

On the Case, the MWA-NY Newsletter: August 2025

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



Mystery Writers of America

New York Chapter

Chapter President's Message from Nev March:

Dear writers,

For us in the North East, this is peak summertime. As I write, the light from my window dims as we await another thundershower. I hope you enjoy nature's gifts, nonetheless.

Unfortunately, we are flooded with awful news each day. So you may wonder, how can we write fiction when reality is so compelling/frightful? My suggestion, focus on doing your own part. Each time my heart hurts, I try to do one positive thing: call a lonely friend, bake cookies for a neighbor, say hello to a child. You'll find dozens of opportunities. Yes, it's horrendous to know entire families are starving in Gaza. Do what you can, where you can. And if it becomes unbearable, write your heart out.

Our chapter goals are still: to help members improve their craft, connect and network, and learn about the business of publishing. So, this September your chapter board has arranged a special treat! Agent **AYLA ZURAW-FRIEDLAND** will give us an online training on writing query letters. After this event, you will have the option to pair up to workshop your own query letter. See details below.

This year the Leon Burstein Award Contest (for chapter members who have not published a crime novel) drew 32 entries. Our judges are actively working on their tasks, so finalists will hear from them by the end of August. Now more on elevating our craft: Our Annual Expert panel in Morristown, NJ is on Oct 25th. I'm delighted to have the opportunity to speak with three heavy-hitters from the crime-busting industry. See details below, and plan to attend.

This year, we moved REVELS up to November 11, so **HOLD THE DATE**—we are confirmed to meet at Tailor Public House (8th Ave and 35th street). The \$35 cost will cover drinks, a fun location and a buffet dinner. Plus-ones are welcome. We will have time to socialize and yes, we will announce the winners of the 2025 Leon Burstein Awards!

Lastly, we have a couple of open spots on the Communications team and other committees. If you would like to contribute, please email me at president@mwany.org. Stay focused, friends.

Happy writing!

Nev March

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:

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

Your information will go up on the website, and we'll include it in the following month's newsletter.

Also, please let us know if there's something you'd like to see in the newsletter.

Email me at newsletter@mwany.org.

(NOTE: new address for newsletter correspondence).

Doug

Upcoming MWA-NY Events



MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA
NEW YORK CHAPTER

The 2025 Leon Burstein Award Status Report

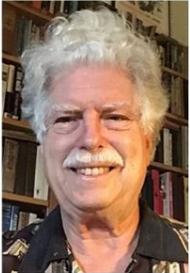
The award committee has received 32 entries! Thank you to all who submitted.

On or around September 1, 2025, we will request full manuscripts from those writers who advance to Round 2.

By November 11, 2025, two finalists will be invited to the award ceremony at our chapter's annual Revels. Good luck!

The New York Chapter of Mystery Writers of America presents

Mystery Authors



Hal
Glatzer



Joanna
Margaret



Lyndsay
Faye



Katie
Tietjen



Michael
Northrop

reading to you from their stories
at Noon on Saturday August 9 in the
58th St. Library – 127 East 58th Street

For more information please email: info@mwany.org

MANHATTAN MYSTERY READING and get-together

August 9, 2025 noon-2 p.m.

58th St. Library, 127 E 58 St.

Five members of Mystery Writers of America (MWA) will read aloud from their work from noon to 2 p.m. on Saturday August 9, at the 58th St. branch of the New York Public Library.

Lyndsay Faye is the author of seven novels and two short story collections. She lives in Ridgewood, Queens.

Michael Northrop is the author of 16 bestselling books for young readers. He is currently writing mysteries for adults, and will read from the first novel in that new series.

Katie Tietjen's Edgar-nominated debut novel *Death in the Details* was inspired by the mother of forensic science, Frances Glessner Lee, who created tiny replicas of death scenes called the Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death. Tietjen's protagonist, Maple, uses her miniature-making skills to get to the bottom of a mysterious death in her small Vermont town.

Joanna Margaret holds a PhD in History, specifically Florentine aristocrats in 16th-century France. She will read an excerpt from her Dark Academia novel, "The Bequest."

Hal Glatzer, an MWA author since 1986, is vice president of MWA's New York chapter, best known for historical mysteries. But his latest are set in the present day; he will read from the second book in his Friends With Benefits series.

The room for the Authors' Readings is up one flight of stairs; there is no elevator. The library is at 127 East 58th St., between Park and Lexington Aves. The 4, 5, N, and R trains stop at 59th/Lex; the E at 53rd/Lex. Buses run north on Third Ave. and South on Lex. The M57 and M31 buses run crosstown on 57th St.

