



Having trouble reading this email? [View it on our website.](#)

## January & February Recap of Wows!

I hope 2018 is off to an excellent start for you! It certainly is for me . . . and it certainly is busy! Already my calendar for the year has major events extending through October. Exciting!



In this newsletter I'll share a recap of January and February, and give you a preview of upcoming events. For readers in the Southwest, I'll send out a detailed newsletter about the Tucson Festival of Books, which happens next weekend. Enjoy!

## January - Arroyo Grande Book Club



On January 11th, I had the pleasure of being this year's guest author for the Arroyo Grande Book Club. Once a year, all three clubs meet together and invite one author. The setting was a dining club house--book shelves filled with books, a cherry fire in the fireplace, and a breakfast bar loading delectable offerings.

They had a very unusual request -- that I speak for a couple of hours. Most organizations want speakers to wrap things up in 20 minutes! So I knew this would be different. Rather than preparing a specific talk, I spent time deeply pondering the topics involved in creating my series. Then on the day, I let these ideas flow. The result was a very special sharing, inspired by a room filled with thoughtful readers, each of whom had read at least one of my books. Together we explored the themes in my series -- the goals of the characters, the currents of internal and external events in the storylines, and the personal and professional experiences that inspire me to write. I think all of us learned something that day, especially me!

One very tangible result is that the questions asked have led directly to my writing a new story for the series that I didn't know I'd be writing! Just goes to prove that authoring is sometimes a dialogue with readers. Thank you again to the remarkable women who invited me to be their speaker this year. Let's stay in touch!

## January - Publishing at Sea - WOW!

This was my inaugural year as a faculty member for the [Publishing at Sea Cruise](#). What an experience it was!



My husband joined me in the wonderful adventure, and we enjoyed excursions, fabulous meals, a gorgeous ship, new and old friendships, and a true getaway.

I also spent much of the trip immersed in teaching some of my favorite subjects to an awesome group of accomplished people, each of whom is somewhere in his or her authoring and publishing journey. What a thrill to introduce new ideas and techniques to help these dedicated colleagues have breakthroughs!

I can't say enough good things about my fellow faculty members, [Judith Briles](#) our founder, [Kelly Johnson](#), [Rebecca Finkel](#), and [Joan Stewart](#). And I want to thank photographer [Ashley Bratton](#) who joined us, offering professional photo packages, and delivering some imaginative and spectacular photos! Here's one, and you'll be seeing more of mine on my website and social media.

Are you an author looking for your own breakthrough? Consider joining us next year! Check out [Publishing At Sea](#).

## January - Shipboard Book Signings

One of the brilliant opportunities for authors on the Publishing At Sea Cruise is on-board book signings. These are major events, open to all passengers (of whom there were 5,000), organized by the Royal Caribbean cruise directors along with Publishing at Sea Director Judith Briles.



How fantastic to connect with so many new readers! And how about the bragging rights: each of us can now say we've signed our book on the third largest cruise ship in the world!

Here's my blog post [Book Signings at Sea](#).

## January - Excursions

Our cruise took us to three fascinating destinations in the Caribbean that inspired me to write some blog posts. In case you missed them, you can find them here:

- \* [European Legacy in the Caribbean - Haiti](#)
- \* [European Legacy in the Caribbean - Jamaica](#)
- \* [European Legacy in the Caribbean - Cozumel](#)

## February - Sweetheart Sale

Every Valentine's Day I offer something special to my readers. This year, I joined forces with several other authors, and we did a four-day sale of our books.



This terrific event was organized by [Tammy L. Grace](#). Like me, Tammy writes a coastal series, and we've discovered a wonderful synergy by cross-promoting our books to one another's readers.

I think you'll enjoy her [Hometown Harbor Series](#), set in the picturesque San Juan Islands of the Pacific Northwest. She also writes a second series, this one set in Nashville. The Cooper Hamilton Detective Novels feature Coop, a lawyer turned private detective, who solves murders with his faithful golden retriever.

If you missed our promotion, no worries, we have an online Tea Party coming up in March!

## February Blog: Author at Work . . . Otters at Play

You might enjoy reading my blog post "Author at Work, Otters at Play," which details some of the research adventures as I prepared to write this novella, as well as some of the insights that popped their heads above water as I wrote.



It's always a privilege to get to know a fellow creature better, and these unique mammals who share our coastline have much to teach us. They're funny and cute, too!

## March - Tucson Festival of Books

I'm very excited to announce that I've been invited to be a presenter at the Tucson Festival of Books, which is now the largest book event in the U.S., surpassing the Los Angeles Festival of Books upon which it is patterned. I spoke at the Tucson Festival a few years ago, and am truly thrilled at being invited again, this time for two presentations.



If you'll be in Arizona, or plan to make a special trip to meet some of the most active and dynamic authors publishing these days, here are the dates. I'll provide further details later.

- \* [Tucson Festival of Books](#)
- \* [University of Arizona, Tucson](#)
- \* [March 10th & 11th](#)

## March Spring Fling Author Tea Party

My author friend Tammy Grace has organized a delightful virtual party, and you're invited! Join us for the [Spring Fling Author Tea Party](#) - a Facebook Event - on the first day of spring!



Wonderful reads from some of your author favorites, as well as some new authors to discover!

- \* [Spring Fling Author Tea Party](#)
- \* [On Facebook](#)
- \* [March 20th](#)

## Writers in Action Conference

Sisters in Crime is a terrific national organization with chapters in several parts of the country. In a member of the [Central Coast Chapter](#), which will be hosting its first Writers Conference next May.



This will be a very full day with workshops, presentations and panels offered by some of the most accomplished authors in the region -- a practical event for aspiring authors, and a behind-the-scenes adventure for readers!

- \* [Writers in Action - From Idea to Publication](#)
- \* [PCBE Energy Education Center, San Luis Obispo](#)
- \* [May 19th](#)

## Becoming Julia Morgan - Updates

As you know, I was part of a marvelous production last autumn, produced by The Monday Club, about the remarkable architect Julia Morgan. Since then, our director Linda Wilson and I have been approached by several other organizations that also own Julia Morgan buildings, about presenting the play at their facilities.



Linda and I have now become co-producers as we work toward creating these new productions. We will continue to keep you posted. For now, updates are:

- \* [The Minerva Club, Santa Maria](#). With apologies, they have asked that we postpone the performances originally schedule for June, so we're discussing later dates.
- \* [Chapel of the Chimes, Oakland](#), has confirmed they'd like us to perform a Staged Reading of the play next August!

## Watermill

The iconic Jerome Robbins ballet "Watermill", for which I'm one of the original musicians, is coming back for another revival! I play lots, working with a small ensemble of fantastic musicians who also specialize in Asian instruments.



Though through the decades we've always performed at the New York State Theatre at Lincoln Center, the home of the ballet company, this time we'll be performing at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, which will be an honor, and a new challenge.

- \* [Watermill, a modern ballet](#)
- \* [Brooklyn Academy of Music](#)
- \* [October 24, 25, 26, 27](#)

## My Heart is Grateful . . .

. . . for the opportunities I've had these past two months to teach seminars and to work privately with several authors on some excellent projects.



. . . to my own publishing team who've been working hard behind the scenes during a major transition at Balakong - in particular to Joan Laidig who improves every page she touches.

. . . to my husband for his support while I work on several concurrent projects, always on this amazing journey with me.

. . . and to you, my readers, those who've been with me for several years, and those who are just joining the Milford-Haven saga. This will be a great year filled with new publications, many events and several performances, so there's adventure and fun ahead!

As always, love and gratitude, **from my heart to yours!**