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MRS. B

The Enchantress Of Story Telling

Arizonian Carri Blake-Brekke, a former medical transcriber, had a nagging sense she was meant to spend her life's "second half" doing something completely different. Her four children were getting older and business life had long-since lost its appeal. Her future lay wide open. "Do what you love," her husband told her in 2002 as she began weighing her options.

"Birthdays had never gotten me down. Turning twenty was great. Turning thirty was amazing. Turning thirty-five was terrific. But, turning forty knocked the wind out of me. I couldn't understand it. For weeks prior to the fateful day, I found my energy level low and finally had to admit that I was a little depressed.



The morning of my birthday, I was alone at home. I sat outside on a lawn chair and said, Well, is this it? It's about half over. Is this what I am here to do? Raise four terrific kids who will someday leave their mark? If that's it, then I'm okay with that. But, I was hoping with everything my life has experienced that I'd have a bigger opportunity to leave more of a mark on this earth.

One hour later, the door bell rang. I thought it would be a flower delivery from my husband or basket of goodies from my parents, but it was the Federal Express guy with an overnight envelope. I took it into my kitchen and opened it. There it was. I could hardly believe it. We'd been waiting for this for a year and a half. I was holding in my hands the final registration for our trade name - Mrs. B's Story Time...with a Twist!

It took me about two seconds to realize the serendipity behind the timing of that delivery. Life could not have sent me a better way to understand its message for me; that the second half of my existence here on this earth would be fulfilling, useful, purposeful and full of joy in a



way I had never even dreamed. In that moment, I realized that forty wasn't depressing. It was fortuitous," says Carri.



Today, with the stage name of "Mrs. B," she performs Mrs. B's Story Time...with a Twist! The show consists of her own satirical spins on classic works such as her tale of a Goldilocks who speaks "Valley talk," or stories about nature, including Bugs on the Farmland Juanita Maria Sophia Bug Diva. For older kids, she pulls no punches; boogers and the runs are fair game. And, in her hilarious Getting Older and All Gressed Out, flabby underarms and crow's feet take center stage.

She tours book stores, schools, and shopping malls across the country including concerts at Pearl Harbor, school assemblies (K - High School), libraries, zoo concerts, national educational conferences, corporate events, etc.



This year, she's performed at over 100 schools in seven different states and is preparing to travel overseas for a second year to perform for Department of Defense Dependent Schools, the European PTA Conference and military installations worldwide.

"The intent," says Carri, "is to make kids laugh." But beneath the clowning is a more serious message - stay a kid as long as you can! "My goal is to make kids laugh, but I also want to remind them that they will have plenty of time to be adults and not to take things too seriously." Carri began by creating books based on the stories she'd long-been singing and playing on the guitar for her own children. She followed up with tunes on accompanying compact discs.

She performed for free at local schools for about a year before pitching the idea to a local Borders Books and Music store. "Mrs. B" has since played at Borders' stores and other venues across the country and she is preparing to launch her second tour playing for students at educational facilities in Germany, Italy and Spain.



"Five years ago, I wouldn't have dreamed that our beloved family storytime would have become so popular on this grand a scale. I am so blessed and wake up each morning knowing I have the opportunity to affect the lives of so many children and adults. I have the best job in the world...engaging students and teachers, children and their parents, business people

and military members around the world in a bit of silliness, many lessons and a lot of laughter. It's a dream job!"

For more information: www.MrsBstorytime.com

Mrs. B is a consummate performer. I watched her every move and forgot for awhile that I was an adult. I clapped and thumped and rocked with the kids. I looked around the room and realized we had all become kids - all of us - teachers, janitors, parents, even the principal. Really. we are never too old for fairytales and fun and laughter, just need a great storyteller.

- **Kanupriya Vashisht, Arizona Republic**

Familiar fairy tales and original stories get a fresh makeover via the smooth rock and roll stylings of Mrs. B.

- **Publisher's Weekly**

She brings a captivating magic to the stage seizing everyone's imagination.

- **Roland Skumawitz Superintendent of Schools, Romoland, CA**

"Mrs. B's" is a performance that captivates and delights every single person in the theatre!

- **Lara Askerooth, Special Events, Pearl Harbor**

Her books just fly out the door.

- **Sandra Carpenter, Marketing Manager., Borders Books & Music**

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