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AUTHOR EDIE BATSTONE

Puddles of fun for readers of all ages!

For some people, retirement is an opportunity to slow down and maybe settle into a hobby. For Edie Batstone of Prescott however, she took retiring as a cue to re-invent herself and launch into a brand new creative career. She is now an author, an artist and very recently, has become something of an entertainer.

It all started with an evening course on creating picture books for children that was offered at an Ottawa High School. She was living in Osgoode at the time and it was a reasonable commute for this short course. She was curious about the possibility of combining her love of writing with her fondness for sketching. That course and the support of her writing group launched her into her foray as a writer of children's books.

She draws her inspiration from the children she sees around her, having raised three kids and now enjoying seven grandchildren. She describes her work as "a desire to preserve the little acts of wonder and kindness that I observed in children - to thank them for reminding us what joy and beauty surrounds us in little things." The puddle theme is about the ripple effect of the small and simple good deeds that come so naturally to children.

The books are entitled: How to Wash a Puddle (2010), How to Grow a Puddle (2011), and How to Stretch a Puddle (2012). She hopes to add at least two more puddle books to the series.

The books are currently available at Windmill Historic Site, located just east of Prescott, at the offices of the St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival on King Street in Prescott, at the Fort Wellington gift shop in Prescott, at Manotick Office Pro, and through her website at <http://www.ediebatstone.ca/>. A portion of the funds raised through sales of these books is donated to Ryan's Well Foundation, a Canadian charity (out of Kemptonville) that helps to provide access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene education in the developing nations.

In addition to writing the books, Batstone also did all of the illustrations. She is a talented artist who has also created a set of delightful greeting cards. They are sketches done with colored pencils, capturing winter scenes around the Osgoode-Manotick area, where she was living at the time, and two of Prescott area landmarks. She hopes to do a similar set of cards with summer scenes from around the Prescott area.

Batstone blogs regularly on her website, sharing her poetry and her gentle optimistic view of the world. As she puts it, "My 'mission statement' in all of my writing, both in my children's poetry and in the more mature poetry and blogging that I post on my website, is to lift the spirits of children of all ages and to instill hope; I believe that hope is the greatest gift that we can give to our children, and to each other."

Batstone has also discovered that she enjoys presenting her poetry as songs. She is beginning to experiment with public performances of her writings. Accompanied by her father's beloved guitar, she has done presentations at the Prescott Legion's Easter Fun Days, as well as entertaining at local schools and for seniors' groups. She hopes to create a CD of her songs at some point in the future.