

FRIENDS' NEWS

Friends of the Surprise Libraries

March/June 2014

FRIENDS FINANCES 20 GED SCHOLARSHIPS

Working through ALTRUSA International of the West Valley, Friends of the Surprise Libraries paid for the tests of 20 successful GED graduates who are headed for college.

"Thanks to you, these students have fulfilled a dream," said GED Director Beverly Ray. Other funds came from the organization's national foundation and from private funds. Friends bore the brunt of the student's test expenses.

In this second Grant to ALTRUSA, Friends gave \$1,200.

At the recent graduation, those receiving the Grants would have been pinched to pay the obligatory fee.

"You made it possible for me to achieve this," GED grad Linda Abdulahad. A volunteer of the Radiant Church, Abdulahad is an avid reader and determined to become a nurse.

"As a mother of three young children, it was challenging for her to earn this diploma," said Ray. But she never gave up during tough times and there were tough times."

Graduate Robert Armstead, is an ace basketball and football player. Described as "a live wire," he plans to head for college and major in culinary arts. Gaining his

GED was hard fought. It took him six years to earn the crucial diploma."

Ray noted that the demands of living and surviving can easily slow you down.

On the other hand, Surprise resident Cameron Fletcher, father of a son and a dedicated hobby auto mechanic, grabbed his GED in less than six months.

Others found blockades in their way. For instance, Kathleen Hall of Peoria never went to school when she grew up. But at 22, her adoptive mother took her in and helped her learn, right at the kitchen table. Once she was in school, Kathleen's husband divorced her and she found out that two of her children had disabilities. "But, said Bev, she just shouldered the load and continued working toward her goal." After receiving her recent GED, Hall said: "I will never stop learning. I love it!"

By questioning many of these GED winners, it's certain that most of them are directly headed for college, toward dreams that were held back by lack of this high school equivalency diploma. "It seemed impossible," said one young man. "But I just jumped in, and here I am."

ALTRUSA would like to greatly expand the grant program. There are a lot of candidates out there.

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FRIENDS HONORS ITS VOLUNTEERS

SPECIAL VOLUNTEER

Lois Carlsen is a volunteer who never says no to an extra shift or an extra day, no matter how late or early she's called into action.

"She's a lifesaver," said Membership Chair Laurel Sund. "Last year when we were short, she kept the bookstore open at crucial times."

"Her dedication and her readiness to help us out has made her the ideal 'Special Volunteer,'" said Friends President Alyson Cline.



Carlsen is modest about her contributions to Friends over the last five years: "I just go in there and run the bookstore like so many others. It is a lot of fun. I'm no different from the other girls."

Like many other Friends Volunteers, Lois is a retired teacher, settling down in Surprise after 30 years in the classroom. She regarded teaching as an adventure and taught all over the country, including Jacksonville, Fla.; Arlington, Fla.; Oakland, Ca.; Sonoma, Ca; Marin County, Ca.; and Phoenix Technical School. Along the way, she worked on special projects for Standard Oil.

Carlsen came to Friends with about ten years of volunteer assignments under her vest. She had volunteered for three years at Boswell Hospital followed by six years at the Del Webb In-Patient Unit on Granite Valley Road.

She is partial to her work for Friends because "of the people you meet and the occasional adventures that occur. Not long after she started at the bookstore, two men appeared carrying a tower of books, put them on the donation tables and then vanished. Closer inspection showed that donations were all in Chinese.

And plans were underway to donate them to Goodwill until yet another Chinese contingent showed up five days later and purchased the entire collection.

On another day, Lois opened the Friends' storeroom to find a Burmese cat curled up inside a carton of mystery books. "He had settled in," she recalled. "But later one of the librarians adopted him."

"You never know what will happen; what will show up," said Carlsen.

"I surely appreciate this award."

PHOTO BY LAUREL SUND

VOLUNTEERS

Three of Friends original founders were honored as Volunteers, members of the first wave who are still going strong after 12 years on the job.

They are:

Jack Hitchcock, who served as Friends President for five terms. Pat Hitchcock, the key “idea person” in the group’s early history. Two-time President, Jean Duncan, a board member since 2001.

