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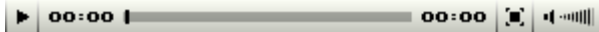


# The GRAPHIC

**artsy**

 Cynthia L. Bassett  
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By Maggie Peterson  
Graphic staff writer

**Cynthia L. Bassett** transforms life into fairy tales.

The Ellsworth resident has been taking people's personal stories and rewriting them as fairy tales for the past eight years. She said each book takes about a month to make.

Bassett chatted with The Graphic about the origin of the idea, the subjects she covers and what she enjoys about this art.



**Graphic:** How did you first kind of get the idea to write these fairy tale books based on personal stories?

**Bassett:** Well, it sort of developed from me being a watercolor artist, and I hand paint wedding invitations. And it sort of just -- I don't know how -- it just developed from that. I got it in my head to write a fairy tale for a friend, something I personally gave someone. Then I started telling other people about it, and it sort of just went from there. People thought it was a really neat idea and something different, and just started requesting "Could you write this, could you write that, could you write this story?" So I just started doing that by word of mouth, and I love doing this. It's my favorite thing.

**G:** What are some of the subjects of these books?

**B:** Well, a lot of them are sort of bride and groom stories, or bride and groom gifts -- the story of how they met and their life up until their wedding. And I've also done, written a 50th anniversary (story), that sort of capsules their life down into 10 or 15 pages -- major points. And I've written children's books ... And the children's stories always have lessons in them. Most all of them have trust your parents, and always ask your parents permission before you go with someone or go on any kind of adventure. And one of them was to be nice, always to be nice, and that friends of all different shapes and sizes are good. and always to look out for your friends. and one even had milk is good food. which it is for kids. So pretty much any

good, and always to look out for your friends, and one even had him as good food, which it is for kids so pretty much any story, just any personal story. The children's ones a lot of times are just based on the lesson, unless they're older and then they have some story that they want to incorporate into it.

**G: The paintings that are in the book -- the little fairies and everything -- where do you get the ideas for what those look like?**

**B:** ... They are based on actually sort of what they look like. Tall, are they short, their hair, their eyes and always wearing their favorite color. And for the adults the names are always anagrammed in the book unless they specifically say that don't want that, but most people think it's kind of cool. And the children are not. The children -- I use their real names because they like to see their name in print.



**G: And then, you write all the words in there and you come up with these stories based pretty much on what the situation is. How long does it take you to put together a book like that, come up with the story?**

**B:** Sometimes they come really fast. It's really funny. I ask a lot of questions, others background things, not just the story. What do they like to do? Where did they come from? Where do they live? Their hobbies, things like that so I can incorporate it in. So I get all the data, and they just come to me. I don't know how to explain it. Sometimes it's right away. It's like bing! and I just write down the whole story. And sometimes it takes a couple weeks ... I like to change whatever it is into something else so it's not exactly the story that they tell me. Like the couple that in the fairy tale where they met at Halloween and they told me what they were dressed as. So I changed that into something that was like that, but not really.

**G: And what do you enjoy about creating these books?**

**B:** The whole process. The actual creating of the story. And then the painting because I love to paint the illustrations. Then put it all together and then the great joy is giving it to the person who wanted it written and to see their faces and to see how they like it. I did hear the 50th anniversary book that I wrote, that they read it at their party and they were crying. So I guess they liked it ...



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