



June / July 2026 update from...

**Ann Goltz,
Author**

What Happened to the April/May Newsletter?

Before I answer that question, I'd like to welcome the new subscribers who signed up as part of the February Women's Fiction Promo on BookFunnel. Glad you're here! Now that you've downloaded the prequel novelette *Needing Hope*, keep reading for the chance to win a copy of *Virtuous Women*.

On to the question about the April/May Newsletter: no, you didn't miss it--I did. If you remember my February/March update, I mentioned that I was scaling back my writing to a bi-monthly newsletter, a weekly blog based out of my soon-to-be-redesigned website, and launching my second novel, *What Happened to Zinnia*, this fall.

A month later I was diagnosed with a kidney stone that became infected, which resulted in a serious case of sepsis that required immediate surgery and some heavy-duty antibiotics. I won't go into the gory details, but the Cliff Notes version is that I spent a total of three weeks in the hospital, eight weeks on antibiotics, and had three surgeries. When I went in for my kidney stone removal surgery two months after my emergency surgery, the anesthesiologist said, "Oh yeah, I remember you. I was your anesthesiologist back in March. You almost died that night."

Fun times.

Anyway, the day the April/May newsletter was supposed to go out was the day I was released from the hospital for the second time. I considered sending it out a month later, in May, but I was still very sick from the antibiotics and other medications I was on, and decided to give myself a little grace.

About two weeks ago, I had my last surgery and finished the last medication associated with that whole nightmare. I'm very weak from two and a half months of being on my back or on my butt 24/7, however I'm walking nearly every day and building myself back up.

Thanks for understanding.

The Fallout

Not only did I not write or send the April/May newsletter, I also did nothing on my website (or, by extension, the blog) or for the launch of *What Happened to Zinnia*. I'll get back to redesigning my website later this summer, and I've decided to delay the release of *What Happened to Zinnia* until spring 2027. That book deserves a well-thought-out introduction rather than the rush job it would have been if I'd tried to keep to my original plan. I appreciate your patience.

What I've Been Doing (Besides Recovering from Almost Dying)



Days before the Infamous Kidney Stone Incident of 2026 began, I ran my very first 5K. I'm 53 years old, have been overweight for my entire life, and I've been training for this since last October. I'd set a personal goal of finishing in under 40 minutes, and I'm proud to report that I crossed the finish line at 38:56. I'd intended to run another 5K in early May, a 10K in June, and a half marathon this fall. But then, well, *you know...*



I've been volunteering a bit with the Women's Fiction Writers Association. While I can't take on a regular role right now, I do step up when I can. So far this year that's meant serving as a judge for the 2026 WFWA STAR Award a few months ago, and serving as a judge for the 2026 WFWA Rising STAR Award, which I'm doing now. The difference between the two is that the Rising STAR Award is for unpublished, unagented writers, and the STAR Award is for authors who have already published a book. This is my first year judging for the STAR Award, and my second judging for the Rising STAR Award. (Last year I'd entered *Virtuous Women* in the STAR Award, so was unable to serve as a judge.)

I've been a member of WFWA since 2017, and they've been a great resource. Through them I've made wonderful connections with other authors, and it's been a helpful and supportive community. If you're looking for a good Women's Fiction book, check out the [WFWA page on Goodreads](#).



In addition to WFWA, I'm also a member of Independent Publishers of New England. In the last couple of years, I've staffed their booth at Arlington (MA) Town Day, the New England Books Sellers Association (NEIBA) Conference, and the New England Library Association (NELA) Conference. I've also attended their virtual annual conference and a few webinars they sponsored. Through all of these events I've made some great connections with local authors. Recently I was elected to IPNE's Board. I'm honored to serve and am looking forward to what the future holds.

If you're a New England-based independent author or publisher, or would like to know more about IPNE, check out their website [here](https://www.ipne.org).

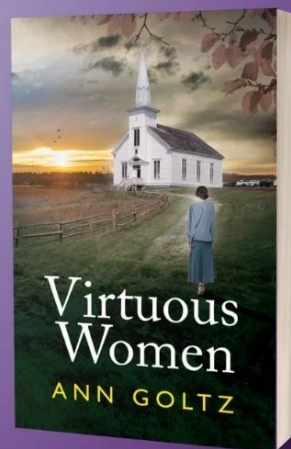
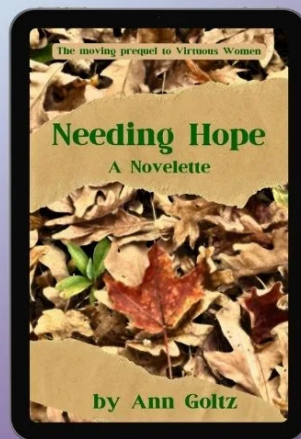


And because life wasn't interesting enough, we discovered in early May that the owners of the house we're renting are selling it so we can't renew our lease, which ends at the end of June. Fortunately we found another rental in the same town so my kids won't have to change high schools (again), but it means we've got to pack up everything (we might have a few books) and relocate, while my kids are taking their finals and I'm still recovering my strength and stamina.

