go to www.looseleaflaw.com.

The Retail Manager's Guide to Crime & Loss Prevention

In her new book also long-time member **Liz Martinez** offers a rare, insider look at retail theft and the strategies that effectively combat it. For more information, go to: www.looseleaflaw.com.

The Beach Club

In his newly published book, **Richard Paloma** reveals a behind the scenes look at the dark humor and aggravations of being a uniformed police officer. Click on www.publishersdrive.com/beach_club_info.html. for more information.

Pension

One of the Association's most prolific authors, **Dennis Griffin** now has six books in print, the newest of which is Pension, a novel that features a private investigator caught up in a case of fraud in public employee pension funds. Other books by Dennis include: Policing Las Vegas, Killer In Par-A-Dice, One-Armed Bandit, The Morgue and Blood Money. For more about Dennis and his books, go to www.authorsden.com/dennisgriffin.

Common Man Books series. Police Writers Association Founder **Roger Fulton** and long-time PWA member **Mike Carpenter** are collaborating on a series of bicycle and hiking trail guides in Florida and New York. So far there are four in New York (hiking and biking guides for the 1000 Islands area, and hiking guides for both the Lake George and Saratoga Springs areas). There are two hiking guides and a biking guide in Florida and soon to come a wildlife viewing guide in Florida. For more information on these books, go to www.commonmanbooks.com.

NOTE: If you've recently published a book or article, please let us know so we can share the good news with other members. Send your notice to: molsen@policewriter.com.

Newsletter Needs News

Since this is your newsletter, by definition it thrives on news. Published a book or article lately? Received an award? Have a writing-related experience (good, bad, ugly or hilarious) you'd be willing to share? Need some specific writing-related advice? Have a joke or story we can send through the mail? All submissions welcome. Send them to molsen@policewriter.com.