

Florence Wetzel Re-Releases Novel

By MARYLOU MORANO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — “Madeline: A Novel of Love, Buddhism, and Hoboken” by former Westfield resident Florence Wetzel, has been re-released.

Wetzel recently re-released the book, which was originally published in 2003, in both paper and e-book format.

It is the story of 27-year-old Madeline Boot, a writer who longs for spiritual centeredness after reading Thomas Merton.

When Madeline’s six-month, self-imposed spiritual retreat of juice fasts, meditation, and solitary living in a small Jersey shore community backfires, she returns to Hoboken and resumes living with her sister and brother-in-law.

On the rebound from her “religious phase,” Madeline reenters the world of temporary employment, up-and-coming rock stars, and the music scene that defined Hoboken in the late 1980s.

It is also a world of romance, sex, rejected manuscripts, and a healthy dose of Scrabble playing.

But mostly, “Madeline” is a story about love, and how it transforms us and helps us grow.

Inspired in part by Jane Austen’s “Emma,” “Madeline” gives its readers a refreshing new take on that age-old enigma: Why does love always seem to make an appearance in the most unexpected places?

Wetzel’s writing style is easy and conversational, her scenes realistic. She does more than bring the reader to her characters; she brings her characters to the reader.

One example of this is found in Chapter 5, “Blind Date.” As part of Madeline’s return, and her becoming “a woman, not a saint,” she ends up on a blind dinner date at Maxwell’s with

a man from Queens named Frank. Anyone who has ever been on a blind date can feel the pain, yet see the humor. It is like you are there, at the next table, overhearing their conversation.

At 473 pages, Wetzel’s book is a long one. But the story moves fast and the pages turn quickly.

The author’s knowledge of Hoboken, where she lived from 1986 to 1990, runs true.

“That was a very particular time in Hoboken’s history; the gentrification hadn’t taken over completely, and it was still possible for artists to live there,” explained Wetzel, who added that during this time period, Hoboken had a vibrant music scene as well as many art galleries. The Tibetan Buddhist influence that runs throughout “Madeline” is also the result of Wetzel’s own experience.

While she was writing the book, Wetzel was reading books and listening to tapes by the great Tibetan Buddhist nun Pema Chödrön. Wetzel was influenced by Chödrön’s ideas, especially those about how we guard our hearts, and how it’s often the painful things in our lives that open us up.

Ms. Wetzel is the author of “Perry Robinson: The Traveler,” a biography of jazz artist Perry Robinson, as well as the novels, “Mrs. Papadakis” and “Aspasia.”

Her most recently published novel, “Dashiki,” is a murder mystery that exposes a side of the jazz world rarely seen.

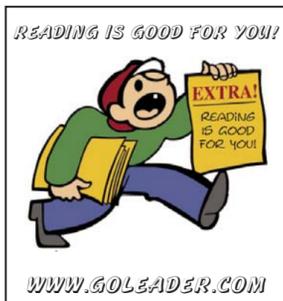
Wetzel also recently self-published a collection of poems, called “Elvis in the Morning: Poems and Tales.”

Both formats of “Madeline” are published by iUniverse and can be purchased by logging onto www.iuniverse.com.

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VENTURE ENTERPRISE...Qustir, a company conceived by Quinnipiac sophomore Thomas Nassr and seniors John Healy and Michael Nanna of Westfield, won \$5,000 for the Best Venture Enterprise. Pictured, left to right, are: Michael Nanna, John Healy and Thomas Nassr.



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FLAGLER COLLEGE

Adams Graduates From Flagler College

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. - Carolyn Adams, of Mountainside, graduated with a bachelor of arts degree from Flagler College. Adams was one of approximately 386 Flagler seniors at the spring commencement ceremony held April 21 at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre.



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Quinnipiac Students Claim Top Prize at Competition

HAMDEN, Conn. - For the second consecutive year, a company from the Media Innovation Collaborative (MIC Project) claimed Best Venture Enterprise in the Connecticut Collegiate Business Plan Competition at the New Haven Lawn Club on April 20.

