

## A Note from your Coordinator

Dear Volunteers and Supporters of WSP,

File folders are stacked on one side of my desk, the number of documents saved in my computer is increasing and many post-it-notes are scattered on my bulletin board. This is a busy time of year, not only with Thanksgiving (at the time of this writing) and the holidays, but for Women's Storybook Project, too. You'll be reading about all the exciting things that are happening with WSP, not only in Gatesville, but also in the Houston area. These happenings wouldn't be possible without you wonderful volunteers and supporters. Once you have read "Making Connections" in this issue, I think you will feel proud to be part of this special program.

Happy Holidays,

*Judith*



### Heightened Security in Texas Prisons



In late October, Governor Rick Perry ordered a lockdown and suspended visitations in all Texas prisons after authorities learned an inmate had made threatening calls to a Texas state senator from a cell phone smuggled into death row. In the aftermath of the lockdown, there have been many changes. The change most directly affecting WSP is the tightening of security at all facilities.

In particular, check in procedures at the four Gatesville facilities have changed. Volunteers should be prepared to have a metal detector wand passed over their bodies, to be patted down, and to remove belts, outer coats/sweaters, and shoes. Clear water bottles will be allowed,

*(continued on page 4—Security)*

### Storybook Goes “Live” on the Web

Thanks to the efforts of Webmaster Lisa Cowan of Cowan Services, Women's Storybook Project of Texas now has a website. The pro bono site is cleverly designed with rotating letters written by recipient children and their caregivers. Current sponsors and supporters are acknowledged and there are easy links to volunteer applications, Book Notes, and the Austin American Statesman June 2006 article. It will soon offer an easy link to those wishing to donate by credit card.

The website first functioned the weekend of the Texas Book Festival, November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. It has had several “hits” and three interested people have already downloaded the application to become volunteers! Check it out at [www.storybookproject.org](http://www.storybookproject.org) and be sure to tell your family, friends and co-workers about it as well! 📱



## What's Happening?

**Ilene Gray** took to heart the request in our last issue of Book Notes for connections to Houston area volunteers. She contacted her Houston area aunt, **Ellie Chaikind**, who has downloaded the volunteer application, told her temple, and enthusiastically embraced this opportunity to serve. Ellie contacted Judith Dullnig, and, as a result, on Mitzvah Day, Dec. 7, Judy Fox and Judith Dullnig will address the congregation at the temple, Houston Congregation for Reformed Judaism, in the hopes of securing more volunteers for the Houston area.

**Mountain View**, the fourth Gatesville facility to offer WSP, initiated its first session on Sept. 13 with Angela Nunley leading. Although it opened with a small group of mothers, more participants are expected as the facility smooths out the process.

**Christine Joannidi**, a WSP volunteer, mentioned our program to a University of Texas at Austin journalism student, **Courtney Slade**. Courtney would like to write an article about WSP as her final story for her class.

**Lisa Cowan**, WSP website designer, is working to make donations possible on-line.

**Women's Storybook Project** is a recipient for the **Juanita Peterson Fund**.



## Can you help?

Contact  
**Judith Dullnig**  
(512) 560-8739  
[jjdull@earthlink.net](mailto:jjdull@earthlink.net)

- Technology Chairman: WSP is in need of a "tecky" volunteer who would be willing to assist with electronic communications; i.e. sending e-mails out to volunteers.
- Volunteer Coordinator for the Barnes and Noble Holiday Book Drive 2009 should WSP be chosen as its community project again.

