

She turns romance writing into career

Judith Blackwell Myers has found romance. It all started a few years ago when a friend presented the then-aspiring writer with a gift: "Writing Romance for Love and Profit." Today, she does just that.

The 38-year-old former Livonian lives in Sacramento, Calif., with her husband and 3-year-old daughter and, writing as Julie Meyers, is becoming a highly popular romance novelist.

Myers had never seen any of her work published, although she had been writing since grade school. After reading the gift book thoroughly, she adapted a kind of "I Can Do That" attitude.

FIRST, SHE read all the best-selling romances of the time, going over each one ever so carefully, paying special attention to things like content, style, plot, length.

She sent away to various romance

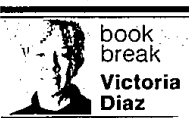
publishing houses for writers guidelines. She joined the Romance Writers of America (RWA) and met other writers, honed her writing skills, and learned more about marketing romance fiction.

An editor from Harlequin, one of the world's largest publishers of romance fiction, spoke to Myers' local chapter of RWA. Myers took copious notes and hung on every word.

THEN, SHE sat down and wrote the first three chapters of a teen romance she titled "Just Like Jessica." Shortly thereafter, she sent the chapters to Crosswinds, a division of Harlequin that specializes in Young Adult books.

All her homework apparently paid off. Crosswinds bought the book, on the strength of those first three chapters.

Since then, Myers has proposed four more books to Harlequin, and Harlequin has bought them all.



book break
Victoria Diaz

"Face to Face" was published in 1989 and "La la Cards" in 1990. "Comfort and Joy" and its sequel, "Body and Soul," will be out early next year.

Also since then, "Face to Face" was the Golden Heart Award from RWA for the Best Unpublished Book of 1987. After publication, the book was a finalist for the RWA's Golden Medallion Award for Best Short Contemporary Romance in 1989.

THOUGH MYERS declines to reveal her income as a romance writer ("that would be crass"), she does say

it's "comfortable."

"To be a successful romance writer, you need to know exactly what line you're writing toward, and what market you're writing for," she said. "You have to work with certain page limitations, certain levels of sensuality."

"Otherwise, you'll just shed a lot of blood, sweat and tears, and there'll be no (market) available for your work. Of course, if you're working purely as a hobbyist, and want to write a book that will just suit you..."

CLEARLY, MYERS is not into this writing business as "a hobbyist." It's obvious after talking with her for only a few minutes that she is not someone interested in writing for herself only, then relegating her words to the bottom of a desk drawer somewhere.

She can quote facts and figures related to the romance writing field as

handily as a seasoned economist can rattle off numbers and statistics.

And though she may deal in romantic fantasies when she's writing, she's certainly no dreamy-eyed type sitting around and hoping the muse will drop in and pay her a long, inspiring visit.

She writes five days a week without fail, turning out three to four pages a day, whether she feels "inspired" or not, and usually completing one chapter every week.

After a recent visit with friends and family in Livonia, she was back at work once again in her at-home office in Sacramento.

BOTH OF her forthcoming novels will feature the usual girl-meets-boy, girl-loses-boy, etc. plot line of romance fiction. But the stories will be played out against an unusual background.

"Harlequin puts out about 72 titles per month. And because they put out so many titles, they're always encouraging authors to come up with backgrounds and other things that are fresh and new."

Many years ago, she read about the Boston-based Helping Hands organization, which trains Capuchin monkeys to live with and assist people who are in wheelchairs. After looking into the subject a bit more, she decided to build her next romance novels around a fictionalized version of the group.

"I told Helping Hands about my project, and they've helped me to research extensively."

Trust Judith Blackwell Myers/Julie Meyers to do her homework.

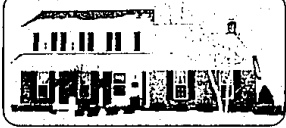
Victoria Diaz is a Livonia-based book reviewer.

