

# Author takes publishing matters into her own hands

By Sarah Junkin  
The Eagle

A Water Valley native who became tired of waiting for responses from publishers has created her own company to publish and distribute her work.

Last year, Patricia Atchison published *Little Blue Penguin*, a picture story book for very young children, and this year followed that up with *McKenzie's Frosty Surprise*, a story aimed at children from Kindergarten up to Grade 3.

With colourful illustrations drawn by Rocky Mountain House artist Jo-Anne Jagers, the book tells the story of a Mallard duck who chooses not to fly south with his family, but to remain in the marsh for the winter.



Patricia  
Atchison

Atchison's publishing company, Woodlily Publishers, was a response to the length of time mainstream publishers took to get back to her.

"I've done my time sending out manuscripts and then waiting for six months," she said.

So she self-published *Little Blue Penguin* and is learning how to market her own work.

No stranger to the world of print, Atchison published a teddy bear magazine from 1999-2006.

"But when the collector market died down it was time to get back to my passion for writing," she said. "Anything and everything touches an idea for me. When I look at animals, I see characters."

In fact, *Little Blue Penguin* was based on a penguin toy Atchison's daughter had once owned and later lost at the zoo.

"I began to wonder what would happen to it, all alone at the zoo," she said.

Atchison also enjoys writing short adult stories to enter in contests.

"It gives me a deadline," she said, but her passion is for the children's genre.

"I like to bring an educational component," she said, adding *McKenzie's Frosty Surprise* teaches children about Mallard ducks, northern leopard frogs and the wetlands.

As well, a dollar from the sale of each book will be donated to Ducks Unlimited.

"When I go into schools to read my book, that only takes five minutes but then I talk about wetlands conservation," she said.

Both books are available in Cochrane at Bentleys

Books, in Calgary at Chapters, or order online at [www.woodlilypublishers.com](http://www.woodlilypublishers.com).