



# The Plot Thins ...

FROM YOUR PARTNERS IN CRIME & IMAGINATION

February 2008 ...

VOLUME 16 NUMBER 2

## Celebrating Local Author Month in February!

If you keep an eye on our event calendar, you'll notice that we are fortunate to have events celebrating new releases by local authors on a regular basis. We hosted three local authors in December, and Susan Arnout Smith was not only our choice for our January title for our Signed First Mystery program, but a local as well. However, in recognition of February's *four* local author events for Jeff Parker, Michele Scott, Matt Pallamary, and Ken Kuhlken, we are celebrating a Local Author Month! Please join us for any or all of these exciting events and support our local talent base. And any time you're in the store during the month, check out our special Local Author display located behind the author table.

### T. Jefferson Parker

Signs *L.A. Outlaws*

Wednesday, February 6, 7:00 PM



Local Author Event for **T. Jefferson Parker** and **L.A. Outlaws**, Wednesday, February 6, at 7:00 PM: Jeff drew inspiration from tales of mythic Western Outlaw Joaquin Murrieta to create a fictional modern-day descendent carrying on his Robin Hood like tradition. Being an outlaw eventually draws Allison Murrieta into conflict with forces on both sides of the law. (See Maryelizabeth's review on the back page of this newsletter.) This is a numbered event. Numbers for the signing line are available with purchase of *L.A. Outlaws* from Mysterious Galaxy, on sale beginning **Tuesday, February 5**. Contact staff for details. Also, visit Jeff's website ([www.tjeffersonparker.com](http://www.tjeffersonparker.com)) for information on how the first 50 readers to mail in receipts from their purchase of *L.A. Outlaws* will receive a special baseball cap!

### Michele Scott and R.T. Jordan

Signs *Tacked to Death* and *Final Curtain*

Saturday, February 9, 2:00 PM

Local Author Event for **Michele Scott** and **Tacked to Death**, Saturday, February 9, at 2:00 PM: Michele combines the old adage of "write what you know" with an active interest in learning new information about two of her loves – wine and horses. *Tacked to Death*, the third Horse Lover's Mystery featuring trainer Michaela Bancroft, finds the trainer and amateur sleuth celebrating the opening of her tack shop. However, festivities like a fashion show are dimmed by the murder of a polo rider, causing Michaela to don her amateur sleuth gear once more. Michele will be an instructor at the Southern CA Writers' Conference, and may also offer a sneak peek at the fourth Wine Lover's Mystery.

Los Angeles author **R.T. Jordan** joins Michele in this cozy event, signing and discussing *Final Curtain*, and drawing for the winner of the *Hollywood Loves A Mystery* Basket Give-Away. (See our lively store display, or check our web site or the January *Plot Thins* for details.) Richard has drawn on his extensive experience in Hollywood for the background for the Polly Pepper mysteries. The series has been described as "what if Carol Burnett starred in 'Murder, She Wrote'?" In *Final Curtain*, Polly is recovering from her adventures in *Remains to be Scene*, and enjoying the chance to appear in an off-off-off-off Broadway stage production of *Mame*. The production is disrupted when the director is murdered, and Polly's best friend is the favorite suspect.

### Matthew Pallamary

Signs *Spirit Matters*

Thursday, February 14, 7:00 PM

Celebrate Love at our Local Author Event for **Matthew Pallamary** and *Spirit Matters* on **Thursday, February 14, at 7:00 PM**. Matt's credentials include Author, Writing Teacher, and Shamanic Explorer. From his web site: "Shamanism is a prehistoric belief system that continues to infuse our world with deeper meaning. Matt has traveled extensively throughout North and South

America for close to a decade pursuing his studies of shamanism. His studies and experiences have infused his writing and teaching with core concepts that tap into ancient teachings that bridge the past into the present." Matt will discuss his journey and have some special gifts from the Amazon for readers at his launch event. He will also be taking part in this month's Southern CA Writers' Conference, and ConDor.

### Chris Marie Green

Signs *Midnight Reign*

Friday, February 15, 7:00 PM

**Chris Marie Green** pays her first official visit to MG on **Friday, February 15, at 7:00 PM**. Chris will be signing and discussing *Midnight Reign*, the middle book of her first Vampire Babylon trilogy, featuring Hollywood stunt woman cum vampire hunter, Dawn Madison. After discovering the existence of the undead in Tinsletown in *Night Rising*, Dawn must continue to work through her family issues and decide where her loyalties lie as she is drawn deeper into her new existence as a vampire slayer. Chris is our Affiliate of the Month on our MySpace blog, and offers some behind-the-novels looks into how a nice schoolteacher learned to get in touch with her dark side.