The Prudential Great Lakes Realty

Presents...Fine Homes



EVERY DETAIL IS OF THE FINEST QUALITY! Newly constructed transitional home presents all the amenities for a lavish lifestyle. Offers 2 story entry and family room, pickled oak woodwork, 2 fireplaces, gourmet kitchen, formal living room, elegant master suite with jacuzzi, walk-out lower level and 3 car garage. \$339,500 626-9100 02-B-4924



RARE OPPORTUNITY! Outstanding Colonial is sure to go fast. Features expansive family room with gorgeous fireplace, 4 bedrooms, formal living and dining rooms, lush deck and 3 car garage. Custom deck overlooks panoramic parklike setting. Lovely! \$194,900 626-9100 02-B-5367



PACK YOUR BAGS AND MOVE RIGHT IN! Completely updated Farmington Hills Colonial is a great find. Boasts oak floors, white kitchen with 2 pantries, massive family room with fireplace and 2 down to a handsome deck, 4 bedrooms and new carpet. Offers spacious master suite with private bath! \$152,500 626-9100 02-B-5291



SUPERIOR LOCATION AND SETTING! Packed with updates and improvements this Contemporary has it all. Features heated Florida room, cathedral ceilings, generous living room with fireplace, 4 bedrooms and breakfast nook. Includes pool, central air and appliances. \$142,800 651-8100 02-B-5370



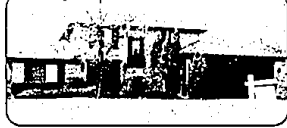
SOLITUDE! Total private rear yard separates this Condo from all others. Highlights cathedral ceiling great room, 2 bedrooms, full basement, 2 baths, dining room, and 2 car garage. Specialties include central air and security alarm. Contemporary floor! \$116,000 626-9100



START OUT RIGHT! Adorable Farmington Hills Bungalow offers so much for the price. Highlights bay window and fireplace in living room, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, delightful kitchen with breakfast nook and partially finished basement with den. Extra large 3 car cedar garage is perfect for the car buff! \$71,500 626-9100 02-B-5297



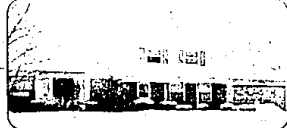
WOODED RAVINE AND BABBLING STREAM! A serene setting accompanies this well cared for home. Showcases 2 fireplaces, garden room, vaulted ceilings, lots of glass and skylights, deck and security system. Offers 4 bedrooms, oversized living room, 3 baths and much more! \$315,000 646-6000 01-A-5350



EXECUTIVE QUALITY BUILT FRENCH COLONIAL! Stunning home on professionally landscaped lot. Accents 1st floor master suite with Florida room, great room with fireplace, large island kitchen with unique large deck. Custom decor radiates throughout! \$178,900 626-9100 02-B-4326



MORE FOR YOUR \$\$\$! Quiet elegance describes this Farmington Hills Colonial. Features hardwood floors in living and dining rooms. Country kitchen opens to family room with built in fireplace, large library and 4 bedrooms all with ceiling fans. Private back yard! \$149,900 626-9100 02-B-5052



SURE TO GO FAST! Priced to sell Colonial is located in popular Kimberly Horn sub. Offers expansive family room with handsome fireplace, quiet library, formal living and dining rooms. 3 bedrooms and hardwood floors under most carpet. Sensational inground pool completes this package! \$129,500 651-8100 06-B-5356



WARM AND WELCOME! Freshly painted Ranch is located in Southfield. Features hardwood floors, 3 bedrooms, roomy family room, elegant living room, finished lower level with rec room and office, country kitchen and more! Sub offers swim club, park and tennis courts! \$84,900 626-9100 02-B-5119



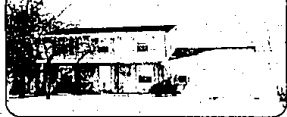
CAPTIVATING CONDO LIVING! Stunning Contemporary 1st floor Condo is filled with extras. Features great room with wet bar overlooks deck and courtyard, spacious bedroom and 1 1/2 baths. Offers lots of storage and private basement. Recently painted! \$59,900 651-8100 06-B-4166



CUSTOMIZED TRADITIONAL! Upgrades of this spectacular home include oak floors, Jenn-Aire kitchen, wood burning fireplace in family room, spacious master suite with fabulous bath, cedar deck and security system. From the pages of House Beautiful! \$259,500 651-8100 06-B-5302



