

New book has fun with stress, Scottsdale lifestyle

by **Dolores Tropiano** - Aug. 14, 2010 06:06 AM
Special for the Republic

Scottsdale isn't exactly the typical American city. Many of its residents enjoy an affluent lifestyle that includes private schools, posh homes and plenty of plastic surgery.

It's this sometimes-laughable lifestyle that convinced author Marcia Fine that the town was overflowing with fodder for her next book.

"I was at a luncheon, and a woman came up to me and said, 'Oh, I'm all stressed out,' Fine said. "I asked, 'What's the matter?' and she said, 'I got a massage, and they didn't have the right oil.' "

Fine put the "stressful" situation in its proper perspective for the massage victim. That crisis was the catalyst for her latest book "Stressed in Scottsdale," which uses [comedy](#) to capture life in one of the West's most wealthy towns.

"I started to laugh. In the scope of life, that's not so stressful. We (in Scottsdale) are 99.9 percent better off than most people in the world," she said. "I thought I have to write a book called 'Stressed in Scottsdale.' "

The award-winning book brings back Jean Rubin, the main character in an earlier Fine book called "Gossip.com."

Rubin is now older and sandwiched between her children, who are grown but not necessarily gone from home, and her mother, who needs a new place to live. Rubin is a multitasking mess whose stress seems to appear somewhere between her shoulders and her neck on a regular basis.

Fine fills the book with people and places familiar to Northeast Valley residents. There is an AJ's Fine Foods as well as artistically carved geckos on the freeway and those three-digit temperatures that make summer easily stretch through September.

Rubin struggles with her unemployed child, Michael, who is trying to save his son from suffering the debilitating pain of being the only child. Michael attempts to persuade his mother to lend him \$5,000 for a fertility vacation that includes a procreation special.

"It is the Caribbean version of Viagra he said.

Her daughter, a helicopter mom, is hovering so close to her children that the skids might get snarled in their hair. Her daughter leaves the darlings with Rubin one day with enough detailed directions to fill two single-spaced pages. Rubin discards the dissertation for her own brand of basic baby-sitting.

"In the past, we instructed our baby-sitters with 'there's Coke in the fridge, watch TV, and let them stay up as late as they want,' " Fine writes.

Then there's Maury, Rubin's husband, a retired doctor who makes regular raids on the kitchen at night, rampaging through the pantry like a pregnant woman in desperate pursuit of peanuts.

Thankfully, Rubin's two best friends, Glee and April, keep her sane and stable by intervening in her overscheduled life and scheduling a group spa day.

Fine does a fine job with the dialogue, particularly that of Rubin's Jewish mother.

Fine insists that Rubin is not modeled after her but rather a compilation of several people. The similarities are hard to miss though.

"Stressed in Scottsdale" has won several awards, including first place in the humor satire category from the Arizona Book Publishing Association and second place for women's fiction at the 2010 Living Now Book Awards.

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More on this topic

'Stressed in Scottsdale'

What: Author Marcia Fine will sign copies of her latest book.

When: 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sept. 25.

Where: Dog-Eared Pages Used Books, 16428 N. 32nd St.,

Phoenix.

Details: 602-283-5423, www.marciafine.com. Books are available at Dolce Boutique, 6107 N. Scottsdale Road, Suite 102, Scottsdale, as well as Borders and Amazon.com.

Read more: <http://www.azcentral.com/community/scottsdale/articles/2010/08/13/20100813stressed-in-scottsdale-book.html#ixzz0wnxpxMyb>