



2009 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

(As of February 25, 2010)

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FOOL'S FORUM

A Newsletter by and for the Friends Of The Oakmont Library

(affectionately known by the acronym "FOOLS")

700 Allegheny River Blvd., Oakmont, PA 15139 • 412-828-9532



Volume 16 • Spring 2010

Dear *FOOL's*:

As the economy has become more difficult, public library usage has risen dramatically in recent months. Instead of buying a book, CD or a DVD movie, these items can be borrowed, enjoyed and returned to the local public library. People turn to libraries during hard economic times for free entertainment, help with employment, free access to the public use computers and to save money by doing things themselves, such as tips on auto and home repair and getting snow off your roof! Inside, you will see 2009 statistics from Access PA showing that PA residents do use their libraries. The American Library Association's Project Manager recently mentioned "Circulation is up, usage is up, computer use is up. If libraries were a private business, people would be investing in them." So when the demand for library services is growing, libraries which rely on state and local aid, are facing cuts—a 10-20 % decrease in State funding and an expected loss in the amount of RAD (Regional Asset District) dollars in the coming years. In a crisis like that, what budget lines get cut? Programs, collections, and sometimes hours are the victims. The *FOOL's* purchase needed equipment, sponsor speakers and programs, and replace worn out equipment. Sponsoring the picture book and Summer Reading Program, providing media equipment for programming, and purchasing cabinets to store craft supplies and part of our local historical collection are only a few of the ways your membership has helped the Library. Inside you will meet a truly wonderful person, Joanne Stephenson, who graced our Friends of the Library Board meetings for years. She once asked for a ride to the meeting because she had a broken back. That is real dedication to the Oakmont Carnegie Library and the *FOOL's*. The *FOOL's* are vital to the financial support to our library, and it's your membership that insures the support continues. If you are not yet a member, please consider, if you are, thank you from all who enter our doors.

Joe Schweinberg
President Friends of the Oakmont Library (*FOOL's*)

Dear Friends,

Another year has passed and the *FOOL's* continue their work to improve our Library. Thank You for your work and support. Several years ago the Board established as part of the Strategic Plan the goal—"To become a Community meeting place" (a short definition). With the *FOOL's* help in supporting many programs we are meeting this goal. One month we had 65 programs at the Library! Your donation of the Wii game in 2009 will lead us in a new direction- a new program for teens to add to our many children and seniors programs. We are hoping for a grant to augment your intention to support a new flag pole. It will be great to have the spotlight flag waving over Allegheny River Boulevard!

As you know Shannon Dunn has left the Library for the new career of raising her daughter, Lucy. We wish her well. The holidays and the February snow storms slowed the hiring process for a replacement especially when we had over forty applicants to evaluate! They came from Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, Philadelphia, and many from the Pittsburgh area with good credentials—a statement on the economy and state's cutting Library funding. We are close to announcing a new Director and she will want to meet you all soon at one of your regular meetings.

I am sure some of you saw the leaking roof problems due to snow accumulation and I would be remiss if I did not call attention to our staff's great performance under trying circumstances. Take the time to pat them on the back when you visit. With RAD and State funding cuts, although the Borough continues its good support, the 2010 budget has been cut. It is time to promote another section of the Strategic Plan—"Fundraising". You'll be hearing more of this as the year progresses and we will look forward to your continued support."

Be well and "Thank You" from the Staff and Board at the Library.

George Coulter
President of the Library Board

We have made every effort to present the list of donors as accurately and completely as possible.

If any errors have occurred, we apologize most sincerely.



AWARD WINNING BOOKS

2010 Randolph Caldecott Medal



The Lion & the Mouse, illustrated and written by Jerry Pinkney

The screech of an owl, the squeak of a mouse and the roar of a lion transport readers to the Serengeti plains for this virtually wordless retelling of Aesop's classic fable. In glowing colors, Pinkney's textured watercolor illustrations masterfully portray the relationship between two very unlikely friends.

2010 Newberry Award Winner

When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead



Twelve-year-old Miranda encounters shifting friendships, a sudden punch, a strange homeless man and mysterious notes that hint at knowledge of the future. These and other seemingly random events converge in a brilliantly constructed plot.

The Coretta Scott King Award



Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshall by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson

Born into slavery in 1838, Bass had a hard life and a strong sense of right and wrong. Bass was one of the most feared and respected lawmen in Indian Territory. During his career, he made more 3,000 arrests but killed only fourteen men.

