



## Beyond the Ripples

by Dede Montgomery

ISBN 9781945805967

A multigenerational mystery set in the Pacific Northwest.

Months after spying a bottle wedged into a fallen cottonwood snag in the Columbia River, Ernest pulls it from the river. The bottle's note connects Ernest, an old man living in a tiny Oregon town, to teenage Annie, and provokes a mysterious and sudden friendship between Ernest's daughter Amelia with Sarah, the daughter of the most recent resident of the home Annie once occupied.

The two middle-aged women are keen to learn more about Annie and her secret, and in the process, they're forced to confront unfinished business with their mothers, intimate relationships, and regrets over life choices.

### From the author

In *Beyond the Ripples* I use my knowledge to build and enhance settings, feelings, moods and reactions. To me—a “non-classically” trained writer—it all goes back to “show don't tell.” We need our readers to experience our story through action, words, thoughts, senses, and feelings. I need my specific knowledge of the workplace to speak through my characters – not through my narration. Their hopes, dreams, worries and aches. The events that scared or changed or empowered them.

### Discussion Questions

1. Amelia and Sarah have very different personalities. Did you identify with one more than the other? Did your feelings about either of them change as the story progressed?
2. Amelia and Sarah also had different relationships with their mothers. What were the commonalities and differences between them?
3. Amelia expresses the thought that at least Sarah's mother is still alive, even with all the baggage in their relationship. How did that make you feel? Did your own relationship with a parent affect how you felt about either character?
4. Did you understand Sarah's unexplainable compulsion in connecting with Annie? Why or why not?
5. The author describes this work as an attempt to illustrate the power that she believes synchronicity plays in people's lives. Was it believable to you?
6. Of all the characters, who did you relate to the most or that was your favorite? Least favorite?
7. The author was hopeful that readers wouldn't read the letters at the end of the book until finishing the book. Did you? Did it change your enjoyment of the book?

### About the author

Dede Montgomery is a sixth generation Oregonian whose family ties have instilled in her a deep connection to the land. Dede was a 2019 Oregon State Capitol Foundation Speaker Series presenter, sharing her 2017 memoir *My Music Man* on Oregon's February 14 Birthday. During the day (except when she escapes to scribble new writing ideas), Dede works at Oregon Health & Science University. Dede lives with her husband in West Linn, Oregon where she never tires of exploring the banks and ripples of the Willamette River. Learn more at <https://dedemontgomery.com>