

## **An Interview with Carol Mackela, author of Noon Skate and On Your Feet!**

Q: Your first book, *On Your Feet!* is about learning to dance in a dance studio. Is there any connection between that subject and your ice-dancing subject?

A: Yes. Many ice dancers take ballroom lessons to learn the character of the dance they are doing on the ice - foxtrot, waltz, tango, quickstep, etc. Ice dancing is ballroom dancing - on the ice.

Q: Your newest release, *Noon Skate*, is about ice dancing. You are a Gold Dance Medalist. How did you become interested in ice dancing?

A: Much like my character Monica Jones, I was taking basic ice skating lessons and stayed to watch an ice dance test session. That was the first time I had seen ice dancing. It looked like something I might enjoy. A few months later I found myself in Ann Arbor, Michigan where there was a large group of adult ice dancers and a coach who was teaching them. I started in group lessons and progressed to private lessons. The more I learned, the more fun it was!

Q: You are also a springboard diver. Are you considering yet a third book about that sport?

A: Not yet. I did include a masters diver in *Noon Skate* in one chapter, but I have no plans to write a whole book about the sport. Maybe in ten years.

Q: You are a retired government attorney. What inspired you to write?

A: I had always wanted to write a novel but did not have a plot. After I retired, I found a book by Chris Baty called "No Plot? No Problem! A Low Stress, High-Velocity Guide to Writing a Novel in 30 Days." The idea is to put your butt in the chair and write every day, striving for "exuberant imperfection." The goal is 1,667 words a day for 30 days, totaling 50,000 words. Baty says that no plot is necessary - just start writing! The first drafts of both of my books were written this way, the first over 30 days in May and June, 2007, and the second during National Novel Writing Month in November, 2016 (see [www.nanowrimo.org](http://www.nanowrimo.org)). I would never have even started if I hadn't found Baty's book.

Q: Do you also like to read and what genre do you enjoy the most?

A: I love to read -- romance, historical fiction, legal thrillers.

Q: How did you develop your characters, Monica Jones & Margie Wilson?

A: They just developed as I went along - they told me what they wanted to do!

Q: What other sports do you participate in or enjoy watching?

A: I enjoy watching tennis, gymnastics, and University of Michigan football and basketball.

Q: What is the difference between figure skating and ice dancing, and the levels of difficulty?

A: Ice dancing is one of three disciplines in figure skating, the other two being freestyle and moves in the field. Moves replaced the old school figures and teach all the basic turns and edges in figure skating. Freestyle includes jumps and spins, which are not done in dance. The United States Figure Skating Association governs the sport and has established the requirements for passing low through high level (gold) proficiency tests in each discipline (freestyle, dance, and moves in the field). A skater could achieve the gold level in just one

discipline, or do all three and become a triple gold medalist. Reaching the gold level in any of the disciplines represents many years of practice, ice time and lessons.

Q: Are there other genres you've considered writing in, such as Mystery, Historical Romance, etc.

A: Maybe a legal thriller, if I can think of a plot!

Q: What was your most rewarding experience and why?

A: In my 18-year career as a government civil rights attorney, I helped victims of job discrimination get some justice, like back pay and reinstatement (or instatement). Sometimes we were able to resolve situations over the phone and avert a situation that could have resulted in the loss of someone's job. This was rewarding because I knew I had helped someone!

Q: Do you offer signed copies of your books and if so, how can a fan obtain a copy?

A: I sign them if I am asked, but I'm not sure how to offer them online.

Q: Do you have any book signing events or other appearances scheduled?

A: Not yet - maybe at local skating competitions in the fall.

Q: What is your wish that your readers will take away from reading your books (or your reason for writing them)?

A: I hope that my readers will enjoy reading about an activity that they already enjoy (dancing, skating) or be inspired to learn a new sport or activity no matter what their age.

Q: What was the most difficult task in writing your books?

A: Coming up with names for all of the characters.

Q: Are there any other writers in your family history?

A: My parents were both great letter writers, but there are no published authors in my family.

Q: Is there anything else you would like your fans or potential readers to know about your books?

A: I hope they enjoy reading my books as much as I enjoyed writing them.



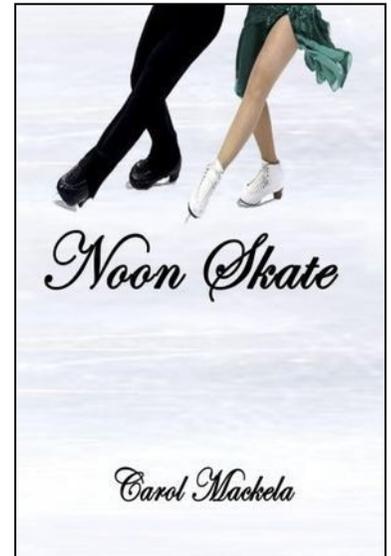
Carol Mackela is the author of *Noon Skate*, a novel about ice dancing. She is a gold dance medalist who enjoyed twenty years of ice dancing and is a competitive masters springboard diver. Her paternal grandparents, Finnish immigrants, settled in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, where her father was born. Carol grew up in Flint, Michigan and is a retired federal government attorney. She lives in Northern Virginia near her daughter and son-in-law and their lively Siberian husky. Carol's first novel *On Your Feet!* - a romance about ballroom dancing - received an Indie Excellence Award in 2009.

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Skaters Monica Jones and Brad Peltonen share a passion for ice dancing. From the moment Brad pulls Monica in for an unexpected but welcome kiss at the end of a skating session, she wonders whether they have enough in common for a relationship off the ice, and whether Brad really has eyes for another skater.

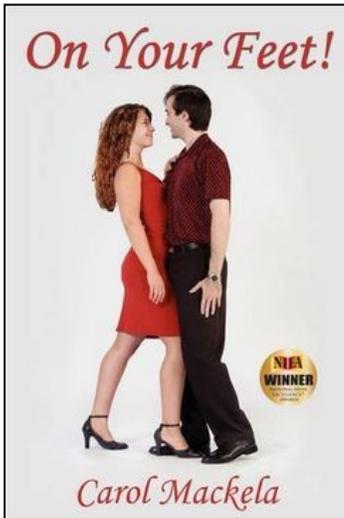
Monica, a single mom and paralegal in Center City, Michigan, has been working with a coach for six years through the test levels of ice dancing – bronze, pre-silver, silver, pre-gold – and is now skating at the gold level. If she passes the four gold dances at a test session, she will be declared a gold dance medalist, akin to a black belt in martial arts. Brad shares the same goal, practicing daily with Monica at noon skate.

When Monica loses almost everything except her life in a devastating apartment fire, she must postpone her upcoming ice dance test and come up with the funds for a new pair of very expensive skates. She must also deal with unsuccessful test sessions, Brad’s sudden illness and the loss of her job.



Available at Amazon & Kindle!

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Margie Wilson, an amateur ballroom dancer, moves back to her hometown in Michigan to care for her mother and begins teaching ballroom dancing at the Williams Dance Studio. She falls in love with one of her students, despite his being off-limits because of their student-teacher relationship.

Monica Jones, another dance instructor and single parent, struggles to support her young daughter while trying to re-establish a relationship with her parents. Tom Williams, the studio owner, fights to keep the studio afloat despite acts of nature, irresponsible employees and family surprises.

Find out if the Williams staff is successful in teaching their students to dance, and how much fun they have doing it!

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