

# Free Love a tale of addiction in Yk

Annelies Pool to hosts book launch for new novel this weekend

Northern News Services

After a decade of blending both her personal experiences and imagination into a gripping tale about addiction, author Annelies Pool is launching her first work of fiction this weekend.

The long-time Yellowknifer is hosting a book launch at Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre this Sunday afternoon, where she will talk about the fiction and read for the audience.



**ARTS  
News**

with Dana Bowen

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"I'm feeling pretty excited. It's been a really long road," said Pool. "It's great to see it in print and hold it in my hands."

Pool has seen her byline in print many times over the years, sometimes within the pages of *Yellowknifer*. In 2010, she published her first book, a compilation of her old newspaper articles about life as a Northerner, called *Iceberg Tea*.

However, *Free Love* is based on a more personal tale than the journalistic work she has done in the past.

The self-published book begins with 30-year-old Marissa who finds herself

shaking and distraught at the Yellowknife detox centre she was checked into. It then backtracks to Christmas Day just two months before, where the character is spending the holiday by herself, drowning her sorrows in bottles of cheap scotch.

Rather than focusing on the drama that often comes with addiction, *Free Love* targets Marissa's everyday battle to overcome her dependence on alcohol.

"This is a story about recovery. A lot of recovery books are really all about the drama and what happened before recovery," said Pool. "I think

what happens after addiction is pretty interesting too."

Pool said the storyline also draws on her own personal experiences but is a made-up tale.

"I'm walking a fine line because I'm a recovering person myself," she said. "I'm not interested in getting into my own story but I've always been interested and been aware of the (recovery) community in Yellowknife."

Alcoholism is not hard to come across living in the North, she said, adding that she believes nearly everyone living in Yellowknife has seen or been

affected by alcoholism.

"I wanted to write about the Yellowknife community and the huge amount of drinking in the North. A lot of people see the worst of it with people downtown," said Pool. "Everybody sees all that stuff

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Annelies Pool

but the recovery community is under the radar I think and that's the really interesting part of Yellowknife."

*Free Love* has been an ongoing project for the writer who has worked with several authors and editors

over the years including Fort Smith novelist Richard Van Camp and Susan Juby, author of *Alice, I Think* – a Canadian novel that spun off into a television show.

"Annelies did a beautiful job of depicting the experience of early recovery for her characters and her portraits of life and different communities in the North will keep readers entranced," wrote Juby in an e-mail. "The book is a profoundly hopeful read and it was a pleasure to see the novel develop."