Theodore Seuss Geisel Award

Benny and Penny in the Big No-No! written and illustrated by Geoffrey Hayes



Siblings Benny and Penny encounter trouble when curiosity about a mysterious neighbor leads them into unexpected adventures.

Pennsylvania's One Book, Every Young Child 2010

What a Treasure! a picture book by Jane and Will Hillenbrand for children ages 3 to 6. This year's program officially kicks off on April 13, 2010. This is the fifth year of this important program to highlight the importance of early literacy development in preschoolers. The authors have created a charming story for everyone who has ever spent time digging for treasure.



ATTENTION PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, AND CAREGIVERS

The Oakmont Carnegie Library is pleased to announce a new program for families. You and your child can play together, create a craft together, and meet new people in an educational and safe environment. Children ages 1-4 are welcome to attend the workshop with at least one parent or caregiver to accompany the child; as always, younger and older siblings of the 1-4 year old child are also welcome to attend the program with their family. The workshops will run for five weeks; our first five week session is scheduled for Tuesdays at 10:30AM, March 30, April 6, 13, 20, & 27, and will take the place of our Tuesday Book Buddies Story time on those days. If you regularly attend that story time, please sign up to attend the workshop with your child instead. The second five week session will take place Fridays at 10:30AM, April 30, May 7, 14, 21, & 28. Registration for the workshops will begin in March, please call the library at 412-828-9532 or stop in for more details.



Every Tuesday and Wednesday at 10:30 AM

Book Buddies Storytime

For children ages 1-4 years old accompanied by a caregiver. Get ready to play, dance and move with your child as we enjoy stories, rhymes, and playtime for the under five crowd. This story time incorporates music and movement with high-interest, interactive picture books. Children must be accompanied by a caregiver. Please note: the books and activities that we share in Book Buddies are appropriate for children ages 1-4 years old, though older and younger siblings are always welcome at story times.

STAY & PLAY

Playtime at the library, every Friday at 1:00 PM



Drop in, play, and meet other families with young children. This class consists of about 40 minutes of unstructured playtime for the kids, with clean up and a brief circle time at the end. For children ages birth through 5 years old accompanied by a caregiver.

Meet Oakmont Author, Joanne W. Stephenson

Joanne Stephenson, long-time Friend of the Oakmont Library, is the author of several children's books, some poetry, and several workbooks for the developmentally disabled.



At authors' table during Library Lawn Fête.

Joanne was born in Pittsburgh just before the Depression, in 1928. She was rigorously educated at The Ellis School, and then in Boston at Wellesley College where she earned a Bachelor's of Science in Mathematics. She married Rob Stephenson of Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1951 and began her family of four children there. Joanne and Rob later lived in Massena, New York, Port Lavaca, Texas, and, beginning in 1969, in Oakmont. These moves were dictated by ALOCA, the company Rob worked for until his death.

In these early family years Joanne, ever energetic, volunteered as a Girl Scout Troop Leader, initially because of her daughters Kate and Jean. After they left scouting, Joanne continued and eventually combined her scout leadership experience with a deep interest in helping the developmentally disabled. She started a Girl Scout troop for developmentally disabled women. At about the same time, Joanne began her lifelong affiliation with the Allegheny Chapter of the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC).

After Rob's death in 1978, she began to work full-time for ARC as a day-to-day supervisor of developmentally disabled adults who stapled together beer boxes for the Pittsburgh Brewing Company. About this same time, one of her favorite scouts, Marianne, wanted to marry Daniel, who was also developmentally disabled. While not unheard of, marriage among developmentally disabled adults was rare. Joanne helped Marianne overcome many obstacles, including having Marianne live with her for a month to learn how to keep her own household.

Joanne's lifelong fascination with books surely began on the lap of her father, Wink Wentz, but grew during her years at Wellesley. Seeing a need for workbooks to help train developmentally disabled adults for living independent lives in the 1970s, Joanne began using photographs to teach about common everyday adult living situations, such as where to find a restroom or when and where to cross a street. Later she published these lessons in workbooks for the developmentally disabled.

Eventually, Joanne retired from ARC Allegheny because she wanted to spend more time traveling. She had spent some time in Japan, and had studied the language and culture of Japan. She wanted to share her extensive knowledge of training developmentally disabled adults with the Japanese, but she was rebuffed.

