

## BWB Author Spotlight

Interview with Author Robert Crais  
BY JILL WEINLEIN

I met with mystery novelist Robert Crais at Vroman's bookstore in Pasadena during a book tour appearance.

The venue was packed with loyal readers. Taken, is his 15th title, featuring beloved main characters; Elvis Cole and Joe Pike.

When asked how he comes up with the angle for this book, Crais shared with the audience "Eighteen months ago, I read about mass graves being found South of the Texas border, so I did more research."

Crais discovered that the violence wasn't from the drug cartel, but from bajadores. The victims were mostly immigrants from India, Asia and Europe who came up through Central America on their journey to Mexico to enter the USA illegally. Bajadores find out which buses are filled with immigrants, kidnap the people at gunpoint and milk them for money. "People smuggling is a huge business," announced Crais.

"Bajadores kidnap, bring their prey to remote ranches and try to collect as much money as they can from families or employers. When the hundreds and thousands of dollars stops coming, the person is killed and buried in a mass grave with others of no value to the bajadores."

Crais learned how to write successful novels from being a Screenwriter. He wrote scripts for the successful television hits: Hill Street Blues, Cagney & Lacey and Miami Vice shows. Twenty-two years ago, he left the lucrative entertainment field as a producer and contract writer to follow a

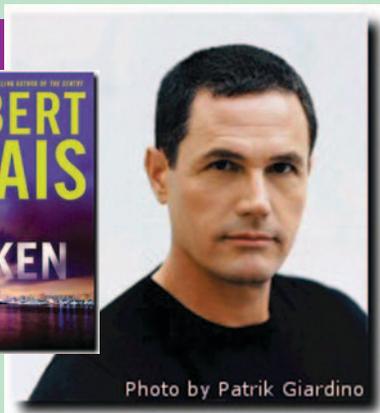
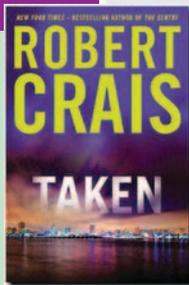


Photo by Patrik Giardino

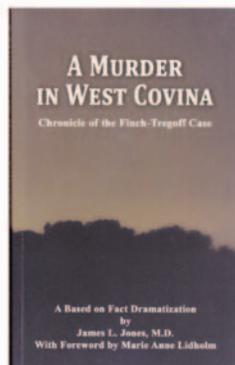
dream of writing his own novel. Crais hit the jackpot with his first Elvis Cole novel, The Monkey's Raincoat.

When asked how novel writing is different than screenwriting, Crais replied, "The dialogue and format don't change, just the pacing." He went on to tell the group, "To write a novel, you don't have to be visual. With screenwriting you do have to be visual." What he enjoys most is the freedom he has as a novelist.

Crais doesn't give a lot of physical description of his characters because he doesn't see them. He told his fans "I can see their outline and the scuff marks on their shoes, but as the camera rises, my characters become a blur."

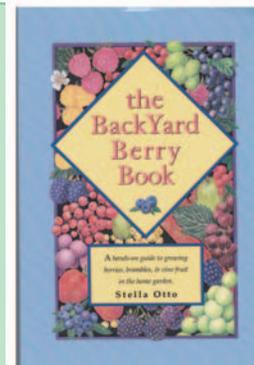
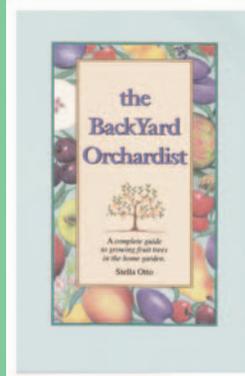
A lady asked Crais, "Where do you get the material to write your books?" He replied with a smile "Writers cannibalize their life. They suck in and take everything around them."

Another fan asked him how he developed his main characters Elvis Cole and Joe Pike? He looked out into the audience and said "I created two guys that I wished were my friends. I'd like to hang out with them. I enjoy thinking about them."



