

Community partnership produces children's book about Blue Ridge Bakery

By Kara Fohner

Copy Editor

Last spring, three-year-old Josie Mosser toddled into the Blue Ridge Bakery. "Miss Bakery Lady, I want a cutcake," she said, staring through the glass display at ornate rows of pastries.

Katina Henson, owner and manager of the bakery, relayed this story to Susan Farrar, who is a member of the organization for Transylvania County Retired School Personnel (TCRSP). Farrar, who had taught Josie's parents, Chris and Amanda Mosser in high school, had previously discussed writing a children's book with Molly Tartt, another former school teacher. Tartt and Farrar approached Elizabeth Fuller, who teaches Survey of Children's Literature at Brevard College, and asked her whether she would like to involve her six students. "There were all these connections in the community," said Fuller, "and I think that's what made the process run so smoothly."

Before writing a word, Fuller and her class trekked to the Bakery, which is located just beyond the Cardinal Drive-In on Broad Street. "Katina Hansen took us through the bakery

and told us all about the process of making the cupcakes," said Fuller.

During the tour, Hansen asked students to hold and feel the cupcakes. "They said that the cupcakes were heavy," said Fuller, "and Hansen explained that the weight is because the bakery uses all natural ingredients.

"I love my bakery and I love showing students of all kinds its inner workings," said Hansen. "I think the project was a great idea, a neat way to learn the ins and outs of writing a book from research to printing."

After the tour, Fuller's students needed to construct a narrative.

"I had a feeling from the beginning that it might be hard for them to get started," said Fuller.

"You have to be thinking about what kind of words and vocabulary would appeal to young children," she continued. "Alexis Brigman had a good feel for the style, and the class based the structure of the book off of her drafts."

Brigman, an Elementary Education major, had little previous experience with creative writing but enjoyed learning the process. "I was really surprised that Ms. Fuller liked my draft, but I've always been surrounded by kids, so I guess I learned to think like one," said Brigman. "The project was a lot of fun because it was so hands-on. We all had an idea of what

to write, but we all wrote our own drafts," she continued. "It was a fast process, but Ms. Fuller was amazing. She was always calm and collected, and I appreciated that."

After organizing the story page by page, Fuller accompanied Josie and her parents to the bakery, where they photographed the toddler learning about "cutcakes."

"If the setting and the background are familiar, it makes the story. The experiential learning made it a better book because it was an experience both the students and the child were familiar with," said Fuller. "Josie put on a show. She was smiling and she was happy, and that's how we got the rest of the pictures [for the book]."

After an extensive editing, revising, and publication process, "Miss Bakery Lady, I want a Cutcake" is now ready to print.

The book signing will be on Saturday, Oct 5 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Blue Ridge Bakery. The community partners, student authors, and graphic artists will be present. Proceeds will be donated to the college.

"I most enjoyed working with Dr. Burrows, and with all of the students and faculty at the college," concluded Fuller. "I like the collaborative approach to the work."

Who let the squirrels out?

By Amanda Higgins

Contributing Writer



The first time I set foot on the Brevard College campus, I was shocked to see two white squirrels playing. My mother and I were in awe. They were beautiful. As all mothers and daughters are bound to do, we began to debate over why they were white. I said that they were albino, while she said that it was just recessive genes. To settle the dispute, I fell upon my trusty friend Google.

Researching this fascinating animal was entertaining, and during my research I realized that many of the students on campus had never seen a white squirrel before coming here. I decided that I should share the amusing folktale, taken from the Transylvania Times, which explains why these creatures are in Brevard.

Brevard's white squirrels are said to have

originated from an animal truck that belonged to a carnival. Mrs. W.E. Mull stated that a Mr. Black gave her brother-in-law two white squirrels back in 1949. The carnival truck had overturned near Black's home and he caught the two squirrels when he noticed them playing in his pecan grove.

Having no use for the squirrels, Mull gave them to his niece, Barbara, who decided to try and breed them. When she married in 1951, she apparently left the squirrels behind. One of the squirrels eventually escaped and Mr. Mull let the other one go. Soon after, the squirrels began breeding in the wild and appeared all over town.

If this tale is to be believed, then these strange squirrels are the product of a crashed truck and a kind family rescued and eventually released them. I don't know about you, but I believe this tale is worth sharing to the students (and the tourists) who continue to admire these beautiful and beguiling creatures.

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