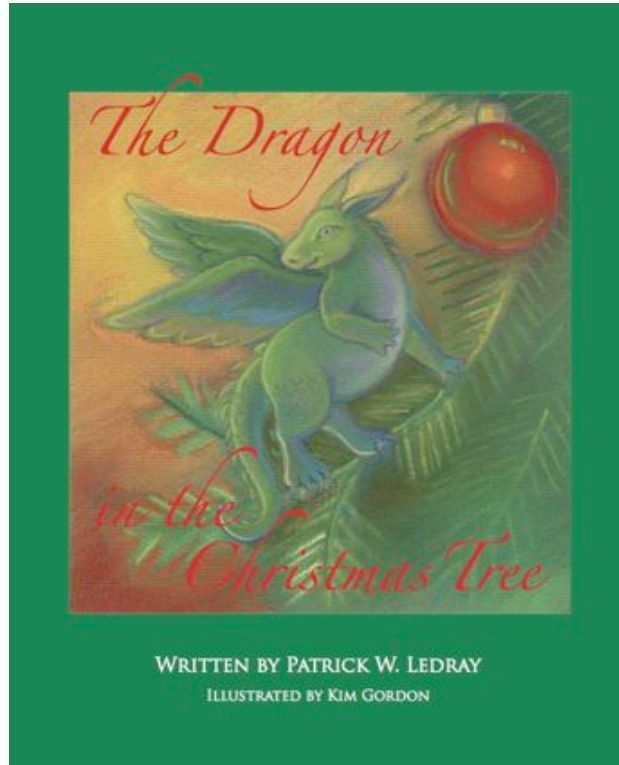


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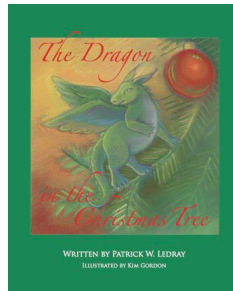


RMA Publicity

Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist
952-240-2513 / rachel@rmapublicity.com

Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist
Office: 952-546-0928
Cell: 952-240-2513
rachel@rmapublicity.com

The New Book that Will Be Under a Lot of Christmas Trees this Year



(Twin Cities, Minn.) – Frosty the Snowman, Rudolph the Reindeer and Santa Claus. They are all iconic characters whose stories have been told so many times they have come to symbolize the holiday season.

This year, they are being joined by Sparky, a tiny dragon whose story will warm the hearts of families everywhere. Sparky is the star of the new book, “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree,” by Patrick W. Ledray of the Twin Cities. He is a practicing attorney and the Honorary Consul of Romania for Minnesota.

Ledray says the story was inspired by the legendary dragons of Romania’s Carpathian Mountains, recognized in J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter books.

“I think the idea for the story began forming in my head around the year 2000 when I was in Romania to present the President there with pictures that children in America had painted for him. After the official functions were over, three of us on the trip spent a number of days driving to castles and sight seeing in towns, villages and the Carpathian Mountains, where dragons are rumored to have lived, and continue to survive,” he said.

In early 2007, Ledray found himself thinking back to that experience and he started to write. After considerable thought and work he had a manuscript in hand. “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree” begins with Sparky the dragon following two young children into their home on a cold winter day. Before anyone can see the dragon, it finds a hiding spot and falls asleep.

It isn’t long before Sparky wakes up, trapped inside. Before the dragon can figure out what to do, the children discover the tiny creature. How they react is where the most important message in the book is captured.

“I think the deeper message of the story is acceptance and tolerance,” said the book’s illustrator, Kim Gordon. “The dragon is in a strange place and it is tolerated and cared for and allowed to still be a dragon.”

Gordon is a good friend of the author’s wife, Sue, and owner of Twin-Cities based Open Cupboard Designs, a design and illustration studio. She also is a professional painter. From the get go, she and Ledray knew they wanted the dragon to be non-threatening, like a child, not big and mean.

“I had originally thought I would do paintings for the illustrations, but as the story developed it seemed clear to me that I needed to stay more within the realm of drawing in order to have the level of detail needed for the interior scenes. I love the rich color of oil paint, so pastels seemed the way to go,” said Gordon, who added that a lot of the poses Sparky does in the book were inspired by observing animals.

Now that the book is out, Ledray is working on another story involving Sparky.