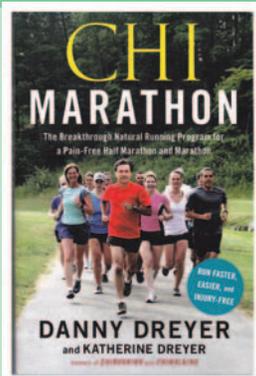
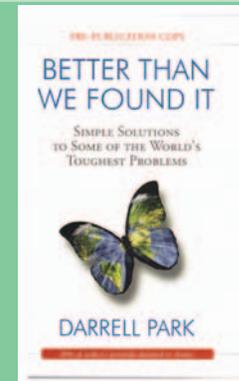
*A Murder in West Covina* by James L. Jones, M.D. available at Barnes & Noble and Amazon. The investigation, hearings and 3 trials that shocked the nation in the summer of 1959 concerning a wealthy physician's murdering of his wife to protect an affair in West Covina California.

*The Backyard Orchardist* by Stella B. Otto offered by Otto Graphics. Packed with down-to-earth information that the home gardener and master gardener crave, this little gem is the finest single source of fruit growing information published to date.



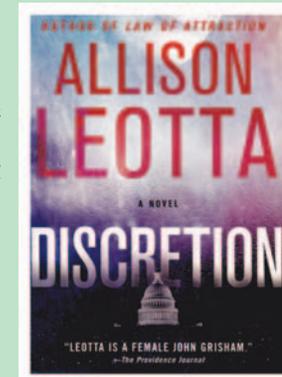
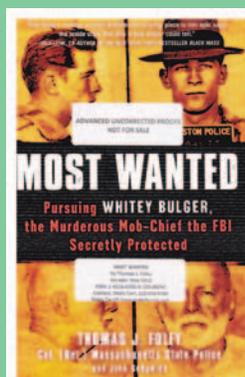
*The Backyard Berry Book* by Stella B. Otto offered by Otto Graphics. Written in plain hands-on language with purposeful drawings, a how-to guide for growing berries, brambles and vine fruit in the home garden.

*Better Than We Found It* by Darrell Park Simple solutions to some of the world's toughest problems by breaking them down into root causes and effects, and then attaching a workable solution to each one.



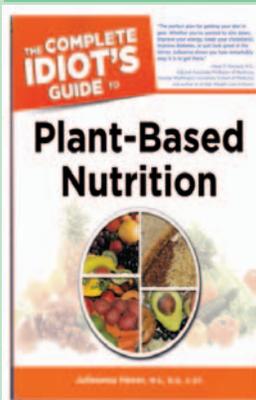
*Chi Marathon* by Danny & Katherine Dreyer offer by Simon & Schuster. A whole body mindful approach to long distance running using principles of Tai Chi-making ease and efficiency of movement the primary goal of one's training.

*Most Wanted/Pursuing Whitey Bulger* by Thomas J. Foley offered by Simon & Schuster. The first hand account of Massachusetts State Police Thomas Foley's 20 year pursuit and capture June 2011 in Santa Monica of notorious Boston mobster Whitey Bulger and the exposing of the FBI's role in protecting his criminal empire.

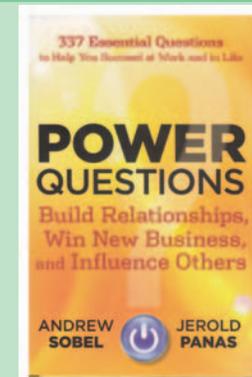


*Discretion* by Allison Leotta offered available at [www.allisonleotta.com](http://www.allisonleotta.com). Fiction. When a beautiful young woman plummets to her death from the balcony at the U.S. Capitol, Assistant U.S. Attorney Anna Curtis is summoned to the scene.

*Murder Investigation Team* by Acorn Media available at [www.acornonline.com](http://www.acornonline.com). In the vein of "CSI Murder Investigation Team," a squad of elite detectives investigate horrific crimes in London in 8 episodes on this 3disc DVD set.



*The Complete Idiot's Guide to Plant-Based Nutrition* by Julieanna Hever, M.S., R.D., C.P.T. offered by Penguin Group. The perfect plan for getting your diet in gear whether you've wanted to slim down, improve your energy, lower your cholesterol, improve diabetes, or just look great in the mirror.



*Power Questions* by Andrew Sobel & Jerold Panas offered by Wiley Publishing. A practical guide to constructing and using powerful questions that help you create a genuine human connection with clients, friends and family. It will transform your conversations and perhaps your life.



*The power of Ten 2011-2013* by Sigma Theta Tau International offered by Nursing Knowledge International. Ten of the most critical issues and obstacles nurses face today as compiled by 30 international nurse leaders

Contact us to see your book review in this section. Email: [nbynews@juno.com](mailto:nbynews@juno.com)