

HEREABOUTS

Artist draws on his love for Scouting, religion

By Diana Blowers

Contributing writer

Rich Diesslin wove three passions — Boy Scouts, religion and drawing — into a career.

Actually it's the Beavercreek resident's second career. He was a business and information systems consultant before becoming a full-time freelance cartoonist in the late 1990s.

"Basically, after 20-plus years in the real world, I decided to turn my avocation into my vocation, a ministry of sorts," said Diesslin, who specializes in illustrating religious books and Scouting cartoons.

Since 1999, his KNOTS or Not scouting cartoons have appeared monthly on the U.S. Scouting Service Project's Web site, www.USScouts.org.

"It's a way for me to share silly stories with other Scouts — some true, some just silly," said the former Boy Scout, who earned the highest rank of Eagle Scout in 1972.

In 2001 and 2005, he was the cartoonist for the National Scout Jamboree's *Jamboree Today* newspaper.

He and his wife, Mindy, a mathematics lecturer at Wright State University, have three children who have all been active in Scouting.

Grady, 20, is a freshman at Purdue University. Sally, 17, is a junior at Beavercreek High School and Neil, 14, is an eighth-grader at Ferguson Middle School in Beavercreek.

Diesslin holds leadership positions in the Tecumseh Boy Scout Council and Beavercreek Boy Scout Troop 71, which is sponsored by his church, Aley United Methodist Church.

In 1995, Diesslin earned a master's degree in theological studies from the University of Dayton "to add credibility" to his Christian cartooning, which is his main focus. He also has an undergraduate degree in industrial management from Purdue University.

He has since teamed up with one of his former UD professors, William P. Anderson, a professor emeritus of the History of Religious Thought, to produce two books. *A Journey Through Christian Theology*, featuring Anderson's anthology of theology illustrated by Diesslin's cartoons, was published in 2000.

In 2004, *The Cartoon Gospel of John, a Serious Commentary with Visual Parables*, was published, with Diesslin supplying the "visual parables."

Diesslin has also researched, wrote and cartooned *The Cartoon Gospels*, *The Cartoon Gospel of Mark*, *The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew*, *The Cartoon Gospel of Luke* and *The Cartoon Ten Commandments*.

"My intent with the cartoons is to convey, in a memorable and entertaining way, the main points of the text."

Diesslin is also a cartoonist for the *London's Times* cartoons, which can be found at www.londonstimes.us, and he works as a multimedia and advertising illustrator and an editorial cartoonist.

His Web site can be found at www.the-cartoonist.com/.

Contact this columnist at (937) 429-2191 or dsb@donet.com

Find this article at:

<http://www.daytondailynews.com/search/content/localnews/neighbors/greene/0420diana.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.