

Travels introduced 'Eggplant' to hungry readers

Buffalo-born writer Alycia Ripley has been traveling around, talking up "Traveling With an Eggplant."

Ripley, 28, who currently lives in Clarence, published her debut novel independently last October and has since seen it gather steam. The book came out under the auspices of Trafford, an on-demand online publisher based in British Columbia.

"It's been doing fantastic," said Ripley, a graduate of Buffalo Seminary and Syracuse University.

Ripley unveiled the book last fall at the Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society in an event at which she was introduced by then-Mayor Anthony M. Masiello. Since then, she's done readings at Borders and the Clarence Center Coffee House, and she's traveled to Toronto, New York and Washington, among other places, for appearances related to the novel.

"Traveling" began with an incident that happened to Ripley at Syracuse University, she said. She met a strange man who carefully seat-belted an eggplant into the passenger seat of his car in order to transport it.

"That's what made me love this person, made me feel we were really kindred [spirits] — the care [with which] he had taken of this vegetable," said Ripley, who lived in New York City for five years and studied creative writing at New York University. "Traveling with an Eggplant" came to mean going through life . . . all the turns you make, the decisions you make."

Next up for Ripley is another novel, "Winterphoenix," a thriller which she said she also plans to publish through Trafford. Her



Alycia Ripley, on the road.

books are available through Amazon.com, at the Trafford Web site (www.Trafford.com) and by asking booksellers.

Also recently released by local writers:

- "The Stone House Diaries," an historical novel revolving around a house in Niagara Falls, by Robert C. Moore, a Falls native who now lives in Massachusetts, published by the Local History Co. in Pittsburgh.

- "Under a Friendship Moon," a first novel about a man, an orphaned dog and a waitress, by Hilton resident and retired teacher John Bullock, published through iUniverse.

- "Jadwiga's Crossing," a novel of emigrants from Poland to the United States and the difficulties they face, by father-son team Aloysius A. Lutz of Dunkirk and his son, Richard J. Lutz, published through iUniverse.

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