

The everything seed — a story of beginnings



THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

"It existed before the sun, the moon, and the planets. It gave rise to all of these. And all things in the universe, from the smallest child to the greatest galaxy, carry a little bit of that very first seed inside them."

My mother-in-law, Judith Ball (deacon at the St. Paul's Anglican Church in Mansonville), when asked for her Christmas wish list this year, said that she would like a book; "The Everything Seed." I ordered said book for her as a gift through a private seller at Amazon.ca.

As fate would have it, for one reason or another, I made contact via e-mail with the seller, Joy Troyer, who resides in California. Joy is actually the illustrator of the book. Joy asked me whom I had ordered the book for and I explained about my mother-in-law's gift request and the work she does volunteering with the Missisquoi North youth programs in Mansonville where, as a community rep on the Former Youth Involvement (FYI) committee she offers support to the Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) program for youth ages 11-17. Judy has been working with the groups



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for a few years now.

Joy Troyer a self-taught batik artist who completed her graduate studies in Theology and the Arts at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, was interested in hearing more about the youth programs in Potton. This found us exchanging more information and then Joy offered a wonderful gift.

After sending the copy of the book I had ordered as a gift for Judy to me, Joy then proceeded to send enough copies of the book for Judy to share with each youth in both FYI and SADD; for free! She then informed me that after "googling" Potton, she had determined that the author of the "Everything Seed," actually resided a little over 65 kilometres from Mansonville in a town called, North Hat-

ley, Quebec!

It's a small world where amazing things happen. Immediately upon receiving the gift at Christmas, as soon as the holidays were over, Judy made contact with the book's author; Carole Martignacco, a poet, potter, teacher, and grandmother who is also an ordained minister serving the Unitarian Universalist Church in North Hatley as well as the First Universalist Parish of Derby Line in northern Vermont.

On Saturday, January 12, Carole made a trip to Mansonville to join the SADD and FYI group who were holding their annual holiday brunch at the youth centre. As Judy's guest, Carole warmly, with an instant magical connection, greeted the youth. She then read them the book

and later signed each a gifted copy with a personal message to the 24 youth in attendance.

The book is a wonderful journey to the beginning of the universe, a beginning that is still with us, still unfolding. The illustrations taken from wall-sized works of art created by the talented Joy Troyer (visit her website at www.dyeingarts.com) are vibrant and beautiful. Carole Martignacco is a spirit full of love, acceptance and openness. She read her own words to the youth with such passion that not a sound could be heard as each page was turned.

As the time with Carole came to an end, one of the FYI members, Julia Eldridge said:

"Judy, we thank you for bringing the knowledge of our groups and what we do to others and for making things like today's special visit from Carole, happen. It means a lot to all of us."

As for Carole...she was hugged, and thanked and hugged some more! As she left, she was already working with Judy as the two began making plans for Carole's next visit. Like the "everything seed," the moment brought with it ways and joys that are yet to be known but that were always meant to be.

No doubt, as Joy Troyer sits in California reading about this visit she will surely smile to herself knowing that thousands of miles away, she played a role in bringing together some amazing people who will continue to mold the universe in a positive way.