

Denver, Colorado March 6-9, 2008

LCC 2008 Quick Updates

- Hawaiian fashion contest – the winner will be skirting off to Hawaii LCC 2009 for free!
- LCC Programs added including a Ski Day, an LCC Party bus, and a tour of The Stanley Hotel and Estes Park!
- LCC2008 Yahoo group added! Contact Pari Noskin Taichert at ptaichert@comcast.net for details.

Registration: \$165 Full, \$115 Light, \$55 Associate
www.leftcoastcrime.org/2008

Hotel: Adam's Mark Denver
\$139 single/double \$149 +
www.adamsmark.com/denver

Individual Highlights

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The View from a Mile High

A crime has been committed. Someone has stolen the summer! The kids are returning to school and a nip is in the air. But at LCC Denver HQ, things are just heating up. Publicity has been ramping up and the program committee has been busy planning some adventures to go along with our March convention, including a tour to the Stanley Hotel, where Stephen King wrote part of The Shining, and a ski trip for all you athletic types. Check out page 2 for more info!

Next, Elaine Viets, LCC Toastmaster, discusses her Dead End Job and Mystery Shopper series, as well as how she comes up with those interesting characters. Don't miss her interview on page 3.

This month D.A. Davenport speaks of the difference – and warnings – of living at high altitude. If you are coming to Denver from a place slightly closer to water, you don't want to miss her advice. See what she has to say in our monthly Things to Denver in when you're DEAD column.

Getting excited about Hawaii 2009? We are too, and to start the hula party early, we will be hosting a Hawaiian fashion contest at LCC 2008. The winner will be skirting off to LCC 2009 on us! For more information, see page 4.

Lastly, our monthly Top Ten list looks at the most popular Mile High Tourist destinations – at least those that will be open during LCC. So browse the websites and make some plans to see a little Denver history while you're here.
Lori Lacefield

Things to do in Denver when you're DEAD

(Dehydrated, Emaciated, an in need of Diversion!)

Hi again, from the Mile High City! I have an important subject to tackle today – our higher altitude. While most folks traveling to the High Country stop in Denver a day or so to adjust to thinner air, Denver is not immune from causing altitude sickness either. Some of the symptoms could be:

Headaches, breathlessness, fatigue, and dizziness. Decreased appetite. Nausea or vomiting. Inability to sleep. Swelling of the face, hands, and feet. Social withdrawal.

Here are things to keep in mind about being a mile

higher than you are used to:

Drink lots of water. Carry bottled water wherever you go so you are constantly hydrated.

If you want to visit higher altitudes, spend some time in Denver first before going to ski resorts, etc.

That Jameson's or Macallan's is going to hit you harder in Denver, that's a promise! Alcohol effects you quicker and stronger here.

If you feel woozey or shakey, get rested ASAP. It will take a while to feel steady here.

You will get tired more quickly your first day or so. Keep that in mind if you want to take a hike. Also, be aware that animals come first in the mountains. You could encounter mountain lions, coyotes, and elk. (Bears should still be hibernating)

A diet high in complex carbs is generally thought to be best for high altitudes. Eat well and eat often. Don't worry about diets. You automatically burn off the extra calories here. Now that's something to toast to! D. A. Davenport

LCC 2008 Adventures!

Your LCC Program committee has been busy. Here is a list of the outstanding extra activities that will take place before, during, or after LCC. Registration and pricing will be on the website shortly, so check the site often for updates. Remember, plan your flights accordingly for extra days!

Hit the Slopes!

Ski/Snowboarding Trip to Breckinridge, Co 3/8/08
Cost: TBA



What: Take a bus up to Breckinridge, get discounted tickets to ski or snowboard, or just come along for the fun. Lunch and shop in an historic town with the amenities of any fine resort. The mountains are beautiful in the spring with all the snow. Bargains galore await shoppers since the local merchants want to clear their merchandise before the season ends. We will meet outside the LCC hotel for the 1 and ½ hour ride over the Continental Divide.

