

# THE Suburban and Wayne Times

Thursday

April 10, 2008

For home delivery  
call 610-688-3000

WayneSuburban.com

Vol. 122 No. 47

The largest paid community newspaper serving the heart of Philadelphia's Main Line

50¢

8-A The Suburban and Wayne Times

Thursday, April 10, 2008

NEWS

## Sex sells — but can it smarten?

### Following one woman's quest to help adults increase their vocabularies

By Rachel Perry

Wordgasm isn't your average vocabulary-building tool, that's for sure. But Main Line resident and Wordgasm creator Renée Mazer is hardly average — in fact, she's downright anomalous (if you remember your vocabulary words). After all, anyone who comes up with the idea to design a risqué audio CD designed to help would-be vocab-learners commit new words to memory — and do most of the audio recording herself — would have to be, right?

Mazer, who grew up in Cherry Hill, N.J., and who moved to the Main Line after studying at the Wharton School and Penn Law, says that the CD probably isn't for those preparing for the SAT, but that it's a useful tool for GRE-studiers or adults who simply want to improve their word banks.

Yes, it is racy — and yes, you will likely blush — but Mazer says that

the songs, poems and stories on the CD incorporate both sexual references and humor to help listeners remember the new vocabulary they hear. And oh, will they remember.

Mazer, a mom of two and a former lawyer who previously put out another program called "Not So Scary Vocabulary!" (more geared toward teens, although it still includes a few risqué references), says that creating Wordgasm gave her a lot more leeway than her first project.

"It's more freeing to be able to go a little bit wilder, from a comedy perspective, in order to make people remember things," explains Mazer, who likens the content level of Wordgasm to that of an R-rated movie. "If you add sex to anything, people will pay attention to it. When you combine comedy with any kind of learning materials, it makes them easier to remember."

Mazer says that that particular technique also uses something called "chunking." How does it work? "When you take new information and connect it with information that's already in long-term memory, [the new information] goes directly to long-term memory," she explains.

So how did she get the idea to make vocab-building tools? Mazer says that it came about as the result of her tutoring experience. While she was practicing law, she picked up a little extra cash tutoring on the side, and one client, a high-school student prepping for the SAT, asked Mazer to "do my vocab spiel on a tape" so the student could study while she was away looking at colleges.

"I thought, 'Wouldn't it be great to just be able to hand [the recording] out to all my kids?'" Mazer says.

She looked at other test-prep products on the market and deemed them "awful," saying that parents were buying the books and CDs but the kids weren't using them.

"If you can solve a problem a

lot of people have, you've got a business," Mazer says.

Because Not Too Scary Vocabulary! was a big hit for her, she decided to take it a step farther with Wordgasm, and she says that it is "goofy" and "shocking sex comedy," but that "it's a fun thing for adults to listen to — you will get smarter."

The Wordgasm CD, which is the first in a series of 10 that will be released one at a time, is called "Jumping the Jock" and is just now starting to be made available to the public. It can be found on Mazer's Web site, wordgasm.net, and it will soon be available for download on iTunes.

Rachel Perry

Main Line resident Renée Mazer is the creator of the risqué vocab-building CD "Wordgasm." Mazer also produced a tamer vocabulary program called "Not Too Scary Vocabulary!" for which she said she got a great deal of fan mail.

