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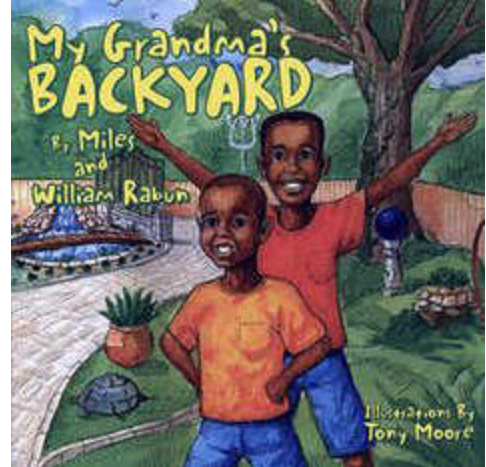
## Author, author!

### Young brothers get a book published

**KINEA WHITE EPPS, Staff Writer**

For the past few years, Miles and William Rabun have spent summers exploring their grandmother's backyard in Georgia. The brothers spend their summer weeks identifying flowers and trees, creating skits on a wooden stage and skipping stones across the pond.

After years of so much fun, the two have decided to share their adventures.



'My Grandma's Backyard'

Miles and William, both students at Pleasant Union Elementary School, have written a book.

Appropriately called "My Grandma's Backyard," the book details the boys' story through colorful pictures of a sparkling blue pond and vibrant green trees.

"My Grandma's backyard is filled with so many things to see, you could spend the whole day there, it's an exciting place to be," they write. "Spider web plants, and real insects, too, Grandma's backyard has it all."

The book also includes comprehension questions, vocabulary words and a section for kids to match the words that rhyme in the story.

About a year ago, Miles and William decided they should write a story about their grandmother's backyard. A childhood idea has turned into an adult's dream with the release of the book. Yolanda Rabun, the boys' mother, said their grandmother, Kappitola Williams, an environmental scientist in Georgia, held the two to the idea.

It took about a year for the youngsters to write their story and have it published.

"It really became a family project," said Yolanda Rabun.

At first the family started out small, only making copies of the story and passing it out when the family visited Georgia. At the urging of friends and family, the idea went a step further. Yolanda Rabun began contacting publishers until she ran across information regarding self-publishing.

The family spent about \$600 publishing the book through Xlibris, a Pennsylvania-based privately owned company that is partners with Random House Ventures. Random House Ventures is the investment subsidiary of Random House, Inc., the world's largest trade book publisher, according to the Xlibris' Web site, [www.xlibris.com](http://www.xlibris.com).

"I'm always amazed that there are so many talented people under the age of 16," said Mary Jervis, a publishing consultant with Xlibris.

In just the few weeks that the book has been available for sale, the family has almost broken

even with the initial costs.

### **'Tallest tree in forest'**

On a recent day after school, Miles and William talked about what it's like to be young authors.

"It's fun," said William, a second-grader.

"It's like being the tallest tree in the forest," added Miles, an 8-year-old fourth-grader and the leader of the two.

But his younger brother is also sharp. During the writing process, William had to give his OK to the sentences and he came up with the rhyming words. Both boys are standouts academically and athletically, participating in field sports and Boy Scouts.

The boys' passion for reading may have been ignited before they were born. When Yolanda Rabun was pregnant, their father, Dereck Rabun, would read stories to them. From the time the boys were born, the family has set aside story time. William has been able to read above his grade level by listening and comprehending the stories that were read to his older brother.

"We are our children's first teachers," said Dereck Rabun. "We were instilling that desire."

The young authors have impressed the adults around them.

### **Proud principal**

"Each year we have an artist-in-residence to talk to the students, but to have two authors walking around is exciting," said Pleasant Union principal Kevin Biles. Biles said that in his eighth year at the school, the boys are the only students to have a story formally published.

Recently, the boys held a book signing at Jasper's Place in Raleigh and there's talk of another one in Georgia. Miles and William are not strangers to the limelight. In addition to being authors and athletes, the boys have also made appearances in commercials for Toyota and Wake Med.

While the writing experience was a little tiring, both Miles and William are toying with the idea of writing another one.

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