

PROGRESS COMMUNITY

Saturday, November 4, 2017

1D

Movin' & groovin'

Instructor takes special needs youngsters to next level on dance floor

By Mindy Ragan Wood
Staff Writer

Thanks to a local special education professional, students regardless of ability have access to dance lessons.

Yukon High School paraprofessional Kelli Smith has been teaching dance at Studio 5-6-7-8 to children she has worked with over the years in special education. She started the class four years ago as a social outlet and as a place to experience success outside the classroom. At the end of the year, her class performs in the studio recital.

Every Sunday afternoon, about 20 dance students practice their routines and have a lot of fun. Mother Connie Drummond said it means a lot to her 19-year-old daughter, Haley, to be



Volunteer Phoenix Garner, far left, works with dance students Brooke Hayes, Abby McClure, Braedon Brown, Haley Drummond, Kasi Richardson and Morgan Ramsdell. (Photo by Mindy Ragan Wood)

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Yukon author releases first book, hopes for series

By Mindy Ragan Wood
Staff Writer

A Yukon resident has released her first book, and she's hoping it will be the beginning of a series in the Christian fiction market.

Lisa Wessel's book, "Doubly Dead" (Bold Vision Books, 2017) is the story of an old family feud that comes back to haunt Sophie Cahill as she seeks to build a new career in her small Colorado hometown. As the activities director for the town's community center, she faces danger and sabotage as the century-old feud resurfaces.

The book has taken Wessel several years to write, as her journey to becoming an author was a winding one. Six years ago, it was a busy time for the single mother who juggled a home life and an elementary school teaching career.

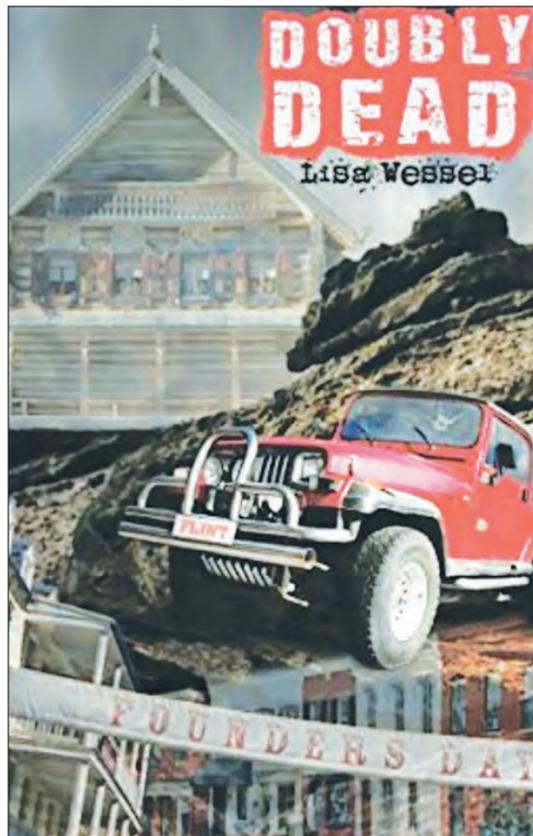
"On the weekends when I didn't have my children with me, I had a lot of free time. I didn't want to just sit in the house, so I would drive around and get these



Yukon author Lisa Wessel has released her first novel "Doubly Dead." (Photos provided)

scenes in my head. Every time I would go for a drive, I would rehash that scene and it would de-

velop a little more. After a while, I decided to put it together in a book," she said.



"Doubly Dead" focuses on an old family feud that haunts the main character Sophie Cahill.

Wessel said she has always been an avid reader. Her favorite authors include the classic Brit-

ish crime writers such as Agatha Christie, Dorothy Sayers, Patricia Wentworth and Ngaio Marsh.

Contemporary crime writers Wessel enjoys are Terri Blackstock, Rene Gutteridge, and Brandilyn Collins. It was Terri Blackstock's book that inspired her to write her own novels.

"When I was going through a difficult period in my life I was reading Blackstock. One of the characters was going through the issues I was, and the way the character dealt with it spoke to me so much that it really kind of turned my life around. It wasn't something I expected fiction to be able to do. I wanted to provide entertainment for the joy of reading, but write a book I would like to read. I also wanted to give back because of what Blackstock's book did for me. I decided to write a Christian novel and whatever happens after that is out of my hands, and God can do with whatever He wants with it."

Her book "Doubly Dead" required intensive research due to the fact

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