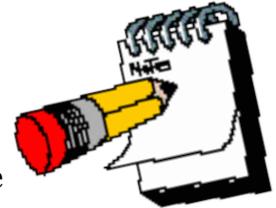


## A Note from your Director

Dear WSP Volunteers and Supporters,

Although an issue of Book Notes was skipped, here we are!!! As we grow, so does the need for more people to help with this quarterly publication. Please contact me if you're interested in helping.



This is a busy season for WSP and here are a few of the happenings:

Several people stopped by the WSP table at the Texas Book Festival to listen to volunteers talk enthusiastically about our program. At the beginning of the festival, a man stopped to learn about us, returning an hour later. "Do you accept donations?" he asked. I responded with a loud, "Yes, thank you!" As he left the table he said, "This is a great program and you are all doing good work."

The Barnes and Noble at Arboretum is sponsoring us for their Holiday Book Drive during the month of November. Dugie Graham has set up a Volunteer Spot sign-up schedule. Please help by being a greeter. Book People is including us on their giving tree, and we'll help with a story hour on December 15. The book drive at Georgetown Grace Episcopal Church collected 189 books!

Also, please read about the large campaign in Lakeway! This is a very, very exciting fundraiser for WSP. As always, thank you, wonderful volunteers and supporters. Happy Thanksgiving. And as the donor at the book festival said, "You are all doing good work!"

## The Hills are Alive!

by Betsy McCraine



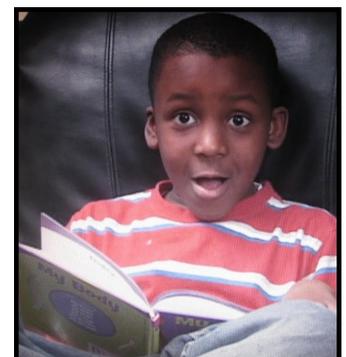
Some Committee members:)  
Brenda Rickert, Betsy McCraine, Dwyce Ratliff, and George Rickert

I sit on the Social Members Committee of The Hills of Lakeway Country Club. Each year, we support a not-for-profit organization. Imagine my excitement when I mentioned how touched I was with the Storybook Project, and the Committee immediately accepted it as our charity for 2012!

(continued on page 3—**Hills**)

## A Marvel in Maine

By Judith Dullnig



Everything is fine now, but I had a brief stay in the emergency room at the Maine Coast Memorial Hospital in Ellsworth, Maine.

While I was being examined, the attractive, friendly, interested doctor asked me about myself and wanted to know what I did; work, etc. It was certainly a successful way to distract me! I eagerly and enthusiastically began telling her

(continued on page 2—**Marvel**)



## Woman's Storybook Project of Texas

[info@storybookproject.org](mailto:info@storybookproject.org)

Director—Judith Dullnig

501(c)3 non-profit organization  
Make your tax free donation payable to:

WSP

700 East 11th Street  
Austin, TX 78701

Donate on line at  
[www.storybookproject.org](http://www.storybookproject.org)

Book Notes Editor—Pat Roberts

*(Marvel- continued from page 1)*

about Women's Storybook Project, a simple idea with a big impact.

After being taken down the hall for further testing, I returned to see the doctor and two nurses hovered over the computer. While I was out of the room, my husband had found the WSP website for them. It was surreal to be laying in a hospital bed listening to the documentary with the attending staff staring at the computer screen. I heard our own Warden Howard say on the computer, " I LOVE this program", watched one of the nurses eyes begin to tear and watched the other nurse leave the room because it was too emotional to watch anymore. They all exclaimed that it was such a wonderful project. 🍷

### A First Timer's Recollections

By Cynthia Winer

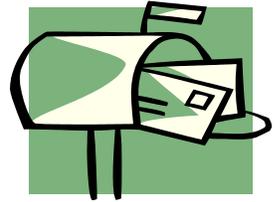
My first experience with the Women's Storybook project was in December 2011. All of us on the team were excited, as we knew the women would be looking forward to getting their books and tapes in the mail, hoping the packages would get to their children by Christmas.

On our drive up to Lane Murray we got a wonderful opportunity to get to know each other. We talked about our families, our

*(continued on page 5—Recollections)*

## Making Connections

A letter from an adoptive mother



April 2010

Dear Women's Storybook Project of Texas,

*We have been very pleased with your program. J\*\*\* is our adopted daughter. Her birthmother, however, is incarcerated in Gatesville, Texas.*

*We've had J\*\*\* since birth. Since it's been almost a year since hearing her birthmother's voice, I don't believe she recognized it.*

*Yet, we are grateful for this experience. It will help J\*\*\* to know as she grows older of the love of her birthmother. It is heartwarming.*

*Thank you for this opportunity of your services,  
An Adoptive Mother*

## 501(c)3 and WSP Board of Directors

In May, Women's Storybook Project received its 501(c)3 status. WSP will still remain under Austin Community Center until a complete financial system is established. Soon after, WSP had its first Board of Directors' meeting. President, Judith Dullnig; Vice-President, Retired Warden Nancy Botkin; Secretary, Linda L. Cox, PhD; and David Graham, Treasurer met at the new office.