## Making Connections

A heartfelt letter written by a caregiver after receiving her first delivery of books



*Dear Ms. Dullnig,*

*I am writing to let you know that my grandchildren received their books and tapes from their mother. It was a big surprise to all of us as we had no idea that this program was in existence. When we opened the package and I read your letter out loud to the girls they had such a look of surprise and confusion on their faces.*

*The three year old didn't really understand until we explained it to her but the 12 year old was so surprised and excited to hear the tape of her mom's voice that she just cried. Together we listened to the story to the 3 year old and she just kept saying "OK Mommy" every time she was told to turn the page. It was as though she was communicating with her mom for the first time in almost a year.*

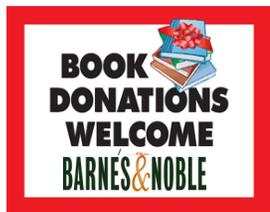
*The 12 year old cried a lot because she misses her mom so and she chose to listen to her tape in private as she wanted to just sit and hear her mom's voice. My daughter picked a book that she and my granddaughter saw the movie together and that meant so much to my granddaughter.*

*I think this is wonderful program and I thank you so much for allowing my daughter to participate. It means so much to be able to play the tape again and again when the girls need to hear their mom and it seems to give them quiet time with her. I, too, was so happy to be able to hear my daughter's voice and I can't thank you enough.*

*Sincerely,*

*a caregiver*

## Barnes and Noble Booksellers Book Drive for WSP



Two of Barnes and Noble Booksellers stores are currently sponsoring a book drive to benefit WSP. Last year, the book drive netted 2500 books to be enjoyed by the children of incarcerated mothers in Texas! Sometimes the most unexpected things happen at events such as this. For example, Judy Darnell, who was volunteering at the Arboretum B&N, was asked by a customer if WSP accepts donations. He left and returned later with a cash donation of two one hundred dollar bills! Judy Fox, at the Brodie location, reported three potential volunteers requested information regarding how to get involved.

This year's drive began on November 1 and will end December 13. People are encouraged to buy a book and leave it in the specified location at one of the two participating B&N stores (Arboretum and Sunset Valley/ Brodie Lane). Children's books appropriate for ages 1-12 are needed. As this is an interfaith organization, only non-religious books are accepted.

Please inform your organizations, schools, churches, synagogues, and businesses about this effort. Fliers and brochures are available from our director, Judith Dullnig (512-560-8739). This is a wonderful opportunity for people in the community to participate in WSP, and as a bonus, they can be assured that they have helped to put a smile on a child's face!



- **Gloria Kelly, Shirley Dyer, Ronit Kublick, Betty Frnka, Norma McCauley, Susan Ivy, Pat Yeargain, Linda Cox, Susan Pintchovski, Ruby Russo, Delayna Russo-Perales, Judy Darnell, Judy Fox, Paula Jameson, Lark Anthony, Pam Rhodes, Vivian Hemme, Madelle Grussendorf, Kate Moss and Judith Dullnig** for offering to be "greeters" during the Barnes and Noble Holiday Book Drive. People donate more books when a volunteer is able to tell them about Storybook Project.
- **Manager Loretta Blanton and the Great American Storage crew** in Round Rock for supporting WSP by making Team Leader Judy Darnell's job of mailing books so convenient.
- **Karen Harrell of Bad Women of the Bible**, a women's group in Houston, for collecting books, money, and mailers in anticipation of the arrival of WSP at the Plane Henley facility there.
- **Ruby Russo** for accepting the responsibility of being co-leader for Mountain View.
- **Marcy Hursting, Liz Davis, and Judith Dullnig** for helping with the Texas Book Festival WSP presentation table. Also, **Lydia Hewitt**, who dropped by the table and stayed to help.
- **Lisa Cowan** for donating time and expertise in designing the WSP website.
- **Linda Cox** from Westlake Methodist Church for submitting a grant proposal to the Juanita Peterson Fund. This fund facilitates projects for women sponsored by a United Methodist Church in the Austin District.
- **Kim Bohls**, a student in Jeri Saper's Jazzercise class, who organized a book drive after hearing about Jeri's Saturday at Mt. View. Westlake swimmers brought new children's books to their Spirit Dinner.

