

# The Arts

## Inside the creative life of Hayley Vande Berg

Hayley Vande Berg moved with her family to Belleville when she was only three years old. It wasn't long before she was devouring an eclectic assortment of books, and filling notebook after notebook with her own stories.

**First, tell us a bit about yourself. How did you end up living in Belleville? Did you always love books, and did you always want to write and illustrate them?**

**Vande Berg:** My family moved to Belleville when I was three, and it's the only home that I've really known so far. I've always appreciated the beauty of this small town, from its parks and trails, to the small businesses and local events. One of my favorites growing up and to this day is the UFO Day parade, which I have invited my friends from Madison and Sun Prairie to every year. I draw a lot of inspiration in the illustrations I do from local scenery.

Growing up, I got my book-loving nature from my Dad, and both of my parents encouraged me when I started writing stories. I have notebooks full of them. I ended up publishing my first completed story through Amazon Self-Publishing when I was 13. I would not consider it my best work now, but I look back on it fondly.

Along with being a reader, I have always wanted to be an artist. Back when I was in

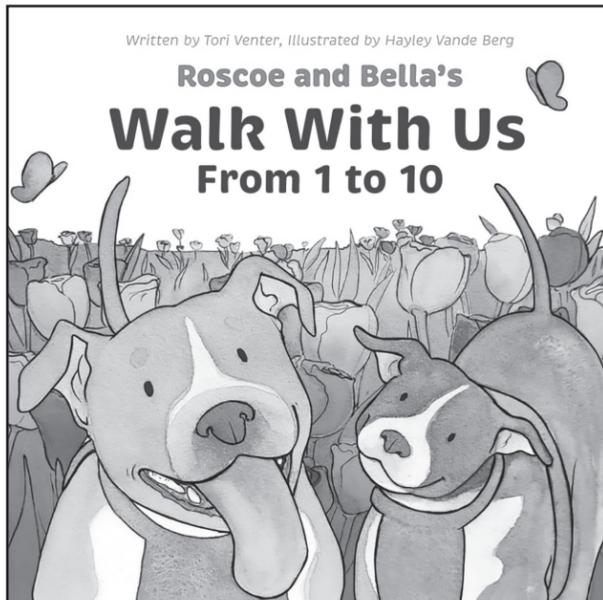
daycare, I got in trouble for drawing on the walls (which I still claim innocence to), but no one knew that 12 years later, I would be asked to paint a mural in the science hallway at Belleville High School. That's when my dream began to make my artwork public, too.

I have filled 40 sketchbooks cover to cover at this point in my artistic career, with doodles from class, studies on anatomy, visually journaling my travels, and making the illustrations that fill the books that are now published. I hope that in my small way, I can impact the lives and imagination of little kids, like me, who love to read.

**Tell us about your favorite children's book(s) when you were young:**

**Vande Berg:** When I was young, I'd have to say that my favorite books were from Dr. Seuss. "The Sneeches", "Yurtle the Turtle", and "Fox in Sox" in particular, but also "The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs", and when I was a little older, the "Frog and Toad" series. I loved that these books told a story with a rhythmic quality. They didn't talk down to readers, and I think that that was the part that kept me reading and re-reading. (I also loved the unique styles of the illustrations.)

Another story that stuck with me, though not published when I was a child, was a story that my mom wrote called "The Loyal



Dog Jes". She wrote it initially as a lesson in the youth ministry for the church we were attending at the time. Little did either of us know at the time that it would be published 15 years later.

**What is your creative process like?**

**Vande Berg:** Everything good starts with an adventure! In our newest book, Roscoe and Bella's "Walk with Us, from 1 to 10", my co-author Tori and I wanted to tell a story along with the lesson of counting. In the book, they are on a walk with their family as they encounter the world around them. We both thought that it was a great illustration of how kids see the world. When everything is new, everything is of note! The dogs found two sticks, they stopped and smelled 6 flowers, they saw 7 walkers in the park, and more!

Once I have a story to work from, I lay out what each spread of the book is going to look like. A great tip that I learned an illustration class in college is that if there is movement, always have the characters moving from the left side of the page to the right because it leads the eye to turn the page. I have worked with a couple of authors now, and it is a very collaborative process. Usually at this point, I send my sketches to the author to confirm.

After that, I make the illustrations (my favorite part).

Then I scan the drawings, or take a picture, and format them on a digital page with the text of the book. Once I hear back from the author that it looks good, we send it through Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing (or KDP) and self-publish. From there it's live on Amazon.com, and we are able to order cop-

ies. It is always SO exciting to hold a copy of a book I illustrated for the first time. Polished, and ready for the world to see.

**Tell us a bit more about your books, specifically:**

I have worked with a few authors, and everyone is different.

The Roscoe and Bella books are a part of a new series I'm co-authoring with my best friend Tori about her two pit bulls: Roscoe and Bella. This series is meant to follow the adventures of the pups and their new baby brother as they begin to discover the world around them. This series includes lessons in letters, the adventure of a walk around the neighborhood counting from 1 to 10, and we hope and plan to make more stories about adventures to the farm, to the city, making new friends, etc. You can see more content from the real Roscoe and Bella on their instagram @puppack2

For the Loyal Dog Jes, it's the story about two curious pups: Evy and Ada as they discover the wide world beyond their Master's garden after the white farm cat Lucy opened the gate. With the help of the shepherd dog Jes, will they be able to find their way back? This (as mentioned before) was a story that my mom, Noel, wrote and was initially a lesson in the youth ministry

for the church we were attending at the time to illustrate the story of the fall and return to grace.

The two books that I worked on with Glen Henning were more simple, but still very fun to be a part of. "The Bug Book" goes through different bugs and what they look like. Reminiscent of "1 fish 2 fish, red fish, blue fish" by Dr. Seuss. And "Rumble Rumble Roar Roar" is the story of a little boy who can't tell if the rumblings outside his front door are a coming thunderstorm, or a dinosaur!

**Where can people find your books?**

**Vande Berg:** All of my published works are on Amazon! I'm hoping to get them into small businesses locally soon, but they are all online at the moment.

**Anything else you want to add?**

**Vande Berg:** If anyone is looking to work with me on a book, or a standalone illustration (I do commission work, too) my website is callmehayley123.com. Callmehayley123 is my calling card for email and all my social media (so I'm easier to find) I have also been known to teach small illustration workshops, though so far only for small independent parties.

## Green County Sheriff's Office

**April 15, 2025**

ATV/UTV Crash-Personal Injury: At 11:14 a.m., Deputies responded to a UTV crash at 101 Old Highway Road, in the Village of Browntown. The investigation revealed the crash happened in the W8100 block of the Tri County Trail, in the Town of Cadiz. A UTV operated by Dennis M. Obrien, 78, Waterford, WI, was westbound on the trail when he lost control of the UTV and struck a tree. Obrien reported a possible injury, was

not wearing a helmet, but was wearing a seatbelt. The UTV sustained disabling damage and was removed by another party.

**April 19, 2025**

Bail Jumping: At 8:41 a.m., Deputies responded to a disturbance in the 200 block of South Church Street, in the Town of Cadiz. Investigation resulted in Matthew A. Fisher, 43, Browntown, being arrested for Bail Jumping and Disorderly Conduct. Fisher was incarcerated pending the

posting of bond or an initial court appearance.

Pursuant to the directive of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, and found in the Supreme Court rule 20:3.6,

*Trial Publicity, you are advised that a charge is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.*

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