Qustir, a company conceived by sophomore Thomas Nassr and seniors John Healy and Michael Nanna of Westfield, won \$5,000 for the Best Venture Enterprise, outlasting more than 50 companies in this spring's event sponsored by the Entrepreneurship Foundation.

Entries were from 11 different Connecticut colleges and universities. Qustir is a mobile application that allows consumers to earn discounts at stores through a personalized bar code, while also having the opportunity to share coupons of their favorite promotions to their friends. Companies advertise through Qustir because of the effectiveness, simplicity, and value as opposed to other media based advertisements. The company finished second in the Entrepreneurship Foundation's fall event this past November.

Qustir joins My Kiducation (Venture, 2011) as winners of this prestigious competition. Snippet, a digital visual portfolio that connects employers and would-be employees, received \$25,000 in seed money this winter through the TechStart Fund, rounding out three companies from the MIC Project which received funding to start media businesses. The

MIC Project was launched in Spring 2011 with students from the Schools of Business and Communications.

The class is an opportunity for students to establish interdisciplinary teams and create a sustainable and profitable media product, service or entity with innovative business models, content and design. This semester's MIC Project presentations will be held Thursday, May 3, from 6-8 p.m. in the Mancheski Executive Seminar Room. The class' finalists will present in front of a panel of judges for a \$2,000 prize. The event is open to the public.



Sullivan Inducted into Honor Society

HAMDEN, Conn. - Daniel Sullivan of Westfield, and a junior at Quinnipiac University, was inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma, the international business honor society for undergraduate and graduate programs that are accredited by the AACSB International on April 11.

To be eligible for induction, students must be ranked in the top 10 percent of their junior or senior class or the top 20 percent of their master's class. In addition, they must also maintain a grade point average that is above 3.75. This is the highest honor business students at Quinnipiac can earn.

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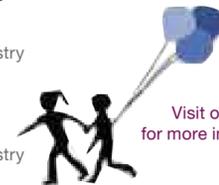
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Closed on Sunday beginning May 27. Closed May 28 for Memorial Day

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS (Check website for registration information)

5/1	7:00 pm	Gayle Lemmon: Dressmaker of Khair Khana (Town residents only)
5/3	10:00 am	E-reader workshop for Kindle users only (WML cardholders only)
5/4	1:30 pm	TGIF! River Cruises of Europe (video)
5/5	2:00 pm	Oboist Frederick Katzenberg & Lenny Leibowitz on keyboard
5/9	10:00 am	Computer class: Genealogical Resources Online (B'ginner-Int'rmed)
5/9	7:00 pm	The Asian Tea Experience with Judith Krall Russo
5/11	1:30 pm	TGIF! Mary Casatt, artist (video)
5/14	2 & 6:30 pm	Foreign Film: The Piano in a Factory (Chinese, 100 minutes)
5/17	10:00 am	E-reader workshop for nook & Sony users (WML cardholders only)
5/17	7:00 pm	Computer Class: Photo Editing with GIMP (advanced)
5/18	1:30 pm	TGIF! Classic Movie Week: "Blue Skies"

PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN (Check website for registration information)

5/2	10:00 am	Tots' Storytime (2½-3½ years)
5/3	10:00 am	Toddler Time (babies and toddlers up to age 3)
5/2 or 5/3	6:30 pm	Lego Club (grades 1-5) Call 789.4090 option 3 to register.
5/1 or 5/4	1:30 or 10:00	Preschool Storytime (3½ to 5 years)
5/4	3:45 pm	Magic Carpet - Listen to librarians read (elementary schoolers)
5/9	6:45 pm	Scavenger Hunt at the Library (grades 2-4)
5/12	10:30 am	Abbasubi: Songs and Activities in Spanish for preschoolers
5/13	1:30 & 2:30 pm	Origami (grades 4 and up) Basic: 1:30 pm Advanced: 2:30 pm
5/19	10:00 am	Grupo ñ: Spanish-Only Storytime (up to 6 yrs)