

Local Author On Another World

By Lauren R. Giannini

For *Middleburg Life*

Karen L. Myers, a photographer and IT systems management specialist based in Hume, draws heavily on Celtic lore to weave her first novel's plot of vengeance which has been brewing for centuries and comes to a head in *To Carry The Horn*. The setting is the Blue Ridge of Virginia and, as the title implies, the hunt plays a key role—albeit with a surreal twist.

George Talbot Traherne, whipper-in for Rowanton Hunt, ends up dazed in an unfamiliar meadow after a low branch knocks him off his horse, Mosby. None the worse for the cranial knock, he remounts and follows a couple of hounds—not Rowanton's, mind you—to a gruesome scene where their huntsman (not his) has just been viciously murdered.

In fact, George had discovered a “way” (portal) to a parallel otherworld, the realm of Annwn, ruled by Gwyn, where fae folk and magic abound, but cell phones, GPS and guns do not function. The sky is empty of planes and satellites, electricity doesn't exist, but they have indoor plumbing and disposable electric lighters and oil for their lamps, thanks to visits to “our” world.

George faces big decisions—return home or stay and

serve as huntsman for the great hunt in two weeks. What he does will impact both on his own life and on the fae. He learns he is related to Gwyn, the Prince of Annwn, and can't help getting involved with the ruler and his foster-children: Rhys, whose royal education includes whipping-in to slain huntsman Iolo, and Rhian, whose passion at 14 for hounds and hunting over-rides any other duty she might fulfill at court.

George manifests talents about which he had no clue in his own world. The Hounds of Annwn hark to him. He discerns “ways” that no one else can detect. His feet are rooted literally in both worlds. He will need all this and more to survive.

As Gwyn puts it: “The great hunt is the heart and purpose of Annwn. All the mighty families come to see the world's justice meted out.”

To Carry The Horn is an intriguing piece of fantasy that paints, through Myers' artistic eye, a vivid picture of a parallel otherworld where hounds and hunting are an integral part of daily life. A riveting read for anyone with ties to the chase, *To Carry The Horn* sets the scene for the next stand-alone entry in the extended series, *The Ways of Winter*. To tell the truth, we can't wait.

