

On the Case, the MWA-NY Newsletter: January/ February 2026

The latest whodunits and happenings of the MWA-NY chapter.



Mystery Writers of America *New York Chapter*

Chapter President's Message from Daniella Bernett:

Dear writers,

As the door closes on the old year, 2026 beckons with endless possibilities. I'm excited and humbled about taking on the role of your chapter president. The board and I have several ideas percolating in response to a call for more in-person gatherings because we understand that human connections sustain us and can fuel creativity.

At the same time, we will strive to bring you programs to help you improve your craft and make the marketing aspect of publishing less daunting. I urge you take advantage of the Mentoring Program, if you'd like objective feedback on that manuscript into which you've been pouring your energies.

When we encourage, inspire and learn from one another, the writing community blossoms, friendships are formed, and we all succeed.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank my predecessor, Nev March, for her steady hand on the helm the past two years and her ongoing contributions to the chapter.

Daniella

Editor's Message from Doug Harrell:

If you have good news to share, we'd love to hear it. Go to the Author Update page of the MWA-NY website and fill out this form to get your information on the website.

<https://www.mwany.org/submit-an-author-update/>

If you want it to also go in the newsletter, email me at **newsletter@mwany.org** to let me know

to grab it.

Also, if there's something you'd like to see in the newsletter email me at that address.

Doug

Meet Our New President

Daniella Bernett

Daniella Bernett has been a member of MWA since 2012. She is a board member of MWA-NY and served as Library Panel Liaison since 2024. She also is a member of the International Thriller Writers and the Crime Writers Association. Daniella graduated summa cum laude with a B.S. in Journalism from St. John's University.

She is the author of the Emmeline Kirby-Gregory Longdon mystery series featuring a journalist and a jewel thief who are a magnet for murder, intrigue and espionage. Daniella has served as a panelist at ITW's Thriller Fest conference and for MWA. Additionally, she is the author of two poetry collections, *Timeless Allure* and *Silken Reflections*. Daniella is working on Emmeline and Gregory's next adventure.

Visit

www.daniellabernett.com or follow her on [Facebook](#) or on [Goodreads](#).

Meet Our New Board Members

Richard Koreto

Richard Koreto: R.J. Koreto has written multiple series: The Lady Frances series, featuring young Edwardian suffragist Lady Frances Ffolkes and her maid, June Mallow. The Alice Roosevelt series, starring Theodore Roosevelt's outrageous daughter and her patient Secret Service bodyguard, ex-Rough Rider Joseph St. Clair. The Historic Homes series, presenting architect and "house whisperer" Wren Fontaine and her girlfriend, chef Hadley Vanderwerf. The latest title, *The Cadieux Murders*, was a Foreword Indies 2024 Gold Winner for LGBTQ+. His next book is the "Regency Noire" title *Winter's Season*. He has also been published in EQMM and AHMM. R.J. is a native New Yorker and over the years has been a financial journalist, textbook editor and seaman in the U.S. Merchant Marine. He has wanted to be a writer ever since reading *The Naked and the Dead*.

Yvonne Ventresca

Yvonne Ventresca's publications include the award-winning novels *Pandemic* and *Black Flowers*, *White Lies*, as well as two nonfiction books and several short stories. She received her MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts, and in addition to her creative work, has taught over thirty writing workshops. She's a longtime member of MWA, ITW, SIC, and The Authors Guild. You can learn more at her website YvonneVentresca.com where she blogs about creative productivity and features author resources, or follow her online @YvonneVentresca.

John O'Rourke

In 2011, John O'Rourke retired from the New Jersey State Police after 26 years of distinguished service in law enforcement and investigations. Over the course of his career, he conducted hundreds of investigations ranging from misdemeanors to murder. His investigative work led to more than 300 successful criminal convictions. Since leaving the force, O'Rourke has written and published four nonfiction books while working full time as a security consultant specializing in emergency preparedness and response.

Suzanne Trauth

Suzanne Trauth is the author of the suspense novel *The First to Die*, the Dodie O'Dell mystery series—*Show Time*, *Time Out*, *Running out of Time*, *Just in Time*, *No More Time*, and *Killing Time*—and *What Remains of Love*, an historical romance (*Firebird*, American Book Fest, Chanticleer book awards), as well as plays and non-fiction books. In her previous career, she spent many years as a university professor of theatre. When she is not writing, she coaches actors. She lives in Woodland Park, New Jersey. Visit her website: www.suzannetrauth.com or connect on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SuzanneTrauth>.

Upcoming MWA-NY Events



Crime Craft

**A Series of Discussions
About Crime Writing**

Join host Kate Hohl
Tuesday, February 17th
at 6:00pm EST

**“The FBI in Books, TV, and Movies
- Myths and Misconceptions”**

**With retired FBI agent
Jerri Williams**



**MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA
NEW YORK CHAPTER**

CRIME CRAFT

Join host Kate Hohl on Tuesday, February 2/17 at 6:00pm EST for the February Crime Craft with Retired FBI agent Jerri Williams: "The FBI in Books, TV and Movies - Myths and Misconceptions"

What most people know about the FBI they've learned from entertainment media. From the perspective of a retired agent who has also worked as a technical consultant for TV shows, Jerri Williams will explore what crime fiction and crime dramas get right and wrong about the FBI and present teachable moments.