*"While incarcerated, my first grandchild was born and I missed his birth. Reading to him allowed me to introduce myself, (his grandma), and to connect with him through this program. I am truly grateful for that. Thank you to all who made it possible."*



## Volunteer Spotlight

### Pat Roberts and Lynne Riley

Pat Roberts of Leander and Lynne Riley of Cedar Park are team leaders for the Hilltop unit. Each of these ladies brings a special flavor to the WSP family.

Pat has lived in Texas ever since 1983, when her native Texan husband, Steve, grew tired of Vermont winters. They have three grown daughters, Kerri, Kristin, and Katrina and 10 children call her "Grammie". Pat particularly enjoys doing crafts with the grandchildren.

Pat has a B.S. in Elementary Education from Johnson State College in Vermont. She is a retired sixth grade language arts teacher, a member of the Good News United Methodist Church where she serves as a Sunday school teacher, and is a certified graphoanalyst (analyses handwriting for personality traits). She enjoys crafts, photography, swimming, and playing games with friends.

Pat has been with WSP for two and a half years, serving as team leader for Hilltop since it opened, and writing the articles for Book Notes. She is especially grateful for the blessing of her family, and wants to give back by donating time to WSP in the hopes of helping the children of incarcerated mothers. "Going to Gatesville each month is not a sacrifice for me; it is a privilege. To help a mother and child bond in difficult circumstances is very fulfilling."

Lynne Riley, Pat's co-leader for Hilltop, and her husband, Brette, have two grown children, Joe and Jennifer. She has two grandsons, Jerry and Elliott, who are the lights of her life. She has an education degree from Baker University in Kansas, a Methodist school, which is the oldest educational institution in Kansas. Lynne and Brette left her native Kansas when his food services job moved them to Texas.

For the past 32 years, Lynne has listened to

the school bells ring. Currently, she teaches grade three at Deer Creek Elementary in Leander ISD. A member of Good News United Methodist Church, she is a pianist and plays for worship services. She has an avid love for music, and in the past has led a youth hand bell choir in Gunnison, Colorado, and has even won an alpenhorn contest in Switzerland!

She has been with Storybook for two and a half years. While teaching in Paris, Texas, several of her students suffered the pain of having an incarcerated parent. She was especially



Pat Roberts and Lynne Riley

touched by an offender's recent story: her child had taken the book and tape to school, and the teacher, validating that child's need, played the tape for the entire class. Lynne was impressed by this teacher's sensitivity, and like her, wishes to make a difference in the families of incarcerated mothers.

***"My mother told me that this was the best thing I could have done for my son while incarcerated. It brought me back into his everyday life. Thank you all volunteers!"***

***(Security— continued from page 1)***

but must be sealed and may not contain more than 20 ounces. Team Leaders should place all necessary personal belongings (keys, paperwork, etc.) in a clear Zip-loc type bag.

Since the check in process takes a little more time, it is recommended that teams arrive 15 minutes earlier than in the past. 

## A Family Affair

No, it's not Uncle Bill, Cissy, Jody, and Miss Beasley! It's Ruby, Dalayna, and Rachael!

All three of these family members have become involved in Women's Storybook Project. Ruby Russo, the mother, read the Austin American Statesman June 2006 article (link on [www.storybookproject.org](http://www.storybookproject.org)), "Mothers' Voices Reach Beyond Bars". Inspired, she completed an application and shared the information with her daughter, Dalayna Perales.



Ruby Russo with daughter Dalayna Russo-Perales

She, too, was excited at the idea; and mother and daughter began making trips to Gatesville together. As they talked about their experiences, Rachael Cromey, another daughter, began advocating for WSP by sharing the project's concepts and stories with her sleep study patients. Now Rachael has decided to experience it for herself and has completed

the application to become a volunteer as well. Welcome, Rachael!

Making WSP a family affair this holiday season could be gratifying for your entire family. A customer, while shopping at Barnes and Noble during the Holiday Book Drive, learned about WSP. She was going to suggest everyone bring a new book when they gather for the holidays. Even the youngest members of the family will enjoy picking out a book for another child. What a special way to remember those less fortunate!



