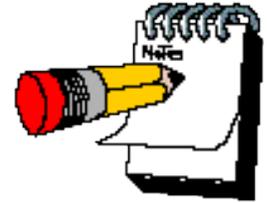


A Note from your Coordinator

Women's Storybook Project of Texas has become so vibrant in the past year! I wanted to share with you some of the things that were accomplished from September 2006 to June 2007.



- 1,045 books and tapes were mailed to children in Texas and around the country
- Volunteers filled 154 places for the trips to Gatesville during those months
- Hilltop Unit in Gatesville re-started the program
- Discussions began with the warden in Dayton, Texas, for the introduction of WSP at the Plane State Jail
- Committee Chairs were established
- Three Austin Barnes and Noble Bookstores sponsored WSP for their community book drive and over 900 books were donated
- Support was received from a Barnes and Noble Bookstore in San Antonio
- Our first Corporate Sponsor, Floor King, was established
- Book Notes, our new newsletter, was published
- Development of Women's Storybook Project website began

These reflect our progress, but where are we going? It would be wonderful to begin the planning stages for the introduction of WSP to another facility in 2008. Do you have a friend or neighbor who might be interested in volunteering with you? Do you know a women's group or club that might want to learn about WSP? If new volunteers join us, and current ones are able to record in Gatesville two Saturdays during the scheduled dates, we just might be able to begin Women's Storybook Project at a fourth facility!

Happy Fall,

Judith

A Village of WSP Volunteers



We all know it takes a village to raise a child; likewise, it takes a village of volunteers to support WSP! A variety of volunteer positions keep everything running smoothly. With the rapid expansion of the program, we will

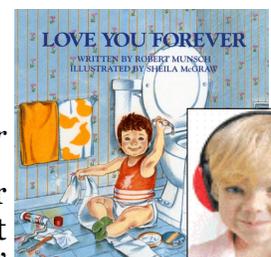
soon need more volunteers in several of the positions described in this article.

COORDINATOR: This critical position falls
(continued on page 3—*Village*)

How to Hug a Child in Need: Volunteering for WSP of Texas

*The world is hugged
by the faithful arms of
volunteers.*

~Everett Mámor



If you volunteer for WSP, you will never meet the children you "hug" through the program, but that doesn't make the experience any less meaningful. When a child hears an absent mother's voice because

(continued on page 7—*Hug a Child*)



What's Happening?

✓ **May 19** – Final production meeting for the first edition of Book Notes distributed June 1



(Left to right) Pat Roberts, Newsletter Chair and writer; Judith Dullnig, Coordinator; Ron Stimson, Editor; and Angela Nunley, Newsletter Production Chair met to finalize the first printing of Book Notes.

✓ **July 14** - “Nuts and Bolts” Luncheon Meeting of Chairs and Leaders (see article below)

Upcoming Prison Visits

- Sept. 8 at Woodman
- Sept. 15 at Lane Murray; Hilltop
- October 13, at Woodman
- Oct. 20 at Lane Murray; Hilltop
- Nov. 10 at Woodman
- Nov. 17 at Lane Murray; Hilltop

November 3-4 – Texas Book Festival **Coming Soon!** - Women’s Storybook Project of Texas Website (now under construction!)

In the Works – Planning for the introduction of WSP at a Houston facility

Making Connections

A letter from a grateful grandmother



May 31, 2007

Dear Ms. Dullnig:

What a treat to hear my daughters voice on the tape you were kind enough to send to us. We were all amazed and cried tears of joy. She has been locked up for 4 years and we only get to see her once a month for 2 hours. This program is a God sent for her daughter, Kayla.

Kayla is age 11 and has been with us since she was 5 years old. She wears hearing aids and struggles with speech. She longs to have her Mom and Dad. I am her Grand mother and she lives with me and my husband. ... At this age, she’s asking a lot of questions about her Mom and why she is not here. We are honest with her and do all we can to fill that empty place.

This tape and book will help fill that empty place. She can now hear her Mom’s voice any time she wants. Her Mom use to read to her before she want to sleep and now she listens to the tape and reads the book. What a great idea and what a service to those that are locked up. I know my daughter struggles to be up and put on a happy face for Kayla and the book helps her do that. Thank you for being faithful to serve, you were able to do for us what we could never do. God bless you and those in your program.

Faith, Hope and Love,

Doris

P.S. I feel that God is leading me to make a donation to this program so that others can experience the same joy we have.