More fun times.

But I'm grateful we found a house, and am looking forward to settling into the new place.

And I'm incredibly grateful to the employee at the local Barnes & Noble who, when she discovered my husband dumpster-diving for boxes in their recycling bin out back, responded by giving him a whole stack of boxes that hadn't hit the bin yet. Book boxes for the win!



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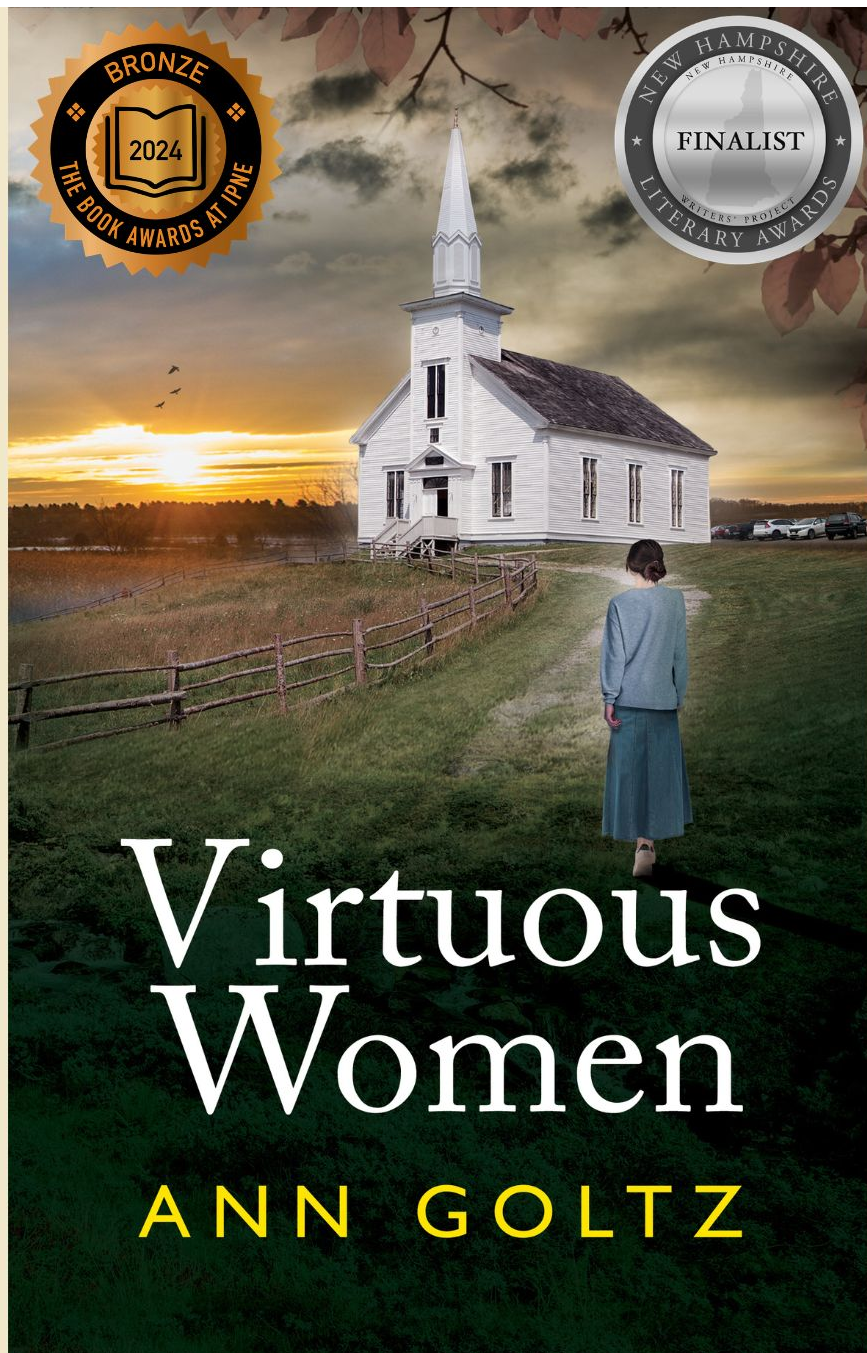
What I've Been Reading

During my recovery I've mostly been rereading *The Wheel of Time* series, since I've read it before (twice) and it doesn't require much mental energy. Right now I'm on *Crossroads of Twilight*, which is book 10 (or 11, if you count the prequel, which I do) in the series.

In my next newsletter I'll continue this section and update you on what I'm reading with some brief reviews, but I'm going to skip it this time.

Book Giveaway!

It's been a while since I gave away copies of *Virtuous Women*, so let's do it again! **Reply to this newsletter by July 10** with your first name and the state (or country) where you live, and tell me if you'd like an ebook or a paperback. I'll give away two of each. Good luck, and may the odds be ever in your favor!



Virtuous Women

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