Family often extends into our community in our faith families, work families, and other social affiliations. If your "extended family" is looking for a community service project, suggest donating books, padded mailers, or financial support for postage and equipment. Sara Paddison said it best in Hidden Power of the Heart: "We are one big family of people, trying to make our way through the unfolding puzzle of life. We are all connected to one another in the heart. Connecting with the ultimate source of love is possible through discovering the hidden power in your heart." Discover the hidden power of love in YOUR heart through volunteering for WSP.



**Has your address changed ?  
Make a financial contribution ?  
Add a supporter to the mailing list ?**

**Women's Storybook Project of Texas  
c/o Austin Community Foundation  
P.O. Box 5159 Austin, TX 78763**



**WSP thanks  
PILLAR TO POST  
THE HOME OF HOME INSPECTION  
(512) 515-0021  
for donating the printing and  
distribution of Book Notes**

### Who's Who

<b>Judith Dullnig</b> , Coordinator	<a href="mailto:jjdull@earthlink.net">jjdull@earthlink.net</a>
<b>Judy Fox</b> , Volunteer Chair	<a href="mailto:jzfox@sbcglobal.net">jzfox@sbcglobal.net</a>
<b>Felicia Kutchey</b> , Scheduling Chair	<a href="mailto:r2fkutchey1@yahoo.com">r2fkutchey1@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Sylvia Fitz</b> , Supplies Chair	<a href="mailto:sfitz22@austin.rr.com">sfitz22@austin.rr.com</a>
<b>Kathy Brothers</b> , Communications Chair	<a href="mailto:kdbrothers@hotmail.com">kdbrothers@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Pat Roberts</b> , Newsletter Chair	<a href="mailto:pastrob@swbell.net">pastrob@swbell.net</a>
<b>Angela Nunley</b> , Newsletter Production Chair	<a href="mailto:angelanunley@gmail.com">angelanunley@gmail.com</a>
<b>Nancy Wallace</b> , Lane Murray Team Leader	<a href="mailto:nweichertwallace@satx.rr.com">nweichertwallace@satx.rr.com</a>
<b>Paula Jameson</b> , Lane Murray Team Leader	<a href="mailto:tmys@austin.rr.com">tmys@austin.rr.com</a>
<b>Judy Darnell</b> , Woodman Team Leader	<a href="mailto:adarnell@austin.rr.com">adarnell@austin.rr.com</a>
<b>Liz Davis</b> , Woodman Team Leader	<a href="mailto:bbqliz@austin.rr.com">bbqliz@austin.rr.com</a>
<b>Pat Roberts</b> , Hilltop Team Leader	<a href="mailto:patsrob@swbell.net">patsrob@swbell.net</a>
<b>Lynne Riley</b> , Hilltop Team Leader	<a href="mailto:lynne_riley@sbcglobal.net">lynne_riley@sbcglobal.net</a>
<b>Angela Nunley</b> , Mt. View Team Leader	<a href="mailto:angelanunley@gmail.com">angelanunley@gmail.com</a>
<b>Ruby Russo</b> , Mt. View Team Leader	<a href="mailto:whoisrubyrusso@yahoo.com">whoisrubyrusso@yahoo.com</a>





Austin Community Foundation  
 P.O. Box 5159  
 Austin, TX 78763



## LOOK AHEAD !

**WSP Volunteers, keep your eye out! The new sign up calendar for January – June 2009 will soon be e-mailed. Reserve your dates with Felicia ASAP. The second Saturday of every month, teams will be going to Woodman Jail and Mt. View. The third Saturday of every month, Hilltop and Lane Murray will need volunteers! Sign up early!**

**Save a few of these dates:**

**Jan 10, 17    Feb 14, 21    Mar 14, 21**  
**Apr 11, 18    May 16, 23    June 13, 20**



	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	DEC 28	29	30	31	1	2	3
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