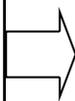


“Nuts and Bolts” Meeting

On July 14, the “Nuts and Bolts” WSP team met for a luncheon meeting at Judith Dullnig’s home. The “Nuts and Bolts” (as Judith affectionately named the leaders and chairs of WSP) in attendance were Paula Jameson, Nancy Wallace, Judy Fox, Liz Davis, Lynne Riley, Pat Roberts, Angela Nunley, and Kathy Brothers.

After lunch, a discussion of past, present, and upcoming events and happenings were discussed. Nancy Wallace shared about a recent presentation she and a Barnes and Nobles representative made to the Austin’s Woman’s Club, explaining the partnership that has recently formed between the bookstore and WSP. Also, the new logo for WSP is in the process of being copyright protected. Finally, Kathy Brothers shared her recent experiences in a grant writing class and her hopes of using her new knowledge to help WSP.

Great food + Great discussion + Great music = one fantastic Nuts and Bolts Meeting!



(Village- continued from page 1)

on the hearty shoulders of Judith Dullnig, who keeps the many facets of WSP synchronized.

VOLUNTEER CHAIR: This position is the caretaker of the volunteers. From the moment a new volunteer expresses an interest until she is secure in her chosen role, the volunteer chair is there to help her along.

TEAM LEADERS: These volunteers facilitate the prison visits at the facility to which they are assigned. The commitment of these leaders offers consistency to the monthly prison visits.

SCHEDULING CHAIR: A volunteer coordinates prison visits and transportation. She provides opportunities for volunteers to sign up to record mothers at the various prison facilities as well as securing car or van pools for the groups going to Gatesville two Saturdays a month.

RECORDERS: Volunteers who assist in taping the mothers as they read to their children may go every month, every other month, or just once every six months; they are free to sign up as often as their schedules permit.

SUPPLIES CHAIR: A volunteer stores some of the donated books, mailers, tapes, and recorders at her home and then distributes them as needed. (The remaining supplies are stored at individual prison facilities.)

NEWSLETTER CHAIR AND PRODUCTION CHAIR: Volunteers donate time (writing, editing, and publishing) and materials to make Book Notes possible.

COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR: Thanking our numerous supporters is the very important role performed in this volunteer position.

HISTORIAN: This volunteer collects and organizes newspaper clippings, pictures, documents, etc. and assemble them into a scrapbook to keep a record of WSP's growth and development.

SPECIAL SERVICE: Volunteers often contribute to "one time" special events such as organizing book drives at churches, schools, women's organizations and businesses or helping out at informational booths at the Texas

Book Festival. In the future, we hope to have volunteers who will coordinate fundraising in the community and organize book drives. Other volunteers prefer to be less involved personally, choosing instead to help through monetary donations or donations of needed supplies.

If you would like to join our village of WSP volunteers, read the article "How to Hug a Child; Volunteering for WSP of Texas" in this Book Notes issue to learn how. We'd love to see our population grow! 



Jayn Maiken for organizing our data base and spending many hours "under the gun" making this fabulous tool!

Jeri Saper for introducing our Website project to Chuck Adams.

Chuck Adams of **Capstone Works, Inc.** for setting up the WSP Website pro bono.

Lisa Cowan of **Cowan Site Services** for her pro bono service as webmaster.

Gloria Kelly for volunteering to help with the Texas Book Festival.

Rennie Popp and **Nancy Johnson** for coordinating the Barnes and Nobles Book Drive.

Liz Davis for becoming a co-team leader at Woodman State Jail.



Can you help?

**Contact
Judith Dullnig
(512) 560-8739**

Volunteers to represent WSP at the non-profit table during the Texas Book Festival Nov. 3rd and 4th for 3 hour shifts

Scrapbook Keeper - A volunteer willing to create a scrapbook of WSP's history and activities



Volunteer Spotlight

Judy Fox, Volunteer Chair

Sitting at the helm of the Storybook volunteers is Judy Fox, an Austin resident and a Texan at heart. Although originally from Pennsylvania, Judy says she “got here as fast as I could”. Judy has been married 40 years and has four grown daughters, eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Her beloved Japanese Chin, Missy, completes her family.

Judy is a registered nurse and a social worker, acquiring the last degree from St. Edward’s University at age 37. She is a member of Temple Beth Shalom as well as an active volunteer. Judy was very instrumental in getting the Temple involved in WSP both with volunteers and financial support.

