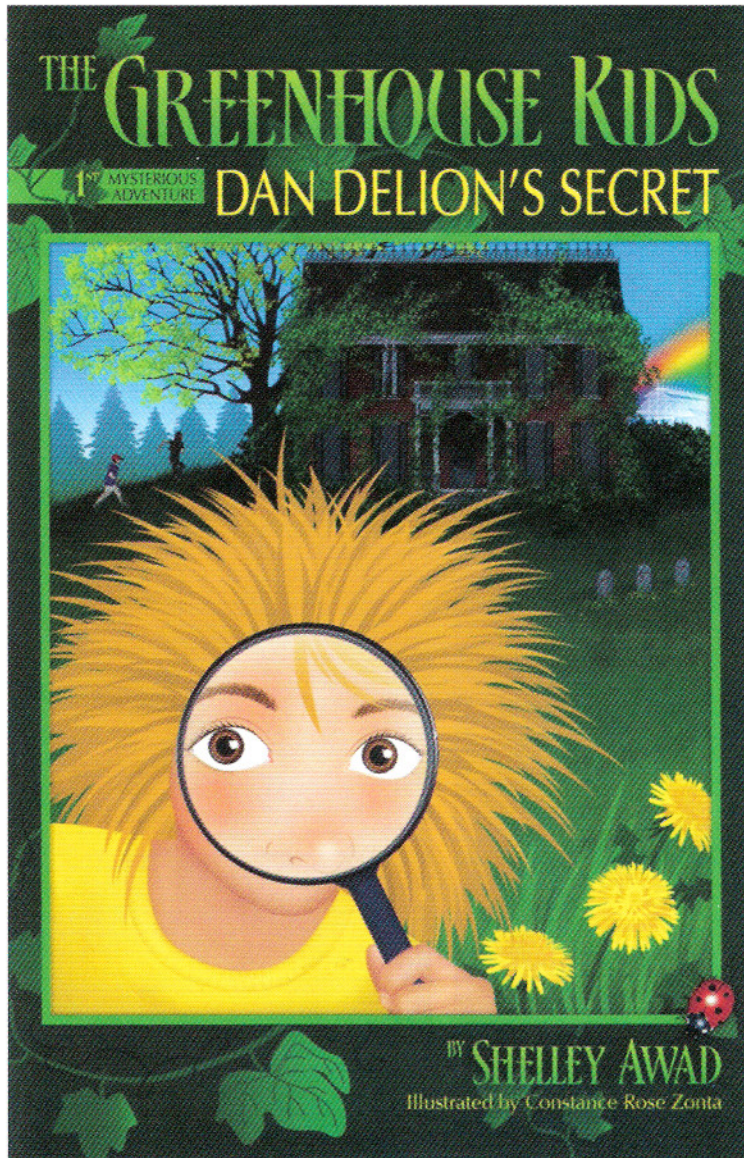


THE GREENHOUSE KIDS

STORY/PHOTOGRAPHY BY DICK HILDEBRAND

Plant Life Takes On A
Whole New Literary Magic



It's part entertainment,
part mystery, part fantasy
and educational to boot!



Shelley Awad
AUTHOR

That's the best way to describe a new book by one of Essex County's newest authors and successful entrepreneurs, Shelley Awad.

"The Greenhouse Kids... Dan Delion's Secret", is the story of a young boy who sets out hunting bugs but discovers a secret that's far too big to keep to himself. So he shares it with his friends Holly Hocks, Foxy Gloves and Johnny Jump-Ups.

The author is a Windsor native. A journalism graduate of St. Clair College, Shelley is married to Mitch and is the mother of a 26 year old son, Aaron, who's completing his PhD. in chemistry at the University of Windsor. The family lives in Tecumseh.

Shelley says she got the story idea about 10 years ago and prepared an outline. During the decade, she occasionally jotted down ideas as they came to her. At roughly the same time, she also opened her own greenhouse business called "Backyard Greenhouses", which

specializes in residential and commercial greenhouses that are sold across North America. As the business grew, the book was temporarily placed on the back burner until about a year ago, when Shelley began looking for a publisher.

The finished product, with its colourful illustration by Constance Rose Zonta of Windsor, is published by the Borealis Press of Ottawa and has been available since the beginning of June.

While the book may not be on store shelves yet, it can be ordered at any Chapters and Indigo location across Canada, as well as at Coles Book stores.

For more information or to order through the Web, log onto www.greenhousekids.com.

"Greenhouse Kids" is also available at Shelley's store, 2539 Dougall Ave. just south of Eugenie St.

As Shelley puts it, "Gardening has always been a joy to me, while reading and writing is another of my hobbies, so I just combined everything and one day as I was driving home I had the idea of writing about the greenhouse kids."

The main kids in the book are named after different plants and take on the same traits, like Dan Delion "growing like a weed".

The heroes have special powers. They're able to see and visit a greenhouse where they meet Lucinda Ladybug who doles out valuable life lessons. Through Lucinda and her emphasis on diet, hard work and attitude, Dan, Holly, Foxy and Johnny are able to achieve some of their dreams.

"The Greenhouse Kids" is aimed at 8 to 12 year olds, even though parents might learn a thing or two as well.

The 127 page book has already been well received.

Shelley's first signing session early in June took place in Las Vegas, not in a traditional store but appropriately enough, in a large greenhouse facility.

In addition to other appearances at Cindy's Home and Garden in Kingsville and at Colasanti's in Ruthven, Shelley has been the featured guest at a Devonshire Mall Fun Day and has been slated for a signing at Indigo in St. Clair Beach on August 22nd between 1 and 3 pm. Further signings have been scheduled at Chapters once the books arrive, and Shelley has been invited to appear on Leamington's Cable TV station, Channel 34.

Half a dozen schools have already ordered books for their libraries and Shelley has received permission from the public Board of Education to visit schools personally.

The Roman Catholic Board has also been approached but hasn't reached a decision yet.

"Greenhouse Kids" is the first in what's expected to be a series of five or six books. Shelley's been writing a sequel and hopes to have it on the market within the next year. She has already prepared the outline for book number three.

"It's just a matter of writing them and getting them fine tuned."