Retired FBI agent Jerri Williams spent 26 years as a special agent, specializing in economic fraud and corruption investigations. She's now on a mission to show the public who the FBI is and what the FBI does. The FBI Agents Association recognized Jerri as its Distinguished Service Honoree for sharing FBI stories.

Through her police procedural novels, non-fiction book, blog, and true crime podcast, FBI Case File Review, she debunks misconceptions about the FBI found in books, TV, and movies. She has worked as a consultant for major TV studios, assisting producers and showrunners in developing realistic FBI characters and storylines. Learn more at

jerriwilliams.com.

See All Crime Craft youtube videos here

<https://www.youtube.com/@mwany9572>

MWA-NY CHAPTER--LOCAL GROUPS COMMITTEE NEWS

Contact email: localgroups@mwany.org

UPCOMING--Stay Tuned

RECAP--Local Group Meet-Ups

Long Island The MWA New York Chapter, Long Island Group had our first Zoom series on January 17th. Our guest speaker was Nev March. It was our largest meeting yet, with 14 people on zoom, and another three who watched together from our Panera Bread location.

Nev was fantastic as she covered how to make a killer query and synopsis, the importance of opening lines, and the ever-important hook. After her presentation she stayed and answered every question from our group. I can't thank Nev enough, but I will, thank you, Nev.

Special recognition and thanks to Nev March, Carol Binkowski and Mark McNease for offering me their time, advice and guidance in putting this together.

Keep on writing.

Sincerely,

Michael Hall



MWA-NY News

Help MWA-NY Connect with Libraries

Hello MWA-NY members,

I am the new Library Panel Liaison for the chapter. I will soon be contacting libraries in the six states that comprise the chapter—New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Delaware and West Virginia—and would appreciate your help.

As you may know, MWA-NY organizes free, in-person panel discussions where our local authors visit libraries and exchange ideas on an array of topics in the crime fiction genre, ranging from the writing process, character development, plot and setting, to the various mystery subgenres.

If you have a particular connection to a library, know specific librarians, or have visited a library and done a presentation or reading, could you send me a list of the facilities and a contact name? I would like to inquire whether they would be interested in hosting an MWA-NY panel.

Also, I welcome any suggestions about approaching libraries or arranging panels. I can be reached at:

library@mwany.org

Thanks for your help here and best of luck for a creative year!

Suzanne Trauth

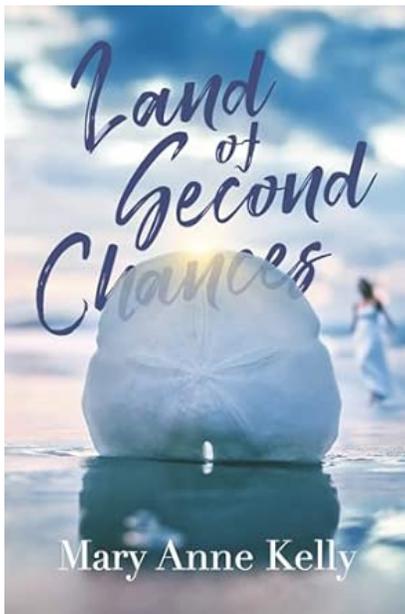
MWA Board Member-Library Panel Liaison

Member Updates

Victoria Weisfeld's new thriller, *She Knew Too Much* will be published by Audecyn Books on February 15 and is available for preorder now.



Mary Anne Kelly's *Land of Second Chances* came out in paperback on Friday, January 16.



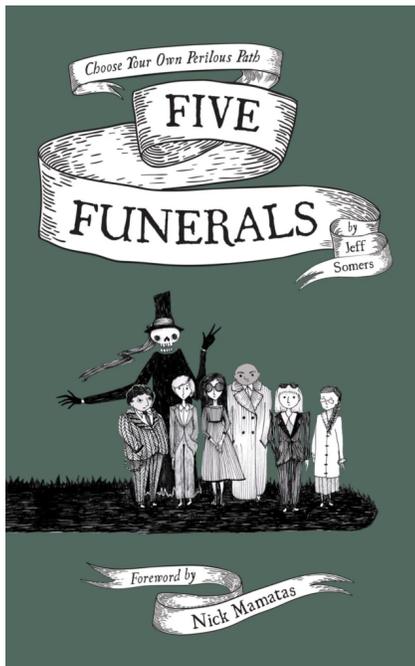
Jeff Somers will be reading from his new novel FIVE FUNERALS and performing for treats.

Date: March 3, 2026

Time: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Location: Little City Books, 100 Bloomfield St, Hoboken, NJ 07030; 201-626-7323

Launch Event for Five Funerals by Jeff Somers coming February 22, 2026, from Ruadán Books (<https://ruadanbooks.com/product/five-funerals/>)



We want to publish news from MWA-NY chapter members in our Author Updates column on the homepage. Send information on new books published, launch parties, readings, awards, publishing deals and anything else the world should know about your publishing life.

To submit an update, including pictures from events, a headshot or cover image, [click to fill out our form.](#)

NOTE: If you sent an author update to the website that never got posted, please resend it. We've had technical difficulties, and we may have missed some.

Who to contact for what:

Member support and general questions - info@mwany.org

Programming - programs@mwany.org

To join readings - readings@mwany.org

Mentor Program - mentors@mwany.org

Library Panels - library@mwany.org

Newsletter - newsletter@mwany.org

Local Groups - localgroups@mwany.org

Communications - comms@mwany.org

News - news@mwany.org

Other: President@mwany.org

USEFUL LINKS

our website: www.mwany.org