Ghosts, Mayhem, and Old Time Murder on the LCC Party Bus!

Place: Around Denver
Time: Thursday evening, 3/6
Cost: 20ish
What: Take a tour of Denver's famous crime sites including The Berg Murder, The Coors Murder (old crime), the Bank Robbery Murders, The Smokin' Willy's heist and more...

You: Rabbit. Me: Cougar

Place: Mostly 16th Street Mall
Time: Friday afternoon, 3/7

Cost: Free, except for the alcohol you consume!

What: 8 teams of 6 attendees each (48 max) will be given a one hour lecture on surveillance techniques, followed by a one hour practical exercise following 8 celebrity authors. Teams will start from the Adam's Mark Hotel and end up at the MWA Cocktail Party for debriefing, cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and mingling with other conference attendees.

Beyond CSI: Get the facts (Forensic Workshop)

Place: Adam's Mark Hotel
Time: One panel track, 3/8
Cost: Free
Jan Burke and D. P. Lyle are hard at work pulling together a great team of outside experts and some of the best mystery writers in the forensic and medical genre for this exciting day of nuts and bolts information.

The Shining and The Gray Lady

Place: Estes Park and The Stanley Hotel

Time: Monday, 3/10 All Day
Cost: TBA

What: A day trip to Estes Park, the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park. See the hotel that inspired Stephen King's classic THE SHINING. While there, you can also look for the resident ghost, aka The Gray Lady. We will go up in the morning, spend a little time walking the main street, then have lunch at the historic Stanley Hotel, built by the inventor the Stanley Steamer.

Cannibals and Hula Skirts The Alferd E. Packer Banquet, Auction, and Hawaiian Runway Fashion Contest

Place: Adam's Mark Hotel
Time: Saturday evening, 3/8
What: The festivities will kick off with a cash bar and Hawaiian Runway Fashion Contest. Entrants will walk the runway in their best

Hawaiian attire. Dinner will be served by a menu specifically designed by Celebrity Chef Joanne Pence. She'll give a nod to Colorado's most infamous cannibal Alferd E. Packer. Also, be expected to be serenaded by Parnell Hall singing "Ode to Alferd" and entertained by Toastmaster Elaine Viets, GOH Stephen White, fan Michael Masliah.



Q&A With LCC Toastmaster Elaine Viets

This month we talk to LCC Toastmaster Elaine Viets.

Q: Elaine, tell us a bit about each of the series you write. When did you begin each and what sparked the initial idea?

A: I write two series: the Dead-End Job series and the Josie Marcus Mystery Shopper series. My first Dead-End Job mystery was published by Signet in 2003. SHOP TILL YOU DROP is now in its tenth printing. The Dead-End Job series is a post 9/11 series. Many of my friends and neighbors were doing well until the stock market crash that followed that horror. Then the Ivy League colleges for the kids, new house, and plans to retire at 45 were gone. So were many good corporate jobs. Instead, they found themselves selling dresses or bagging groceries at the local supermarket. It was a whole different (and unprotected) world. The only power they had was to quit suddenly.

My character, Helen Hawthorne and I work a different low-paying job in each book. I've worked as a bookseller, telemarketer, shop clerk, survey taker, pet boutique clerk, and more. The first lesson I learned was that clerks are invisible. They put up with an almighty amount of abuse.



Q: Penguin asked me to write a mystery shopper series. I was delighted. My mother worked as a mystery shopper in the 1960's. Surprisingly, the job has changed very little in nearly fifty years. Even the questionnaires the mystery shoppers use are the same.

Q: I love your Dead-End Job Series. I understand you've worked all of them at some point in real life. Has there been a dead-end job that you've actually enjoyed working?

A: I loved working in a bookstore, but it's physically hard labor. My back hurt at the end of the day from carrying those heavy books, which weigh about a pound a piece.

Q: Do people often suggest other jobs to you? Have you used any of them?

