

# BOOKMARK



*Fiction and Nonfiction News from Janet Litherland*

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## Potpourri

Yes, we had a winner in July's travel photo contest! Connie Wood of Thomasville, GA, correctly identified the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles and received a signed copy of *Song of the Heart*. Other guesses included the Guggenheim Museum, Mexican Technology Museum, and "somewhere in Israel." Actually, I thought the smog in photo #2 would tip you to Los Angeles!

Several of you have sent messages that you loved *Song of the Heart*, and I appreciate every single comment! If you are connected online, would you consider repeating your comments via a review on BarnesAndNoble.com or Amazon.com? Online reviews help me "get the word out" so others can enjoy the stories too. Speaking of Amazon, they recently posted a new "author page" for me. Check it out!

Here is your travel photo. Yes, that's me in the center, being attacked by birds! Where am I? First new winner to respond correctly (& specifically) receives a book.



**All of Janet's books  
are available at:**

BarnesAndNoble.com  
Amazon.com  
and other online stores.

## Fiction Reviews

My first graphic book! No, I didn't write it; I read it. Not "graphic" as in sex and violence, but rather meaning illustrated. Comic-book fashion. Laurie Sandell's *The Impostor's Daughter* is a 247-page hardcover memoir in full color. It is a delight to hold and peruse, even if you don't read it. In contrast, the story is grim (and occasionally falls into the other definition of graphic). Sandell grew up with a bigger-than-life father, a hero, an educator, an important man—or so she thought. As an adult with lingering doubts, she investigated and found that his life, and consequently her own, had been built on a web of lies. Maybe that's why she sub-titled her book, "A True Memoir."



My reviews often include a book that doesn't make it past the first 20 pages. Not this time. Everything I read was worth finishing. No clunkers. Clunkers? Hmmmm ... "Cash for Clunkers" ... What if *publishers* had to pay *readers* for the clun... Oh, well. Here are six more novels (continued on page 2) that certainly captured my attention:

*Stalking Susan* (Julie Kramer, 2008, paperback). First-time author Kramer is a freelance television news producer for NBC, and the heroine of her book is a TV news reporter. Accordingly, every scene in this novel has the ring of truth. Riley Spartz is investigating two cold cases involving women named Susan who were both strangled on the same day, one year apart. I was not only drawn in by the fast-paced plot, I was completely taken with Riley, the sassy, witty reporter who had me chuckling along the way!

*Still Life* (Joy Fielding, 2009, hardcover). This is one spooky book, and I absolutely loved it! A beautiful, happy, successful woman is hit by a car and plunged into a coma. In her hospital bed, she is unable to see, move, or communicate; however, she can *hear* everything—including conversation that convinces her that the accident was not an accident at all and there will be another attempt on her life. Can she break through the coma in time to save herself? This one will keep you up all night!

*Devil Bones* (Kathy Reichs, 2008, paperback). The TV show, *Bones*, is based on this series featuring forensic anthropologist, Tempe Brennan. The author, Reichs, is past vice president of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and a professor of anthropology at the University of North Carolina—the lady knows what she's talking about. The only problem for me is she talks too much, giving more forensic details than I want or need. The plot begins when a plumber working in an old cellar finds human remains and religious artifacts. Interesting premise; and Reichs provides a "cliffhanger" at the end of each chapter to keep it moving forward.

## More Reviews

FICTION AND NONFICTION NEWS FROM  
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Another winner from Kate Morton! *The Forgotten Garden* (2008, hard-cover) is even better than *The House at Riverton*, which I reviewed in July. In 1913 a tiny child carrying a small suitcase and a book of fairy tales is abandoned on a ship bound for Australia. Many years later she learns of her abandonment; and, with the book of fairy tales her only clue, begins a quest to find her true identity. In a manor house in England she finds many answers, but not all. After her death, her granddaughter continues the search and unravels the final secret held in the little book. This novel (549 pages) is about deceit, betrayal, and families gone wrong; and it's woven together with threads of stories and storytelling. Compelling!

*Tailspin* (Catherine Coulter, 2009, paperback). Savich and Sherlock are a husband and wife team of FBI agents. In addition to working together, they truly love each other. In this story, a fellow agent's plane goes down in the Appalachian Mountains and a young woman who witnesses the crash saves the lives of the pilot and his secretive passenger. Problem is, the young woman is running/hiding from something and doesn't want the attention her heroism is destined to bring. The intertwined plots, plus the humanity of the characters, kept me glued to the pages!

*No Time for Goodbye* (Linwood Barclay, 2007, paperback). A 14-year-old girl wakes up one morning to find her family has vanished. For 25 years she lives in agony, not knowing what happened. The plot is unique, the development brilliant, a true thriller. The only thing that bothered me about this novel is over-use of the "F" word. In real life *everyone* doesn't talk that way; however, in this book everyone does. To me, it's annoying, distracting, and unnecessary.



## "These are a Few of my Favorite Things"

Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, Pachelbel's *Canon in D*. *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* and *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*. The Irish Tenors' *Dublin in the Rare Old Times* and *The Fields of Athenry*. Elton John's *Blessed* and *You Can Make History Young Again*. Kenny G's *Forever In Love*. ... Sunsets ... Gentle rain ... A brisk walk ... Falling leaves ... Wildflowers ... Holding hands ... "Hi Mom!" Yes, you could say I'm a romantic.

## Language Cautions

Don't confuse marital with martial, though some marriages may seem like war zones at times.

If something is funny, it's hilarious, not hysterical, which comes from panic and may not be funny at all.

Farther can be measured, as in number of miles farther. However, further cannot be measured, such as "This idea needs further development."

Often Misspelled Words: jewelry, occurrence, questionnaire, fiery, harass, its/it's (it's is always a contraction for *it is*).

**Read back issues of *Bookmark* online at: [www.janetlitherland.com/newsletter.htm](http://www.janetlitherland.com/newsletter.htm)**



**Bookmark**  
Janet's Book News

**Janet's Ratings:** Scaled 1 - 5 ★=OK, ★★★★★=Fantastic!

*Mimosa Grove* (Dinah McCall, 2004) ★★★

*Sworn to Silence* (Linda Castillo, 2009) ★★★★★

*The Undertaker's Widow* (Phillip Margolin, 1998) ★★★★★

Janet Litherland, author of 10 nonfiction books and four novels, also is editor emeritus and former owner of Write-Choice Services, Inc., a book-development company that aspiring authors can find at: [www.writechoiceservices.com](http://www.writechoiceservices.com). (Note there is no longer a hyphen in the web address.)