



The Milford-Haven Novels *by Mara Purl*

Milford-Haven Socie-Tea® Events

Welcome to Milford-Haven! And thank you for your interest in working with the Milford-Haven Novels team to create a Milford-Haven Socie- Tea Event!

These special events are designed as community partnership events, which means they have community support from the very start. Each Tea* event is a triple-win scenario—triple in that it benefits the author (Mara and her guest-authors), the sponsoring organization, and the charity.

[*We choose a special name for each event, or series of events. Other names include Hospitali-Tea, Possibili-Tea, Generosi-Tea, Creativi-Tea, Responsibili-Tea, etc. depending upon what will best highlight the focus of the event.]

Here are some guidelines that will explain how we organize these events. Once you and your organization have read this, we'll plan a conference call so you and Mara can begin working out the details. We look forward to working with you!

Reya Patton

1. Choosing the Charity

The local charity may be chosen by the sponsoring organization, or a charity may approach us directly, or we may approach the charity. Sometimes the organization that approaches us is a Non-Profit (such as an arts organization), but not one that provides emergency services (such as a domestic violence shelter). What we recommend in this case is that a local emergency-services charity still be included, even though it means funds will be donated to two different entities.

Why do we suggest this? Because it creates synergy and good will. The event would be represented as, for example, "Local Writers Help Local Shelter" event. The press appreciates this, and so does the community will appreciate it. Because Mara writes Women's Fiction, she often chooses a Women's Charity such as a domestic violence shelter, or a Women's Resource agency that helps women get back in the job force. Really any local charity you deem worthy will work well.

2. The Charity's Responsibility

This is an important part of the equation. Sometimes in the past, a charity we've chosen will simply send a spokesperson—and we do always invite a spokesperson to speak for five minutes at the event, as this is a key element. But the charity **MUST** understand that **THEY** also must work to ensure we have attendees. What we need from them is an ironclad promise that: a) they require their board members to attend; b) they send out an e-blast or a mailing to their own list of supporters.

What needs to be in their message to their own list? The message is: "The more we buy at this event, the more we will benefit our own agency." That's the key. We're donating usually 10 percent of sales. But 10 percent of nothing is nothing.

3. The Venue

We've used different kinds of venues: sometimes a beautiful rented space; sometimes a spectacular special room in a Carnegie Library; but sometimes we actually work with a realtor who's trying to sell a house. It's a great benefit to the realtor to have people viewing the home. It's a benefit to the event budget, because use of the home is free.

4. The Commerce Partners

We invite local businesses to participate:

A - Caterer. A caterer provides free food and service people, because they get great PR from this event. In return, we offer them the opportunity to sell their own wares. We give them the kitchen of the home; they serve tea and goodies (scones, cookies, lemon bars, whatever they choose). And we let them sell packages of their own cookies or tea, again, whatever they choose, so they have the chance to make some money. Sometimes the caterer does **NOT** sell anything. They prefer to focus on serving, knowing they'll get customers anyway from this special day.

B - Staging/ Design company. The staging company that works with the realtor will, upon request, bring in special items according to the theme we choose. We've done holiday teas where they bring in gorgeous holiday decorations; an excellent idea is to do an ocean-themed decor, since this is how the Milford-Haven Novels are branded. Again, we sometimes invite this company to sell their own wares, if they care to. If they do, we give them the master suite of the home to set up a temporary display and store. If a local staging company is not available, we do have a staging professional we work with who's willing to travel. We can discuss that option.

5. The Commerce Partners Responsibility

In exactly the same way that this is important for the charity, it's vital that commerce partners also reach out to attract guests to the event. By offering our commerce partners the opportunity to sell their own wares, we are to some extent diluting the amount of money the authors are likely to earn for book sales. So, to compensate for this, the commerce partner MUST understand that THEY also must work to ensure we have attendees. What we need from them is an advance agreement that they will send out an e-blast or a mailing to their own list of customers. And what needs to be in their message to their own list? The message is: "The more we buy at this event, the more we will benefit our community, and the more we wo;; increase our own customer base."

6. Guest Authors

Mara sometimes invites a guest author to join her at her events. You and she can discuss the possibility when you have your conversation. Our focus is to create the most engaging, enjoyable and effective event for you and for the guests who attend the Tea. When we do invite other authors, it's because some kind of synergy exists between their work and Mara's.

7. Meeting Your Needs

We'd like to know what your goals are, and how we can help you achieve them. We look forward to creating a dynamic, delightful event with you!

