
MAY 2023 | ISSUE 30

Joyce's Journal

A monthly dispatch from Joyce A. Miller, Writer



APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS!

I went to a book launch on Tuesday evening April 4th for **The House is on Fire** by Rachel Beanland, a Richmond author and member of James River Writers. She wrote **Florence Adler Swims Forever** several years ago, maybe you read that one? They held the book launch at the Monumental Church, which is built on the site of the Richmond Theater that burned to the ground in 1811. Rachel's novel follows the lives of 4 people who were in the theater at the time of the fire. I've already read my copy! Rachel's husband is a VCU math professor. She said when they were considering moving to Richmond and he came for his interview for the job, they were driving down Broad Street in a taxi. She noticed the church and asked about it. The taxi driver gave her his abbreviated version about the theater fire and how the church was built as a memorial to those lost in the fire. She said that little nugget remained in her mind for years and when she was ready to write her second book, that was the event she wanted to write about. So many stories to tell--that's how our writer brains work!

As I told you in my last newsletter, I had my first book signing on April 15th at a bookstore in Mechanicsville, VA called Books, Beads & More. It's a charming little indie bookstore that sells used books, local crafts and has a whole section devoted to local authors. I sold and signed both books. A couple of my friends from James River Greyhounds set up a greyhound meet-n-greet on the same afternoon. I sold a few books, and we got one greyhound adopted--so I'm counting that as a success!

A GLIMPSE OF
WHAT'S INCLUDED:

THE NINETEENTH OF APRIL

On the weekend of April 22nd, I went to a writers' workshop called Springboard, sponsored by James River Writers. It was held at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. We had two days of independent and guided writing activities with writing coach Lisa Cooper Ellison, a history tour of the gardens, and a poetry writing session in the garden with poet Derek Kannemeyer. April was National Poetry Month, who knew? I wrote two poems with Derek's help, and I'll share one with you!

Add some sparkle to your Mother's Day! Join me on Sunday, May 14th from 10am till 5pm at Babe's of Carytown for a Mother's Day Market. I'll be selling and signing both books—**Joe Harris, the Moon** and **Look! You're Dancing**. Free dance classes at 1pm and 3pm, and craft stations for all ages. Several of Richmond's famous Drag Queens will be reading stories to children throughout the day. Imagine a world where everyone can be their authentic selves!

As the bonus for May's newsletter, I'm attaching my first poem **The Nineteenth of April**. Have you ever written any poetry? If so, please share your poem on Instagram and tag me, or email it to me!

I live in the Church Hill section of Richmond, VA with my husband and my retired racing greyhound. Before I started writing, I worked for 30 years at a nuclear physics research laboratory.

Do what you came here for!



JOYCE A. MILLER, WRITER

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THE NINETEENTH OF APRIL by Joyce A Miller

Neighborhood people walking with their dogs and children
are visible outside the restaurant
through the large windows

The chef is searing scallops.
A server saunters over.
“More water?”

I smell the yeasty sourdough bread
before he even brings it to the table.
The plate clinks as he sets it down.

Our favorite place.
Delighted. Sustenance. Gratitude.
A respite from the week.