As part of the NorthWords NWT mentorship program, Pool worked with Juby in

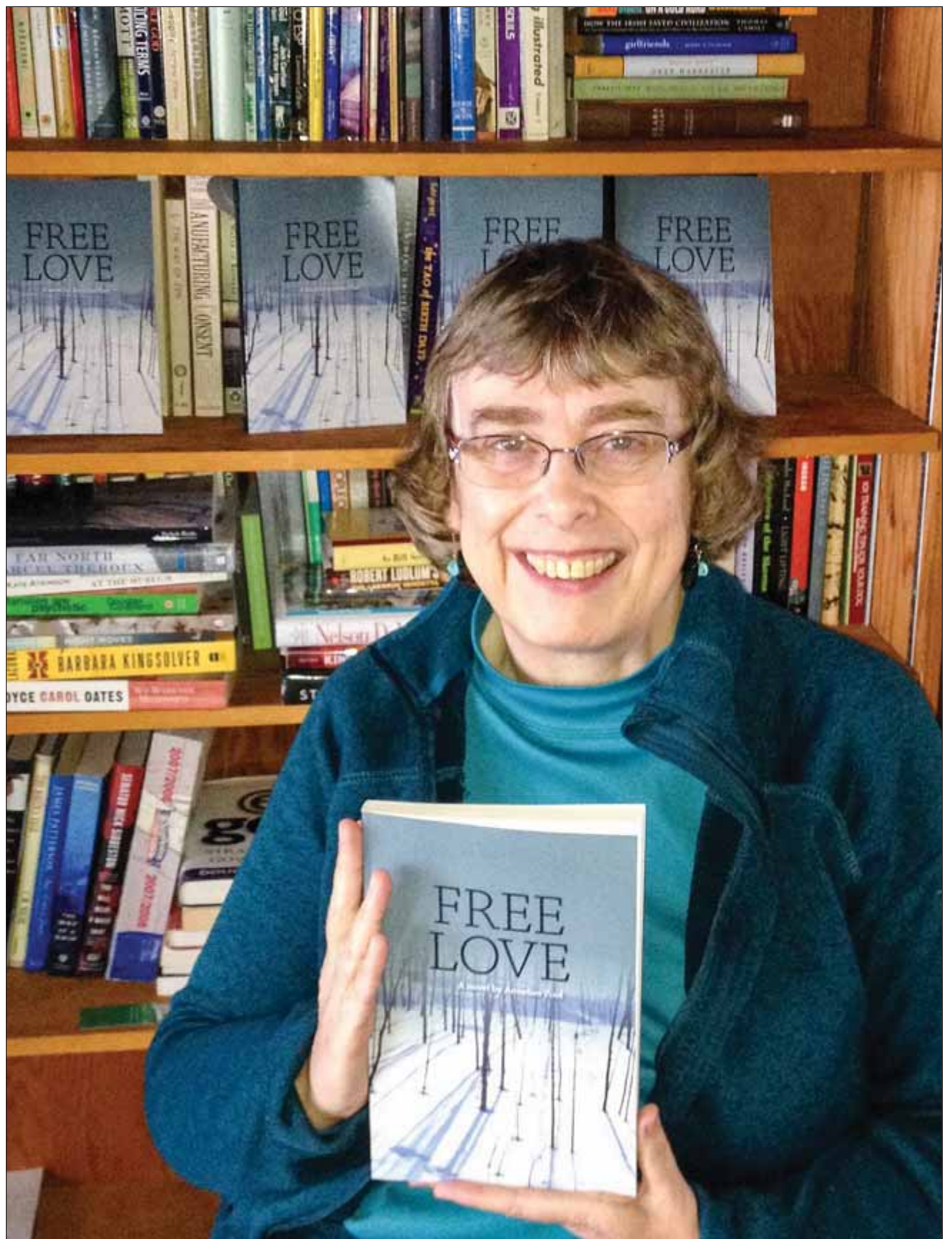


photo courtesy of Annelies Pool

**Annelies Pool is hosting a book launch** for her first work of fiction titled *Free Love* this Sunday, which follows a 30-year-old woman's journey through addictions recovery in the North.

the early writing stages of her book and received pointers from the author who has written her own memoir on addiction.

"I can't say how important NorthWords has been to me for hanging around with authors," said Pool. "One thing I've learned is they say it takes a

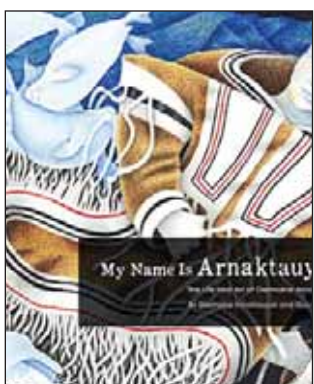
community to raise a child but it takes a community to write a book too in many ways."

When asked what the title of the book meant, Pool

replied, "Read the book. *Free Love* has many levels of meaning in the book and I think that's all I'm going to say about it."

## My Name is Arnaktauyok: The Life and Art of Germaine Arnaktauyok

by Germaine Arnaktauyok



*My Name is Arnaktauyok: The Life and Art of Germaine Arnaktauyok* by Germaine Arnaktauyok gives exactly what the subtitle promises. There are autobiographic bits, some discussion of her inspiration and creative process, and description of Inuit legends, all of which is interspersed with images of her artwork.

Arnaktauyok's sentences are mostly short and factual. It's hard to say why. One might be inclined to suggest that it's because English is not her first language. Still, she had been forced at residential school at a young age to learn English and I suspect her command of English would be more than sufficient to have spoken with more figurative flair and emotion. She does state at one point that she's shy and she also comes across as

### SPOTLIGHT on books

with John Mutford  
Yellowknife Public Library

quite pragmatic. Even as she describes how residential schools had eroded the bond between her and her parents, it's told with almost no editorializing.

However the artwork, painstakingly detailed and highly evocative, more than sufficiently balances out the text. Arnaktauyok herself says at one point, "when I do artwork, I put a lot of emo-

tion into." It shows.

The book as a whole then is more than a sum of its parts. It speaks as much about the power of art than it does of Arnaktauyok's own life. The beautifully intricate prints and sketches provide an almost cathartic release to her words. Truly a breathtaking book. *My Name is Arnaktauyok* is Ruth Bowen's pick for the upcoming Yellowknife Reads debates. Find out more about these debates, including the other panelists and their books by checking out the library's website: [www.yellowknife.ca/yp](http://www.yellowknife.ca/yp)