

## As the Author Learns

Bits & bites about publishing & writing from

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### What's Happening?

What a difference a month or two makes, right? Who could have predicted we'd all be hunkered down in our homes, sweating a toilet paper shortage?

Well, I could, actually. As you well know, I've written a big series about a pandemic that swept through the world. The one I imagined was one hell of a lot worse than this one, so count your blessings, I guess.

Very little has actually changed for me, I confess. We used to go out for dinner now and again, but now we're ordering take-out rather than sitting down in a restaurant. And we used to get together now and then with friends, but we're doing that via video conferences now. I never particularly enjoyed retail shopping, so I don't miss that very much. And I used to telecommute full-time for ten years, so working from home is no big deal for me.

No, wait. I take that back. One big thing did change: I wash my hands a lot more now than I ever did before. 😊

I'm still doing work in my job as Master Gardener Coordinator. Our plant sale, which used to occur in one morning, is going to go online as a virtual sale. That means a HUGE amount of re-working, most of which I need to do up-front to get things ready. So for the next month, I will be busy-busy-busy with that, doing all the planning and set-up remotely via webcam and computer.

And let's not forget that we're coming into gardening season. We had our front garden terraced, so now I don't have to garden on a slope -- a much safer way to grow plants! I've mapped out two or three different designs for what I'd like to see there. Here's hoping the landscape nurseries will be opening soon so I can get there and pick out my plants.

On the writing front, I did edits on *Mazed*, which will be releasing this year sometime. I have the final galley to proof then it will be out of my hands. I haven't received the cover art yet and as we know, that can be a bit nerve-wracking. Fingers crossed!

I have my *Adventures in Retirement* series ready to go but I'm waiting to publish them. I plan to set up my own little publishing company and publish these under that imprint. There are a

variety of reasons why I want to do that, but it's something that I think I need to do because I have many self-published books. That means doing more research about setting up an LLC, getting it registered, and so on. With so many offices closed or on reduced hours, I decided to wait on that until everybody emerges from hibernation to do that. Once I have it set up, I'll release those books.

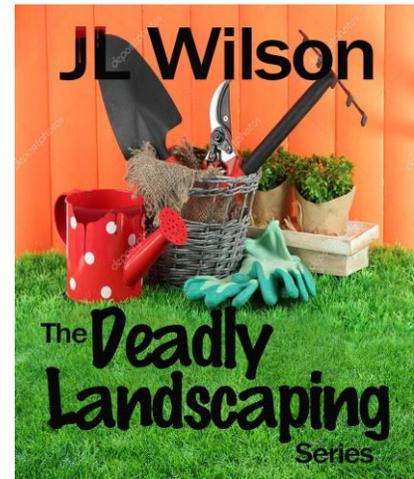
## In Other News

I also still need to figure out how to do a "boxed set" of books (group them all for special pricing). I hope to learn how to do that this spring because my publisher is going to re-release my Deadly Landscaping Series as a "box set" (all three books for one price) on May 1. That set will have a new cover and here's the first draft of that.

This won't actually be "boxed", it's just a way on Amazon and other retailers to group all three books together for one price. That's why I needed a new cover for it.

I'd like to transfer all my old self-published books to the new LLC publishing company. That would be for my History Patrol books, Adventures in Retirement, and the Dream Series. Once I learn how to do that, I'll get new covers for all the "sets" and release them anew.

Lots of stuff to learn but I hope to have time to do it once summer finally arrives and I'm done managing the plant sale for the Master Gardeners.



## What's Next?

I finished my review of the Endless American Dream Series and I was happy with it all. Hooray! I wasn't sure if it would all hang together as a 9-book series and I think it does. I did some editing then set that aside with a big sigh of relief.

Next I reviewed the final book in the series (that takes place 200 years in the future) and found things I want to change there. I wrote that book about 5 years ago, and haven't reviewed it since, so there's a lot of work to do.

And now I'm working on the book between the Big Series and that final book. I did a draft of that book at least 10 years ago and boy, is it a mess! It's almost more work to rewrite an old version than it is to write a new book. There's a lot of basic Writing Craft errors: shifts in point of view, too much description and "telling", some continuity problems (physical descriptions of characters varied from chapter to chapter).

It's going to take me spring and summer to get those final two books whipped into shape. Then I want to get covers for the entire series and start contemplating releasing it. Yes, you heard that right -- I hope to release the whole series next year.

The end is in sight!