

IN THE LIMELIGHT: Cathlene N. Buchholz

Give us a little synopsis of who you are.

Co-finalist for the Freddie Award for Writing Excellence and the author of three published short stories, I was raised in Minneapolis Suburbia and am currently writing from my hobby farm in Central Minnesota. My diversions from writing are tuning my guitar, singing karaoke (via Facebook, these days), belly dancing, painting, learning Hebrew, and collecting books (nearing 2000 of them!). In my past life, I worked in the OR as a surgical tech and later as an anesthesia tech; I am enjoying early retirement, which turned out to be busier than expected with a new adorable grandbaby. I live with five black cats, one visually- and hearing-challenged dog, and one husband.

What gave you the idea for your first book and what was the first book?

The idea for my first published short story, "A Killer in the Cornfield," in *Festival of Crime*, was loosely based on the annual scarecrow festival held at the Emma Krumbiegs Restaurant & Bakery in Belle Plaine. I had dined at the restaurant many times while traveling to and from Mankato State University, and, later, I had enjoyed taking my children to the apple orchard to view the fall display of handmade scarecrow entries. What if, I had thought while brainstorming a story idea, the competition turned nasty? I threw a couple of best friends together, mixed in love, jealousy, and greed, and added a mysterious killer in the cornfield.

Two more of my short stories have been published in the mystery anthologies *Cooked to Death: Lying on a Plate* and *Minnesota Not So Nice*. I've also been published in a poetry anthology, newspapers, and magazines. My brother in crime, William J. Anderson, and I had our manuscript *In Too Deep* place as a top finalist for the 2017 Freddie Award sponsored by the Mystery Writers of America, Florida Chapter. It's the first of our series of suspense novels set in the Twin Cities and is looking for a home while collecting a fine layer of dust.

Since this is Sisters in Crime, which genre of crime do you resonate with? Psychological Thriller, Crime, Cozy, Romance, etc.

I enjoy staying up late reading hard-boiled psychological thriller/suspense or true crime. As a writer, I tend to gravitate toward penning cozy mysteries and various degrees of boiled thriller/suspense. I like to consider my creative self as flexible.

Who has influenced your writing the most and why?

Did I mention my boxes of 2000 books? Some of my favorite female authors in the genre are Mary Higgins Clark, Caroline Crane, Tami Hoag, Tess Gerritsen, and Ann Rule. As for encouraging my writing, that honor goes to my adult daughter (also a published writer) and my writing critique group.

What advice would you give to your readers?

Support independent bookstores and read local authors. Besides being a land of many lakes, Minnesota boasts a plethora of wonderful writers.

Is there something that goes bump in the night that you are afraid of?

I suffer from chronic nightmares (go figure) and, according to my husband, have been known to talk, cry, laugh, yell, hit, and kick in my sleep.

What makes you laugh?

Saturday Night Live clips with Gilda Radner and the rest of the original cast. Dwight Schrute from The Office. Dr. Sheldon Cooper from The Big Bang Theory.

What is your favorite quote?

“Writing is a lonely job. Having someone who believes in you makes a lot of difference.”
--Stephen King

How can readers find you and your books?

The three Minnesota mystery anthologies previously mentioned can be purchased at Once Upon a Crime bookstore and other independent bookstores, Amazon, or on my website at www.cnbuchholz.com.