

# Prosecuter brings real-life flavor to new novel



Christine McGuire

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SANTA CRUZ — In the span of two weeks, attorney Christine McGuire deals with a murder trial, a serial rapist on the loose, tragedy at home and the rekindling of an old romance.

But this isn't real life — it's just the story in "Until Justice Is Done," a new book by McGuire, an assistant district attorney for Santa Cruz County who lives in Rio Del Mar.

"Unlike real life, you can make it come out the way you want it to," McGuire said yesterday as she prepared for a tour to promote the book.

The book, which describes the legal and personal adventures of prosecutor Kathryn Mackay, is a sequel to McGuire's "Until Proven Guilty," published three years ago.

McGuire's first book, published in 1988, was the non-fiction "Perfect Victim," describing her prosecution of a Red Bluff man who kidnapped a young woman and kept her locked in a box most of the time for seven years.

The success of that book — it went to No. 1 on the New York Times best seller list — prompted Simon and Schuster to ask her if she wanted to write fiction.

McGuire agreed, and she's already working on a third in the

series. McGuire sets her stories in the fictional coastal town of Santa Rita, and there are places that match real life — the district attorney's office is on the second floor of the county building, and there's an atrium between the county building and the courthouse.

When the first fiction book came out, some people McGuire knows thought they saw similarities between real people at the courthouse and the characters in the book.

"There truly aren't" any resemblances between real and

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fictional characters, McGuire said. "I was very careful not to."

While the crime and the characters are made up, McGuire said her descriptions of medical and legal procedures "are completely authentic. That's what sets it apart from most courtroom drama" books.

McGuire gets some help on the

book from her husband, Richard Standridge, a former policeman who is now an accountant.

"He's very involved," McGuire said. "He especially helps with the male characters, and he helped with the character of the perpetrator."

The time she spends on the book "takes the place of the hobby I probably don't have," McGuire said.

"Until Justice Is Done" went on sale this week, in paperback only. Published by Pocket Books, it sells for \$6.50.