“I read ‘The Dragon in the Christmas Tree’ to my six granddaughters and felt like I was taking them into that home at Christmas. They were in awe by the story and the amazing artwork,” said Mary Bosrock, the founder and CEO of International Education Systems and the author and publisher of the Put Your Best Foot Forward books, an award-winning series on cross-cultural communication and behavior.

“This is a very good book! I love the illustrations and how well the story keeps kids’ attention,” added Kay Lowinske, director of Rainbow School & Child Care Center, in Fridley, Minn.

For more information, log on to www.romaniandragons.com. To request a review copy of “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree, or to arrange an interview with author Patrick W. Ledray or Illustrator Kim Gordon, contact Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, at 952-240-2513 or rachel@rmapublicity.com

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About the Author: Patrick W. Ledray

Patrick W. Ledray is a general practice attorney who works in Fridley, Minn., a suburb of Minneapolis. He also serves as the Honorary Consul of Romania for Minnesota, a position he has held since the year 2000. His ties to Romania had a great influence on his decision to write and publish a children’s book about a dragon that sneaks into a family’s home and saves Christmas for them.

Ledray and his wife, Susan, who is also an attorney and serves as a senior manager for Hennepin County District Courts, live in Brooklyn Park, Minn. They have two children, Laura, 18 and Gregory, 16.



About the Illustrator: Kim Gordon

Kim Gordon is a graphic designer and illustrator from the Twin Cities with a degree in art education from the University of Wisconsin - Madison. She is also a professional painter. “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree” is the first children’s book she has illustrated.



Kim Gordon lives in Longfellow neighborhood of Minneapolis, Minn.

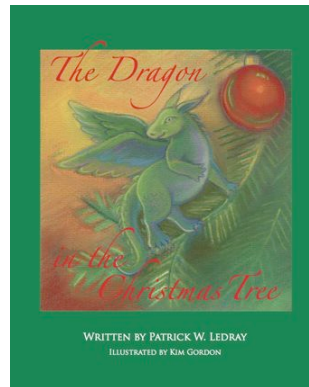
Title:	<i>The Dragon in the Christmas Tree</i>
Author:	Patrick W. Ledray
Illustrator:	Kim Gordon
Publisher:	Romanian Dragons, LLC
ISBN #:	978-0-9853567-0-5
Price:	\$16.95 (Hardcover)

To request a review copy of “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree” or to arrange an interview with author Patrick W. Ledray and/or artist Kim Gordon, contact Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, RMA Publicity at 952-240-2513 or via email: rachel@rmapublicity.com.

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Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist
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Cell: 952-240-2513
rachel@rmapublicity.com

What People are Saying About...



“I read ‘The Dragon in the Christmas Tree’ to my six granddaughters and felt like I was taking them into that home at Christmas. They were in awe by the story and the amazing artwork.”
- **Mary Bosrock, founder and CEO of International Education Systems, author and publisher of the Put Your Best Foot Forward books.**

“The book is delightful... It has substance in the thoughtful interactions of the family members and the dragon's perceptions of where it is at. It is whimsical without being weak and it ends happily as should all stories of Christmas. Bravo!”
- **Dr. Rose Linderman-Worlein, Grandmother, St. Petersburg, Fla.**

“Patrick has such a way with words. He paints a beautiful picture through this story for children that is better than a Christmas Card. I can envision a series based upon Sparky’s adventures and family.”
- **Dexter Pehle, Biwabik, Minn.**

“This is a very good book! I love the illustrations and how well the story keeps kids’ attention.”
- **Kay Lowinske, Director of Rainbow School & Child Care Center, Fridley, Minn.**

“Our toddlers really liked the story about the dragon and were delighted when they found it on the page even though it was hiding.”
- **Ann Ridder, teacher, Rainbow School & Child Care Center, Fridley, Minn.**

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About Patrick W. Ledray, Author

Patrick W. Ledray has enjoyed a long and successful career as an attorney. After graduating from Hamline University School of Law in St. Paul, Minn., in 1977, he worked at a Minneapolis law firm for ten years, then served as a prosecutor for various municipalities for a number of years while in private practice beginning in 1987.

“I’ve been involved in every type of litigation you can imagine. Everything from defending people charged with homicide to divorces, personal injury and business law,” said Ledray, who also has military experience.



