

Book Notes



Our Mission: To connect children with their incarcerated moms through the joy of literature.

What's Happening?

We LOVE our volunteers at WSP! So we celebrated in their honor one Sunday in May at the LCRA Redbud Center. Judith Dulling, founder and president, recognized over 50 volunteers who attended, and many others unable to join us that day, for their time and talent.

Thank you for all that you do, for

all that you give, and for all that you represent to Women's Storybook Project. We couldn't do it without you!

We had more special guests that day—a former WSP participant and her daughter. We are so glad they reached out to us to prove **turning pages does turn lives.**



Dugie and David Graham, volunteer couple



Judith Dullnig (center), with program alumnis

Our founder, **Judith Dullnig**, has passed the baton after 14 years at the helm of WSP. See Closing Circle, p. 4, for more.



A scrumptious spread and a good read at the luncheon.

We held the **1st Annual Women's Storybook Project Luncheon** in April at the Austin Country Club. The event sold out—new friends and donors filled 32 tables and pledged \$160,000 over the next three years.

A big THANK YOU to our **underwriters, table hosts, guests and volunteers** for making this event such a success!



The Invisible String winners from the luncheon!

The luncheon represented another major milestone for WSP: it was the launch of a new program, "**The Readers Circle.**" Twenty-two new members joined in support of the WSP mission to connect children with their incarcerated mothers through the joy of literature.

It is our hope that this support program will continue to garner new members and enable the organization to expand into more Texas Department of Criminal Justice units.



Dell team (left to right): Ingrid Lopez, Albert Navarro, Glenda Marquez, Dan Connor, Michelle Strawn, and Nate Newberry

in other news ...

We have procured stickers to "tag" our books. Soon, **WSP will be represented inside every book that children receive through our program.** Look inside the cover of the next book you record to see how WSP is spreading the "word" even more!

Google is partnering with WSP to brainstorm the next generation of recording moms' voices. Stay tuned for updates on this exciting opportunity!

We will launch WSP in the **Hobby unit** of TDCJ in October. Look for more info in the next issue of **Book Notes.**

WSP has been connecting children with their moms in the **Lockhart** and **San Saba** units since 2016. These mothers are grateful to participate in the program.



Ladies of Lockhart: on a mission!



Joshua United Methodist Church in Joshua, Texas, has donated 250 new children's books in both Spanish and English. Thank you to Palmer Byerley and his team for a great job!



Mr. and Mrs. Foster with their grandchildren

Cheer Up Charlies, a local establishment in downtown Austin and around the corner from the WSP office, graciously collected \$450 and new books from their regular customers. Thanks also to the Amplify Austin website, where they learned about the Women's Storybook Project.



Brittany Malm, sound engineer, Cheer Up Charlie's

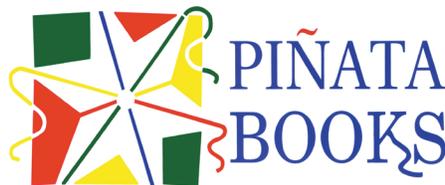
Cindy Fehring of The Pilot Club of Baytown, Baytown, Texas, is very supportive of the work in the units in Dayton, Texas. Her group donated \$250.

Three-year old Lila and her family, asked for children's books to donate to Women's Storybook Project in lieu of presents for Lila's birthday. Through gifts, they were able to donate 31 books to WSP!



Happy birthday, Lila!

Arte Público Press recently donated a case of bilingual books from Piñata Books, Arte Público's children's imprint. WSP volunteer, Becky Spohn, attended a writer's conference and met Gabriela Baeza Ventura, executive editor of Arte Público Press. Ms. Ventura was on the panel at the conference and was moved by Becky's description of our program. Thank you to Becky and Arte Público!



Southwestern University student volunteers spent a Saturday afternoon tagging our inventory of books with the new WSP stickers. We can't wait to see them ship out!

Other supports to Women's Storybook Project include:

Gamma Nu Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma, Mona Bonds

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church outreach committee, Susan Robertson, outreach coordinator

Westlake United Methodist Church Kim Rowe Lusero and Patricia Newton, for their presentation to members of their church outreach committee

Pi Delta Phi Sorority The Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation, for their book donation



Julie Finch, foundation president, and Carol Barnwell, WSP volunteer

Thank you to the many businesses, individuals, friends and community organizations for your continued support. Your gift makes a difference!

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BOOK NOTES

WOMEN'S STORYBOOK PROJECT OF TEXAS

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Board of Directors

Judith Dullnig | president & founder
Nancy Botkin | vice president
Linda Cox, PhD | secretary
David Graham | treasurer
Leonard Chaikind | advisor

Tricia Bakke | executive director

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Volunteer Spotlight



The WSP Dayton volunteer group was excited to welcome Jackie Berner in 2014 to the group as their new technology chair. Her expertise, pleasant personality and willingness to help others learn to use computers and new techniques has made her a valuable team member.

