

Local writer to hold book signing in Bossier City

Written by Sean Green

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Martha Holoubek Fitzgerald will sign her most recent book, "The Courtship of Two Doctors: A 1930s Love Story of Letters, Hope & Healing," at Books-A-Million on Airline Drive in Bossier City on Sunday, Feb. 3 from 2-4 p.m.

Before the era of emails and texts, Fitzgerald's medical student parents courted by pen and paper, sharing their passion for the healing profession. Alice Baker of New Orleans and Joe Holoubek of Omaha corresponded across 1,100 miles, and their fancy turned to deep respect and abiding love. The book, compiled from a private collection of nearly 800 letters, has been praised by the Library Journal (Oct. 15, 2012): "Other readers will fall under the spell of the music, automobiles, and social mores of the 1930s." Later known as Dr. Alice and Dr. Joe, a professional couple known for their unbreakable bond, the doctors Holoubek practiced internal medicine in Shreveport for more than forty years.

"The Courtship of Two Doctors" chronicles their early history, providing an inspiring look at the birth of a marriage and a lifetime of service.

The book recreates the medical era before antibiotics, when health workers were at risk of serious infection, and vividly illustrates the 1930s social barriers challenging women in medicine and two-career marriages. It relates the real-life romance that inspired Dr. Joe's 2004 novel "Letters to Luke," winner of the Writer's Digest Award for inspirational literature and the Independent Publisher Award for religious fiction.

"I hope to inspire new generations of servant healers, encourage young couples to cherish one another, and generate new interest in personal family history," said Fitzgerald. "With its blend of history and love story, this seems like a perfect Valentine's Day gift."

Proceeds from book sales benefit LSU School of Medicine in Shreveport, which Dr. Joe co-founded, a local marriage ministry, and other causes Fitzgerald shares with her parents. She has placed an annotated edition of the complete letters collection in medical archives in Louisiana, Nebraska and Minnesota.

Fitzgerald, an award-winning journalist of 27 years, served as a columnist and associate editorial page editor for the Shreveport Times. Now an independent editor, writer and publisher, she owns Martha Fitzgerald Consulting. Find out more at www.marthafitzgerald.com