WSP Board of Directors, L to R: David Graham, Retired Warden Nancy Botkin, Judith Dullnig, Linda L. Cox, PhD

*(Hills- continued from page 1)*

We will be not only raising money for supplies, but also collecting books at all five of our Club's facilities. Additionally, Committee members will be soliciting businesses in our Lakeway community to support WSP. Articles are planned for our local newspaper, monthly magazine, and the Club's internal newsletter.

I took two of our members to visit Mountain View where they experienced working with the incarcerated mothers in taping books for their children.

Next "Book Notes", I will give you a report of what we have accomplished. I have seen the love and compassion of some wonderful people who want to make a difference in some special children's lives. I cannot tell you how pleased I am with the response of these dedicated and caring people in Lakeway. 🍷

## Newbie Reflections

*By Cynthia Moss*

Admittedly, entering a prison under lock and key and giving up all control to someone else is a little bit daunting. However, knowing the bigger reason behind going and the fact that sixty-three children would be reconnecting with their mothers through reading a book, was justification enough to let go of my own anxiety. The Storybook Program is a true blessing and it is a well thought out, prepared plan that brings hope and comfort to many children. In my experience, the inmates/mothers were nervous but eager to read a book on tape to their child and show their love and support for them even in their absence. Many were moved to tears. I heard no excuses, no casting of blame, no grumbling, only intentions of sharing their love with their children despite their circumstances.

I am blessed to be a part of this program and I look forward to continuing to volunteer. Support of family is so crucial to growing children and to offer an opportunity to allow children to have that verbal contact and that connecting experience in a positive way is beneficial. Thank you to the Storybook creators for implementing this program and continuing to carry it forward. I look forward to becoming more involved. 🍷



- **David Graham, Retired Warden Nancy Botkin, and Linda L. Cox, PhD** for accepting positions on the WSP Board of Directors.
- **The Heineman Foundation, NY, NY** for awarding another generous grant to WSP.
- **Dugie Graham** for helping organize the Texas Book Festival.
- **Judy Darnell, Dugie and David Graham, Judith and Jon Dullnig, Liz Davis, Erika Mittag, Julia Taylor, Samara Siegfried, Anne Duncan, Susan Hardaway, Nancy Snyder, Amy Clift, and Mary Lou Batlan** for helping at the Texas Book Festival.
- **Betsy McCraine and Pat Yeargain** for their presentation about Storybook to members of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church.
- **Pat Yeargain** for connecting WSP with Dr. Pollack and a student at Texas State University.
- A hearty thank you to **all the volunteers** who helped us move to our new office space.
- **Steve Nunley** for helping to acquire and set up the new office computer.
- **Brenda Rickert and Betsy McCraine** for wonderful organization and enthusiasm in encouraging The Hills of Lakeway Country Club to choose Storybook as its charity for 2012.
- **Pat Roberts** for finding a source for ordering the tape recorders.
- **Rhonda Chandler** for the years that she was a team leader at Plane State Jail.
- **JoAn and Kelly Martin** for putting a new lock on the storage cabinet at Plane State Jail.
- **Wanda Stimson and her team** for organizing the Georgetown Grace Episcopal Church Book Drive. 189 new books were collected, valued at \$1,381.90.



## Volunteer Spotlight

### Betsy McCraine

Betsy McCraine is a Co-Team Leader for Mt. View, serving at that facility with Pat Yeargain. Betsy lives in Lakeway and has been instrumental in mobilizing that community to support Storybook.

Betsy grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, where her father had a candy factory. She says their dentist was their family's best friend! She attended Golf Park Junior College in Mississippi and then went to LSU, where she had the fortune to meet her husband, Bob. Bob's job with Olympic Airways brought them to Texas, although he is now a part time registered nurse at St. David's. Bob and Betsy raised two daughters, Charlotte and Margaret. Charlotte is married, lives in Dallas, and has two "very cute, very brilliant" little girls. She owns the Cake Ball Company of Dallas. Margaret is a massage therapist, living in Alaska. Betsy and Bob enjoy visiting her in the summer.

Betsy has a B.S. in Elementary Education which has served her well in the 30+ years she has spent teaching elementary grades in Houston, Dallas, and finally Austin. She spent the last 18 years of her career at Lake Travis. In retirement, she continues to substitute teach and tutor students.

Betsy and her husband have enjoyed traveling to many places, but she most enjoys her trips where she has been involved in mission work. She went to Nicaragua and assisted in instructing teachers there. In March, she is looking forward to another mission-oriented trip, this time to Tanzania. She has also chaired a committee assisting the Heifer Project with buying a couple of Arks, which is two of every Heifer animal im-



proving lives of many families around the world.

