

Local author creates unique children's books

by Joseph Friedrichs
Staff Writer

Published:

Wednesday, October 22, 2008 9:48 AM CDT

WHITE BEAR LAKE — Several years ago, Michelle LeBow said, she spent time writing about her family in a journal until her fingers almost fell off.

"Out of that, I realized I wanted to impact relationships — especially relationships between children and their parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles," she said.

LeBow, author and founder of the New Brighton-based company Memoir of Me LLC that produces personalized children's books, recently launched a new title called "A Letter From Me to You." The book encourages a process through which an adult, typically a parent or family member, writes a letter to a child. The letter then becomes the plot through an illustrated story LeBow created. Essentially, she said, the people in the letter become the main characters of the book.

The idea for the book came to LeBow last November while she was staying in a tiny northern Minnesota cabin that had no heat.

"Wrapped in blankets, reading the journal I've written over the past 14 years of my life with my husband and children, I realized that my journal was like a love letter to my family," said the White Bear Lake mother of two. "That is when I came up with the concept of writing a letter that is then weaved into a personalized book."

To help form her business plan, LeBow turned to WomenVenture, a St. Paul-based nonprofit that guides entrepreneurial women and men who want to start and grow their own businesses.

Although LeBow's business is still in the early stages, book sales are already underway. Jessica Hoylo, a mother of two who lives in St. Anthony, purchased one of the first copies of "A Letter From Me to You." Hoylo said her children love the story, pictures and the fact their own names appear inside the book.

"It is equally special to me because I am always looking for ways to capture memories," Hoylo said. "I did this through writing my own letter to each of them."

Memoir of Me — Personalized Books are now available by submitting a letter and an order on the company's Website (www.memoirofme.com). The cost is \$34.95 per copy. Future plans for the company include creating books for a variety of occasions, including weddings, retirements and graduations, LeBow said.

Joseph Friedrichs can be reached at 651-407-1218 or whitebearnews@presspubs.com.