

# Writer's love of wild horses spurs poetry, Web site, and now a novel

By **SALLY CAPONE**  
STAFF WRITER

**MADISON** – When Diane Tuorto of Locust Street was 12, she saw a television special about wild horses and how they are rounded up and sold.

It made such an impression on her that she began writing a novel about their lives as seen through the eyes of Cayuse, a young mustang.

Fourteen years later, that novel, "My Desert Sun," will be released through BookSurge Publishing in August, and little has changed about Tuorto's love of horses or the novel, whose opening paragraph has remained unaltered.

"I knew I had to do something, so I started writing immediately," Tuorto said. "To make matters worse, many mustangs continue to end up in slaughterhouses for human consumption in Europe and Asia.

"There's a big initiative to have horse slaughter banned," she said. "Why kill horses here to send them to Europe?"

"My Desert Sun" is set in the desert and mountains of the American Southwest, where Cayuse fights for survival and then freedom from the restraints imposed on him by man. Among the issues the story tackles are the plight of the diminishing herds of the American mustang, and animal abuse.

## Poetry Volume

While this is her first fiction release, it is not Tuorto's first publication. In March, she released her first poetry collection entitled, "Let the Horses Die: Poems of Longing, Love and Loss from 1997-2005." It is dedicated to a horse that Tuorto had owned and "other animals that have brought her joy."

"I miss my horse - but not the \$1,400 veterinarian bills," she noted.

Since the collection was self-published, as is "My Desert

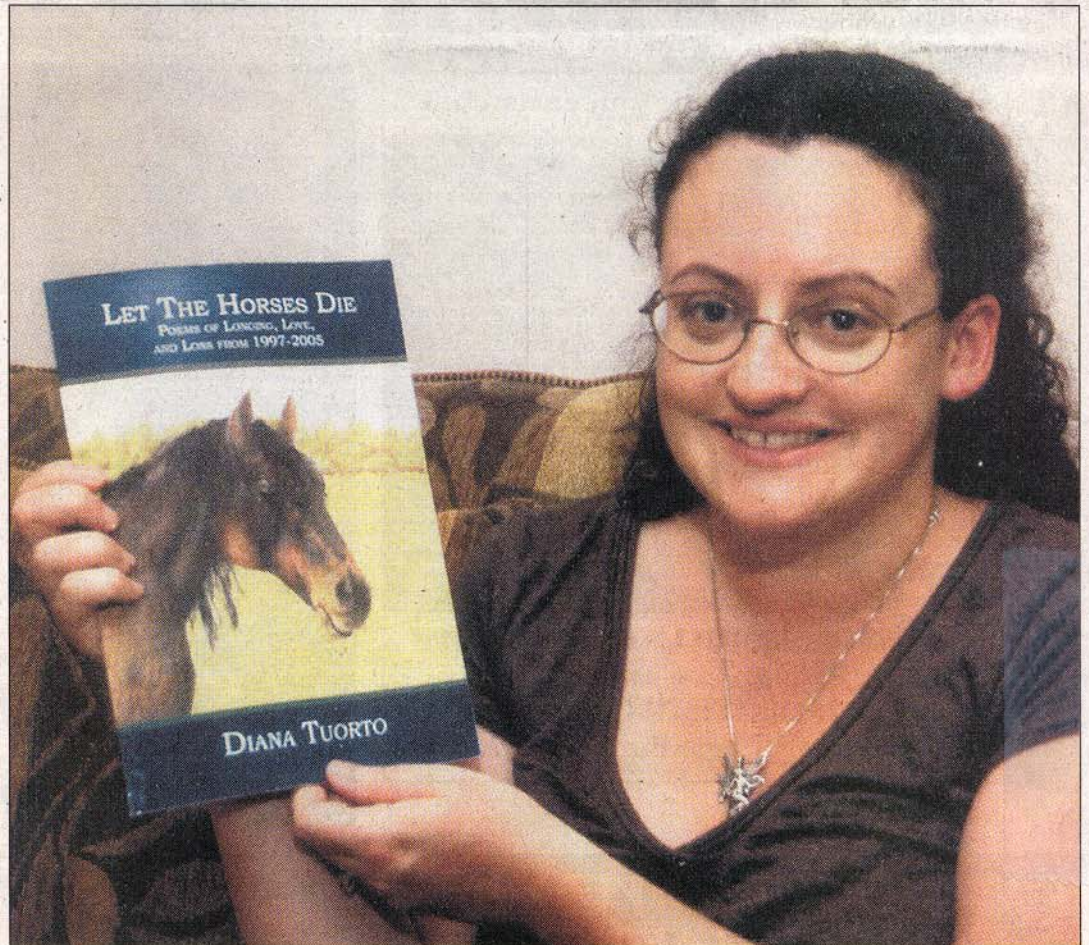


Photo by Judi Whiting

Diana Tuorto, 26, of Madison, is following up the March publication of her first poetry collection, "Let the Horses Die," with the August release of her first children's novel, a story told from the point of view of a wild horse.

Sun," Tuorto promoted the poetry book on her own, and has sold more than 400 copies to date. Poems from the collection have appeared in the magazines Mobius, Goldfinch and Open Stage Poetry Zine, she noted.

She also sells her works through marketing, at poetry readings and by word of mouth.

Born in Staten Island, N.Y., Tuorto grew up in Marlboro in Monmouth County, and has lived in Madison for one and one-half years. When not writing or advocating for horses, she works at Weichert Commercial Brokers in Morris Plains as an

executive assistant in marketing.

"What I like about Madison is that you can walk to so many things," she said, adding that since she took up residence in the borough, she has joined Women Who Write, a collective that meets at the Madison Community House on Cook Avenue.

Tuorto has been writing fiction and poetry since she was 10. She graduated from the University of Pittsburgh, Pa., with a degree in English writing and history in 2002.

"My Desert Sun" is appropriate for children 9 and older, and proceeds will be donated to Life-savers Wild Horse Rescue in Cal-

ifornia, Fair Dinkum Horse Rescue in Wyoming, and the Institute of Range and the American Mustang/Black Hills Sanctuary in South Dakota.

The book can also be ordered through several online retailers, including Amazon, and at a discount from lunar\_aradia@yahoo.com.

In 1998, Tuorto created Horse Welfare Organizations, an extensive Web site with links to horse rescue and welfare organizations in the U.S. and abroad. The Web site, <http://horsewelfare.8k.com>, is widely recognized as the largest online database of horse rescues worldwide.