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Features »

Officer pens kids' book about domestic violence

By Clay Evans
Longmont Ledger

When Longmont Police Detective Sara Pierce and other members of Longmont Ending Violence Initiative's books subcommittee went looking for materials about domestic violence for children, they didn't find very much. So Pierce decided maybe she should write a kids' book herself.

"I had some ideas in my head, so one day I just sat down, typed up a story, all in rhymes, and presented it to the group," says Pierce, who joined the police department in 2001 and has worked with the domestic-violence unit since 2004.

The committee liked Pierce's story "On a Dark, Dark Night" so much that they decided to publish the book themselves as a benefit. But first, Pierce's story about a violent incident in a young polar bear's family, and how the rest of his animal community steps in to help him, needed an illustrator.

Committee member Rebecca Lange, began doing illustrations with cut and layered paper, Pierce says.

"But she was diagnosed with cancer before she finished the illustrations," Pierce says. Lange died and the illustrations were finished by Ellen Schultz.

The story is simple. One night, Little Cub witnesses Papa hitting his mother. Looking troubled by a stream the next day, he is approached by his friend moose. Little Cub explains his worry, and Moose takes him Eagle - "Who is sort of law enforcement," Pierce says. Papa bear must appear be-

IF YOU GO

What: Publication party for Sara B. Pierce's "On a Dark, Dark Night," a children's book about domestic violence

When: 4 to 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday

Where: Longmont Public Library

Cost: Free; books are \$16.95, proceeds going to LEVI

Information: 303-774-4534

fore an animal council, which decides "he can't use his paws and has got to use nice words," Pierce says.

The council sends Papa out of the village for awhile. When he returns, he explains to Little Cub that "no matter where I am, I will always love you," even if he has to move out of the house, Pierce says.

"I left it open-ended on purpose, because kids have different cases," she says.

LEVI approached a graphics expert and went through the entire process of self-publishing the book. The group was able to publish the book with financial assistance from the Boulder County District Attorney's Office, private donations, donations from Longmont's Rotary Clubs and pre-ordered books by the Boulder County Treasurer's Office, Pierce says.

"It's been quite a learning experience," she says, "going through what it actually takes to write and publish a book, issues with editing and graphics. I'm glad this is done."



"On a Dark, Dark Night" by Longmont Police Detective Sara B. Pierce was written to help kids deal with domestic violence.

Courtesy, LEVI