He was on active duty with the U.S. Army from 1971 – 1974, and served with the Army Reserves from 1974 – 1999, where he achieved the rank of Colonel and held Army leadership positions, including command of a company, battalion and brigade. During his career he earned numerous decorations and badges, including the Meritorious Service Medal and Army Commendation Medal

In the year 2000 he was named the Honorary Consul of Romania for Minnesota. In that role, he is responsible for fostering cross-cultural activities that connect America and Romania, promoting trade between the two countries and assisting Romanian nationals living here with matters such as authenticating birth certificates and other documents. He also assists people who have questions about travel to Romania, represents the country at the Festival of Nations held every year in St. Paul and regularly attends cultural events at the two Romanian churches in St. Paul and South St. Paul.

In 2012, he added published author to his list of accomplishments. Romanian Dragons, LLC published his first children’s book, “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree,” which was inspired by his ties to Romania. Dragons are legendary there, reportedly having lived in the Carpathian Mountains for generations.

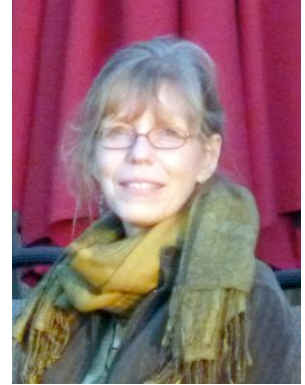
In Ledray's story, a dragon flies into a family's home. During its stay, Sparky learns a great deal about the spirit of Christmas and shows compassion and understanding for the family.

To arrange an interview with Patrick W. Ledray, or request a review copy of “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree,” contact Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, RMA Publicity at 952-240-2513 or via email: rachel@rmapublicity.com.

About the Illustrator: Kim Gordon

Kim Gordon has known she wanted to be an artist since she was a little girl. “I decided early on that I was an artist and never veered from that course,” said Gordon.

Both of her parents are artists and she says that played a huge influence on her. “When I was young I would sit under my father’s easel. He used very thick paint and would scrape some off on the edge of the easel. I would reach up with my brush and take his extra paint and make little paintings, sitting under his easel,” said Gordon.



Kim Gordon has a degree in art education from the University of Wisconsin- Madison. Today she works as a graphic designer and illustrator and has her own business, Open Cupboard Designs, which is based in the Twin Cities. She has won numerous awards for both her design and illustration work.

In addition, Gordon is a professional painter and has participated in juried, group and solo exhibitions throughout the Midwest. As a practicing artist, she also finds time to teach. Over the years she has worked with private students, taught classes through arts and community organizations and presented workshops through galleries. “Teaching is a way of paying it forward,” Gordon believes, “of helping share the kind of opportunities to explore art I had as a child.”

Kim Gordon lives in Minneapolis, Minn. “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree” is the first children’s book she has illustrated.

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To arrange an interview with Kim Gordon, or request a review copy of “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree,” contact Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, RMA Publicity at 952-240-2513 or via email: rachel@rmapublicity.com.

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Ask Patrick W. Ledray, Author, “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree.”



- 1) What does the dragon in your story represent and what does Sparky do that is so heroic?
- 2) What are you hoping Sparky will teach kids?
- 3) How was your book influenced by your ties to Romania?
- 4) In your book, Sparky returns to Dragon Hollow. Where in Romania is Dragon Hollow?
- 5) What themes about Christmas are introduced to children through your book?
- 6) Where does this family that is depicted in your story live?
- 7) How did you communicate what you wanted with regard to illustrations when you worked with the illustrator?
- 8) I understand Sparky products are going to be available soon. What are they?
- 9) Which of the illustrations best capture the portion of the story that it depicts?
- 10) What has been the reaction of children who have heard this story? What has been the reaction of young adults to your book?
- 11) Since you are introducing a new character into the Christmas season, what has been the reaction of adults to this new character?

Ask Kim Gordon, Illustrator, “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree.”

- 1) How did you and the author come to work together?
- 2) Why did you decide to go with pastels instead of paint for the illustrations?
- 3) How many different versions of Sparky were there until you settled on the one you used in the book?
- 4) Are you working on any other books?



To request a review copy of “The Dragon in the Christmas Tree” or to arrange an interview with Patrick W. Ledray and/or Kim Gordon, contact Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, RMA Publicity at 952-240-2513 or rachel@rmapublicity.com. # # #