For more information email the New York chapter of MWA:

info@mwanyc.org

MWA-NY CHAPTER--LOCAL GROUPS COMMITTEE NEWS

Our MWA-NY Chapter extends to five states, and there's growing interest in forming local in-person groups where writers can gather, discuss writing, and enjoy special activities and events. It's been a joy to speak to members in so many different areas about their ideas, and I'm excited to share news of what's already been happening since the project started this year.

Below, we report information from our groups in Central New Jersey, Long Island, Northern NJ/Rockland-Westchester, and Pittsburgh.

Groups in Philadelphia, the Hudson Valley area, and Buffalo are now in the launching stages. Stay tuned for further news—coming soon!

If you'd like to form a group in your area or receive more information about the currently existing groups, please email me. Also, be sure to check the Chapter's groups.io, Facebook, and website for continuing news and announcements. So far, everyone has been happy to have the opportunity to gather with fellow writers, and we look forward to expanding the number of these local groups and making each one an enjoyable success!

Central New Jersey

Nev March hosted the inaugural local group event in April: an informal meet-and-greet at Juvon in Raritan. In June, Mark McNease hosted an informative walking tour of historic Lambertville followed by lunch at Under the Moon.

Next meeting: Another is planned for September 21st.

Long Island

Michael Hall hosted two successive monthly meet-and-greet meals (East Bay Diner and Outback Steakhouse) followed by a third at Panera in West Babylon, featuring guest speaker, retired NYPD Sergeant John Ferriso.

Next meeting: tentatively scheduled for September 6th at Panera with guest speaker, English Professor Gregory Cioffi from Nassau Community College.



Northern NJ/Rockland-Westchester

Carol Binkowski hosted a meet-and-greet brunch at Shannon Rose in Ramsey.

Next meeting: meet-and-greet dinner for Metro New Jersey at Veggie Heaven in Montclair on August 24th.



Pittsburgh

Next Meeting: The first gathering will be on August 20th, when members will have a fun browsing session at the Mystery Lovers Bookshop in Oakmont followed by a meal at a local Panera. Catherine Olteanu and Joseph Benedetto are co-coordinators.

Save the Date



MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA
NEW YORK CHAPTER

How To Write an Agent Query Letter

Please join us on

Saturday,

September 13th 2025

at 4:00pm EST

**Literary Agent Ayla Zuraw-Friedland
will lead a discussion on how to craft
a compelling query letter that will
help your submission stand out and
catch the attention of agents!**

There will be an opportunity to
workshop your query letters with other attendees.



Special Zoom Event

September 13, 2025 4:00 p.m.

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83794864332?pwd=sZ4GSNGYygUCr6hySlym6YoP9i9pM4.1>

Learn How to Write An Agent Query Letter

Join Literary Agent **Ayla Zuraw-Friedland** who will lead a discussion on how to craft a compelling query letter that will help your submission stand out and catch the attention of agents!



MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA
NEW YORK CHAPTER

Panelists



Rhonda Barnat
"Prey of New York" short story



Gary Cahill
"On a Two-Way Street" short story



Lori Robbins
On Pointe Mysteries



Jeff Markowitz, Moderator
The Other

The Mystery Genre: Its Evolution, Current Trends, and the Future

FREE EVENT!

**Hoboken Public Library
500 Park Avenue
Saturday, September 13
1 p.m.-3 p.m.**

Panel Discussion

**September 13, 2025 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
Hoboken Public Library
500 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ**

The Mystery Genre: Its Evolution, Current Trends, and the Future

What makes mysteries so tantalizing? Three mystery authors will delve into the genre's history; memorable sleuths and villains; captivating storylines; and what devilish mayhem lies ahead. This free event will be open to MWA members and the public.

Moderator: Jeff Markowitz

Panelists: Rhonda Barnat, Gary Cahill, Lori Robbins

Jeff Markowitz (www.jeffmarkowitz.com) is the author six crime novels set in and around New Jersey, including his latest book, *The Other*, a dual-timeline historical about standing up to hate. Jeff spent more than forty years creating community-based programs and services in New Jersey for children and adults with autism, including twenty-five years as President and Executive Director of the Life Skills Resource Center, before retiring in 2018 to devote more time to writing. In October 2021, an epic late-night puzzle hunt based on Jeff's novella, *Motive for Murder* raised over \$1 million for at-risk children in New York City. Jeff is a past President of the New York Chapter of Mystery Writers of America. He lives in Monmouth Junction, NJ, with his wife Carol

and two cats, Vergil and Aeneas.

