

In the Kingdom of Candy Land

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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Making sweet memories

A few weeks ago, Nikki Salomon was playing the game Candy Land with her 5-year-old daughter Avery.

“I had the yellow person and was winning that day,” Avery said.

That didn’t matter to Nikki who had visions of lollipop woods, gumdrop mountains and ice-cream cone castles dancing in her head.

Mother and daughter decided then to try and re-create the popular board game for Gothenburg Public Library’s annual gingerbread-house making contest.

Last year, the duo won the people’s choice award in the contest with a Thomas-the-Train-themed creation.

Sunday afternoon, with packages of candy, cookies and other sugary treats, Nikki and Avery and Avery’s long-time, former caregiver Lanna Mitchell gathered in the kitchen to create—instead of play—the game.

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“M&M’s are my favorite,” Avery announced.



Nikki said keeping Avery, and her 2-year-old brother, Andrew, from eating too much candy was one of the challenges of the activity.

“That and keeping them entertained,” she said with a laugh.

Creating the board game replica took about six hours.

The time had a lot to do with how Nikki and Lanna are wired.

“Sometimes we don’t know when to quit,” she said, describing them both as detail oriented. “You can go crazy with this project or keep it as minimal as you want.”

Lanna showed up at the Salomon house with various sizes of graham-cracker, hot-glued houses that she had assembled at her home in rural Cozad.

Using the houses, plus M&M’s, lollipops, licorice, crushed and whole peppermints, Starbursts (for the path through Candy Land), chocolate candy bars, chocolate chips, frosting, Smarties, chocolate Kisses, gumdrops, ice cream cones, gingerbread cookies, cotton balls and fake snow, Nikki and Avery’s dream took shape.

For Nikki, the best part was spending most of a day doing something with her daughter.

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Lanna said she enjoyed creatively “feeding off of each other.”

“Nikki loves to scrapbook and I do cake decorating,” she said.



The project was also a reunion since Lanna, who retired from giving care to Avery and Andrew last September, returned to do something fun.

“We’d been planning it for a long time,” Nikki said.

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