About five years ago, the priest at St. Matthew's Episcopal took her aside and said, "Betsy, I think you should go to jail!" After the initial confusion was explained away by an eager Pat Yeargain who told her about Storybook, Betsy agreed. At first, she went only occasionally, but then, on a trip to Gatesville, Betsy sat with Judith Dullnig in the van and Judith planted the "you can be a leader" seed. Soon, Betsy signed on to co-lead with Pat, and now she goes as often as she can. Betsy's goals are simple, yet driving: to do and be the best she can be each day. She has certainly lived up to this goal in her efforts to get the word out about WSP. Being active on the Social Committee of the Hills of Lakeway Country Club, she has been a driving force behind the fundraising efforts of that organization (see the article "The Hills are Alive" in this issue of Book Notes).

Betsy says she loves and respects Women's Storybook Project. "This ministry is an outreach to children and incarcerated mothers who need someone to care. I am proud to be on board with this richly rewarding project." Betsy McCraine, we are proud to have you on board, also! 🍷



### Can you help?

A Co Team leader to work with Cynthia Weiner at Lane Murray is urgently needed. Please help! Nancy Wallace (from San Antonio) has done this for many years and needs a break. This is a shared leadership position with "on-the-job" training!

Call Judith if you would be willing to help.

*(Recollections - continued from page 2)*

faith connections. In the car I learned the routine for our recording process once we arrived at Lane Murray.

We arrived in Gatesville and had lunch at Pruitt's Shell station. It was very exciting to meet the large number of volunteers seated at one long table in the back of Pruitt's. Two teams were there that morning, working to bring Storybook to both the Hilltop and the Lane Murray Units.

Nancy Wallace, our team leader, collected our licenses and off we went to Lane Murray. You could see the officers' faces light up as they discovered which volunteer group we were with. The next stop was security. It didn't bother me; it just seemed necessary for everyone's safety. When we were all cleared, we waited for our escort guard to take us to the chapel.

Once in the chapel, Nancy Wallace began our circle with greetings and reminders to the women on the day's process. We went around and introduced ourselves, and the women talked about who they were reading for that day. As I looked around at these women who had worked hard to earn the right to be there that day, I was surprised at the diversity of age and race. Some look like they could be my next door neighbor or the lady driving next to me on MoPac. Many of the women had taken much time to prepare their hair and their make-up. Except for the white uniform and the green jackets, all of us, volunteers and offenders, looked the same. But our stories are different.

Our recording began, and I was happy to get to work! What was very surprising was how polite, generous with their thanks and very excited about recording for their children these women were. It was great fun to work with them and imagine the impact that the tape and book will have on a child when they get to hear their mom's voice.

When we finished recording, we gathered up all the packages and headed back through the gates and out to the parking lot. The team was very excited—not so much by what we had done but from what the women had given us. The euphoria we felt individually was shared with one another in the car on the trip back to Austin. We had been a part of connecting a mother and her child. We helped get literature into the home and helped a mom feel really good about doing something special for her child that December afternoon.

Once I got home and shared my day with my husband, I knew I'd go back. I knew I'd take the TDJC training and keep heading to Gatesville to do my part in providing an opportunity for a connection. I also knew I'd call my mom that night and let her know how special she is. 🍷

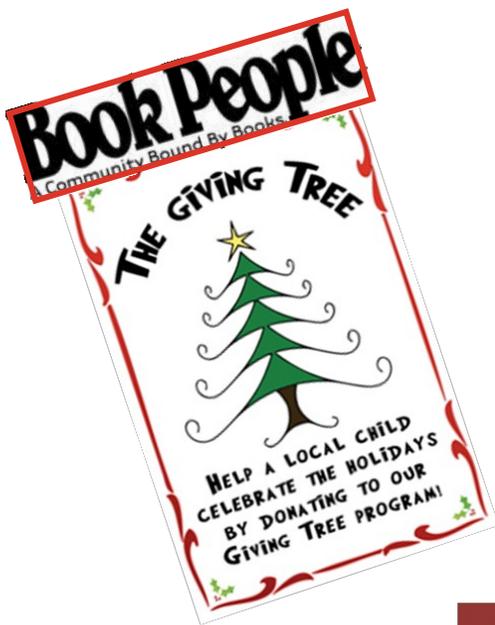


## What's Happening?

- In May, the first board meeting for our new 501(c)3 was held.
- The Arboretum Barnes and Noble Holiday Book Drive will be collecting new books for WSP during the month of November.
- Book People, an Austin independent book store, will include WSP on their Giving Tree during the holidays. Customers can take a tag from the tree and then donate a book. WSP will be included in the Book People Story Hour on December 15<sup>th</sup>.
- WSP has moved into the new office: same address, different space.
- Once again, WSP hosted a table at the Texas Book Festival on October 27 and 28. This is a yearly source of donations and new volunteers for WSP.
- SAVE THE DATE! On February 10, 2013, Dugie and David Graham have graciously offered their home for a Storybook Project Valentine's Party. Bring your Valentine or WSP friend. There's lots to celebrate! (For volunteers and friends who are unable to come to Austin, plans are in the making for a social gathering closer to Dayton.)
- WSP will be featured in the December issue of Community Impact newspaper.
- Projects are underway with students from Texas State University and Rice University. More information to come!



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**Our Holiday  
Book Drive  
Partners  
Fill Our Supply  
Room!**