Rhonda Barnat is a crisis management expert and writes crime fiction under the pen name Rona Bell. Her short story, “Prey of New York” was included in the anthology *Where Crime Never Sleeps: Murder New York Style 4* and cited in the Houghton Mifflin book of Best American Mystery Stories 2018, edited by Louise Penny and Otto Penzler. Her short story “The Call Is Yours” appears in *Me Too Short Stories: An Anthology* of crime writers responding to Me Too issues, edited by Elizabeth Zelvin and published by Level Best Books. She has contributed a number of pieces to *Mystery Readers Journal*.

Gary Cahill's first short story, *That Kind Of Guy*, appeared in *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* as an homage to the 1920s and beyond dark and twisty classic *Black Mask Magazine*. Other work has been published in print, e-book, online and audio versions with *Pulp Empire*, *Short Story Me Genre Fiction* (editor-nominated for a storySouth Million Writers Award for best stories on the web); the *Pulp Magazine* anthology *The Kennedy Curse*; *The First Line Literary Journal, Volumes I, II, III*, the print anthology; and as podcast co-founder of *Plan B Magazine*; a featured cover story for *Mystery Weekly* (now *Mystery*) *Magazine*, and *Shotgun Honey*, among others.

He is a two-time, blue-ribbon champion of the Colts Neck Country Fair Great American Apple Pie Contest. Additionally, after 23 years working in Hell’s Kitchen at the height of its most hellishness, he is now a staff member at the Weehawken, NJ, Public Library.

Gary also serves as the “amuse bouche” pizzaiolo for the secret society WWC (Writers Who Cook).

Lori Robbins is the Amazon bestselling author of the *On Pointe* and *Master Class* mystery series and a contributor to *The Secret Ingredient: A Mystery Writers Cookbook*. She is the recipient of two Silver Falchions; the Indie Award for Best Mystery; and a silver medal in the Daphne du Maurier Award for Mystery and Suspense. Short stories include “Leading Ladies,” which received Honorable Mention in the 2022 Best American Mystery and Suspense anthology. A former dancer, Lori performed with a number of modern dance and classical ballet companies, but it was her commercial work, for Pavlova Perfume and Macy’s, that paid the bills. After ten lean years onstage, she became an English teacher and now writes full time. Her experiences as a dancer, teacher, and mother of six have made her an expert in the homicidal tendencies everyday life inspires. You can find her at lorirobbins.com.

Crime Craft

There is no Crime Craft for August

Be sure to join us:

September 16, 2025 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Inside the Criminal Mind: What Writers Need to Know

Join host Kate Hohl for a discussion with forensic psychologist Stephanie Scott-Snyder as she helps us understand the criminal mind.



MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA NEW YORK CHAPTER

Panelists

UK, Connecticut



Lt. Art Weisgerber
Commanding Officer Crime Scene/Identification Unit
Norwalk Police Department

Unlocking the Secrets of the Dead: Forensics

FREE EVENT

Morristown & Morris Township Public Library
1 Miller Road Morristown, NJ
October 25, 2025
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Dr. Lauren Thoma, M.D.
Deputy County Medical Examiner
Middlesex Regional Medical Examiner's Office



Kimberlee Moran
Associate Teaching Professor
Rutgers-Camden Dept. of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice

Moderator
Nev March
MWA-NY President



Panel Discussion

October 25, 2025 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. (networking mixer 3 - 4 p.m.)
Morristown & Morris Township Library
1 Miller Rd, Morristown, NJ 07960, Morristown, NJ

Unlocking the Secrets of the Dead: Forensics

This expert panel will explore the fascinating world of forensics and how scientific methods are used to help solve crimes. The discussion also will look at how forensics are portrayed in books. The event will feature a Q&A and a networking opportunity. This free event will be open to MWA members and the public. Refreshments will be served.

Moderator:

Nev March, MWA-NY Chapter President

Nev is the first Indian-born author to receive the Minotaur Books/Mystery Writers of America Award for Best First Crime Fiction. Her debut novel, *Murder in Old Bombay* also won an Audiofile award and was an Edgar and Anthony finalist. Her sequel, *Peril at the Exposition*, describes conflict during the gilded age which planted the seeds of today's red-blue divide. Her third book *The Spanish Diplomat's Secret*, traces the origins of the Spanish American war over Cuba from the perspective of her immigrant detective duo.

Nev's books deal with issues of identity, race and moral boundaries. After a long corporate career, Nev returned to her passion—writing fiction, and now teaches creative writing at the Rutgers-Osher Institute. She is a member of Crime Writers of Color and president of New York chapter of Mystery Writers of America.

Panelists:

Lieutenant Art Weisgerber, Crime Scene/I.D. Unit, Norwalk Police Department

Lt. Weisgerber has been the commanding officer of the Crime Scene/Identification Unit at the Norwalk, Connecticut, Police Department since 2011. The Unit is responsible for the processing of forensic evidence at major crime scenes and fatal crash scenes along with evidence collected by other divisions.

