

This Little Light alternative to storks and cabbage patches

BY GREG LANGLEY
Books editor

Every parent faces the dreaded task of answering their child's question: "Where do babies come from?" The answer is always dependent on the child's age. At a certain point, they get a biology lecture, but before that they get all sorts of explanations. Storks, cabbage patches and all kinds of other things can come into play.

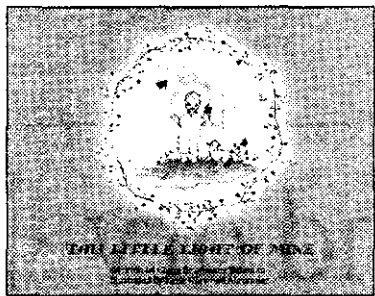
Local author Claire Boudreaux Bateman has seized on those ideas to come up with a children's book aimed at the pre-

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biology lesson crowd. It's called *This Little Light*

(Shell Beach Publishing, \$18.50 hardcover). This title comes from an old and popular spiritual, and it gives a clue about the author's philosophy. This is a book by an author not afraid to declare her belief in God. That declaration comes in the form of the story line: all babies come from heaven where they are assembled by God and gifted with his light (from the title) and then sent on to earth.

"On your way to earth, you may lose your eyes or your ears. While you are on earth, you may get sick and lose all of your hair. But my light will always be in you," God



tells a little girl getting ready to come to earth.

It's a sweet and sentimental way to explain the spiritual side of conception to those too young to understand the physical part of it. The story is short and non-denominational in its message. The book is illustrated in baby friendly colors by local artist Katie Norwood Alexander.

Williams Center event

On Sunday, April 2, from 2 to 5 p.m., the LSU Libraries will participate in the LSU GEMs Day campuswide open house with free events highlighting the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History, which is part of the Libraries' Special Collections division.

Named for the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian who was a pioneer in the scholarly use of oral

history, the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History has collected more than 2,500 interviews to date. On April 2, staff will speak about the center's projects, such as documenting the Baton Rouge Bus Boycott, the experiences of Vietnamese refugees who relocated to Louisiana, and the center's upcoming project working with the Pointe au Chein Tribe. Presentations will start at 2:30, 3:30 and 4:30 p.m. Visitors will be able to talk with community members who participated in these projects, listen to interviews, and learn about how oral history preserves life stories that would otherwise be lost. Special guests for the day will include Toby Daspit, co-author of *Talking Gumbo: A Teacher's Guide to Using Oral History in the Classroom*; Dr. Jonathan Roberts, project director developing an oral history of Charity Hospitals of Louisiana, Peggy Frankland, project director of Louisiana's Women Grassroots Environmentalists, Dr. Jesse Walker, LSU Professor Emeritus, and members of the West Feliciana CDF African American Heritage Task Force.

Visitors can also enjoy the exhibition, *Special Delivery: A Showcase of LSU Libraries Special Collections*. Gems on display run the

gamut from book arts to Louisiana history, including a 15th century illuminated Book of Hours, Eric Gill's *Four Gospels*, original drawings by Audubon, a letter of William C.C. Claiborne, first governor of Louisiana, and a Civil War diary. On the lighter side, memorabilia from the libraries' extensive collections of political papers includes two leather bull whips, presented to the late U.S. Sen. Russell Long when he served as Senate "whip" and programs from the Mystic Krewe of Louisianians Mardi Gras balls in Washington, D.C.

Programs and exhibition are free and the public is invited. Call (225) 578-6547 for more information or visit the LSU Libraries Special Collections Web site at <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special>.

Funk at library

Teens will get the chance to meet the author of the *Boundary's Fall* fantasy series, Bret Funk, at the Pride-Chaneyville Branch Library, 13600 Pride-Port Hudson Road, at 1 p.m. Saturday, April 1.

The author will discuss and answer questions about the three books in the series, *Path of Glory*, *Sword of Honor*, and *Jewel of Truth*, which will come out this

spring.

Registration is not required. For more information, call (225) 658-1550.

You can get there from here

Cynthia Campbell, travel editor with *The Advocate*, will present a program about short, affordable trips for families at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, April 1, at the Baker Branch of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library, 3501 Groom Road. Brochures on tourist attractions and other points of interest will be provided.

Campbell has been travel editor for *The Advocate* for more than 20 years and was a feature reporter for the *San Antonio Express News*.

For more information, call (225) 778-5940.

The Real CSI

Crime scene investigators from the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office will demonstrate what happens during a crime scene investigation 7-8 p.m. Wednesday, March 29, at the East Baton Rouge Parish Main Library, 7711 Goodwood Blvd.

For more information, call (225) 231-3740.

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