When Friends was still pretty much an idea in the heads of civic leaders, Jack Hitchcock, a member of the City of Surprise Advisory Commission, worked with City officials to secure the lobby for the used bookstore that is now booming.

He’s still at it, working on three key committees this year and serving as Nomination Chairman for 2013.

Pat is the one who mapped out the original bookstore and converted the empty space into a carefully planned space that resembled a successful commercial bookstore, a Barnes and Noble in miniature.

She also initiated a series of programs that still thrive today: the magazine department with specially made shelves; the creation of “book bucks” as rewards for small services; the successful annual bookmark contest for middle school students and facilitated a

Memoir writing class for four years.

Jean Duncan, worked closely with Pat and Jack since the very first book sales, before the Northwest Regional Library was constructed. Duncan remembers being part of a committee that toured the County by bus, studying other facilities in the County to gather ideas for the Surprise facility.

Duncan went on to serve as President twice and has remained on the Friends of the Surprise Libraries throughout its history.

Recently, Duncan Chaired the committee that distributed \$30,000 to School Libraries, part of a program that she helped start in 2006.

All three received special certificates from Friends President, Alyson Cline, as part of a rewards program originated in 2010.



Photo by Mary Ann Gillispie

Volunteer's 2014 Luncheon



FIVE YEAR VOLUNTEER PINS WERE PRESENTED

**TO: Gail Meholic, Devon Hall, Elizabeth Brunson,
Ann Thompson, Aurora Leon and Lois Carlsen.**



ONE YEAR PIN WINNERS:

Arnold Alpert, Jan Anaya, Ginger Bendickson, Linda Castillo, Claudia Czaeczyk, Mary Ann Eckert, Shirley Ferguson, Debbie Kargol, Jo Anne Knell, Jan Knoll, Lynn Peters, Venus Labaty, Chris La Clair, Michael Lee, Kathie Loe, Carol Mains, Joan Mayer, Fran Nicholson, Ellen Seibert, Martha Serin and Arlene Tschop.

FRIENDS FIRST COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP

Sarah Fakhoury, a Valley Vista High School honor student and activities leader, is Friends of the Surprise Libraries' first higher education grant recipient. A four year, \$4,000 scholarship which she will use at Arizona State University.

The aid was given through the Dysart Education Foundation, which studied scores of applicants before choosing Sarah, a straight A student.

Fakhoury has also received a \$24,000 New American University Scholarship which she will use, along with Friends' stipend to eventually get a Master's Degree in biomedical engineering. "I plan to remain in the community," she said. "to give something back to the area that has given so much to me."

She is the daughter of Faud Fakhoury, a chief engineer, and Fayrooz, a pre-school educator. "We are terribly proud of her," said Fayrooz. Sarah's mother pointed out that her daughter had followed her goal and her dream.

Like many high achievers, Sarah worked in student activities whenever she could. She was a member of "Friends of Rachel," a major student organization and became the first Youth Leader of the City Council, where selected students sit with the Surprise Council and participate in the discussions. She was also a Youth Delegate from the City to Washington D.C. where she participated in several governmental functions. She was commended by Surprise Councilman, John Williams, who marveled at the level of leadership.

The honor student expressed her gratitude for the Friends of the Surprise Library Scholarship. It will help meet her rigorous program. "My program includes four years of Bachelor's work and one year of independent honors study. "This demands high marks, a 4.0 grade point average in high school plus honors work and AP College courses."

She credits her success to her decision when she was just starting high school "to concentrate on keeping my grades scrupulously my number one priority and to make this the greatest importance of my life."

"It paid off," she concluded.



Treasurer Gary Cline with scholarship recipient Sarah Fakhoury

Photo by Laurel Sund

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HONORS FRIENDS

The Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce has named Friends of the Surprise Libraries one of five outstanding non-profit organizations in the region. Initially, Friends fought its way through 120 non-profit groups in the area to become one of the five.

Though the Chamber committee gave the winning non-profit award to the West Valley Arts Council, there were signs that Friends was right behind the leader:

Friends was nominated more times than the other contestants. “Those who nominated Friends were determined because the nominations continued pouring in, even at the last minute. Ab Jackson, Executive Director of the Chamber described this outpouring as “amazing.”

