

writing vented in saucy raccoon

New children's book by author Lyn Hancock is a lively and fun way for kids to learn to love reading and writing.

BY JUDIE STEEVES
STAFF REPORTER

This will not be the first time Lyn Hancock has been quoted in the *Capital News*.

The exuberant naturalist and author lived in the Okanagan in the late 1970s with the raccoon she has just written a book about: *Tobasco, The Saucy Raccoon*, illustrated by Loraine Kemp of Kelowna.

The book will be officially launched Saturday at Mosaic Books in Kelowna.

Hancock has spent this week talking to school kids in Kelowna, Penticton and Vernon about her pet raccoon *Tobasco*, encouraging them to try expressing their passion in writing as well.

With 19 books under her belt, Hancock is a veteran of both writing and being interviewed about her books.

It was nearly 30 years ago that she last appeared in the pages of the *Capital News*.

She and *Tobasco* were interviewed by the editor of the day, Reiner Zeigenhagen.

Those book tours and interviews with *Tobasco* are just a part of what she writes about in this lively, funny book.

She took *Tobasco* on promotional tours for the books

she was writing in those days.

Hancock is the author of *There's a Raccoon in My Park* and *There's a Seal in My Sleeping Bag*, which she wrote in the 1970s.

At Glenmore elementary Thursday morning, both Hancock and Kemp gave workshops on writing and drawing and talked to the kids about their experiences.

"I love to inspire kids to learn to read and to write," said Hancock, who was also a teacher.

She now finds many of her former students are writers and biologists.

It seems she can't stop because she's given local youngsters assignments to pretend they're reporters and to write a "grabby" lead about a subject they're passionate about.

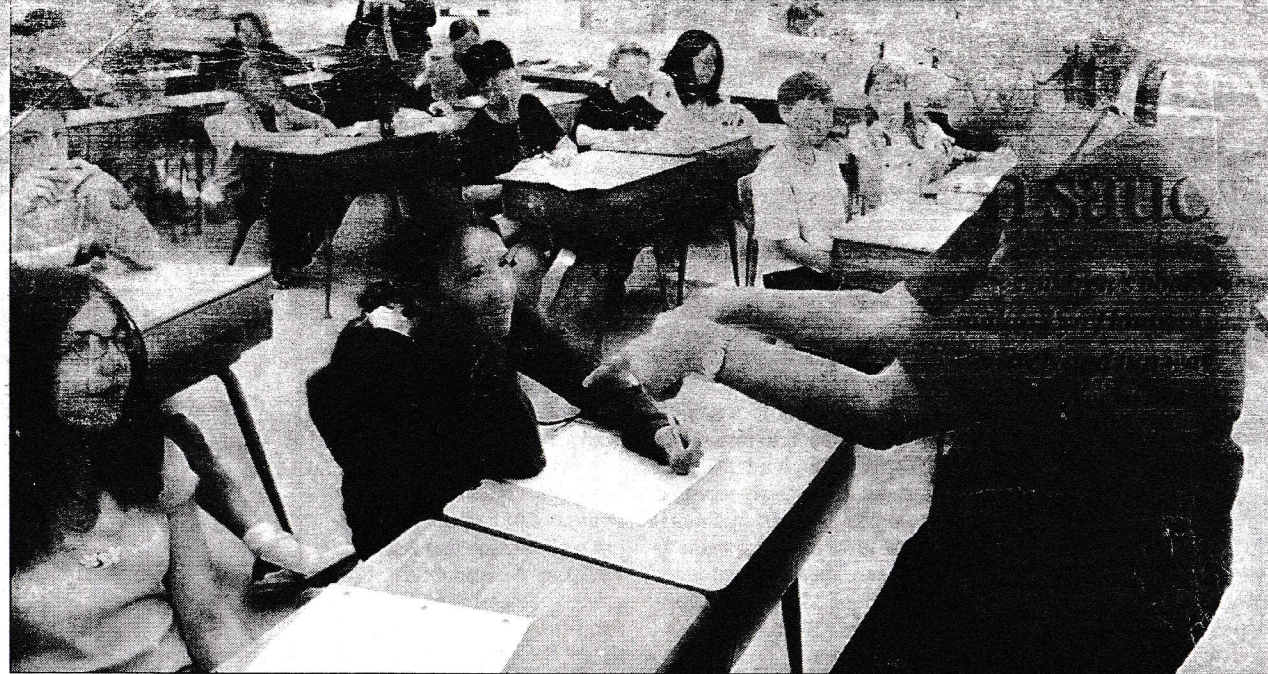
They're e-mailing her from all over Kelowna at her new website: www.lynhancock.com.

Her stories and books are all true, which is one of the reasons it's taken 30 years to publish *Tobasco's* book; the ending was not considered appropriate at the time and she wouldn't sugar-coat it, she explained.

Being close to nature and wildlife has provided a wealth of material for her articles and books, but she feels a closeness with nature is important for everyone.

Illustrator Kemp is also an animal lover, and she's excited about the publication of her first book.

For each drawing, she



SEAN CONNOR/CAPITAL NEWS

LYN HANCOCK talks to a class of students at Glenmore elementary about reporting and writing stories.

says she took 50 photos, using the teachers and students at Anne McClymont elementary in Kelowna as her subjects.

Principal Sandra Sellick's likeness graces the first chapter and those who know her say: "It's a dead ringer."

Kemp admits she is a perfectionist, as is Hancock.

She says she found her first book, "a long labour, but a lot of fun."

Although she doesn't have anything else on the horizon, Kemp says she hopes to illustrate another book, and would like to work with another school to find her subjects.

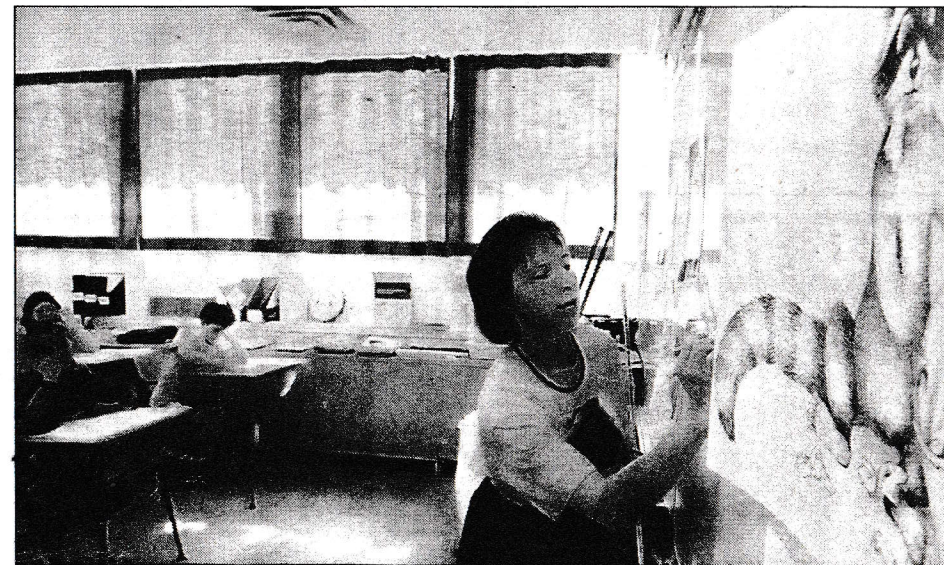
Both Hancock and Kemp will be at Mosaic Books, showing slides and signing books on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

It's expected to be a popular event, so if you're interested in a copy of her book, it's recommended you reserve one by calling 763-4418.

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—author Lyn Hancock



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LORAIN KEMP explains to students how to draw illustrations.