Jackie grew up and started her married life in the Houston area, then moved to SAn Antonio, where she lived for more than 17 years. Her late husband was employed with Valero Energy during those years when the company experienced tremendous growth and expansion throughout the world as a major oil and gas production and refinery company. Recently retired, Jackie spent over 40 years as a registered nurse working with dialysis patients.

Following her move back to the Houston area, Jackie was looking to renew old friendships and to fill her time with the right opportunity when an old high school friend introduced her to WSP on Facebook. "It has been a great experience because I have always been interested in technology," Jackie said. She is a member of First Baptist Church in Humble, and she volunteers part-time at

the preschool welcome desk in addition to serving as a cofacilitator for Griefshare, a program that helps people deal with the loss of a loved one.

Collecting Stephen King books and making floral wreaths and seasonal swags are new hobbies for Jackie. She is fortunate to have family nearby and one of her three sisters for a roommate. She is an animal lover to her Chow-mix puppy named Honey, and two cats, Samson and Delilah. Her motto nowadays is, "Whatever life gives you, take it one day at a time."

We at Women's Storybook Project of Texas are so grateful that life has brought us Jackie Berner. Thank you for your time and your service!



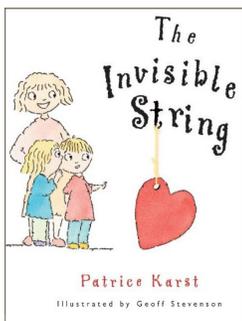
Jackie Berner

Making Connections

Patrice Karst, author of *The Invisible String*, our signature book, reached out to Judith Dullnig after she saw photos from the April luncheon on Facebook.

Ms. Karst was excited to learn that her book had been adopted by WSP and is being shared

with children across the nation. She has offered her support, and may even come to Austin for a special event in support of the project. After all, Storybook has been and will continue to be that "invisible string" that connects incarcerated moms with their children, sharing love and hope through literacy.



... and new connections

WSP is excited to introduce the newest members of our volunteer team. Volunteers are the life-blood of Women's Storybook Project. Without these talented, diverse women, WSP would not be able to meet the demand by TDCJ over the last 15 years. We want to say THANK YOU to all of our volunteers. We appreciate your time, talents and treasure!

Mykeisha Peyton • Kim Mancini
Rev. Tracey Beadle • Jennifer Sanchez
Sheryl Cox Weber • Michele Freeman
Kathy Balsamo • Kelly Blumhagen
Haley Keith • Melanie Eyck Alberts
Diane Cooney • Susan Pekoe
Brittini Brimhall • Jeanne Ickes

Remember to like/follow
us on Facebook!

Mark Your Calendars

Mark your calendars so you don't miss out on all of the fun!

April 26, 2018 is the date for our 2nd annual fundraising luncheon. We will celebrate WSP's 15th anniversary. Call our office at 512-861-5110 if you would like to be an underwriter for the event. You can also email us at info@storybookproject.org.

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| October 26 | Reader's Circle wine & cheese |
| October 29 | team leaders quarterly meeting |
| November 4-5 | Texas Book Festival |
| November 2017 | Barnes & Noble book fairs every weekend |
| March 2018 | Amplify Austin |
| April 26, 2018 | annual luncheon, "Celebrating 15 Years" |



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Closing Circle

Dear volunteers and supporters,
May was a month of transition for Women's Storybook Project of Texas! I'm pleased to write that WSP has a new, salaried executive director, [Tricia Bakke](#), and I had the pleasure to introduce her to our program. In June, she met WSP leaders, and I shared with her the special qualities of each unit.

I never imagined that I would one day start a non-profit, and certainly not one that involved female prisons. This was not on my bucket list! But I have had an exciting journey over the years developing this program. In addition to helping children and mothers of this neglected population, I've met so many wonderful people—volunteers, prison administrators and supporters. It's hard to believe this program began with five volunteers traveling to one

prison, carrying in four tape recorders and 25 books. We now have over 200 volunteers who serve eight prisons, and we mail CDs with the books. We have successfully held our first annual



fundraising luncheon, completed a strategic plan for the future, and have connected with our first “alumni,” a mother and her daughter who benefited from our program.

But there is more to do, and I believe that Tricia will successfully take us to that next level. She has experience in non-profit development, and she has great ideas for our future!

Although I have left the role of executive director, I will remain as president of the board. And I have been making plans for beginning our program in a ninth prison, the Hobby Unit in Marlin, Texas.

Thank you for supporting WSP in so many ways over the years! You have helped make this such a unique program, and you have given me so many special memories. I feel confident in Tricia's abilities and in the future of Women's Storybook Project of Texas.

Warmest regards,