A source close to the awards process noted that Friends’ outpouring of cash to the Surprise Library and the Dysart School Libraries were translated into votes by the Chamber’s special committee. Friends President, Alyson Cline, noted that Friends was the only one among the chosen five to give heavily to the Library and the Schools. To date, Friends has poured more than \$300,000 in Grants to the Surprise Libraries and the School Libraries. Dozens of other charities benefitted as well. Just last year Friends donated \$30,000 to the School Libraries and \$20,000 to the Surprise Libraries.

Other Legacy awards included:

New York Flavor; Amtrust Bank; the annual Farnsworth award went to Jeanne Blackman; and the member volunteers who were honored: Cassandra Hoffman-Boyle and Mike Boyle.

Citizens of the year were: Melissa Holdaway, City of Surprise; Arthur Medivil, El Mirage; Bill Pearson, Sun City; Larry Woods, Sun City West and Ed and Charlotte Johnson, Youngstown Member volunteer’s of the year; Rowdy Dawson, Mara Acosta, Chuck Strange, Frank Dias, Linda Rojas, August Heiss, Cassandra Boyle, Mike Boyle and Stephanie Bond.

Friends delegates who attended the banquet included: Alyson Cline, Gary Cline, Judy Spradling, Laurel Sund, Shirley Ferguson and her husband Larry, Jack Hitchcock and Peter H. Brown

NEW COMMITTEE WILL AID SCHOOL LIBRARIES YEAR ROUND

A new Friends Standing Committee has been formed to meet the month-by-month “special needs’ of the Dysart District’s Libraries.

These grants, when approved, will not necessarily affect the yearly donations Friends has been giving the Libraries since 2006. These large grants have totaled \$114,000 to date. In 2013, Friends Granted the School Libraries \$30,000, which gave the Librarians all they asked for in their grant proposals.

“The standing committee will allow Friends to accept requests from the schools year round as things come up,” said Friends’ President Alyson Cline. “It might allow for smaller requests to be reviewed. The librarians can submit grants at the time the need arises rather than waiting for the annual request period.”

Friends also honored a separate request by purchasing 40 books that are already being read in the Willow Canyon High School Book Club, the “Page Turners”. “There was no other way for us to get these books,” said Library/Media Specialist, Wendy James, “the club needed them as soon as possible.”

“That’s a good example,” said Alyson. “Friends did that donation of books, but it could have been reviewed by the Library Grant Committee. I am hoping that these grants will become an ‘as needs arise’ approval rather than having it only once a year.”

Alyson noted that these smaller grants, coming year round, the Board “may be able to approve more requests without a significant impact on our annual cash flow.”

The Friends President predicted that most of the requests will be in the \$500 - \$1,000 range. These smaller items will allow Friends to fund more of the little things that mean so much to School Librarians.

Past President, Jean Duncan, will Chair the committee. A wise choice since she was a High School Librarian and one of the founders of Friends of the Surprise Libraries.

FRIENDS BOOKMARK WINNERS



The young artists who won the bookmark prizes are, from left:

Athena Cote, grade 8, honorable mention; Debra Yourist, grade 8, honorable mention;

Rachel Smith, grade 7, honorable mention; Sara Rae Mejia, grade 7, third prize;

Sophia Wisniewski, grade 8, second prize; Rebekah Overfelt, grade 6, honorable mention and

Anielle David, grade 7, first prize.

PHOTO BY LAUREL SUND

GENEALOGY @ THE LIBRARY!

Tracing your family's history is a fascinating journey. The Northwest Regional Library can help guide you along the way by offering genealogy classes and providing books, magazines, databases, and other resources that will help you dig deeper into your family's past.

