



Authors Joshilyn Jackson, Jane Smiley, Tatjana Soli, event organizer Robbie Wright, and authors Josie Brown and Eileen Goudge.

Last week's "[Between The Pages](#)" event on Bainbridge Island wasn't perfect, as you'll see below ... but it was a success. (Let me check that: Once things *got to* Bainbridge, things were perfect.) But an enthusiastic crowd of about 275, paying at least \$50 a ticket, came out to support the Kitsap Regional Library system and listen to an entertaining powerhouse lineup of female authors — Jane Smiley, Josie Brown, Eileen Goudge, Joshilyn Jackson and Tatjana Soli — read from their latest books.

[Here's a six-minute video of the evening](#)'s highlights, prepared by event organizers Robbie Wright and Liberty Bay Books owner Suzanne Droppert.

And when I asked Josie Brown to reflect on the evening, here's what she had to say:

It was a great adventure, for sure. We had plenty of time to get to the ferry. Too much, apparently, because we got onto the wrong one: the Bremerton one as opposed to the Bainbridge — and didn't realize it, until we almost docked and my husband, Martin, timidly asked me (because he thought I'd faint): "Hon, um, wasn't this ferry ride supposed to be a half-hour, tops?"

A mad rush by taxi (we had a colorful driver — Anthony, originally from Buffalo, and the topic with him jumped from his tenure in the armed services to his job as a masseuse, to hemp clothing) and we were there, only fifteen minutes late. Jane was laughing because she'd made it over earlier that morning to visit a pal — and she was the one we thought would get lost or be late, as she's always the one texting, "I have to be where? When?"

there were quite a few teachers and librarians there as well.

Eileen calls us “The Sisterhood of the Traveling Books.” Most of us met face-to-face for the first time just the night before, but you’d think we’d known each other for quite some time, the way everyone got along. Joshilyn is a consummate performer: you can tell she was an actress in her previous profession. Tatjana gives an eloquent read. Her book is serious, but she is lighthearted and fun. She and her husband, Gaylord, dance the tango!

The way back — this time the RIGHT ferry — was too short. It was fun just to sit together and recapped the fun. I hope everyone in the audience had as much fun as we had.

[September 20, 2010](#)[Uncategorized](#)[Bainbridge Island](#), [Between The Pages](#), [books](#), [Bremerton](#), [Eileen Goudge](#), [Jane Smiley](#), [Jim Thomsen](#), [Joshilyn Jackson](#), [Josie Brown](#), [Kitsap Regional Library](#), [Liberty Bay Books](#), [reading](#), [Tatjana Soli](#), [writing](#)

[✉ Email This Post](#)

[Leave a comment](#)

[Literary Heavy Hitters Go to Bat for Kitsap Libraries](#)

[jimthomsen](#)

Like 15

Share

Authors of literature are usually valued in society as philosophers, sages and teachers. Oh, and quality drinking companions (in my experience, anyway).

To that list, add superheroes.

It’s in the latter mode that five highly regarded fiction writers from all over the United States are coming Thursday to Bainbridge Island for a public reading and reception. Their mission: To raise money for the cash-strapped [Kitsap Regional Library](#) system.



Jane Smiley

The \$50-a-ticket “[Between The Pages](#)” event, at the Bainbridge Performing Arts center, features one marquee name: [Jane Smiley](#), the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Thousand Acres*, a modern-day retelling of Shakespeare’s *King Lear* which was later made into a movie starring Jason Robards, Jessica Lange and Michelle Pfeiffer.



Josie Brown

Joining Smiley are four other female authors with strong national reputations: [Josie Brown](#), [Eileen Goudge](#), [Joshilyn Jackson](#) and [Tatjana Soli](#).



Eileen Goudge

For 90 minutes, they'll read from their latest novels (more on those below), interview each other and possibly take some questions from the audience, Wright said. They'll stay for another 40 minutes after to chat and sign copies of their books.

“My karmic way of giving back is to come up with ideas in which the sales of my books can help good causes,” said Brown, a Bay Area author who helped spearhead the event. (She even arranged for copies of her newest novel, *Secret Lives Of Husbands And Wives*, to be included in the ticket price.)

Brown is friends with Robbie Wright, a corporate events planner who lives on Bainbridge. When Wright told her last spring about the library system's woes — budget cuts, past levy failures and the theft of children's books from the Port Orchard branch — Brown came up with the fundraiser idea.

They quickly enlisted Peter Raffa, director of the Kitsap Regional Library Foundation, and the three drew up a wish list of names. One glittery name at the top of their list — show-business novelist [Jackie Collins](#) — initially committed to the Between The Pages event.



Joshilyn Jackson

But, Brown said, Collins had to drop out when when the date for the London premiere of a movie based on one of her books shifted from summer to fall. Also having to drop out was novelist Lisa Rinna, who saw the release of her latest novel shifted to October.

York author with a second home in the Puget Sound area, came on board next, followed by Jackson, a Georgia resident, and Soli, who lives in Southern California.



