

## LONGMEADOW

# Former Longmeadow author to read from latest romance

BY CHRISTINE WHITE

Special to The Republican

Author Gail Ward Olmsted has just released her fourth novel, a contemporary romance titled "Second Guessing," published by Roane Publishing.

The STCC professor and former Longmeadow resident will read from her new novel, and talk about her experiences with publishing, at Storrs Library, 693 Longmeadow St., on Feb. 28 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. All of her books will be available for sale. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Friends of Storrs Library.

"Second Guessing" is the story of 40-something, single mother Jill, who writes ballads for top performers, and Ben, a young boy-band singer aiming to strike out on a solo career. He hires Jill to write for him and the sparks fly. Olmsted said, "It's a sequel of sorts, following up on characters I first introduced in (her second book) 'Guessing at Normal.'"

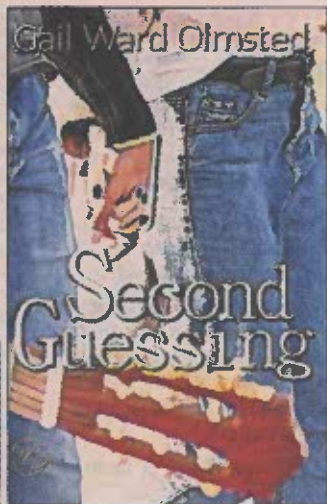
**"I never set out to write 'romance,' but at my core, I'm a romantic and I believe in second chances and the power of love to change your life."**

Gail Ward Olmsted

Olmsted came to writing late in her career. She toyed with the storyline for her first novel for years before getting serious about writing. "I never set out to write 'romance,'" she said, "but at my core, I'm a romantic and I believe in second chances and the power of love to change your life."

Things have taken off from there, and have moved pretty quickly, though the journey has not always been smooth.

She self-published her first novel in 2014 when, as she puts it, "I realized that there were no traditional publish-



Gail Ward Olmsted, a local romance author who just published her fourth novel, "Second Guessing," will read from her novel and host a discussion at Storrs Library on Feb. 28.

ers lining up to work with me."

She did find a publisher for her second book, and was about to sign with them for her third novel, when they announced they were going out of business. So she published all three of her books herself, and fortunately found Roane Publishing for

band, Deane, who she calls "the love of my life." She is the mother of two young adults.

Olmsted said her focus, when writing, is on character development. She lets the characters take the story wherever it needs to go. With her first book, for example, she said, "I wasn't certain how it would end until I was at least two thirds of the way through. (The main character) dictated her own future and I helped her get there."

She went on to say, "There's a hint of truth in all of the fiction I write. Although the main characters are entirely created from my imagination, many of the secondary characters are based on real people. Years ago, I worked at a motel while completing my bachelor's degree. One night, not-yet-famous musician Dan Fogelberg checked in. That experience led me to write 'Guessing at Normal.'"

To hear Olmsted read from the sequel to that book - titled "Second Guessing" - register online at [longmeadowlibrary.org](http://longmeadowlibrary.org) or by calling 413-565-4181, ext. 1620.

For more on Olmsted, visit her website, [gailolmsted.com](http://gailolmsted.com).

her fourth and latest book.

"This whole literary journey has been a wild ride ...," she said, "but I've enjoyed every minute of it."

Olmsted grew up in Connecticut but has lived in Massachusetts for 30 years. She worked in the telecommunications industry for a number of years before beginning her academic career, teaching marketing at Springfield Technical Community College, where she's been for the last 20 years. Formerly a resident of Longmeadow, she now lives in Charlton with her hus-