HALLMARK MOVIES & MYSTERIES ANNOUNCES SLATE OF 34 NEW ORIGINAL WORLD PREMIERE MOVIES FOR 2017

Al Roker and Holly Robinson Peete Mystery Wheel Franchises in Development

New Movies for Returning Popular Mystery Franchises

“Signed, Sealed, Delivered,”
“Gourmet Detective,” “Aurora Teagarden,”
“Murder She Baked” and “Hailey Dean Mysteries”

PASADENA, CA, January 14 – Hallmark Movies & Mysteries, the premiere television destination for thrilling mysteries and poignant dramas, will present an unprecedented slate of new, original world premiere movies on its 2017 program schedule. Cable television’s fastest-growing network unveiled plans for new movie installments of its returning popular mystery franchises, new dramatic world premiere movies and many exciting projects in development for 2017. The announcement was made today to a semi-annual gathering of the Television Critics Association in Pasadena.

The network announced development projects with Al Roker based on his book series of murder mysteries featuring Billy Blessing, a celebrity chef turned amateur detective as well as a new mystery franchise series with Holly Robinson Peete.

New installments from “Signed, Sealed, Delivered,” “Gourmet Detective,” “Aurora Teagarden,” “Murder She Baked” and “Hailey Dean Mysteries” will also premiere in 2017.

“Hallmark Movies & Mysteries’ original content continues to drive the tremendous growth of the network,” said Michelle Vicary, Executive Vice President, Programming and Publicity. “We are excited about expanding our library of mysteries and partnering with high caliber talent such as Al Roker, Holly Robinson Peete and Kathie Lee Gifford.”

Additional information on upcoming original programming is detailed below:

UPCOMING ORIGINAL WORLD PREMIERE MOVIES

“Framed for Murder: A Fixer Upper Mystery” – Sunday, January 15 (9 p.m. ET/PT)
Stars: Jewel (“Ride with the Devil,” “Ring of Fire”) and Colin Ferguson (“Eureka”).

In the small resort town of Lighthouse Cove, everyone knows that the best man for the job is a woman. And that woman is Shannon Hughes (Jewel), owner of Hughes Restoration and an expert in Victorian home restoration. Through her work, she stumbles across clues hidden in the old homes, uncovering past secrets and becoming an unlikely sleuth to crack unsolved mysteries. In the premiere movie of the franchise, Shannon Hughes gets a partner in crime-solving when her new client offers to help hammer out the details of her friend and neighbor’s untimely death. The “Fixer Upper Mysteries” movies are based upon New York Times bestselling author Kate Carlisle’s novels. **“Fixer Upper: Crown and Moldering” will premiere in April 2017.**

“An Uncommon Grace” – Sunday, February 12 (9 p.m. ET/PT)

Grace Conner, a military nurse formerly stationed in Afghanistan, hopes that moving to a farm in rural Ohio will help her recover from the ravages of war. Levi Troyer finds his pacifist beliefs challenged when he discovers his stepfather has been killed and his mother wounded by an unknown intruder. Levi and Grace are thrown together (more)
when she comes to his family's rescue and saves his mother's life. A deep attraction develops - even though a relationship between them is strictly forbidden. Levi belongs to the most conservative and isolated of all Amish sects - the Swartzentruber Amish. Even before meeting Grace, Levi had begun to question some of their teachings. He has considered leaving, but knows he will be banned forever from contact with his younger siblings and widowed mother - who need him to survive. He is torn between his love for Grace and his responsibility to his family. Grace considers leaving her beloved farm and reenlisting rather than continuing to live near the man she loves but cannot have. And a murderer must be caught. When lifelong allegiances are tested, can love and justice prevail?

“Signed, Sealed, Delivered: Higher Ground” – Sunday, February 19 (9 p.m. ET/PT)

Featuring inspirational music by Grammy Winner Keb’ Mo, “Signed Sealed Delivered: Higher Ground” begins in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, where local New Orleans handyman and blues singer-songwriter Gabe Recolte (Keb’ Mo’) was left homeless and broken hearted. The storm came right before he had a chance to express his love for club owner Hattie (Holness). As he is forced to evacuate and relocate, Gabe wrote a heartfelt letter to Hattie. The Postables face unusual challenges in solving the postal mystery in post-Katrina New Orleans. Oliver grapples with his unexpressed feelings for Shane while Norman and Rita’s relationship continues to get stronger.

