

Book Notes



WOMEN'S
STORYBOOK
PROJECT
OF TEXAS

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

What's Happening?

New Unit Launching in November

WSP now serves eight facilities! Our inaugural visit to the Lockhart Correctional Facility is Saturday, November 12th. Lockhart is an easy 40-mile drive from Austin. We visit on 2nd Saturdays.

New Unit Seeking Team Leaders

The Riverside sub-unit of the Christina Melton Crain Unit in Gatesville is ready for WSP, but we need two team leaders before we can serve there! E-mail info@storybookproject.org if you are interested in this role!

Corporate Sponsors Added

Oakwood Anesthesia Associates is our newest "Book"-level corporate sponsor with a donation of \$1K! Sutliff & Stout, Injury & Accident Law Firm, is a new "Chapter"-level corporate sponsor with a donation of \$500!

Killeen Heights Rotary Club Visited



WSP was the focus of the August Killeen Heights Rotary Club meeting presentation, resulting in donations and new volunteers!

Recent Presentations Held

- Salado United Methodist Church, Salado, by Nancy Phillips (October 10)
- Temple Beth Shalom Austin by Jeri Saper and Judith Dullnig (October 28)
- St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, San Antonio, by Nancy Wallace and Judith Dullnig (November 3)

New Supply Manager Needed

Our fabulous Austin-area supply manager, Lydia Hewett, is stepping down from this role to spend more time serving in prisons. E-mail info@storybookproject.org if you are interested in helping order/manage/distribute the supplies that keep our program running! You will have help from our administrative assistant, Sun Connor.



Lydia passing along supplies to Lynne Riley and Pat Yeargain

Texas Book Festival

WSP is again participating in the wonderful annual Texas Book Festival, held on the grounds of our state capitol November 5-6. TBF is a great place to recruit volunteers and support. Thank you to all our volunteers who turned out!



Get Involved

Fall and winter typically are our most fruitful seasons in recruiting volunteers and raising funds. Because you already understand the power of our program, YOU are our best ambassadors! Here are some upcoming opportunities to promote WSP—please help!

Austin-Area Holiday Book Drives

Barnes & Noble at the Hill Country Galleria joins our long-time supporter B&N Sunset Valley in naming WSP as their Holiday Book Drive recipient for November and December!! Please find a friend and grab a shift! You are NOT expected to sell books.



We also hope to recruit Boy and Girl Scout troops, school service organizations, book clubs, etc. to help us staff the drives.

[Sign up here for B&N Sunset Valley.](#)
[Sign up here for B&N HC Galleria.](#)

Or e-mail support@storybookproject.org with questions or to connect us with a group that can help.

Saint John's Methodist Austin

Alternative Gift Market

People may make gifts to WSP in honor of their family and friends. Would you be able to volunteer at our table on Saturday, December 3, for one of our two shifts? E-mail info@storybookproject.org to sign up or for more information.

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Amplify Austin E-mail us at admin@storybookproject.org for more info or to help plan WSP's participation in this annual philanthropy event, held each year in March.

Director's Message

Dear Volunteers and Supporters,

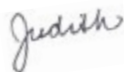
I hope that all had an easy summer. Fall is here, and WSP activities are ramping up again. There's a plethora of presentations, parties, and book drives, special stories, and two new corporate sponsors!

We continue to grow, having added a new unit. The wardens at the Lockhart Unit have been very welcoming, and we already have two team leaders. We also are just around the corner from serving the first sub-unit at the Crain prison in Gatesville—a major milestone!

WSP is such a wonderful, unique program, and we have come a long way. In thirteen years we have grown from five volunteers in one prison, to over 200 volunteers serving seven—soon to be eight—prisons! But we have more to do and more people to reach—children of incarcerated moms, the moms, and future WSP donors and volunteers. I've also had an opportunity to counsel many in other states on starting similar programs in their areas. The future is bright for Women's Storybook Project!

I look forward to seeing you at a prison, a party, a presentation, or a book drive! Without you, WSP would not be the special program it is. Thank you!

Warmest regards,



Fall 2016

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BOOK NOTES

WOMEN'S STORYBOOK PROJECT OF TEXAS

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Board of Directors

Judith Dullnig | President & Founder
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[Linda Carey & Debra Taylor](#) for serving as our new team leaders for San Saba.

[Kim McDonald & Karen McMahon](#) for accepting the roles as our team leaders for Lockhart.

[Deborah Stevenson](#) for inviting WSP to speak to the Killeen Heights Rotary Club, and to the club for its donation.

[Nancy Wallace](#) for serving as a substitute team leader in Gatesville, as well as being a presenter and representative for WSP at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, San Antonio.

[Mona Carver & Jeri Saper](#) for organizing the upcoming WSP presentation at Temple Beth Shalom.

[Ellen Balthazar, Linda Cox, Judith Dullnig, David Graham, Lisa Holleran, & Nancy Phillips](#) for working on WSP's strategic plan.

[Andy Darnell](#) for supporting Oakwood Anesthesia Associates in a new corporate sponsorship.

[Wanda Stimson](#), for 10 years of service to WSP as a volunteer, fundraiser, and recruiter for more volunteers!



Wanda in action for WSP.

[Matthew Green, Hank Stout, & Graham Suttlif](#) for supporting Suttlif & Stout in a new corporate sponsorship.

[Oakwood Anesthesia Associates](#), our newest "Book"-level corporate sponsor with a donation of \$1K!

[Suttlif & Stout, Injury & Accident Law Firm](#), our newest "Chapter"-level corporate sponsor with a donation of \$500!