A: Yes, and I'm always interested, but many of them are too close to a series Penguin already has. So far, I've found all the dead-end jobs of my own.

Q: I think humor is one of the toughest things to write. There seems to be such a fine line between funny and eye-rolling. Plus, you have to have just the right amount sprinkled in. How do you maintain that balance in your books?

A: I have a good editor, Kara Cesare, who tells me when she thinks I've gone over the top. Also, I wrote a syndicated column for United Media. You quickly get a feel about how far you can go without outraging the public.

Q: I know you live in south Florida now so finding interesting characters must be pretty easy ;) Which of your characters have you found you found your fans resonate with most?

A: Margery Flax, the 76 year old landlady of The Coronado Tropic Apartments, where Helen lives. Many people wish Margery was their mother.

Q: How did Margery Flax end up becoming a character in your books?

A: The real Margery is MWA's office manager. She won an auction at Bouchercon, I think, to be a character in my old series. But that series was discontinued. I offered Margery a chance to be a young bimbo, a homicide detective, or an old woman. She chose to be the old woman, as long as she could smoke and wear purple. I gave her both of those, but refused to let her drive a red Ferrari. Everyone knows if you're over sixty, you have to drive a large white car in Florida. It's the law.

Q: How did you land the gig as Toastmaster for LCC 2008?

A: Christine Goff asked me, and I was thrilled. I think the mountains are beautiful. The only mountain we have in

Florida is Mt. Trashmore, and it's made of....well, trash.

Q: Everyone was saddened to hear of your stroke last year but are overjoyed at your speedy recovery. Where you surprised at how the mystery community came together to help promote your book in your absence?

A: I was touched by how many writers helped, but not surprised. The mystery community is very generous.

Q: To date, what are your plans for next year? What books do you have forthcoming and where will you be promoting?

A: My third Josie Marcus mystery shopper series, ACCESSORY TO MURDER, will be published in November. The seventh dead-end job series, CLUBBED TO DEATH, will be out in May 2008. It's set in a country club. I'm hoping to tour in May.

Top Ten Denver Tourist Attractions



The Denver Mint. See how they make money. Authors – bonus by imagining it’s your royalties.

Coors Brewery, Golden. See and smell the process of making beer. At the end you get your choice of three beers, for free.

The Denver Aquarium. Fish in Denver? Yep. Escape the landlock with a trip to the sea.

Red Rocks ampitheatre, Morrison. Most popular in the summer, but even in spring, and especially at Easter, the flocks arrive to watch the breathtaking sunrise.

Denver History Museum. A taste of the wild west.

Denver Performing Arts Complex – take in a show at the Buell Theater.

Molly Brown House. She’s unsinkable and the house is breathtaking.

Brown Palace Hotel, Denver. Make a reservation for Sunday tea.

Denver Art Museum. Designed by Ian Lipkind, this one of kind museum showcasing contemporary art opened last year.

And of course, the slopes! Winter Park, A-Basin, Copper Mountain, Vail, Aspen, Breckinridge... if you ski, it’s a must!

Hawaii 2009 – for Free?



Aloha! Excited about LCC 2009 when we will all converge on the big island of Hawaii? Want a chance to attend the convention for free? Well, here’s your chance! At LCC 2008 we will be holding a Hawaiian fashion contest – and the winner will go to LCC 2009 for free!

Guys – think you can you look like Don Ho? How about those crazy detectives from Hawaii-5-0? Or, best of all, a hula girl?

Ladies – what about you? Ready to give that grass skirt some action? Or would you prefer to attach some sideburns and be Don Ho yourself?

Well, drag out those Tommy Bahamas, grass skirts, and shell necklaces and create the most original outfit you can. Then have a drink at the cash bar, and get ready to parade your stuff down the runway. Judges will be several of the best mystery authors around.

This is an event sure to be filled with many Kodak moments of your favorite authors, fans, and friends. Just imagine your best friend or favorite author in a hula skirt and a coconut bra . Enough said!

Lori Lacefield