One Book, One Community, 2010

A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson



BILL BRYSON

In the tradition of a travel memoir, author Bill Bryson tells the story of his trek along the Appalachian Trail. With no outdoor experience or knowledge of the Trail, Bryson sets out with an old college friend, Stephen Katz, to conquer one of the last pieces of wilderness.



In the book, Bryson describes his many adventures with Stephen and the other hikers he meets along the Trail. He also bemoans the destruction, both fabricated and natural, of nature that he observes on the trail.

MONTHLY HAPPENING AT THE LIBRARY

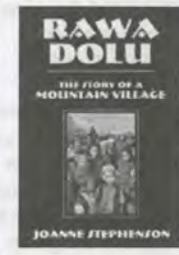
- Oakmont Historical Society** — First Monday, 6:30PM
- UPMC St. Margaret Medical Lecture** — First Tuesday, 6PM
- Yoga** — Tuesdays, 10:15AM and Thursdays, 5:30PM
- Genealogy Group** — Second Tuesday, 10AM
- Silver Scholars Computer Classes** — Wednesdays, 1:30PM
- Cookbook Club** — Last Monday, 6PM
- Library Staff Meeting** — first Friday, library opens at 11:00

A trip to Nepal changed her life. In the grinding poverty, she saw an opportunity to make a difference. Eventually, she founded an educational foundation that built a school and funded the teaching staff in the remote village of Rawa Dolu for 25 years. Between her own resources and friends in the US, Joanne was able to do many things for the villagers of Rawa Dolu. In addition to the school, she started an adult literacy program with her friend, Jean McCormick, a library and school dormitory with a Swiss educational foundation, and a program to market crafts made by the villagers. Seeing that a rural education for the villagers was not always enough to bring prosperity to Rawa Dolu, Joanne began an ambitious effort to further the education of the more outstanding students she met. She provided scholarship money for some to attend the university in Kathmandu, and established a loan program for some to attend college and graduate school in the United States. If they returned to Nepal to work, she forgave the loans.

Always a diarist, Joanne began to explore other writing styles about the same time she retired from ARC Allegheny. After years of trying her hand at poetry, fiction, and non-fiction, she seemed to hit her writing strength in children's books. She saw the need to add color and pictures to her stories so she hooked-up with Wellesley classmate and illustrator, Helene Horner, to help bring the books alive.



From Joanne's rich Nepali experiences came much of the material for her books, which tell stories of the personalities, cultural aspects, and hopeful attitude of this remote land. Included in these are Joanne's books *A Boy, a Village, and a School*, *The Decision: The Story of Kumar, a Young Gurung*, *Pieces of the Puzzle: The Story of Shyam and*



Ram, Two Rams, and Rawa Dolu: The Story of a Mountain Village.

In 2001, Joanne felt the call to write another children's book in order to share the experiences that she, three of her children, and five of her grandchildren had during an extended family Christmas holiday in Bergen, Norway. Christmas in Norway tells the story of an American family visiting cousins then living in Norway. The book is based on their experiences learning the Norwegian culture, sledding down mountains, making a traditional gingerbread village, and sharing traditional Norwegian Christmas foods.

Joanne still lives in Oakmont, now at Longwood. She has four grown children and seven grandchildren. Currently her family is spread across the Eastern United States, living in Tennessee, South Carolina, Virginia, New York, and Indiana.

ARE LIBRARIES REALLY USED BY PA RESIDENTS?

To answer that question, Access PA picked a random date, October 28, 2009, and asked for volunteer sites to tally the use of the following categories. 505 libraries including 236 school, 221 public, 24 academic and 24 special libraries volunteered.

CATEGORY	ACADEMIC	SCHOOL	SPECIAL	PUBLIC
Print Circ.	4,141	81,885	3,916	86,013
Non-Print Circ.				33,168
Visits	28,804		3,164	89,199
Reference?'s	595		564	20,271
Class attendance		996/classes 40,541		
Computer Use	31,559	14,115	5,682	17,694
Volunteers		408		711
Children's Programs				285/7,984
Teen Programs				58/650
Adult Programs	35/632			149/1,773
Computer Classes				53/276
Other				121/626
Class Visits				79/1,440
Outreach			56/395	106/1,703
Requests		1,038	6,252	
IL Loans	1,254			

After reading the chart, one can say that PA residents really do USE their libraries.