Among the many resources that the library has to offer, and always at no cost, are:

BOOKS: How To books – *How to find your Female Ancestors*, etc.; Research aids – *Handy Book for Genealogists*, *The Genealogy Sourcebook*

MAGAZINES: *Family Tree Magazine* – 2012 to present; *Internet Genealogy* – 2012 to present

INTERLIBRARY LOAN: The search is free; the postage fee is \$6.00 if the item is found; the checkout time is two weeks with no renewals

LEARN4LIFE: To enroll in a terrific 6 week course in beginning genealogy research: Log on to our Library website (www.mclldaz.org); choose “Learning” tab on the home page; choose “Learn4Life: 300+ courses”; type in search box: Genealogy Basics; click on “Enroll now” - choose a start date closest to present (or it can be slightly in the past as it is not difficult to catch up). If you are a new student to Learn4Life, create an account using your email address. You will have free access to several fee based databases during the course, like World Vital Records, Fold3, etc. There will be more about Learn4Life in future issues.

DATABASES: Ancestry Library Edition; Gale Genealogy Connect; Genealogy & Obituaries Website Links; Heritage Quest Online; and ProQuest Obituaries. To access library databases, Log on to the library website (www.mclldaz.org); Choose the “Research” tab on the home page; Choose “Subjects”; Choose “Genealogy”.



Photos by Mary Ann Gillispie

Susan Smith, Library Coordinator

(Opposite Page) Mary Melby, Library Manager

GALE GENEALOGY CONNECT: Full text books; Emphasis on colonial times and immigration

HERITAGE QUEST ONLINE: Census 1790-1820, 1860-1920, some 1930 & 1940; Books – 28,000 full text; PERSI – 2.3 billion articles; Revolutionary War records; Freedman’s Bank- Civil War; Serial Set – U.S. government legal

GENEALOGY AND OBITUARIES WEBSITE LINKS: 3 online magazines; Arizona resources; Ethnic groups research aids; General genealogy sites; Names

PROQUEST OBITUARIES: Older obituaries from six cities in the U.S.- Atlanta Constitution [1868-1922]; Boston Globe [1872-1922]; Chicago Defender [1921-1975]; Chicago Tribune [1852-1984]; Los Angeles Times [1881-1984]; New York Times [1851-1994]; Washington Post [1877-1950]

ANCESTRY LIBRARY EDITION: Censuses for other countries; U.S. Census 1790-1940; Immigration & Travel (includes Passport applications); Births, Marriages, Deaths; Message Boards; *Recent* or *all* databases (includes public Family Trees) 2 billion people on Family Trees; Charts & Forms – print blanks; Military Records; 137 Newspapers; City directories; Tax lists; Maps; Stories, histories; Photos

In addition to all the different and wonderful free resources that the Northwest Regional Library has to help you do your genealogy research, we offer classes conducted by our resident Genealogy expert, Susan Smith (susansmith@mclidaz.org). These include: Genealogy One-on-One - 10 am Mondays - register one week prior; Beginning Your Genealogy Research – 1st or 2nd Saturday - register any time; Genealogy on the Internet – 3rd or 4th Saturday -register any time. Please check the online calendar located on our home page for dates and times, and also to register.

Have fun climbing that family tree!



THE FIGHT FOR RELUCTANT TEEN READERS

Part One: In the School Libraries

Early this winter there was a stampede of sorts in the Dysart High School library.

Rumors had spread on campus that a treasure trove of graphic books, 230 of them, had been unpacked and shelved. Rumor also had it that the hottest, coolest titles were ready to be checked out.

Once inside, the small crowd of teenagers bubbled over with excitement at the presence of titles they'd been yearning to read, all of them purchased by Media Specialist Janice Koenig using Grant funds from Friends of the Surprise Libraries.

One young man in a letter jacket gestured toward Koenig and bellowed, "thanks, you just made my day." Also shouted out were words such as "cool," "hot" and an old standby, "rad," words seldom heard in the High School Library.

"I had used my total Grant from Friends to make our collection of graphic books as hip and as up to date as possible. I was glad to see this much enthusiasm over books."

Graphic Novels, the latest creation to woo teens into reading, are designed with a comic book format, loaded with illustrations and short bursts of prose. But the similarity ends there. Graphics are full novels and run as much as 300 pages. Early in their history these books were damned by parents and librarians "as little more than a comic book."

But they have now come of age and are a unique teaching aid.