Lt. Weisgerber joined the department in 1988 and has worked in the Patrol Division, the Narcotics Unit, and the Detective Bureau as both a detective and detective sergeant before assuming command of the Crime Scene Unit. During his time in the Detective Bureau, He was assigned to the Cold Case Unit and closed several cases by arrest or identification of human remains. He also is an adjunct police instructor for the State of Connecticut Municipal Police Officer Academy, as well as teaching crime scene procedure/investigation privately for the Spector Criminal Justice Training Network.

Dr. Lauren Thoma, Middlesex Regional Medical Examiner's Office

Dr. Thoma, M.D. is a forensic pathologist working in central New Jersey who has performed nearly 2,500 autopsies and testified over 65 times in Superior Court in New Jersey and New York and in federal court. Originally hailing from the Philadelphia suburbs, she obtained her B.S. in Biology at Wilson College in Chambersburg, PA, and received her M.D. from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. She underwent four years of residency training in anatomic and clinical pathology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and completed fellowship training at Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of the City of New York in forensic pathology and forensic cardiac pathology/neuropathology.

Dr. Thoma holds board certifications in Anatomic, Clinical, and Forensic Pathology and has lectured at the New Jersey State Police Academy and NJSP Crime Scene Investigation School. She has a special interest in long-term unidentified cases, overdose fatalities, and quality improvement in death investigation.

Kimberlee Sue Moran, Associate Teaching Professor of Sociology, Anthropology & Criminal Justice at Rutgers University - Camden

Assoc. Prof. Moran has over 20 years of experience as a forensic consultant and educator, both in the UK and United States. She is an Associate Teaching Professor in the Rutgers-Camden Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice. Assoc. Prof. Moran has worked on several cases in a range of capacities. She runs training workshops for local law enforcement that include blowing up transit buses and digging up dead animals. Her doctoral research was in the field of ancient fingerprints and her current research is in taphonomy, the process of decomposition.

She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Science; an active member of the Society for American Archaeology; the UK Fingerprint Society; the Association for Women in Forensic Science; and Forensic Archaeology Recovery. In addition, Assoc. Prof. Moran holds an undergraduate degree in archaeology from Bryn Mawr College and a Master's of Science in forensic archaeological science from the Institute of Archaeology at University College London. She is the co-editor of *Forensic Archaeology: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. She served on the

Crime Scene Investigation subcommittee of the NIST-led Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) from 2015 until 2024. She is passionate about public outreach, STEM education, and science in the service of justice. Assoc. Prof. Moran is the recipient of the 2021 Chancellor's Teaching Excellence Award and the 2021 Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching.



REVELS 2025

MWA-NY's annual Revels party will be held

Date: November 11, 2025

The Tailor Public House

505 8th Ave, New York, NY 10018

MWA-NY News

Call for Manhattan Mystery Readers

If you are a member of MWA-NY, and would like to read aloud from your work, upcoming Manhattan Mystery Readings will be on Saturdays October 4 and December 6, from noon to 2 p.m.

The 58th St. Library is at 127 East 58th St, between Park and Lexington Aves. Getting there is easy by transit: the #4, 5, 6, N and R trains stop at 59th St. and Lex. Uptown buses run on Third Ave.; downtown buses on Lex. The M31 and M57 buses run crosstown on 57th St. The Library's meeting room is on the second floor and there is no elevator.

For further information, please email

info@mwany.org.

Member Updates

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 in author update to the website that never got posted, please resend it. We've had technical difficulties, and we may have missed some.

Hal Glatzer has had new covers made for his two latest cozies. Hearing from readers and fellow authors that the original covers were “vague,” he commissioned new ones from The Book Designers, in California. Hal will be among five authors reading from their works at MWA-NY's Manhattan Mystery Reading, Saturday August 9, at the 58th St. branch of the New York Public Library, from noon to 2 p.m.



In Case You Missed It

CrimeCraft for July: The Art of World Building with Rob Hart

Sorry! We had an issue with the Zoom, and no recording was able to be made.

MWA University-2025 Previous Sessions

<https://mysterywriters.org/2025-mwa-university/>
click here for [MWA-U sessions held in 2024](#).

Who to contact for what:

ASK DEAR EDGAR - info@mwany.org

Member support and general questions - info@mwany.org

Programming - programs@mwany.org

To join readings- readings@mwany.org

Mentor Program - mentors@mwany.org

Bookfairs/ conferences - info@mwany.org

Newsletter - newsletter@mwany.org

Other: President@mwany.org

USEFUL LINKS

our website: www.mwany.org