

LOCAL

Former Bristolite's book to aid children's rare-disease group

By SARAH WILSON
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BRISTOL — Christine Auclair spent many days as a child enjoying the hiking trails behind her home in Bristol's northeast section.

"I relied on the outdoors as a source of entertainment," Auclair said, adding her mother passed a fondness and appreciation for nature on to her.

Auclair is now hoping to inspire appreciation of nature among youth with her children's book "You Can't Find a Rainbow in the House!"

"There is so much to do outdoors that is educational and beautiful," Auclair said. Auclair, now a New York resident, hopes her book will encourage children to unglue themselves from the sofa and computer.

The self-published book is illustrated by Auclair's great-niece, Lauren Lachance. When Auclair read part of the book to 8-year-old Lauren, she very enthusiastically offered to be the illustrator.

It was a morale booster for her," Auclair said. Lauren suffers from McCune-Albright Syndrome

(MAS), a very rare genetic disease that causes hormonal and endocrinological problems that can limit physical activity. Many of Lauren's normal activities have been limited because of MAS, Auclair said.

"Her attention span was amazing with the whole project," Auclair said of Lauren's work. Lauren drew illustrations from her home in Kentucky and sent them to Auclair.

Auclair plans to donate a portion of the proceeds from book sales to The MAGIC Foundation, a nonprofit organization that helps children with rare diseases, including MAS.

"My goal is to assist children such as Lauren who suffer from rare diseases," Auclair said in a press release. "Combining my words and photography with Lauren's illustrations will demonstrate a small piece of our beautiful world and encourage children to get out and explore, while at the same time encourage adults to make a difference in this world by choosing a children's book that is directly helping another child. It is paying it forward in a literary sense."

Auclair and Lauren plan to attend The MAGIC Foundation

annual convention in Chicago July 24 for a reading and signing of the book. They will also donate a book to each child at the convention.

It is estimated that 50 to 60 families in the U.S. are affected by MAS, said Mary Andrews, CEO

of the MAGIC Foundation. MAS is considered extremely rare and little is known about the disorder, she said.

"We are extremely thrilled that she has chosen our organization," Andrews said of Auclair and her

book. "We appreciate what she is doing for the foundation and families."

"You Can't Find a Rainbow in the House!" can also be found at Auclair's Web site, www.CeilswheelsPublishing.com.