

PRESS RELEASE

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Rochester author captures hearts with holiday story and charitable giving

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — November 18, 2019 — A local fiction writer is celebrating the season of giving...twice. Clarissa J. Markiewicz, author of the new holiday novel *Christmas In Whimsy*, is donating 1 percent of sales to benefit worthy causes.

"People keep telling me, 'I loved the book and I'm buying a copy to give to my mother for Christmas,' or 'my sister,' or even 'my husband,'" said Markiewicz. "So while people are giving *Christmas In Whimsy* to their loved ones, I'll be giving a portion of sales to reputable, nonpartisan foundations."

Markiewicz has named her initiative the Holding the Door Open program, and she plans to maintain the program for future novels. How does it work? Purchases made one of three ways qualify for the program: paperback sales from the BookBaby.com store, ebook sales from Amazon, or sales made direct from the author at signing and reading events. Currently, the list of beneficiaries includes: the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation, Bivona Child Advocacy Center, Spondylitis Association of America, Downtown Women's Center and Housing Works, and Teach For America.

The story of *Christmas In Whimsy* fits right in with the spirit of the program, too. It's filled with the feel-good warmth of a holiday TV movie, but with "characters, both believable and relatable, (that) read as flesh-and-blood people," according to reader Marcia Sisson. The book also has a magical element enjoyed by sweet romance and fantasy readers alike. "A joy to read," said self-ascribed sci-fi/fantasy enthusiast Cassandra Moffitt. Readers have called *Christmas In Whimsy* "compelling," "engrossing," and "engaging and enjoyable." *Christmas In Whimsy* tells the story of three women, each struggling with love or career (or both), who call on a mystical spirit for guidance...but the clock's ticking, because when Christmas is over, any help the spirit can give will melt away.

And Markiewicz knows something about the snowy locale of the title town, Whimsy. "I've moved around a lot, but I'm originally from Buffalo, New York, so, oh yeah, I'm quite familiar with the setting," she said. Markiewicz's writing career officially began at fifteen, when she won grand prize in the Scholastic, Inc./Jackson Browne "Write Lyrics" contest. She went on to write for *The Buffalo News*, earned her B.A. in English from The Ohio State University, studied postgrad creative writing at Harvard, and worked as a literary editor for years before penning *Christmas In Whimsy*.

The ebook and paperback preorder of *Christmas In Whimsy* are available now at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and BookBaby, and at retailers everywhere December 2, 2019. For upcoming news and events, including readings and signings, and for more information about the Holding the Door Open program, visit www.clarissajeanne.com.

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