

“The Three Bears” O’Brien author offers JoCo version with sly tale featuring Goldilocks’ crime spree

By
Bob Rodriguez
IVN Contributing Writer

What happens when an intruder named Goldilocks gives the Three Bears a bad time, prompting calls by the bruins to a sheriff’s office that cannot respond because the request for help is “beyond available resources” (BAR)?

Why, of course the result is a book, “Goldilocks and the Three BARs,” by O’Brien resident Ryan Forsythe, using his own Left Fork Books as publisher with printing by CreateSpace, an Amazon company. He has combined Tales From the Rural Patrol in the “Illinois Valley News” with the fairy tale of “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” to write a tongue-in-cheek rendition of what happens when budget cuts force a reduction in officers.

As Forsythe writes in the opening pages, “Any similarity between characters and events depicted and actual people and events in Josephine County is purely intentional.” There also is a note, “Special thanks to Dan Mancuso and

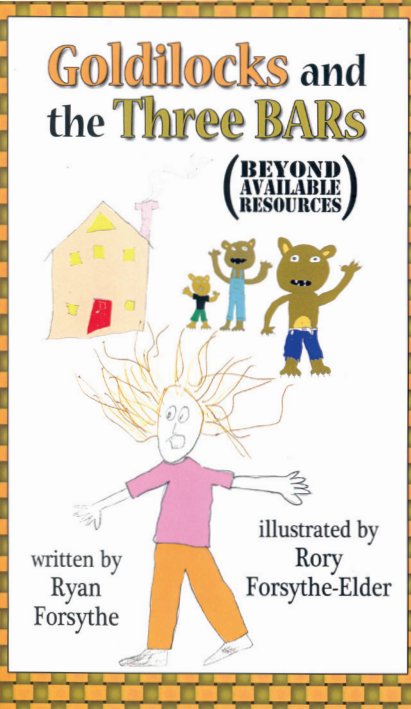
the ‘Illinois Valley News’ for use of the actual Rural Patrol files for designing this book’s final page.”

The soft-cover, black-and-white and bound book of some 34 pages overall features endearing, hand-drawn illustrations by Rory Forsythe-Elder, 9, son of the author and his wife, Kaci Elder. For his art work, Rory, his father relates, was given the choices of a percentage of sales income or 20 bucks outright. He took the cash.

Forsythe, who describes himself as “a writer, editor, teacher, artist and dad,” plans to debut the work with copies available for \$6 on Wednesday, Dec. 3 at the Cave Junction Library during a special event with seven other Valley artists. Refreshments of baked goods, coffee and tea will be provided. (See separate article elsewhere in this issue.)

He related that he mulled the tome since May 2013 when a woman was assaulted, but no deputies were available to respond. The call was BAR. “I read ‘Tales From the Rural Patrol’ each week,” he said, and gradually the idea jelled

for the Valley rendition and edition of “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” with a BAR touch. He originally thought about using “The Three Little Pigs” as the characters, but



eventually felt that the bears and Goldilocks would be best.

The author said that he has studied “writing for some time.” He

received a B.A. in English/creative writing from Ohio State University, an M.A. in teaching writing from Humboldt State University, and most recently, an M.F.A. in creative writing from San Diego State University. There he “also served as associate editor with ‘Fiction International,’ the literary journal of formal innovation and social activism.

“My writing is mostly focused on fiction – short stories and novels – though I also write travel stories, family history, personal essays, the occasional poem and children’s books for adults. In reading and writing, I am drawn to the offbeat and experimental in form and content. In fact, the subtitle of my first novel will tell you a little about my styles and interests. “Dick Cheney Saves Paris: A Personal and Political Madcap Sci-Fi Meta- Anti-Novel” was released by Love Earth Publications on Aug. 30, 2011, the same day as Cheney’s “In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir” (though I’d wager mine is a bit more fun to read).”

Among his writing efforts,

he is co-editor with Valley poet Michael Spring for the on-line quarterly, “Cobra Lily.” He and his family moved full time to O’Brien on July 4, 2003 soon after he received his San Diego State degree. They previously had resided in the Klamath, Calif. area. The author’s Website is ryanforsythe.com.

