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Ruling the roost

Greenwood native publishes fifth children's book

By **RYAN TRARES** | DAILY JOURNAL
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No matter what, Rody the Rooster just wouldn't do what he was supposed to.

When Jude and his family buy a chicken and a rooster, they expect the end result will be plenty of fresh eggs in no time. Little did they know that Rody wouldn't make things that easy.

In the end, though, it's a surprise twist that changes the whole story for everyone.

"That big surprise helps Jude help people in need in his town," author Jodi Scheve said.

Scheve, a Greenwood native, tells this unusual story in her newest children's book, "Jude & Rody the Rooster." The story, which covers the trials of raising chickens combined with the importance of helping others, is her fifth book, further showcasing her ability to weave important childhood and life skills such as learning the alphabet, counting to 100 and recognizing shapes with quaint and quirky plots.

To create the book, she teamed up with her former classmate at Greenwood Community High School, Kristina Dougan, who illustrated it. The end result is a colorful and fun tale that builds on early childhood education as well.

"Every book has a teaching lesson in it," she said. "There's a lot of thought process that goes into the book, it's not just a story. I try to teach them a little bit too."

Scheve's entrance into children's book was born out of necessity. When her son Ritchie was 3 years old, she was searching for a good book that would teach him his ABCs.

But she couldn't find one that showed both uppercase and lowercase letters.

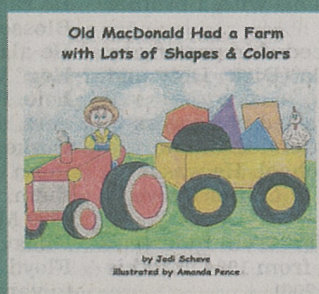
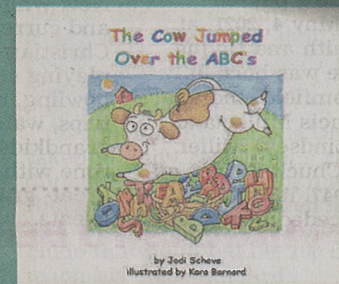
"So I decided, I'll just write my own book," she said.

The result was "The Cow Jumped Over the ABCs," which followed the adventures of a leaping cow while covering the different letters of the alphabet. That initial release was so enjoyable that Scheve went on to write three more.

"The Sand Crabs Journey Home" helps kids count to 100, illustrated by the exploits of a mob of crabs trying to get home to their parents. "Richie Saves Nashville" tells the story of a boy named Richie, who makes the biggest candle anyone has ever seen to save his hometown of Nashville.

"Old MacDonald Had a Farm with Lots of Shapes & Colors" touches on the basic shapes and colors, in addition to getting into more obscure ones such as a nonagon — a nine-sided polygon.

"Jude & Rody the Rooster" was another one that was inspired by the Scheve family. They raise chickens, so much of the misfortune experienced by the characters in the book



ROOST

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"Jude & Rody the Rooster" came out in mid-April and is available for purchase at Twisted Wick Candle Co., the shop that Scheve and her husband, Rich, own in Nashville. Her books can also be found on the Twisted Wick website, as can an online version.

Being able to offer the book for families, in addition to her previous releases, has been very fulfilling experience.

"When I wrote my first book, I didn't know if I'd write any others. But ideas keep popping in my head. And it's really satisfying when you get the book completed," Scheve said.

came from real-life happenings.

Frustrations and setbacks eventually lead to triumph in the end.

So Scheve had the story set, but was looking for an illustrator to bring the characters to life. She remembered Dougan was a talented artist when they were close friends in high school in the late 1990s. Getting in contact with her old friend, they discussed the project, which Dougan agreed to take on.

"I wanted the chickens and rooster to look really whimsical-looking, and she gave me a sketch of what she thought it'd look like," Scheve said. "It was just what I was looking for."

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Clockwise from top: Greenwood native Jodi Scheve holding her new children's book, "Jude & Rody the Rooster," which was also illustrated by fellow Greenwood native Kristina Dougan. // The cover of "The Cow Jumped Over the ABCs" by Greenwood native Jodi Scheve. // An illustration from "Jude & Rody the Rooster," a new children's book by Greenwood native Jodi Scheve and illustrated by fellow Greenwood native Kristina Dougan. // The cover of "Old MacDonald Had a Farm with Lots of Shapes & Colors" by Greenwood native Jodi Scheve. // The cover of "The Sand Crabs Journey Home" by Greenwood native Jodi Scheve. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

'Synchronic' may be the best sci-fi movie of the past year