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Lawyer swings into writing

Children's book author is a big kid at heart.
Lifestyles, **A12**

Lawyer finds new career as successful children's book writer

BY KATHY RUSSO

Chalk it up to the luck of the Irish, but hard work and talent come in to play as well.

"Tim and Sally's Year in Poems" has recently been awarded a Moonbeam Award for Children's Poetry. The book was written by Grady Thrasher of Watkinsville and illustrated by Elaine Hearn Rabon, and its latest award celebrates "youthful curiosity, discovery and learning through books and reading."

The book is the third in an award-winning series.

"Tim and Sally's Vegetable Garden," the initial publication, won Georgia Author of the Year for Picture Books in 2008 "to my great surprise," said Thrasher. It also won the IPPY award, an independent publishers' award.



Grady Thrasher has a zip-line in the backyard of his Watkinsville farm. He said riding it is something that will improve your life. When questioning if it's in one's job description, he said, "It probably isn't, but it's in your life description." [Photo by Kathy Russo]

About his illustrator Thrasher said, "When I met Elaine she was just it. She just read my mind."

How does a retired securities attorney turn to writing award-winning children's books?

"I had a good career as a lawyer, but I was never really impressed with just being a lawyer," said Thrasher. "I would do this really dull and dense writing every day. Sometimes I would write light verse just for the fun of it."

"I can understand why he writes children's books," said his wife Kathy Prescott. "He's got a childlike approach and vision of the world. Everything is good luck. Everyday is a good day. He likes to have fun."

"He has an open heart and mind, and I don't know why it wouldn't slam shut after practicing law in Atlanta for 30 years," she continued.

"Somehow he's been able to keep that positive outlook. Yet he has a wry sense of humor that sort of takes the edge off all the sweetness."

Thrasher has close ties to the area.

"All my ancestors are from Watkinsville and Athens," he said. "I don't say this to brag. I'm just proud of the heritage. My great grandfather, B. E. Thrasher, was Oconee County's first judge in 1875."

Thrasher loves to talk about his father, who he said was "a character."

His dad was a pilot in World War II. After the war he built a platform atop a 1946 Ford and called it the world's smallest airport. He toured around the Southeast doing shows, landing a Piper Cup atop a moving car.

Thrasher is thrilled to be "living in

this glorious place in Watkinsville."

He recently built a barn workshop with generous areas for his four grandchildren, ages 3 to 9, to create art and to play. The solar powered barn sports a giant tube of a slide two stories high for kids of all ages to enjoy.

"I'm old-fashioned enough to believe that kids and their parents need to do things," he mused. "They need to do art, go outdoors, go to the beach and to the garden without always having to be in front of a computer."

Thrasher will be participating in Café au Libris this Friday from 7 to 9 at the Athens-Clarke County Library as a guest author at a book signing to benefit the library. Admission is free.

Call 706 613-3650 for further information.