

# Local illustrator collaborates on second project with East Coast author

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BY AMANDA WALKER  
World staff writer

WENATCHEE — With high-tech tools and the power of the internet, local artist Aaron Parrott is collaborating on his second project with Maryland author Kari

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Martindale. Parrott and Martindale knew each other through their time in the military, when Martindale's husband Paul and Parrott were instructors at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. When Martindale posted on Facebook a couple of years ago that she was looking for an illustrator to collaborate with on a children's book, the Wenatchee-based Parrott volunteered from across the country.

"She told me a little bit about what she was envisioning," Parrott said — a series of picture books about a girl, Squirt, and her dog Flash, based on Martindale's daughter and her Jack Russell terrier. So Parrott sketched out some pictures.

"It was originally done in colored pencils, just very, very low-tech," he said. Martindale loved the illustrations and a creative partnership was born. But publishers weren't interested.

"People kept saying...this looks really promising but it's not right for us right now," said Parrott. He and Martindale decided they would publish the book themselves.

They completely redesigned the book, from its size to where the series would start, along with one big illustration adjustment.

"I will actually...draw the figures on paper, scan them into my computer into Google Drive, open them on my tablet, take my professional



Photo provided/ Text, Kari Martindale, pictures, Aaron Parrott (c) 2017

A page from "The Christmas Flash Couldn't Even," illustrated by Wenatchee's Aaron Parrott



Photo provided

Illustrator Aaron Parrott with his dog Bitzy

meet virtually to discuss the book, going through each page and making sure they both approved of any changes, which could be seen in real-time.

On Oct. 1, they published the first book in the series, "The Time Flash Had the Best Day Ever," and "The Christmas Flash Couldn't Even" followed on Nov. 24.

"Flash wakes up on Christmas Eve morning and the family is just this whirl of activity," Parrott said of the plot. "Squirt is just hauling him all around, participating in these frenetic before-Christmas-gets-here activities and he's just burned out... But there's one last big surprise coming

Walter Mitty," with Flash experimenting with roles in different types of TV shows — to sneaking into school because he misses Squirt. The format is working for he and Martindale so far.

"The traditional model has been: an author puts a manuscript into a publisher. The publisher hires an illustrator to draw it. The author and the illustrator may never meet until sometime after the book comes out," Parrott said, in contrast to the self-publication route. "This has become a real partnership. There's a lot of give and take, push and pull in the creative process."

"Certainly Kari and I wouldn't have been able

print on-demand is both convenient and ecologically sound. "There's no more books than are wanted at any one point in time."

The books, published through Amazon (\$10.95 paperback, \$5.99 on Kindle) and Ingramspark, are also being sold by Barnes and Noble and will eventually be available at downtown Wenatchee businesses Ye Olde Bookshoppe, Radar Station and Firehouse Pets. The North Central Washington Regional Library has ordered copies and Parrott has donated one of each story to Mission View Elementary School.

For Parrott, the most rewarding part is seeing people post videos of their kids reading the book or having it read to them.

"You see the kids enjoying it and getting into it and the parents leaving great reviews and saying how much they appreciate this kind of book being available," he said. "And you're like, 'We did that. We put that out there.'"

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"I will actually...draw the figures on paper, scan them into my computer into Google Drive, open them on my tablet, take my professional stylus and go ahead and digitally color them," Parrott said. Then he saved the images back to Drive and put them on a background along with Martindale's text. They'd

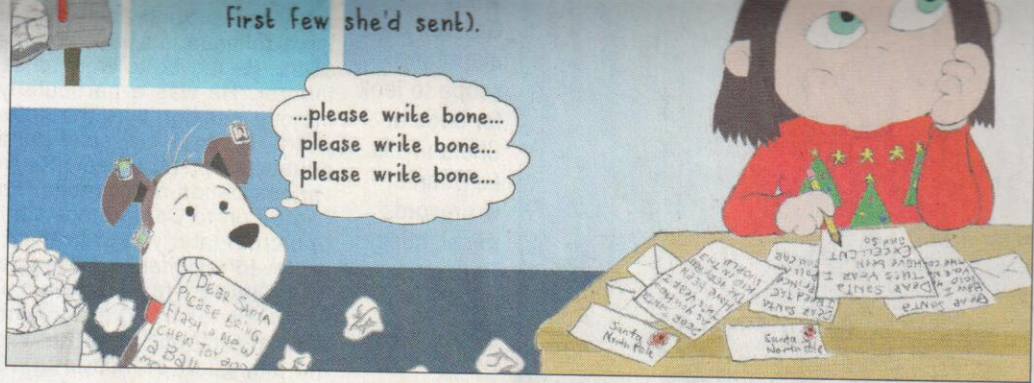


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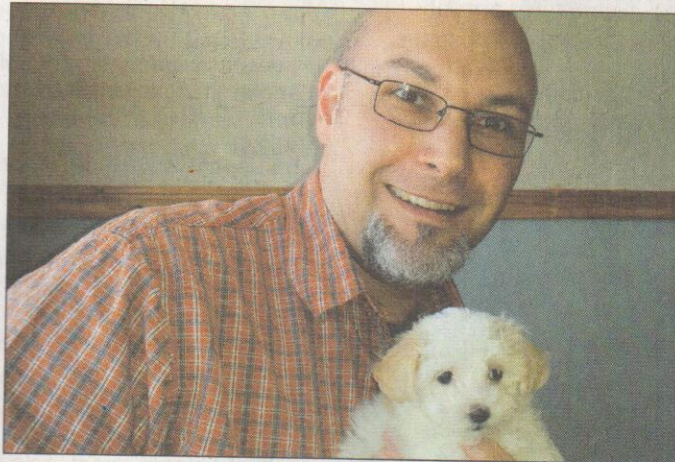


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A spreadsheet on Drive holds dozens more ideas, from Flash sitting on the TV remote — Parrott compares this to "The Secret Life of

Walter Mitty," with Flash experimenting with roles in different types of TV shows — to sneaking into school because he misses Squirt. The format is working for he and Martindale so far.

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"Certainly Kari and I wouldn't have been able to collaborate without the extent of technology we have," said Parrott. He said it also gives a better, more consistent quality to his art and adds that being able to

print on-demand is both convenient and ecologically sound. "There's no more books than are wanted at any one point in time."

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## Alzheimer's Disease ARE YOU

According to a new study by Johns Hopkins University, men are more likely to develop dementia and hearing loss, the study reports, were 50% more than those with normal hearing.

Have you noticed a change

"The more hearing loss you have, the greater the risk of dementia. Hearing aids could delay or prevent dementia."

—2011 Study by Johns Hopkins University

IS IT TIME FOR A HEARING AID? TAKE THIS QUIZ TO FIND OUT

## Briefly

News from around NCW

The ban in Chelan, Douglas and Okanogan counties — and six other eastern Washington counties — means there is no outdoor burning, and only certified woodburning stoves may be used indoors

burn ban, and are seeing light smoke from California's wildfires drift into the area.

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