

From the community: Children's book to assist nine area humane organizations

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Over 20 years ago artwork for a children's story, "Sammy Sparrow's First Flight" was born. I was on holiday break from college and sat on the floor in my bedroom using chalks to free images for the story that lived in my mind.

The images have been tucked away in a scrapbook album until now. "Sammy Sparrow's First Flight" (ages 2-8) was released Dec. 25, 2014 by Guardian Angel Publishing. It is my third children's book.

In conjunction with the book, I have created the Sammy Shelter Project to help NINE area humane organizations with the book sales. By ordering through the project website, \$2 from each book purchase will be donated to the organization chosen and noted on the form. Use this link to visit that page - tracyahrens.weebly.com/sammy-shelter-project.

Current humane organizations set to benefit from this project are: It's a Pittie Rescue (Peotone, Il.), New Beginnings for Cats (Bourbonnais, Il.), River Valley Animal Rescue (Mokenca, Il.), Cache Creek Animal Rescue (Anna and Joliet, Il.), Grassroots Animal Rescue (Medinah, Il.), Illinois Horse Rescue of Will County (Beecher, Il.), Iroquois County Animal Rescue (Iroquois, Il.), Kankakee County Humane Foundation (St. Anne, Il.) and Because Animals Really Kount (Kankakee, Il.).

In "Sammy Sparrow's First Flight," a young sparrow named Sammy quickly learns why parents set rules. He was told not to fly alone at night. His wings are weak and Sammy falls into a bush below. The world looks scary from the ground. A friendly owl flies Sammy back home to sleep under his parents' wings.

The story is based on my childhood years of rescuing baby sparrows that fell out of a multi-room birdhouse high up on a pole in a neighbor's backyard.

Initially I went to college to be a veterinarian and changed my major to English. I continue to help creatures with the written word, my art and volunteering for humane organizations. It's only fitting that I finally let Sammy fly with a mission to help area humane organizations I have grown to know and volunteer with.

You can also find information about the project on Facebook under Sammy Shelter Project.

To donate to a participating rescue organization, you must use the form available for download from the Sammy Shelter Project website.

Otherwise, "Sammy Sparrow's First Flight" can be ordered in eBook form (\$5) and print form (\$9.95 + \$5.95) through Guardian Angel Publishing, www.guardianangelpublishing.com. It can also be ordered in print form through a variety of other book order sites such as www.barnesandnoble.com and Amazon.com.

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