



NEWS

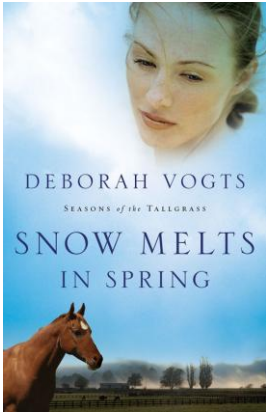
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Debut Novel Captures the Timeless Appeal of Modern Life on the Prairie 'Country at Heart' fiction tells contemporary love story set in the Flint Hills of Kansas

**"Deborah Vogts is a fresh new voice in fiction"
- Karen Kingsbury, America's No. 1 Novelist and Bestselling Author**

Grand Rapids, Mich., June 11, 2009 –Deborah Vogts is a fresh new voice in contemporary prairie romance. Her debut novel, *Snow Melts in Spring* (July, 2009), gives a modern-day look into a small area of Kansas and captures the timeless appeal of life on the prairie. The novel is the first installment to *The Seasons of the Tallgrass* series and features ordinary people who live and find love in the Flint Hills of Kansas – one of the last tallgrass prairie regions in the world.



This contemporary love story broadens the scope of romance novels to draw a compelling picture of regional beauty, personal conflict and ultimate forgiveness.

Mattie Evans loves her work as a veterinarian almost as much as she loves the Flint Hills of Kansas. And she has a special place in her heart for a gruff old rancher, John McCray, who has become a father figure to her. So when John's estranged son, Gil, returns with thoughts to sell the family land and move his father to California, Mattie is drawn into a family conflict so deep that healing seems unlikely.

As layers of secrets are peeled away and old guilt resurfaces, Mattie struggles to understand Gil's past and wonders how she fits into his future. Through the conflict, Mattie faces her own family's discord—complicated by a sister who has a few secrets of her own.

Deborah Vogts and her husband have three daughters and make their home in Southeast Kansas where they raise and train American Quarter Horses. As a student at Emporia State University studying English and journalism, Deborah developed a love for the Flint Hills that has never faded. In writing this series, she hopes to share her passion for one of the last tallgrass prairie regions in the world, showing that God's great beauty rests on the prairie and in the hearts of those who live there. For more information visit <http://www.deborahvogts.com>.

About *Snow Melts in Spring*

By Deborah Vogts
Zondervan
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About Zondervan

Zondervan is the world's leading Christian publisher of books whose authors are noted for their excellence in the craft of writing as well as their worthy contribution to the ongoing global evangelical conversation. The works published by Zondervan not only confirm readers' faith and understanding, they also challenge and stretch readers' thinking. For more than 75 years, Zondervan has delivered transformational Christian experiences through general, ministry, and academic resources by influential leaders and emerging voices, and been honored with more Christian Book Awards than any other publisher. Headquartered in Grand Rapids, Mich., Zondervan publishes bestselling [books](#), [audio](#), [video](#), [curriculum](#), [software](#), and [digital](#) products in such categories as biblical [languages](#) and [studies](#), [biography](#), [business](#), [contemporary issues](#), [counseling](#), [cultural](#), [devotional](#), [evangelism](#), [family](#), [fiction](#), [history](#), [inspiration](#), [leadership](#), [ministry](#), [pastoral](#), [personal development](#), [prayer](#), [philosophy](#), [reference](#), [relationships](#), [textbooks](#), [theology](#), [youth](#) and [more](#). Zondervan resources are sold worldwide through retail stores, online, and by Zondervan [ChurchSource](#), and are translated into nearly 200 languages in more than 60 countries. Visit Zondervan Books on the Internet at www.zondervan.com/books.

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About Deborah Vogts Author of *Snow Melts in Spring*



Deborah Vogts grew up on a farm in Southeast Kansas and began working on her first great American novel in high school. In college, she studied English literature and journalism, but it wasn't until a few years ago that she became serious about her writing. Deborah is a member of American Christian Fiction Writers and is co-chairman for a local writers group, Christian Writers Fellowship. She contributes to the CWF monthly newsletter and serves as their conference coordinator.

As a college student at Emporia State University, Deborah developed a love for the Kansas Flint Hills that has never faded. In writing the ***Seasons of the Tallgrass***, a contemporary romance series for Zondervan, she hopes to share her passion for one of the last tallgrass prairie regions in the world, showing that God's great beauty rests on the prairie and in the hearts of those who live there. The first book in the series, ***Snow Melts in Spring***, is set to release June 2009.

Deborah and her husband have three daughters and make their home in Southeast Kansas where they raise and train American Quarter Horses. To learn more about Deborah, please visit her web site at www.deborahvogts.com.

To schedule an interview with Deborah or for more information on *Snow Melts in Spring* contact Robin Geelhoed at 616.698.3345 or robin.geelhoed@zondervan.com

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Q&A with Deborah Vogts Author of *Snow Melts in Spring*

Q: Why did you set your debut novel in the tallgrass prairie of Kansas?

A: Years ago, I took a Flint Hills Folklife summer course at Emporia State University that was taught by Dr. Jim Hoy. Along with classroom study, we took field trips into the heart of the Flint Hills and visited with old-time ranchers, schoolmarms and post-mistresses. It was such a delightful experience, especially our drives into the pastures. We would get on these back roads and drive over pasture guards into the open range. We would travel for miles without seeing another car or even an electric line—just pure, native prairie. That summer, I fell in love with the Flint Hills and it has stayed with me all this time.

Q: What did you do to research for this novel?

A: I did lots of research on the Flint Hills and ranching. I also studied and visited various veterinarians and tagging behind a couple of them for an afternoon was fun. My male lead character, Gil, is a retiring professional quarterback, so learning more about football was essential. Having never cared much for the sport before this point, let's just say, I had a LOT of learning to do. I remember spending lots of time pouring over books about the game and watching hours of college and professional games on television. My daughters didn't necessarily care for my "newfound interest" in the sport, but my husband enjoyed it!

Q: You and your husband raise train American Quarter Horses. How as that affected your writing? Will all of your stories have horses in them?

A: A great deal of it, actually. I grew up on a farm and have lived most of my life in the country. Both of my brothers work farms/ranches, and my husband and daughters ride and train American Quarter Horses, so many of the ranch/horse scenes come from something I've seen or heard about. Like Mattie, my main female character, I love the country life and in particular, the Flint Hills. As a young woman, I remember living in Topeka, KS and yearning for wide open spaces. I soon found myself returning to my home roots. And yes, to answer your other question, all of the stories I've written so far (and have planned) have horses in them. To my way of thinking, ranching and horses go together and cannot be separated.

Q: What advice do you have for writers working on their first novel?

A: Don't give up. Keep dreaming, studying the craft, writing and reading. Stay tuned to what God wants for you and let scripture keep you afloat. Learn to depend on God for everything—every step of the journey. Just knowing that He is in charge and knows what is best for you, helps to alleviate the pressure of "getting published" so that you're able to ENJOY the journey AND life.

Q: What are you working on next?

A: I'm continuing on with the *Seasons of the Tallgrass* series. I'm waiting for edits of my second book, *Seeds of Summer* and have started working on the third book. I'm eager to view the cover for *Seeds of Summer*, a story about a former Miss Rodeo Kansas queen and her return to the Flint Hills to care for her deceased father's ranch and her two younger siblings.

To schedule an interview with Deborah or for more information on *Snow Melts in Spring* contact Robin Geelhoed at 616.698.3345 or robin.geelhoed@zondervan.com

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