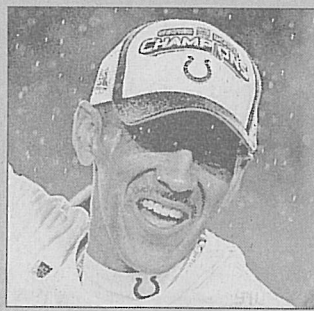


FICTION

- 1) **A Thousand Splendid Suns** 3 9  
Khaled Hosseini (*Riverhead, \$25.95*)
- 2) **The Quickie** 1 3  
James Patterson and Michael Ledwidge (*Little, Brown, \$27.99*)
- 3) **High Noon** 2 2  
Nora Roberts (*Putnam, \$26.95*)
- 4) **The Tin Roof Blowdown** — 1  
James Lee Burke (*Simon & Schuster, \$26*)
- 5) **Lean Mean Thirteen** 4 5  
Janet Evanovich (*St. Martin's, \$27.95*)
- 6) **Up Close and Dangerous** — 1  
Linda Howard (*Ballantine, \$25.95*)
- 7) **The First Commandment** — 1  
Brad Thor (*Atria, \$25.95*)
- 8) **Someone to Love** — 1  
Jude Deveraux (*Atria, \$25.95*)
- 9) **The Judas Strain** 5 3  
James Rollins (*Morrow, \$25.95*)
- 10) **Bungalow 2** 6 4  
Danielle Steel (*Delacorte, \$27*)



TONY DUNGY

In his memoir (written with Nathan Whitaker), the first African-American coach to lead an NFL team to Super Bowl victory reveals the secrets to his success.

NONFICTION

- 1) **The Secret** 1 29  
Rhonda Byrne (*Atria/Beyond Words, \$23.95*)
- 2) **The Dangerous Book for Boys** 2 12  
Conn & Hal Iggulden (*Collins, \$24.95*)
- 3) **Lone Survivor** 3 6  
Marcus Luttrell with Patrick Robinson (*Little, Brown, \$24.99*)
- 4) **Quiet Strength** 4 2  
Tony Dungy with Nathan Whitaker (*Tyndale, \$26.99*)
- 5) **The Weight Loss Cure "They" Don't Want You to Know About** 8 7  
Kevin Trudeau (*Alliance Publishing, \$24.95*)
- 6) **God is Not Great** 6 12  
Christopher Hitchens (*Twelve, \$24.99*)
- 7) **The Diana Chronicles** 5 6  
Tina Brown (*Doubleday, \$27.50*)
- 8) **A Long Way Gone** 11 23  
Ishmael Beah (*Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$22*)
- 9) **21 Pounds in 21 Days** 13 3  
Roni DeLuz with James Hester (*Collins, \$24.95*)
- 10) **The Assault on Reason** 7 8  
Al Gore (*Penguin Press, \$25.95*)

# DETOUR OVER, AUTHOR'S 'WISH' GRANTED



## CHICAGO LIT | City plays major role in bewitching first novel by airline pilot

BY ABIGAIL PICKUS

It's Chick Lit meets black magic. *Wish Club*, by Chicagoan Kim Strickland, is the story of five women whose book club takes a detour into the occult.

Set in Chicago, the longtime friends soon tire of discussing books and instead turn to making their dreams come true, one chant at a time. What starts innocently enough soon spirals out of control, giving new meaning to the adage: Be careful what you wish for.

For Strickland, seeing her novel in print is her own wish come true.

"Ever since I was a little kid I knew that I was supposed to be a writer," says Strickland, 43. "But I took this wacky 20-year detour as a pilot first."

Indeed, growing up in Logan Square and later in Wood Dale, she knew that being a writer wouldn't always pay the bills.

"I didn't have much growing up and I knew if I was a fiction writer I'd be a starving artist, and I didn't want that," she says.

So she started flight training in the early '80s and has been flying ever since. As a co-pilot for United Airlines, she often flies to Europe.

The flexibility of flying — she works three weeks on and one week off — gives her more time to spend with her husband and 10-year-old twin sons.

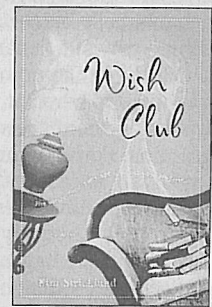
But writing has always been her first love. Beginning with her first novel, which she wrote at age 12, she has started and stopped a few books. The last straw came when she was typing away at a Lincoln Park cafe while her sons were in preschool.

"I was 100 pages into another novel when I got stuck," she says. "I closed my laptop in frustration and thought, 'Why can't I finish these novels?' I realized I wasn't interested in what I was writing."

That's when she hit upon the spark that became *Wish Club*.

"I realized I've always been fascinated by witchcraft, with the fact that there is more out there than we can see than with the naked eye."

Strickland then thought of her own book group, which has been meeting in different Chicago homes



FICTION

**WISH CLUB**

By Kim Strickland  
*Three Rivers Press, 336 pages, \$13.95 (paperback)*

for years, and thought: What if a book group started doing witchcraft?

She scribbled out the outline for the book.

Many drafts, revisions and rejection letters later, Three Rivers Press, a division of Random House, agreed to publish her novel.

Interestingly, except for a few obscure references to meteorological terms only a pilot would know, and some quips like, "She would be less than twenty minutes late — which, if you were an airline, was practically on time," flying is conspicuously absent from the novel.

"That was intentional," says Strickland. "I don't like to read books about flying and I didn't want my book to be about flying."

Instead, the story centers on five female friends in their 30s and 40s who have more earth-bound jobs. One is a teacher at an elite private school (eerily reminiscent of Francis Parker in Lincoln Park), another is a former ad executive-turned-homemaker, another is an artist.

Chicago itself plays a key role in the book. There are references to tony condos along Lake Shore Drive, bungalows in St. Ben's, and every journalist's favorite watering hole, the Billy Goat Tavern. There's even a chase scene at Montrose Harbor.

"Chicago is a beautiful city and I absolutely love it," Strickland says. "Even when I'm in Paris I miss the restaurants here."

Her next book is a work of historical fiction based on the 1915 Eastland tragedy, where more than 800 people died on the Chicago River.

*Abigail Pickus is a Chicago-based free-lance writer.*

"Ever since I was a little kid I knew that I was supposed to be a writer. But I took this wacky 20-year detour as a pilot first," says Chicago author Kim Strickland. | KEITH HALE-SUN-TIMES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12B

## ALVAREZ | Quinceanera's mass appeal is a strictly American phenomenon

"One of the things that I kept hearing is that this was an ancient

RESTAURANT OWNER OF HOW THE GUESTS FEEL ABOUT THE HOSTESS JULIA ALVAREZ

some sort of message that this is the beginning of them being sexual,

tion lavish affairs take away from real issues such as educational dis-

for marriage but that's not the reality here. They need to be prepared