"I know that graphic novels are checked out for pure personal enjoyment," said Koenig who is Dysart High School's Library/Media Specialist. "The fact about these books is that they are popular with all of our students, from the advanced students to the struggling students. It makes me even happier to know that they are reading because they want to, not because they have to."



Koenig noted that early resistance to the illustrated books has almost evaporated. "I did not know how my Administrator would greet my decision to spend the entire Friends Grant on graphic books."

"What a great idea," said the Administrator. "This will give us more readers."

Koenig's hopes materialized: circulation has shot up since the addition of the graphic novels. Students who read well have been just as excited as struggling readers.

Two High School Librarians ordered graphic novels in varying quantities. Jean Duncan, a past President of Friends is the current Chair of the School Library Grant Committee. “The Committee considered the requests for graphic novels carefully. We came to the conclusion that graphic novels are much more than just comic books, and there are many student requests for these books at both high schools. There are even graphic novel book clubs.”

Koenig said she has observed a number of students who start out in the graphics and then graduate to regular books, particularly the series books such as “Twilight” “Hunger Games” and the currently hot, “Divergent.” Another hot tool being used to lure in teenage readers is a vast (3,000) library of e-books assembled by the Dysart District’s Lead Media and Library Specialist Todd Simonson. This library is aimed at every student level plus their parents at home. The invisible library has already been used by thousands. In fact he expects readership of about fifteen thousand by the end of the year.

Simonson praises the flexibility of the e-book library. “Students can access these books from just about anywhere and onto almost any device.” The library offers teenagers a chance to “take an adventure into this vast library of books.”

“They usually end up finding some cool stuff they want to read,” Simonson said. This can painlessly lead them into reading.

Statistics show that use of this library, “Destiny,” as it is called, has almost doubled in the past year.”



Students from Willow Canyon High School

FRIENDS FINANCES SUCCESSFUL BABYSITTER TUTORIAL

United Phoenix FireFighters Association lecturer Jill Healey pulled out a series of lifelike baby dolls, all of them named 'Annie', and scattered them across a series of tables where anxious teenagers waited.

"Watch what I do," Healey said, as she proceeded to tuck the doll over her shoulder and began maneuvering it through the motions needed to dislodge a foreign object."

"Now, you do it," she said after assigning each teenager to an "Annie."

In the next hour the teens, 29 of them, diapered the dolls, learned how to hold them properly and then put them to bed.

The scene was the "Surprise Room" at the Northwest Regional Surprise Library and the occasion was an intense, five-hour symposium on babysitting, financed by Friends of the Surprise Libraries.

The training session for adolescent babysitters that ranged from life-saving maneuvers to the art of reading bedtime stories to the issue of snacks for small children.

It was conducted by representatives of the United Phoenix FireFighters Association who presented each graduate with a special certificate, a document that is often required by parents when hiring a babysitter.

Organized by the Library and paid for by a \$1,050 Grant from Friends.

All seats at the conference were spoken for within eight hours after it showed up on the Library's website and even the waiting list filled several hours later. "This indicated to me how much need there is for this program and the certified sitters it creates," said Surprise Library Manager, Mary Melby.

The experienced teachers were Healey and her assistant Amie Newport of the United Firefighters. Jill noted at the start of the session that she and her assistant were both married to firefighters and that they both have infants at home.

In addition to the graduation certificates, the grads left with a paperback babysitting encyclopedia and checklists to use on the job.

Melby has wanted to offer this type of program for several years, but the Maricopa Library District failed to provide the funds. She then turned to Friends for financial aid. It was approved by a unanimous vote.

The babysitting program is 100% paid for by Friends. Friend's President, Alyson Cline, noted: "This class offers safety and life skills for teens that they can use for the rest of their lives. Being able to fund a program that supports the education of our youth and that can help them transition to jobs within the community offers us one of the privileges of partnering with librarians at the Surprise Library."

Alyson continued: "The role of libraries has changed. What began as a way for people to access books has expanded to include educational and interactive programs that are now offered for all ages. Libraries are becoming community centers; bringing people to the location for many different reasons. The babysitting certification program is an example of a community need that Friends of the Surprise Libraries could meet in partnership with the Library. This is what being a Friend of the Library is about."

