

Westfield Author Debuts Romantic First Novel Inspired By Her Dream

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Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD – There are many reasons why people turn to writing and become authors.

Take Westfield resident Lois Winston, for example.

The author of the recently released “Talk Gertie to Me,” was inspired to write by a dream she had while traveling on a business trip in the spring of 1995.

“It was such a vivid dream that continued for so many nights that I decided to get it down,” Mrs. Winston explains.

By the end of the summer she had produced a manuscript that was revised into her first book, “Loves, Lies & a Double Shot of Deception,” which will be released in June 2007.

Mrs. Winston calls her first effort “drivel,” and acknowledges that “Loves, Lies & a Double Shot of Deception” underwent huge transformations to bring it from the manuscript stage to publication. In the process, she learned about various writing techniques including point of view and setting a timeframe.

“Talk Gertie to Me,” Mrs. Winston’s first published work, was created at a time when “chick lit” - a type of writing featuring strong, unpredictable heroines and appealing more to women than to men - first became popular.

“Bridget Jones’s Diary” had just come out, and publishers were looking for something that could be considered ‘chick lit,’ yet was a little different,” explained the author. “I like writing outside the box. I enjoy a challenge.”

Mrs. Winston’s “Talk Gertie to Me,” written from two separate points of view, was exactly what her publisher was looking for. Billed as a contem-

porary romance, “Talk Gertie to Me” is, according to the book’s promoter, “part romantic comedy, part chick lit, and part hen lit.”

The novel is a comedic look at the life of Nora Stedworth, a sexy single woman enjoying the good life in Manhattan, whose life is disrupted by the unexpected arrival of her mother from her hometown of Ten Com-



Lois Winston

mandments, Iowa.

To deal with this unexpected crimp in her lifestyle, Nora turns to her imaginary childhood friend, Gertie.

Mrs. Winston, a Newark native who has lived in Westfield for the past eight years, holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design and Illustration from Tyler School of Art, a part of Temple University.

For several years, Mrs. Winston has worked in the consumer crafts industry as a designer of craft and needlework projects for both kit manufacturers and craft magazine and book publishers. Her knowledge of and involvement in the craft industry is used as a backdrop in “Talk Gertie to Me.”

Along with romance novels, Mrs. Winston also writes mysteries and novels that combine different genres. One of her yet to be published books is the first in a mystery series.

A dedicated writing contest entrant, she has placed as a finalist and won Romance Writers of America (RWA) chapter contests as well as the St. Martin’s Press Malice Domestic

contest for mysteries. In the last two years, she placed as a double finalist in RWA’s Golden Heart contest in both the Single Title Romance and Novel with Romantic Elements categories. It was winning the Dorchester Publishing’s American Title contest that led to her publishing contract for “Talk Gertie to Me.”

As a member of RWA, she conducts courses on writing contests for an online chapter of RWA called From the Heart Romance Writers.

She has also been a judge in more than 50 writing contests.

A member of several writers’ organizations, including the New Jersey Romance Writers, Valley Forge Romance Writers, Kiss of Death and Chick Lit Writers of the World, Mrs. Winston uses these groups to meet and network with other authors, and to gain additional information about the craft of writing.

She is the author of nine completed novels and she is at work on numbers 10 and 11. A few of these books are set in the town of Westfield.

Mrs. Winston’s books are available wherever books are sold. To read more about her, log on to her website: loiswinston.com.