“Aurora Teagarden: Dead Over Heels” (wt) – Sunday, March 19 (9 p.m. ET/PT)

Librarian and real crime buff Aurora “Roe” Teagarden never liked Detective Sergeant Jack Burns, but she also never wanted to see him dead but when he winds up murdered, she can’t help but get involved. When other strange things happen around her, ranging from peculiar (her irascible cat turns up wearing a pink ribbon) to violent (her assistant at the library is attacked) to potentially deadly (her former boyfriend is stabbed), she must decipher the personal message in the madness before it’s too late.

“Murder She Baked 5” (wt) – Sunday, March 26 (9 p.m. ET/PT)
Stars: Alison Sweeney ("Days of Our Lives"), Cameron Mathison ("All My Children"), Barbara Niven ("Chesapeake Shores"

Hannah Swensen’s winter heats up when her pet project leads to murder. The televised Hartland Flour Bake-Off that Hannah organized is a fun diversion for Eden Lake and a great opportunity for a new baker to become a star... until one judge, high school coach Len Bishop, is killed in a bizarre hit and run with a twist. As Hannah and Detective Mike Kingston uncover suspects and unravel the mystery of Bishop's life and murder, a close call for Hannah ups the ante in their romance.

“Stay at Home Dead” (wt)
Stars: Brennan Elliott (“UnREAL,” “Debbie Macomber’s Cedar Cove”)
**Based on the book series by Jeffrey Allen

Ex-football star and stay-at-home father, Deuce Winters, finds the dead body of his high school rival in the back seat of his mini-van. As the number one suspect in the court of public opinion, Deuce is determined to clear his name and must reconnect with people from his past to find the real killer. With the help of his savvy lawyer wife and the small town’s only private detective, Deuce will have to untangle a slew of clues to find the true culprit and get back to his quiet life.

(more)
“Hailey Dean Mystery 3” (wt) - April 2017
Stars: Kellie Martin (“Mystery Woman,” “Hello It’s Me”)
**Based on the book series by Nancy Grace.

After her fiancé is murdered, Hailey Dean (Martin) becomes one of the country’s most revered felony prosecutors. When the former attorney-turned-therapist helps her close friend Pam sell the estate of Pam’s grandparents, she falls head-first into a harrowing mystery. Without notice, Pam disappears on a “dream vacation.” But that dream vacation quickly turns into a nightmare for Hailey, who’s convinced her long-time friend is a victim of foul play. Then, Pam’s beau is left for road-kill after a hit-and-run, and Hailey’s love interest falls mysteriously ill. It all goes sideways when Hailey’s intuition takes over. It’s a race against the clock as crime-fighter Hailey Dean puts her own life on the line!

UPCOMING ORIGINAL MOVIES/SERIES IN DEVELOPMENT:

“The Midnight Show Murders”
Al Roker Mystery Franchise

This mystery wheel franchise revolves around a fictional TV morning show, like “Home & Family.” Billy Blessing is the food anchor for the show and owner of a successful local bistro. After the mysterious death of one of the network execs, Billy’s life takes a turn as he becomes the main suspect in the murder investigation and he is forced to investigate to clear his name. Billy solves a new mystery in each movie. Based on the mystery books written by Al Roker.

“When God Winks at You”
Kathie Lee Gifford and SQuire Rushnell

This is about true stories demonstrating that God communicates with us, making incredible things happen in our lives every single day. As you read the riveting accounts of everyday and famous people – you will begin to recognize that God winks in your own life, both past and present. Through these tangible signposts from God, we receive personalized messages that reassure us, stop us from worrying, chart our path in life and help us keep the faith.

“Darrow and Darrow”
Kimberly Williams-Paisley (“According to Jim,” “Father of the Bride”)

Three generations of women aspire to share a house, a law practice and their feelings. Claire Darrow, an idealistic lawyer, fights for what’s right, regardless of whether it makes her a dime. Naomi is her estranged mother, whose view of the law is more elastic and profitable. They clash on nearly everything, but especially on the best way to raise Claire’s daughter, Louise, a bright 12-year-old with an older soul. Louise takes after her grandmother in knowing what makes people tick. The three of them make an unbeatable team.