### Southern California Writers' Conference

Crowne Plaza Hotel

President's Day Weekend, February 15 – 18

Writers in progress should join MG at the **22nd Annual Southern California Writers' Conference** at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Mission Valley from Friday, February 15 to Monday, February 18. Instructors at this year's intensive workshop convention include (subject to change): Josh Conviser, Ken Kuhlken, Laura Preble, Alan Russell, Matthew Pallamary, Michele Scott, Susan Arnout Smith, Alexandra Sokoloff, Jeremy Lassen of Nightshade Books, and Karen Syed of Echelon Press, and many more familiar names from the literary field. For more information, visit their website: [www.writersconference.com](http://www.writersconference.com).

### Peter May

Signs *The Critic* and *The Killing Room*

Monday, February 18, 3:30 PM

How many opportunities does one have to spend the afternoon with a Scottish author, sampling French wines, and discussing murder? Not many, we believe, which is why we look forward to hosting **Peter May** on **Monday, February 18, at 3:30 PM**, signing and discussing *The Critic*. The title character, an American wine critic, is murdered while traveling in the Gaillac region of France (home of the wines for the event), and the investigation into his death is the second of the Enzo Files series. Multiple-award winning author Peter also has a new release in the US in his China Thrillers series, *The Killing Room*, setting Beijing detective Li Yan and American pathologist Margaret Campbell against a killer who has filled a mass grave in Shanghai with the corpses of young women.

### Alexandra Sokoloff

Signs *The Price*

Tuesday, February 19, 7:00 PM

*The Harrowing*, **Alexandra Sokoloff's** haunting debut novel, was nominated for both the Bram Stoker award and the Anthony for Best First Novel, as well as receiving accolades from the MG Staff. *The Price*, her new novel of dark suspense, finds Boston District Attorney and aspiring politician Will Sullivan and his family caught up in a medical nightmare that only seems to deepen as they spend more time in the bowels of the mysterious Briarwood Medical Center. For Will and his wife, Joanna, as for so many parents, must ask what price they will pay for their child's well being. Alex will be an instructor at the Southern CA Writers' Conference as well as our guest on **Tuesday, February 19, at 7:00 PM**.

## Staff Picks Live!

Friday, February 22, 4:00 PM

Join the Mysterious Galaxy staff as we gather in the store and talk about our latest favorite books, why we love them, and which customers would like them as well. We learn, we share, and we want to invite you to join in, both listening and joining in to tell us what you are reading and recommending. So come in ... and check out **Staff Picks Live!** on **Friday, February 22, at 4:00 PM**. Let us know about your current reading options, and find out about ours!

## Cornelia Read and Melinda Wells

Signs *The Crazy School* and *Killer Mousse*

Saturday, February 23, 2:00 PM

It's the Princess of Darkness vs. the Princess of Light on **Saturday, February 23, at 2:00 PM**, as we host a mystery event with two authors with very different approaches to the genre. Cornelia Read, whose first Madeline Dare novel, *A Field of Darkness*, was one of our very first Signed First Mystery Picks, returns with *The Crazy School*. Ex-debutante Madeline, working at a school for disturbed teenagers, discovers that the school's staff holds dark secrets that may endanger her and the damaged students she forms an alliance with. *The Crazy School* is a Killer Books pick for the Independent Mystery Booksellers Association for February. Don't miss Cornelia's excellent contribution to noir anthology *A Hell of a Woman*.

**Melinda Wells** brings a lifetime of experience in Hollywood to her "Della Cooks" Mystery series, featuring Della Carmichael; financially burdened cooking school owner, newly cast cable cooking show star, and murder suspect. After an ugly confrontation with the previous host of her cooking show, Della finds herself in an unwelcome spotlight when the Cooking Diva samples Della's specialty dessert and suffers a fatal allergic reaction to the toxic ingredients that weren't in Della's original recipe. The lighthearted nature of the series is reflected in the first book's title: *Killer Mousse*, and the cooking school theme is reinforced through the inclusion of (non-lethal) recipes.

## Ken Kuhlken

Launch Party for *The Vagabond Virgins*

Sunday, February 24, 2:00 PM

Mysterious Galaxy is pleased to hold the Launch Event for Local Author **Ken Kuhlken** and *The Vagabond Virgins* on **Sunday, February 24, at 2:00 PM**. Ken continues the Hickey Family novels with a traditional private eye theme – woman trouble. It's 1979 and San Diego P.I. Alvaro Hickey is drawn into the mystery behind the apparent appearances of the Holy Virgin south of the border. Not only is the "Holy Virgin" committing the unusual and potentially deadly action of taking sides in the Mexican elections, but also, a very attractive young woman asks Alvaro to help determine if she is her missing sister. A short Hickey Family adventure appeared in this Fall's *Hollywood and Crime*. The party will include refreshments, Ken and his guitar, and possibly a special guest appearance by Ken's partner in crime, Alan Russell.

