

For Immediate Release

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Shaping Up the Family

Debut author draws from her teaching experience in new book

Mt. Pleasant, SC (February 1, 2014) – Kristin Haas understands the struggle that young children face when learning math. In her debut picture book with illustrator Shennen Bersani, *The Shape Family Babies*, they tackle the tough subject of geometry together.

After Mother Rhombus and Father Rectangle welcome three new babies, readers will meet members of the shape family as they weigh in on naming the new additions to the family. Two of the babies are easy to name, but the third shape baby requires careful thinking. Kristin was inspired by both her experience as a teacher and her experience as a child to write this book. “I enjoy putting on voices for characters to make a story more lively,” said Haas. “My book was influenced by this. I wanted to include many different characters from different generations to give the reader and listeners the opportunity to play with different voices.” The whimsical illustrations by Bersani help readers to clearly identify each shape without losing that element of fun.

Geometry is sometimes a complicated subject for young children; *The Shape Family Babies* includes a For Creative Minds section where children and parents have facts and activities to dive deeper into shape names. Online the publisher offers teaching activities, quizzes and standards alignment to seamlessly integrate the book into an elementary classroom.

Kristin Haas is a third grade teacher with a Masters in Elementary Education. As a teacher, she sees how books inspire learning and engage the minds of young readers. Kristin hopes this book will encourage young math fans at home and in classrooms to learn about the myriad kinds of geometric shapes. This is her debut picture book. Kristin lives in Newburgh, New York with her family.

Award-winning children's book illustrator Shennen Bersani has two million copies of her illustrated books cherished and read by families throughout the world. She has been a freelance illustrator since 1989. She works primarily with colored pencils, sometimes using a mixed-media technique of colored pencils, crayon, and paint. For this book, she used a Wacom Cintiq Pen Display where brush strokes of many sizes and colors are created with a digital pen on a flat screen glass display. Her art delivers a unique blend of realism, heartfelt emotion, love of nature, and life lessons for children of all ages. In addition to *Sea Slime: It's Eeuwy, Gooey and Under the Sea*; *The Shape Family Babies*; *Shark Baby*; *Home in the Cave*; *The Glaciers are Melting!*, and *Astro: The Steller Sea Lion* for Sylvan Dell, Shennen has illustrated a number of best-selling books, including, *Snakes: Long, Longer, Longest*; *Sharks: Big, Bigger, Biggest*; *Ocean Counting: Odd Numbers*; *Icky Bug Shapes*; and *My Sister, Alicia May*. Shennen lives with her family near Boston.

For more information about *The Shape Family Babies*, or to schedule an interview with either Ms. Haas or Ms. Bersani, contact Heather Williams at (843) 971-6722 or heatherwilliams@sylvandellpublishing.com.

About Sylvan Dell Publishing

Sylvan Dell is on a mission to improve child literacy with science and math through fictional picture books. Using prose and pictures, children are delighted with stories of their favorite animals, planets, or even place. This leads to the exploration of facts and learning activities in each book's *For Creative Minds* pages. Sylvan Dell carefully designs each book to portray accurately the chosen subject. Vetted by experts in that field, and aligned to common core and state standards, each book is an asset to educational programs. Sylvan Dell has grown to include more than 80 authors and illustrators, and honored to have won more than 70 book awards since its inception in 2005.

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