

Sept. 22, 2018



Gangster In Our Midst—available at local bookstores, [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000APR004) & Barnes & Noble
www.bettybrandtpassick.com
<https://www.facebook.com/BettyBrandtPassick/>

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Gangster Blog

Who Thinks To Call a State Senator for this?

Quite by accident I met Craig Johnson, Iowa State Republican for District 32, on the phone the other day.

I haven't lived in Iowa for several decades, but what a help he was to me.

Actually, I called the number for Heartland Acres Agribition Center in Independence. I found out Craig is its executive director.

Straightaway I delved into my marketing spiel: "I'm looking for businesses in the area willing to sell *Gangster In Our Midst*... a book about Fairbank, Iowa in the 1920s, when one of Al Capone's gangsters came to town...blah, blah, blah...."

When I finally took a breath, Craig placed a book order—then added: Oh, and you should call Laree's in town—she sells books by local authors; also contact Hotel Julien in Dubuque—Capone and his entourage stayed there on occasion; plus the National Mississippi River Museum. He said he'd work on getting a contact at the Iowa Tourism office and get back to me.

I should note that the Independence Public Library and Chamber of Commerce initially directed me to Heartland Acres (and Laree's). I'm grateful for ALL the help I get promoting this book.

New Vendors (* pending)

Heartland Acres Agribition Center, 2600 Swan Lake Blvd, Independence, IA

Hotel Julien Dubuque*, 200 Main St, Dubuque, IA

Laree's*, 306 1st St E, Independence, IA

The National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium*, 350 East 3rd Street Port of Dubuque, IA

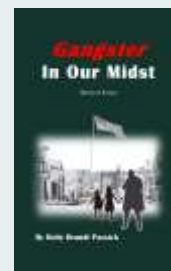


Three Fingers

July 1, 1928—Frank Yale was found slumped over the wheel of his new Lincoln near his New York home, gunned down by four men in a black Nash sedan dispensing one hundred .45 caliber bullets into his car. The police...

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Attendance at my book talk in Knoxville, Iowa on Monday evening, Sept. 17th was more than I could have hoped—a full house!

Only Three People Raised Their Hands

I found out about the 1932 murders of two elderly Keefer sisters on their Knoxville farm when doing research on the affects of [Great Depression in rural Iowa](#).

This tragic story was the focus of my September 17th book talk, sponsored by the Marion County Historic Society in Knoxville.

I asked those in attendance how many knew about the murders before coming that evening; only three people raised their hands. One was a lady who'd carried in a manila envelope and immediately walked over to me to reveal the yellowed newspaper clippings inside, including the photos of the two Keefer sisters. The article had been collected by her mother, I believe she said.

The decade of the '30s was hard—even harder for some. I personally heard many stories of the struggle to survive from my grandparents and parents. Over time, we tend to forget them. And the lessons.

I'll also never forget the young boy who raised his hand to get my attention. I walked over to the lad—wide eyed, big smile on his face. He stated he wanted to buy my book, and would I sign it—please? then asked if he could take a selfie with me. Perhaps he's a budding author... will I learn of our photo together in his scrap-book some day? #greatkid #greatmemories

Midwest Book Awards

I'll be submitting *Gangster In Our Midst* (April 10, 2018, re-edited to accommodate a few additional stories) for a Midwest Independent Publishing Association historical fiction award. [MI-PA](#) awards for creativity in content and execution, overall book quality, and the book's unique contribution to its subject area. The entry deadline is December 31, 2018.

Author Events

— **Sat., Oct. 20**, noon — Chapter2 Books, 226 Locust S., Hudson, WI, (715) 220-8818

— **Fri, Nov. 2**, 11 am–2 pm — Decades, 25 South Frederick, Oelwein, IA, (319) 504-1464

— **Sat., Nov. 3**, 9 am-3 pm — “Holiday Open House”, Barn Happy, 11310 University Ave, Cedar Falls, IA, (319) 266-0888

— **Sun, Dec. 2**, Noon-3 pm — “Christmas at the Depot”, Illinois Central Railroad Depot, 1111 Fifth Ave. NW, Independence, Iowa, (651) 334-3439

— **Jan/Mar 2019** — West Des Moines Library, 4000 Mills Civic Pkwy., West Des Moines, IA, (515) 222-3400

— **Fri., May 3, 2019**, 10 am — Burlington Public Library, 210 Court St., Burlington, IA (319) 753-1647

— **Sat, May 4, 2019**, 11 am-3 pm — Burlington By The Book, 301 Jefferson St, Burlington, IA, (319) 753-9981

Pending...

— Date/Time: **TBD** —Cedar Valley Historical Society, 503 South St., Waterloo, IA, (319) 234-6357

— Date/Time: **TBD** —Iowa Railroad Historical Society, 225 10th St., Boone, IA, (515) 432-4249

— Date/Time: **TBD** — Majors & Quinn, 3038 Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis, MN, (612) 822-4611

Book Fairs

— **Sat., Sept. 22**, noon- 5 pm — [Marydale Festival](#), 524 Maryland Ave., St. Paul, MN, (651) 488-4485

-- **Oct 11-14 (new)**, Wisconsin Book Festival, Madison Public Library (Central Library), Madison, WI