“Emma Fielding Mysteries”
Courtney Thorne-Smith (“Two and a Half Men,” ”Melrose Place”)

Brilliant, dedicated, and driven, archaeologist Emma Fielding finds things that have been lost for hundreds of years – and she’s very, very good at it. A soon-to-be-tenured professor of archaeology, she has recently unearthed evidence of a 17th century coastal Maine settlement that predated Jamestown, one of the most significant archaeological finds in years. But the dead body that accompanies it – a corpse washed ashore near the site – has embroiled Emma and her students in a different kind of exploration. With her reputation suddenly in jeopardy due to the ruthless machinations of a disgruntled rival and a second suspicious death heartbreakingly close to home, Emma must unearth a killer among the artifacts. But that means digging deep into her past to dark secrets buried in the heart of the archaeological community – which, in turn, could bury Emma Fielding.

(more)
Cara Rutledge receives a letter from her mother asking her to visit the South Carolina island on which she spent most of her summers growing up. Though she is skeptical, the timing couldn’t be much better for Cara as she was recently sacked from her high-powered job at an ad agency and doesn’t have much of a life outside of work. Cara also learns the devastating news that her mother is dying and won’t live past the summer. This news flips a switch in Cara, who suddenly realizes that she doesn’t have much time to make amends with the woman who she’s spent so much of her life resenting. Finally seeing clearly Cara moves into the beach house with a new outlook on what is important in life.

“J.L. Family Ranch 2”
Jon Voight (“Ray Donovan”), James Caan (The Godfather), Teri Polo (Meet the Parents) Trevor Donovan (“90210”)

“J.L. Family Ranch 2” picks up where the movie left off... Veteran rancher and former sheriff John Landsburg (Voight) and his family are holding their ground in a tense face off with the federal bureaucracy regarding ownership of the Landsburg family ranch. The Landsburg family will not go down without a fight. Tap Peterson (Caan) is seeking revenge over a decades-old grudge and has the Feds on his side.

“Gourmet Detective 4”
Stars: Dylan Neal (“Debbie Macomber’s Cedar Cove”), Brooke Burns (“The Chase”)

The “odd couple” at the center of the Gourmet Detective series are beautiful, tenacious Detective Maggie Price (Burns) and dashing Henry Ross (Neal), an ex-chef with an eye for detail who helps her solve any crime occurring in the food world. Their bickering and bantering masked a mutual attraction about which they were both in denial until Henry finally made a move and they shared their first kiss. Their adventures in crime-solving - and, now in romance - continue in the fourth installment of the popular franchise.

ABOUT HALLMARK MOVIES & MYSTERIES
With sister cable television network Hallmark Channel, Hallmark Movies & Mysteries is the second 24-hour linear channel under the Crown Media Family Networks umbrella. Distributed in both (HD) and standard definition (SD) in 67 million homes across the United States, Hallmark Movies & Mysteries is one of the fastest growing networks in cable and a leading destination for quality, family friendly entertainment. Launched in 2008 as Hallmark Movie Channel, the network was re-branded in fall of 2014, transitioning into Hallmark Movies & Mysteries. True to its name, the channel brings the lighter side of the suspense and mystery genres into focus with rich, dramatic, and thought-provoking storytelling. The network’s programming lineup features a unique mix of new, original movies, presentations from the acclaimed Hallmark Hall of Fame library, and such time-honored acquired series as “Murder, She Wrote,” “Matlock,” “Hart to Hart” and “Diagnosis Murder.” The channel is also home to the annual, eight-week holiday programming event “Most Wonderful Movies of Christmas,” which helps viewers celebrate the season with new, original movies and beloved holiday classics, including “A Christmas Carol,” “Holiday Affair,” “Babes in Toyland,” and “Christmas in Connecticut.”

Hallmark Cards, Inc. owns and operates Crown Media Family Networks.

Facebook: HALLMARK MOVIES & MYSTERIES
Twitter: @HALLMARKMOVIE

CONTACTS:
Pam Slay, 818-755-2480 PamSlay@CrownMedia.com
Chandler Hayes, 818-755-2490 ChandlerHayes@CrownMedia.com

--HALLMARK MOVIES & MYSTERIES--