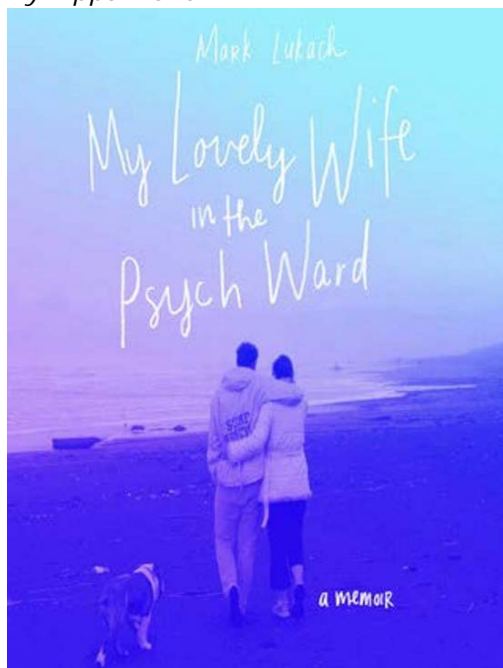


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Local author examines family's experience with mental illness

By Pippa Fisher



Lafayette Library and Learning Center is featuring Lafayette resident Mark Lukach for the May author talk. Lukach's internationally bestselling memoir "My Lovely Wife in the Psych Ward" seems particularly apt at this time - this May is the 70th year that Mental Health America has been observing Mental Health Month as a way to educate and increase public awareness.

Lukach's book chronicles the unexpected onset of a bipolar diagnosis for his wife, Giulia, her three hospitalizations with psychosis, her lengthy bouts with suicidal depression, and his attempts to support her as a caregiver.

The book starts with their love story - a seemingly perfect young romance, meeting in college, aged 18, marriage at 24 and their dream life in San Francisco.

Following his wife's diagnosis at age 27 and ongoing battle with mental illness, Lukach looks at the question, "How do we care for the people we love?"

In his book Lukach focuses on how mental illness is a shared experience. He has spoken about his family's experience at schools, hospitals, businesses and to mental health organizations across the country and has been interviewed on TV and radio.

The New York Times Book Review wrote that Lukach's "rare combination of tenderness and ruthlessness is what makes this book more interesting than your typical illness narrative."

Adult Services Librarian Chris Gray says this promises to be a touching and very relevant program.

Lukach is the ninth-grade dean and a history teacher at The Athenian School. He lives with his wife and their two sons in Lafayette.

The talk will be held at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 23 in the Don Tatzin Community Hall at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center.

Copies of "My Lovely Wife in the Psych Ward" will be available for purchase at the event, courtesy of Orinda Books.

To sign up, please go to <http://ccclib.evanced.info/signup/EventDetails?EventId=180935>

Reach the reporter at: pippa@lamorindaweekly.com

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