## Kim Harrison

Signs *The Outlaw Demon Wails*

Friday, February 29, 7:00 PM

Witch Rachel Morgan has spent her time in The Hollows of Cincinnati trying to protect herself and those she loves, not always successfully, as readers of *For a Few Demons More* know. In *The Outlaw Demon Wails*, **Kim Harrison** brings her original cycle of Hollow novels to a close, as Rachel tries to come to terms with her demons (literal and otherwise), including her relationship with her mother, Ivy's continued pursuit of Kisten's murderer, gargoyles in her belfry, and a rollerskating date on Hallowe'en. Kim has an active web presence, including special ephemera items available for ordering through her web site, like the burning bunny pin sported by several MG staff members. This is a numbered event. Numbers for the signing line at the **Friday, February 29 event at 7:00 PM** are available with purchase of *The Outlaw Demon Wails* from **Mysterious Galaxy**, on sale beginning Tuesday, February 26. Contact staff for details.



## ConDor 15: Death and Beyond

*The Handlery Hotel and Resort*

February 29 to March 2

San Diego's longest running Science Fiction convention welcomes author Guest of Honor **Timothy Zahn** (*Star Wars: Allegiance*; *Angelmass*; *Dragon and Liberator*, etc.) and media Guest Ellen Muth from "Dead Like Me." The convention will take place at Mission Valley's Handlery Hotel from Friday, February 29 through

Sunday, March 2. Mysterious Galaxy will be in our traditional location in the Dealer's Room. More information on other guests and convention specifics at the convention website: [www.condorcon.org](http://www.condorcon.org).

## More Great Events!

Spring continues: Joanne Fluke – March 8; Sandi Ault – March 11; Christopher Rice – March 12; Steven Thomas – March 15; Laura Lippman – March 16; Lisa Lutz – March 28; Joseph Wambaugh – March 29; Raymond E. Feist – March 30; Jim Butcher – April 5; Robert Levinson – April 12; Peter Hamilton – April 14; the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books – April 26 & 27; Wil Wheaton – May 3 ... and much more to come before our 15<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bash on May 10!

## Rave Reviews!

### Curse of the Spellmans by Lisa Lutz

This second entry in the non-stop, frenzied, comedic world of Isabel Spellman, PI is both more convoluted and funnier than *The Spellman Files* we all loved last year. This time Izzy finds herself confounded by nearly everyone in her life and of course, unable to leave anyone alone until she gets to the bottom of the many mysteries surrounding her. First, her family is acting even weirder than normal. She notices her mother leaving in the middle of the night to commit minor vandalism; her father is acting suspiciously, disappearing and then reappearing with wet hair and smelling of soap; and her brother and best friend are acting totally out of character. When a new neighbor moves in next door, Izzy must immediately investigate to a point that results in multiple arrests (hers). Meanwhile, Rae's new best friend is none other than Inspector Henry Stone who has unwittingly become a member of the family, and the report files are piling up with all of Izzy's surveillance documentation. Finally, all of Izzy's ex-boyfriends are getting married and she is feeling less than sure about her future. It all adds up to fun and many laugh-out-loud moments. Another MG favorite by Lisa Lutz (who will be here on March 28, 2008) from Simon & Schuster, \$25.00. — tlg

### L.A. Outlaws by T. Jefferson Parker

Allison Murieta is a thief. She's a charming, charismatic thief, who shares her spoils with the needy, and feels a strong attachment to her infamous ancestor, the Western bandit, Joaquin Murrieta. But at the end of the day, what she's doing is illegal. Suzanne Jones is a school teacher raising a family of boys, paying her taxes, and being a law-abiding citizen. And Allison and Suzanne are the same woman. When a deal for illicit diamonds goes sour, she becomes the target of a lethal assassin, and is in danger of losing everything she holds dear, especially when she can't be straightforward with the cop assigned to protect her. Jeff Parker's new multi-layered thriller is perfect not only for his fans but also those of Thomas Perry and Andrew Klavan. Dutton, \$25.95. — MeH

### The Lost Fleet: Dauntless by Jack Campbell

Captain John "Black Jack" Geary awakes from survival hibernation after almost a century to find the war he "died" in still raging ... and that he is a legend. Now, he's been ordered to lead the Alliance Fleet home from deep within Syndic territory and against overwhelming odds. And not all of his adversaries come from the enemy hunting him. His command is composed of those who believe he's been sent by the living stars to save them and those who think he's gone soft and is unfit to lead. After a century of war much has changed. Time for Captain Geary to restore a bit of discipline ... and honor ... to the Alliance ranks.

After years of enemy atrocities, it's easy to justify the "well, they do it, so we can too" mentality, but we must be wary not to turn into that what we purport to oppose. "We have met the enemy and he is us." Kick-ass science fiction action/adventure ... that inspires a bit of thought. Honor your ancestors, people. Ace pbo, \$6.99. — PMH

mysterious galaxy  
BOOKS OF MARTIANS, MURDER, MAGIC & MAYHEM

7051 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. #302

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92111

(858) 268-4747

[www.mystgalaxy.com](http://www.mystgalaxy.com)

Want more reviews?

[www.mystgalaxy.com](http://www.mystgalaxy.com)