

LIVING

INSIDE TODAY'S SECTION:

- Dear Abby, D-3
- Dr. Gott, D-3
- Sunday Crossword, D-6

Gloucester County in all its rich textures

Cherry Hill native gives words sex appeal

By Kaelin O'Connell

kcoconnell@sjnewsco.com

An indigenous female is employing lascivious narratives to enhance the populace's vernacular.

Translation: A local woman is using sexy stories to pump up people's vocab.

Renee Mazer, a Cherry Hill native and bona fide wordsmith, has released the first CD of "Wordgasm," a vocabulary building tool that uses risqué stories and blush-worthy mnemonic devices to help listeners remember words' meanings. Mazer kicks off the CD with a true confession of her high school crush, describing the entire scenario (including a closet make-out session) in big words. The object of her affection is an Adonis, when he ignores Mazer she becomes lachrymose, and so on.

"The problem with getting anyone to learn vocabulary is people will think it's really boring and tedious. People want a good vocabulary, but they don't want to do the work to get there," said Mazer, who now lives on the Main Line in Pennsylvania. "But what if learning vocabulary was so much fun it didn't require the work?"

Mazer's target audience was anyone who wants a bet-



Renee Mazer has created 'Wordgasm,' a vocabulary builder.

ter vocabulary. She said some parents have given volume one of "Wordgasm," "Jumpin' the Jock" (featuring 120 words), to their kids for SAT preparation, but the material was not written to be kid-friendly.

"There were things I was embarrassed to say the first time I recorded, and by the end I had no problems," she said. "It's almost like a game. I'm always thinking, 'How can I sex this up?'"

Mazer is now so used to looking for a sexy angle, in fact, that when she wrote a speech for her son's Bar Mitzvah she found it "so hard

trying to write straight," she said. "That thing took me forever."

A mother of two who graduated from Wharton then from law school, Mazer has been a long-time tutor for the SAT and the LSAT tests. When a student asked her to record her lessons so she could study in the car, Mazer turned the idea into her first CD, "Not Too Scary Vocabulary," which uses songs to help students remember SAT words.

"I don't know if I (use big vocabulary words) more than the average person," she said. "But I do use my words unabashedly."

"Not Too Scary" came out in 2000, winning an award and gaining praise from customers, and its success convinced Mazer to take on another project. She began working on "Wordgasm" three years ago, using the profits from "Not Too Scary" for funding, and she finished the first CD this summer.

"Wordgasm" includes harder words than those on "Not Too Scary," and it educates adults both by introducing new words as well as explaining their origins. Just as importantly, Mazer said, it uses sexy and funny context to keep you hooked.

"It doesn't go much further than 'Sex and the City,' which has become so mainstream," she said. "Senior citizen women aren't huge fans, but men and younger people are loving it."

Barnes and Noble is set to start distributing "Wordgasm" soon, she said. And in the meantime, Mazer is finishing up the other CDs in the "Wordgasm" series (there will be 10 in all) and continuing to learn new words.

"Today I saw 'tumescant' and didn't know that one," she confessed.

For more information on "Wordgasm," visit www.wordgasm.net.