Each month the [students at St. Thomas Episcopal School](#) participate in the Matthew:25 project, which refers to the Biblical verse "whatever you did for the of the least of these, you did for me." It teaches the chil-



dren to give to others in a caring, loving way. This September and last September, Storybook Project has been the recipient of the Matthew 25 Project. The children from preschool through 5th grade participate in the project. The school has about 160 students.



**AUSTIN CANYON
CORPORATION**
GENERAL CONTRACTOR
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

**Oakwood
Anesthesia
Associates**

Volunteer Spotlight

"I think the Women's Storybook Project is amazing because it provides a way for kids to connect with their moms. And every child deserves a relationship with his or her mom."

~Beshar Garcia

At ten years old, **Beshar Garcia** is among WSP's youngest volunteers. Beshar is the son of Sara and Ryan Garcia, and big brother to Isaac. When asked about his connection to Storybook, Beshar explains,

"Three years ago, I went to Barnes and Noble. I saw Megan Hedgecock and Jenny Siviter handing out pamphlets for WSP. I asked them what it was about. And they told the project was about connecting moms with their kids. I wanted to help, so I asked them what was the best way to help. They told me that they needed more books.

"That night, I made a video telling the story of my visit to the bookstore and asking my friends and family to donate books. [Watch it here!](#)



"Now, I do a video donation drive each year to collect books for WSP. [Here's last year's version!](#) I plan to make a goal of 375 books this year for my third book drive."

Outside WSP, Beshar says, "I love dancing, especially tap dancing. I started dancing when I was three and have loved it ever since. I now dance in RISE Dance Company and compete in tap, jazz, lyrical, contemporary, musical theater and hip hop. This year, I am excited to be an assistant for the Adrenaline Dance. I also have a passion for learning magic tricks and sleight of hand."

Thank you, Beshar, for working your magic for WSP!!



Strategic Planning Update

Women's Storybook Project of Texas Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Vision: To become the national model for Storybook-type programs across the U.S.

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

Strategic Objective: To expand the WSP program to all applicable women's prisons in Texas by 2020.

In September, the strategic planning team identified the following strategies as our top priorities in achieving WSP's strategic objective:

1. Hire a full-time, paid executive director.
2. Expand the board of directors through strategic recruitment.
3. Develop a new internal resource plan for each unit expansion, including volunteer pool expansion and training, materials costs, and technology resources.



4. Review and improve all organization, program, development and office processes based on best practices for non-profit organizations.
5. Optimize the volunteer experience and capacity.
6. Establish consistent feedback loops from offenders, caregivers and participating children to inform quality control and program development.

Please watch for more news as we begin to seek a new executive director. The executive board will be involved with this selection. Judith will assist with the transition and continue to be a member of the executive board.

Making Connections

"[A] mother's love is a third dimension that only her children can enter."

~Maddie

From new volunteer **Jillian Beck**: "I just wanted to reach out to tell you how much I enjoyed my first visit to San Saba. It was an amazingly moving experience and I can't wait for my next trip (Lane Murray). Traveling with Pat Yeargain and Linda Carey was a pleasure and they were so helpful showing me the ropes."

Go Fund Me A fundraiser has been created in honor of WSP Team Lead, **Pat Roberts** by a student of hers from the first year of her teaching career (1972-1973). This is a testament of the lasting impact of great teachers! **Check it out!** <https://www.gofundme.com/patsavoieroberts>

Remember to like/follow us
on Facebook and Twitter!



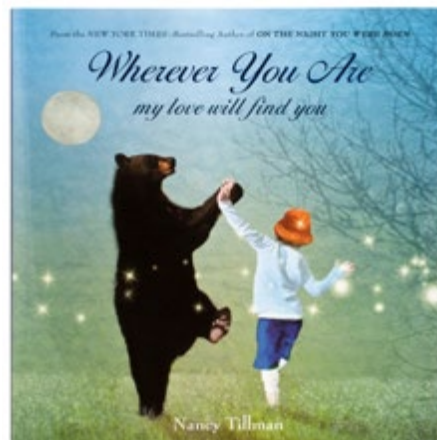
700 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Closing Circle

During the September visit to Hilltop, one offender mom shared **how WSP affected the court's decision on her parental rights**. ... outcome of the final court hearing to terminate her rights to her baby and put the child up for adoption. Here's the story, re-phrased by Pat Roberts, Hilltop team leader, from Pat's memory of what the mom said, along with her written account:

“As a team leader at Hilltop for 11+ years, I have heard many touching stories by offender mothers during the opening sharing circle, but **recently I experienced full-body goose bumps from the story shared by one particular offender**.

Breanne had her first WSP experience in August [2016], and had read to all three of her children. However, she



went on to say that the best news was that her one-year-old daughter had received her book the day before a final court hearing in which her parental rights were to be terminated. Breanne's baby's caretaker, her sister, took the book to her lawyer, who presented it as part of the case. The book Breanne read to her daughter was *Where-*

ever you Are, My Love Will Find You, by Nancy Tillman. Both the lawyer and the judge became emotional as they read the message Breanne had written inside the cover of the book about her love for her baby girl.

As a result of this, and other self-improvement efforts Breanne has made, her parental rights were not terminated—and her baby will not be available for adoption. Further, the no-visitation order was lifted, and she will actually get to see her daughter in January 2017, for the first time since giving birth to her in October 2015.

Breanne believes the book had a ‘very big impact on how I was seen as a mother. I want to thank everybody in the Storybook Program for giving me a chance to stay connected to my children!’”