

From zebras to toys, woman creates a world of her own

By Sally Robinson
News Correspondent

WESTFIELD — Joankay Delli Bovi finds playing games with her son, Christopher, can turn up interesting ideas for story books.

"Christopher and I have a fun-and-games relationship when we try to figure out nonsense things such as, how many elephants can fit in mommy's car?" (Delli Bovi drives a Volkswagen.)

From that beginning, questions evolved including, "How many elephants are eating from a jar, how many could bathe in the kitchen sink, how many are going for a hike and how many can ride on a bike?"

From those fanciful excursions into a child's mind has evolved a delightful book, *How Many Elephants*, one of many Bovi hopes to produce.

The Brookline Avenue resident produced her first book, *Eric and the Dragon*, in 1977. Her second book, *But What Do You Do With A Dragon*, was published last year and can be purchased at the New England Craft Boutique in West Springfield.

"My greatest ambition is to create a book that is published and is included in libraries," Delli Bovi said.

The talented artist draws watercolor as well as oil painting prints. An example of her watercolor projects is a special creation, *Mole Melvin*. In this painting he sits in his below-ground condominium with a cold drink perched on his crossed knees.

Another book created by Delli Bovi is entitled *The Zebra Stripes*. The tale illustrates the value of creatures helping one another — a giraffe, elephant, monkey, turtle and lion, all try to aid the hapless stripeless zebra in retrieving his lost stripes.

My Favorite Toys is the title of a black and white illustration based on the illustrator's own toys. The theme here is the toys (one rabbit, one dog and one bear) argue over who could be the owner's favorite, as they are scrunched together in a packing box.

They ponder their fate until they discover they have not, indeed been banished from their beloved owner's arms forever. Instead, they are merely being moved from a bed in their mistress' older home to a newer one. And at last, each finds he is a truly treasured toy after all — for there are no favorites.

Delli Bovi is employed part time as a graphic artist on evenings when her husband Robert can be home to watch their son.

Her background includes art lessons, attendance at East Carolina



Joankay Delli Bovi with son, Christopher.

University School of Art in North Carolina, and a Bachelor of Science in Art Education with a minor in painting.

When asked how she begins a project, she said, "I do my own writing, devise my own characters and they just seem to evolve!"

She admits to having so many ideas they might take a lifetime to do. When one sees her work, it is easy to hope that it does take a lifetime, for it will be time well spent.

