

October 10, 2020



**Gangster In Our Midst**—available at local bookstores, [Amazon](#), [Walmart](#) & [Barnes & Noble](#)

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## Gangster Blog

### Metropolitan State University Alumni Assoc. Alumni Author Event, Oct. 27, 6-7:30 pm

Join Metropolitan State University Alumni Association on October 27th when I will be among 3 award-winning alumni authors to discuss the journey that led to writing our most recent book of fiction: Why this book (or this subject) mattered to us? Why was it worth spending a year or more of our lives researching and writing it?

**Zoom (video conferencing) registration (free):** <https://metrostatealumniauthorsoctober.eventbrite.com>, 651-793-1810.

#### Fictionalizing Your Story: Readings and Discussions with Alumni Authors

Metropolitan State University Alumni Assoc.

Tuesday, October 27, 6-7:30 pm



#### Award-Winning Panel



Betty Brandt Passick  
Oakdale, MN  
Historical Fiction



Alan Lesslöt  
San Francisco, CA  
Fiction



Capt. Jim Korne  
Bayport, MN  
Fiction

Zoom  
Registration  
(Everbrite), or  
651-793-1810

### 2020 Sterling Lord Festival, Burlington, Iowa

I was a 2019 author at the [Sterling Lord Festival](#). Due to the coronavirus, the November 2020 festival will be virtual, and I have been invited to be interviewed via Zoom to talk about: “**How I used libraries in the process of writing Gangster in Our Midst (2017).**” Sterling Lord, while not a common name in his home state of Iowa, was a New York City publishing legend. Read more: Des Moines Register, 2015 ([link](#)). Watch for more information to follow.



#### COMING!

Sequel to  
**Gangster in Our  
Midst:**  
**Winter 2020!**

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## More Clues: Sequel (Book #4)

Book #4 will be a sequel to *Gangster in Our Midst* (2017).

**BOOK DESCRIPTION:** The novel is about a doctor who comes to a small village in Iowa in the 1850s to start a practice. He also hopes to find murder, knowing his black bag allows him into places where others may not go.

My roster of alpha readers (first people to read the manuscript and provide me with feedback) is now complete:

- 1) a 97 year old man from the AREA;
- 2) a man whose FAMILY HISTORY includes the 'physician' (main character);
- 3) a 2020 PHYSICIAN;
- 4) Fairbank HISTORIANS; and
- 5) a "I GREW UP IN FAIRBANK, IOWA" Facebook friend

Book #4, still untitled, will be a stand-alone historical novel. If you've read *Gangster in Our Midst*—great. The sequel will tell its own riveting story, not on telling the "backstory," rather, what's important in this story.

I came across this story when researching the 2017 book; actually I came across a couple compelling stories. Perhaps Book #4 will turn out to be the second book in a trilogy.

My husband (not an author, but an avid reader) says I write books differently than he would expect of an author.

I start with the dry, sunbaked carcass of an historically true event or story. All the living flesh in between the bones comes from my imagination... Scenes that allow you to look into the faces of three-dimensional characters throughout the story's progression.

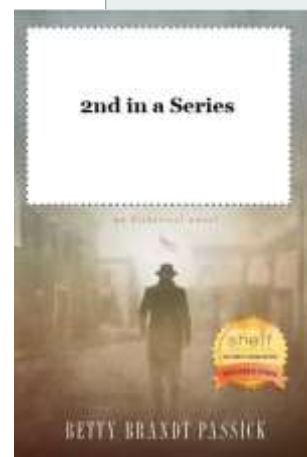
I believe some of 'real life' always ends up in books (see BLOG #45). In 2020 America—indeed, the whole world—is going through periodic lockdowns, mask-wearing, and social distancing due to the coronavirus, leaving our nation in an economic strangle-hold. With the approach of the November presidential election, its citizenry is more polarized than ever. One and all have given me greater clarity and insights as I put ideas and words onto paper, which I probably wouldn't have had otherwise. Definitely look for more intensity.

Largely, I've tried to give readers more of what they liked in the first (gangster) book. You'll recognize Oxbow (similar to Fairbank, Iowa), but there are entirely different settings, with different goals and different stakes, for entirely different reasons.

But I remind you (as much as for myself), as alpha readers examine chapters, one by one, the next milestone will be sending the manuscript to the editor—who very likely may say: "I suggest you throw out seventy percent of this, and start writing again from there."

Hoping Book #4 will be ready the latter part of winter 2020-21.

Hoping.



*Thoughts and Prayers for Those Experiencing Loss, an anthology*, by Kathryn M. Holmes, including "Black and White, Divorce at Christmas" (poetry) by Betty Brandt Passick

### Author Events

**(July--December 2020)**

— Tues, Oct. 27, 6-7:30 pm, Alum Authors: Fictionalizing Your Story, Zoom video conferencing, registration: [Metropolitan State University Alumni Relations](#)

— (Zoom) November, 2020 Sterling Lord Festival, Burlington, Iowa, [TBD \(link\)](#)

— (pending) July 16-17, 2021, Waverly Heritage Days, Memorial Park, 515 5th Ave SW, Waverly, IA

#### **Book Clubs**

—**Jane's Book Club**, Woodbury, MN