

LEARNING

Author, illustrator, naturalist visits Prescott schools

By PAULA RHODEN
The Daily Courier

Author Brooke Bessesen began writing stories when she was a young girl.

"For me, writing was a safe haven. Most of my writing was for myself, but I wrote a lot of reports on animals," Bessesen said.

Today, she is a published author, illustrator and naturalist.

Bessesen still writes about animals, her favorite subject.

Bessesen said her love of animals led to working with the medical crew at the Phoenix Zoo as a certified veterinary technician.

Today, Bessesen spends a lot of time traveling. She will be flying to Costa Rica next month to work with sea turtles.

Bessesen visited Abia Judd and Taylor Hicks elementary schools to talk to students about how to write a book.

"Books are made by people who want to share their knowledge and ideas with others," she told the students at Abia Judd.

For Bessesen, it is all about animals. She told the students she began learning about animals through books in her elementary school library.



Author, illustrator and naturalist Brooke Bessesen talks to first- and second-grade students at Abia Judd Elementary School in Prescott recently.

Les Stukenberg/The Daily Courier

to come to our schools," Scott said. "It took about a year to arrange everything."

Scott said Bessesen would also meet with teachers during professional development time.

To prepare for Bessesen's visit, students read both her books "Look Who Lives in the Desert" and "Zachary Z. Packrat and His Amazing Collections."

Bessesen said she loves adventure, and visiting schools is an adventure.

"I want to expose students to the idea that their ideas can be poetry, books, research papers, reports or anything else. I want to help instill in them a love of learning," Bessesen said.

Anyone interested in more information about Bessesen can visit her website at www.brookebessesen.com

"Where do book ideas come from?" Bessesen asked the students. "They come from your experience, knowledge and imagination."

She also asked the students if any of them has written a book. If not, she said they should find something that

really interests them, read and learn as much as possible and then write a book.

"People who are writers love to read and love to share information," Bessesen said.

Abia Judd reading specialist Melissa Scott and Taylor

Hicks reading specialist Jan Richards were instrumental in arranging Bessesen's visit to Prescott.

Scott said she and Richards met Bessesen about a year ago at an Arizona Reading Association conference.

"We knew we wanted her

Contact the reporter at
prhoden@prescottaz.com