FILLED WITH EXTRAS! Fantastic condo presents ceramic floor and kitchen with breakfast nook, cathedral ceilings, fireplace in family room, spacious master suite with fabulous bath, cedar deck and security system. From the pages of House Beautiful! \$259,500 651-8100 06-B-5302



A WINNER! Fantastic floor plan separates this Colonial from the others. Boasts year round Florida room, lovely fireplace in family room, 4 bedrooms, finished lower level with wet bar and 2nd kitchen, 2 1/2 baths, hardwood floors and master suite with walk in closet and private bath. \$249,900 626-9100



BIRMINGHAM! SCHOLAR! Contemporary decor comes with this fabulous home. Features large family room with natural fireplace, remodeled kitchen, formal living and dining room, 4 bedrooms and 2 1/2 baths. Beautifully landscaped lot with many flowers! \$153,000 669-8900 05-A-5385



PENTHOUSE LUXURY! Panoramic views come with this outstanding Condo. Boasts spacious living room with fireplace, chef's delight kitchen, track lighting, neutral decor, formal dining room, 2 master bedrooms and 2 baths. Complex offers pool, jacuzzi, tennis and clubhouse! \$84,900 626-9100



WHAT A DEAL! Lower level end unit Condo located in Farmington Hills is an outstanding value plus a whole lot more. Features open concept living room, expansive master suite with walk in closet and private bath, central air and delightful kitchen. \$56,900 626-9100 02-B-4793



ALL THE SPECIALTIES! Lavish custom Tudor is nestled in prestigious Shalimar sub of Farmington Hills. Accents crown moldings, oak floors, cathedral ceiling and fireplace in family room, bay windows, French doors to library and dining kitchen. Offers 4 bedrooms including elegant master suite. \$259,900 651-8100 06-B-5261



TOWNHOUSE LIVING! Spectacular Contemporary Condo is a former model. Highlights large ceramic floor, open layout with fireplace, dining room, library, 3 large bedrooms, spacious kitchen, full basement and 2 car garage. Beautifully landscaped! \$158,000 651-8100 06-B-4262



SERENITY! Country like setting enhances this spacious Colonial located in Farmington Hills. Features sensational Florida room, large country kitchen, 4 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, formal living, den, rec room and a walk out to a private lot and walk in closet. Offers cathedral ceiling, large lot and more. \$147,000 626-9100 02-B-5284



HOME SWEET HOME! Beautiful Ranch is located in desirable Country Club sub of Farmington Hills. Includes finished lower level, beamed cathedral ceiling in family room with natural fireplace and built ins, 3 bedrooms, remodeled kitchen, 2 baths and full basement. Many updates! \$179,900 626-9100



GREAT VALUE! Sure to go fast this Condo is close to everything. Comes with 2 bedrooms, requires no living room and great kitchen with extra cabinets, separate dining room and 2 baths. Includes central air, hardwood floor in kitchen, 1 bed room, 1 bath and dining room. Good investment! \$34,500 651-8100 06-B-4010



WHY RENT WHEN YOU CAN OWN THIS FANTASTIC CONDO! Close to everything this Condo offers natural brick throughout, spacious living room, hardwood floor in kitchen, 1 bed room, 1 bath and dining room. Good investment! \$34,500 651-8100 06-B-4010

The Prudential Great Lakes Realty



BIRMINGHAM/BLOOMFIELD
1520 N Woodward
(at Long Lake)
646-6000
ROCHESTER
1460 Walton Blvd.
(at Livonia)
651-8850

FRANKLIN/FARMINGTON
31000 Northwestern Hwy
(at 12 Mile)
626-9100
RELOCATION OFFICE
800-521-4264

WEST BLOOMFIELD
4316 Orchard Lake
(at Lone Pine)
851-8100
TROY
3150 Livonia
(at Big Beaver)
689-8900

OPEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9 a.m.-9 p.m. SATURDAY 9 a.m.-5 p.m. OPEN SUNDAYS

The Prudential and are service marks of The Prudential Insurance Company of America. An Independently Owned and Operated Member of the Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.