

People

Former reporter hits the bookshelves

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A former Parklander reporter has moved her byline from the newsstand to the bookstore with the release of a book published by Harper Collins.

Birgit Stutz wrote "The Rescue of Belle and Sundance - A Miracle on Mount Renshaw" with the help of a co-writer after being personally involved in the rescue of two abandoned packhorses in central British Columbia, near McBride.

"I was approached by an agent from Harper-Collins after the horse rescue two years ago," said Stutz.

"An agent sent me an email out of the blue. I thought it was a scam, it seemed too good to be true."

Though she intended to ignore the email originally, Stutz responded at the insistence of her husband and was soon set up with co-writer Lawrence Scanlan.

"He was all keen the moment he heard about it," said Stutz.

"It took almost two years to get it completely done."

Stutz found herself involved in the rescue of the horses when a friend of hers, who lives in the village next to hers had heard that the two horses were found in an alpine area by snowmobilers.

The horses owner had taken them through rough terrain that was not meant for horses back in mid-September 2008.



Freelance reporter Birgit Stutz (left) has published a book about her hand in rescuing two abandoned horses near McBride, B.C.

Submitted Photo

After running into some trouble, he abandoned the horses, expecting that they would head down to the valley on their own as most horses normally would.

However, the pair did not try to head home because the terrain of the trails was not meant for horses and was too rough.

The owner found them in the same area six weeks later but deemed

them too weak to be brought back to the valley and left them there to die.

The pair survived another two months and were discovered by snowmobilers Dec. 16.

By then, the horses were trapped in the alpine area by deep snow and could not get out without assistance.

Stutz was one of many McBride

area volunteers who spent eight days digging a one kilometer trench six feet deep and three feet wide in order to free the horses.

She also covered the story for the Valley Sentinel as a freelancer.

While the book is indeed about the rescue, Stutz said it is more than that.

"It's also about what can be accomplished by a community if

people work together towards a common goal," she said.

"It just shows what McBride and the whole valley is about. It's about community."

"We can achieve great things by working together," she said.

Stutz's book is available online and in stores at all Chapters and Amazon bookstores and subsidiaries.

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