

TRENDSETTERS

beat



JENNIFER HECKER DUVAL

*Passionate about Arizona and
about Arizona's kids*

BY SUSAN LANIER-GRAHAM
PHOTO BY CARL SCHULTZ

Jennifer Hecker Duval is a social worker, wife, and mother. She is proud to be a native Arizonan, and spent her childhood traveling the state's back roads. When her husband, Fred Duval, ran for governor in 2014, she says she realized it was a perfect chance to reacquaint herself with the best of Arizona.

"It gave us the opportunity to fall in love with the state all over again," she explains.

She says that what became most obvious to them was the incredible potential here.

As Arizona made headlines over the past few years with budget cuts and controversial bills, Duval says friends in other states asked why they stayed here, especially after the birth of their son Monte almost seven years ago. When her husband suggested she write a children's book, she decided it was an ideal opportunity to share her passion for the state with others, especially children. *Monte & the Magnificent Star*, illustrated by Sara Ruhe, tells the story of Arizona through the eyes of a 5-year-old boy named Monte, and his companion, Dog-Dog.

Etc.

What are some of the things you cover about Arizona in *Monte & the Magnificent Star*? There are so many interesting things in Arizona: Sedona's red rocks, Native American dancing, the border town of Nogales, the Grand Canyon, Sabino Canyon. We have countless treasures we take for granted, and these are what will sustain us as a state. **Where can readers find a copy of the book?** I'm sending it to schools that contact me via my website, www.heckyeswellness.com. It's also available locally at Changing Hands or Write-Ons, Etc. on 7th Street, or online at www.amazon.com.