

Making dreams come true

Heather Chrudimsky
For the Times-Villager

Three years ago, if someone told Ginny Timmers that she would have a published book she would have laughed in their face. Timmers has always liked to write poems and short stories, but she never intended on writing a book.

She began writing the book while attending a week-long retreat in Wisconsin Dells.

"One morning I got up and took my pad, pen and a cup of coffee out on the porch," Timmers said. "I was going to write a poem. The first sentence in my book was actually the start of the poem. And then something just happened and instead of finishing the poem, I started to write a story. The book took off from there."

It took Timmers a little more than a year to write the book. But during that time, she was diagnosed with Graves' disease, which is an autoimmune disease where the immune system attacks certain tissues that causes overactivity of the thyroid gland, or hyperthyroidism.

She spent the next year dealing with the disease and getting back to her old self. She then picked up where she left off and started to write an ending to the book. Timmers had her sister-in-law in Colorado proofread her book.

"She read it with fresh eyes and offered me tons of much needed critiquing – both good and bad," Timmers said.

Timmers found out about Terri Langan, an English professor at Fox Valley Technical College who was suppose to be great at editing.

"Since then, Terri has become not only my mentor but a wonderful friend," Timmers said. "I would have never had a confidence to bring the book to fruition without her encouragement."

After she finished the book, Timmers began thinking of ways to get it published.

"I realized it could be years before I ever found a publisher who might like my book," Timmers said.

That is when Timmers decided to publish the book herself.

"I wanted to see my book in hardcover and on my coffee table," Timmers said. "I knew it would take a ton of hard work, but I was convinced that I could somehow sell enough to eventually break even. I had worked too hard to just let it all die or to wait for years and years before seeing it on my table."

Timmers contacted Jeff Eiden at Print Source in Appleton who helped make her dream of publishing her book a reality.

"Jeff and the people at Print Source have been so fantastic to work with," Timmers said. "They have gone out of their way to help me get my dream accomplished."

The book is set at a resort on a fictitious lake near Madison.

"I choice the name Sunrise Lake because the early morning sun has a lot of significance to Maddie, the main character in the book," Timmers said.

Timmers drove all over Wisconsin taking pictures of lakes looking for the perfect one for the book's cover.

"I was trying to find one with a sandy beach like the one in my story," Timmers said. "I finally found the scene I had envisioned at Lake Delton in Wisconsin Dells. Coincidentally, it is very close to where my book was started. The beach is actually a volleyball court and I had to lie on my stomach while taking the picture to make it look real."

The book is about a young girl, Maddie, who is abandoned by her parents and is raised by her grandmother, the proprietress of a resort. When she was nine years old, her parents wanted her back and for the next few years she was juggled back and forth between her grandmother's resort in the summer and her parent's home during the school year. Throughout the book, Maddie encounters many things along her journey and meet many people along the way. Eventually she meets two men under different scenarios and falls in love with both of them. The main plot of the story is about how Maddie deals with her life and all of its challenges she encounters along the way.

"I honestly have no idea how I came up with the focus of the book," Timmers said. "I just started to write and it all sort of unfolded before me. I had no idea what would happen until I wrote it. My characters entered the book in the same fashion. They just showed up on their own as I was writing."

"I loved writing the book because I never knew what was going to happen next," Timmers said. "It was as if I, too, was reading it for the first time. I was always wondering where Maddie's life would take her and I couldn't wait to get back to my writing so I could find out."

Timmers said the hardest part about writing the book was editing it over and over again, and making sure that all the facts and information are consistent throughout the book.

Timmers' book is available at a variety of businesses in the area including Jerry's Pages and Pipes in downtown Appleton, Pages and Pipes in Northland Mall, The Bookstore in Appleton, Hawaiian Tan Spa in Appleton, Memorial Florists in Appleton, Grace's Salon de Beaut in Appleton, the Cigo Gas Station on American Drive in Appleton and Heart of the Valley Community Blood Center in Little Chute. The book is also available at several bookstores and gift shops in Door County, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin Dells, Wautoma and Waupaca.

The book can also be purchase the book directly from Timmers herself. She can be reached at (920)886-8874. Timmers will even autograph them.

She is also working on getting the book onto more bookstore shelves throughout Wisconsin.

"It takes time, and because of my job and the rest of my life, I have very little time left over to do things as fast as I would like to see them get done," Timmers said.

Timmers has sold more than 300 copies of her book in just a little more than a month.

"I am getting more favorable responses than I had ever imagined possible from strangers as well as friends," she said. "I'm overwhelmed with the way this is all turning out."

Timmers said she plans on sending the book to publishers now that she has a hardcover copy of her own.

"I know it will take a ton of perseverance and a really thick skin when the rejections start to roll in, but I have all the confidence in the world that there is a publisher out there who will eventually publish my book."

Timmers is in the process of writing a second novel.

"I want to try out some different things, but I am not sure if I can pull it off or not," Timmers said. "I guess time will tell."

Timmers grew up in Appleton. She attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison, but dropped out in the first semester to get a job.

"I was floundering because I had no clear idea of what I wanted to do with my life," Timmers said. "My biggest regret in life is that I quit college and my second biggest regret is that I never went back and got a degree. I may still do that one of these days."

Timmers is a phlebotomist at the Community Blood Center in Little Chute. She has worked at the Blood Center for about two-and-a-half years.

"I always wanted to be a nurse or a teacher, but I also wanted to stay home and raise my children," Timmers said. "After my children grew up and left home, I decided it was time to do something for me."

Timmers went through six months of extensive training, but she said it was well worth it.

"I love my job," Timmers said. "It is so rewarding to work with the donors who come in and give of their time to donate blood and save lives. I am just the middle man who helps them do that and it is truly a wonderful feeling."

Timmers and her husband, Tom, have four children and one grandson scattered all over the country including North Carolina and Colorado.