Besides striving to produce more volumes, Forsythe is interested in helping aspiring writers. A major goal is “to publish books of interest to people in the Valley area.” Thus, his notation in his latest writing is most appropriate, reading: “In this updated version of the Three Bears, Goldilocks comes to Josephine County, Oregon. But will anyone help when the Three Bears call their local Sheriff to report Goldilocks’ acts of trespassing, robbery and vandalism?” Read the book to find out!

(Editor’s Note: Bob Rodriguez and his wife, Jan, were co-publishers of the “Illinois Valley News” for nearly 25 years, and he continues to write “Tales From the Rural Patrol.” Also: This month they celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary).

Tuff truck patriarch remembered fondly

By
Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

Gerald “Jerry” Sommers was a beloved community leader, best known for his work with the I.V. Lions Club over the years, but he was also a loving father and grandfather and gave his time and resources to help others.

Sommers’ Oct. 11 celebration of life memorial was standing room only at the clubhouse as I.V. residents from all walks of life paid their respects.

Son-in-law Ken Swift, who bought Jerry’s Auto Repair & Towing when Jerry retired, reflected last week on Sommers’ legacy as a family man and business leader.

“He was a great father-in-law,” Swift said. “He volunteered as a wrestling coach for the I.V. Wrestling Club and was involved in every single thing the Lions Club did, including the scholarship program. He was also active with the Masons.”

“Years ago we used to do a go-cart grand prix up and down Watkins and around Jubilee Park for the Labor Day Festival,” Swift added.

“Jerry would do the layout, bring his own equipment and set up the logs. After go carts stopped being popular he came up with the idea for the Tuff Truck competition. He just did everything, even borrowed bleachers from the county fairgrounds and hauled them here and back.”

In discussing the recent Jerry Sommers Memorial Tuff Truck competition at the Josephine County Fairgrounds, fellow I.V. Lions member Steve Lyons said, “It went pretty good. We had a good field of 23 racers and there were about 300 to 400 in the crowd.”

Lyons feels confident that the event will take place again next year.

A+ Mini-Storage manager Lynn Nielsen agreed with that assessment.

“It went off like clockwork,” Nielsen said. “I think it went well and everybody had a good time. Since our Tuff Truck events here have been so successful, Mary Groves at the fairgrounds called Jerry, and made a proposal, and she’s invited us back.”

Following Sommer’s untimely death due to an accident at the end of September, all the stakeholders agreed to name the event in his

honor.

“Ronnie Fusion built the track at the fairgrounds and it was very professional,” Nielsen said. “The fairgrounds liked it so much, they’ll probably ask him to do it again. Instead of deep drop-offs for the jumps, he made the landing softer, so the drivers could catch the air and still land on a tabletop. It makes things safer.”

“We split the net to help support our glasses program and made about \$1,500 when all was said and done,” Nielsen added. “Jerry did a lot and gave a lot. It’s going to take a bunch of us to step up and fill his shoes.”

The annual Tuff Truck competition at the I.V. Lions Labor Day Festival has, of course, become a highlight of the entire event.

“That’s what rejuvenated our Labor Day Festival,” Nielsen said. “Tuff Trucks was his baby. Jerry spent his own money and a lot of hours getting the track ready every year. He didn’t take reimbursements. Jerry came up with the idea and he was the chairman and ran it to generate the money we need for our programs. I’ve been with it from the start, eight years now.”

Nielsen is proud of the annual competition’s safety record.

“We educate the drivers and make sure they all have window nets and roll-bars,” said Nielsen.

Then Nielsen rattled off some of the many projects the group manages each year.

“We’re one of the most active Lions Clubs,” Nielsen said. “We give five \$1,000 scholarships to graduating IVHS seniors, and \$2,000 to the Helen Keller Foundation. We provide wheelchairs, crutches, and canes to Valley residents who need them.”

Lyons elaborated on Sommers’ involvement with the club’s ongoing efforts.

“Jerry was always a good liaison to the I.V. wrestlers,” Lyons said. “We supported that club. And he was one of the Easter egg colorers, we put out 3,000 Easter eggs every year. Jerry never asked for reimbursement for fuel or time. He was always taking care of stuff and doing stuff. He was a great motorcycle ticket seller. We started the motorcycle raffle in 1996 and went to every fair and festival from Cottonwood, CA to Florence, OR to sell tickets.”

See Jerry on A-10



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