Tatjana Soli

All write what could be labeled literary, issue-driven women's fiction.

"They are heavy hitters, all of whom have books that resonate with library patrons all over the country," Brown said. "And there are no more avid readers than those in the Seattle metro area. That's a known statistic in the book industry."

And, she added: "Any excuse to get out into the incomparable Puget Sound area is a writer's joy. Which is why so many great ones live in your neck of the woods, right?"

Sad disclosure: As things stand now, I won't be able to attend the event, as I must punch in for my regular Thursday swing shift at the paragraph factory in Bremerton. However, if you're going and bringing a camera, would you mind sharing some of your shots with me so I can share with everyone? E-mail me at thomsen1965@gmail.com. And please share some of the funny anecdotes and other highlights of the evening. And cake, if there's any.

A little about each author and their latest books:

- Jane Smiley, who has published 13 novels, three nonfiction books and a short-story collection over a 30-year career, came out earlier this year with her latest, [*Private Life*](#), which follows one Midwestern woman's life in marriage from the 1880s to World War II. Said *Booklist*: "Smiley casts a gimlet eye on the institution of marriage even as she offers a fascinating glimpse of a distant era."
- Josie Brown is a journalist who specializes in celebrity interviews and relationship articles. Her previous novels include *True Hollywood Lies* and *Impossibly Tongue-Tied*; her latest release, just out in June, is [*Secret Lives Of Husbands And Wives*](#), which examines the dramas of two vastly different Silicon Valley couples. Wrote *Booklist*: "These women inside their fishbowl are fun to peer in on despite being caricaturish, and the momentum of Brown's writing and plot keeps the pages turning."
- Eileen Goudge broke into book publishing by contributing to the crazily successful *Sweet Valley High* series for young teen girls in the early '80s. She published her first adult novel in 1986, and her latest, released last October, is [*Once In A Blue Moon*](#), a tale of two tempestuous sisters and their secrets. Said *Publisher's Weekly*: "A touching story with wide appeal, Goudge's novel is a sharp example of dysfunctional family fiction."
- Joshilyn Jackson, a Florida native and former teacher, broke into book publishing with a splash, with 2005's *Gods in Alabama*. Her fourth book, released in June, is drawing her biggest notices: [*Backseat Saints*](#), a Southern-fried tale of an abused woman who runs from the husband who will never let her go. Said *Booklist*: "Jackson

“woman who yearns to make a better life for herself.”

• Tatjana Soli, born in Austria, wrote and published short stories for years before breaking out this spring with her debut novel, [The Lotus Eaters](#), an exhaustively researched story of a female wartime photographer in Southeast Asia at the close of the Vietnam War. Wrote *Kirkus Reviews*: “Graphic but never gratuitous, the gripping, haunting narrative explores the complexity of violence, foreignness, even betrayal. Moving and memorable.”

Between The Pages: A fundraising event for the Kitsap Regional Library Foundation

Who: Authors Jane Smiley, Josie Brown, Eileen Goudge, Joshilyn Jackson and Tatjana Soli

When: Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Bainbridge Performing Arts Center, 200 Madison Ave. N., Bainbridge Island

Tickets: \$50 (includes copy of Brown’s novel, *Secret Lives Of Husbands and Wives*), with discount available for groups of eight or more; and \$150 for “VIP” access, which includes a catered pre-event reception with the authors and copies of each of their latest novels. Purchase at Liberty Bay Books, 18881 D Front St., Poulsbo.

More Info: For ticket info, Peter Raffa, (360) 475-9039; for event info, Robbie Wright, (206) 390-1989

[September 13, 2010UncategorizedBackseat Saints, Bainbridge Island, Between The Pages, books, Eileen Goudge, Jane Smiley, Jim Thomsen, Joshilyn Jackson, Josie Brown, Kitsap Regional Library, Liberty Bay Books, Once In A Blue Moon, Private Life, publishing, reading, Secret Lives Of Husbands And Wives, Tatjana Soli, The Lotus Eaters, writing](#)

[✉ Email This Post](#)

[Leave a comment](#)

[Good Stuff That’s Coming Up](#)

[jimthomsen](#)

Like 14

Share

A look through Kitsap’s September literary calendar:

• Friday, Sept. 3, 9 a.m. through 4 p.m.: [Stillwaters Environmental Education Center](#), 26059 Barber Cut Off Road in Kingston, begins its annual fundraising book sale. At least 15,000 new and used books, covering all genres and subjects, will be sold each Friday through Sunday, through Oct. 3. During the sale’s last weekend, books will be sold by the grocery bag (\$5 on Friday, \$3 on Saturday and free on Sunday). All proceeds go to support environmental education. For more information, contact Naomi Maasberg at (360) 297-1226 or at naomi@stillwatersenvironmentalcenter.org.



• Sunday, Sept. 12, at 3 p.m.: [Eagle Harbor Book Co.](#) on Bainbridge Island hosts [Carol Cassella](#), the Bainbridge author whose second novel, *Healer*, will be in bookstores Sept. 7. Those wanting a signed copy can order it in