Judy wrote a WSP article for the Temple’s website which was discovered by the National Crime Prevention Council. That article led to the WSP being chosen by NCPD as one of the top strategies in the nation for Faith and Restorative Justice. That fall, the Union for Reform Judaism presented the Epstein *Communicate!* Award to Temple Beth Shalom for the Storybook Project. Due to Judy’s efforts in submitting our project for this award, WSP was deemed the best idea out of all the participating small Reform Jewish congregations in the U.S. and Canada.

Judy divides her volunteer time between WSP and Mobile Loaves and Fishes, a program assisting the homeless. She and her husband travel frequently within the U.S. and abroad. A recent trip to Israel was highlighted with a memorable visit to the Wailing Wall, also known as the Wall of Prayer.

Over the past nine years, Judy has been researching and co-authoring a book entitled Voices of Strength – Daughters and Sons of Suicide Speak. It has just been accepted for publi-

cation by New Horizon Press. Judy’s mother took her own life when Fox was seven weeks old. Another woman cared for Judy until she was three. Growing up, when Fox heard a voice that resembled her caretaker’s, she was overcome with a haunting, intense longing. “I’m so fully aware of what separation from your mother means,” Judy says. “I longed for that voice for many years. In my 30’s, I found my caretaker and the sound of her voice stunned me.”



Judy Fox works with a mother to record the sound of her voice reading a book to her child.

That appreciation for the sound of a voice drew Judy like a magnet to WSP. When her friend, Andrea Michael of St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, introduced WSP’s novel concept to her, it touched Judy’s heart as she fully understands the need to hear a loved one’s voice in their absence. “The voice has a stronger impact in connecting a separated mother and child than people can ever imagine,” she states with conviction.

If you would like to help these voices be heard by the children, Judy would love to hear from you. As WSP’s Volunteer Chair, she assists new volunteers through their journey from that first spark of interest until they are active volunteers, including assistance with the application and training process. (See “How to Hug a Child” in this issue for more information.) Contact her at jzfox@sbcglobal.net or 512-292-4115. She’ll be glad to hear your voice! 🧡

“The offenders thank us profusely for volunteering our Saturdays. I truly believe that we are just as grateful for our time very well spent.” ~Judy Darnell

A Saturday in the Life of a WSP Volunteer

It's Saturday, and you're traveling to Gatesville today for your monthly opportunity to volunteer at one of the facilities there. Your mind races in anticipation, and you can't help but wonder what this day will be like. Here's what you can expect from your day, and some tips and hints (below) to help it go smoothly:

Ahead of time, arrangements will have been made for you to car or van pool (unless you prefer to drive yourself!) with another group of cheerful volunteers. You will meet at the prearranged location around 9:00 or 9:30 AM. The trip to Gatesville from the Austin area takes about 1 hour and 45 minutes, but with the fellowship and camaraderie you will experience in the vehicle, it will feel more like a mere 30 minute drive!

At Pruetts', a small cafe camouflaged as a gas station, you will enjoy a quick lunch from a surprisingly varied menu (chicken fajita salad is this writer's personal favorite!) The group will report to their assigned facility a little before noon. Once inside, usually the materials are ready and waiting for the volunteers. There's time for you to familiarize yourself with the recorder.

The offenders will arrive and begin with the opening circle. After introductions, the mothers will select books, and the volunteers will begin taping them as they read to their child. Usually, the volunteers remain in the facility 2-3 hours allowing time for each mother to read a book to each of her children. This time varies depending on the number of offenders and the total number of children they have. There may be a closing circle, depending on the facility.

After leaving, you will enjoy debriefing with the other volunteers, often over a treat at the local Dairy Queen. The car/van pool usually leaves shortly thereafter and arrives in the Austin area around 4:30 or 5:00.

WARNING: Be prepared for a warm fuzzy feeling to wrap itself around you as you reflect on your experience as a WSP volunteer who assisted in bringing a mother's voice to a child's longing ears.

Volunteer Tips and Hints

BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME:

1. You will need to bring two items if this is your first visit: your letter of acceptance (suggested) and your driver's license (REQUIRED). (Only your license is needed on repeat visits.)
2. Bring a lunch or money to purchase lunch.
3. Avoid dressing in white as the offenders dress in all white. Dress conservatively. Please no sleeveless tops or tank tops, no shorts or Capri's, no open-toe shoes, and minimal jewelry.
4. If you are car pooling, be sure you know where and when to meet. Have phone numbers so you can contact your fellow riders should there be an emergency. (Contact the team leader of your facility if you need phone numbers.)

WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT THE FACILITY:

1. The gate officer will greet your vehicle. You will need to show identification and state that you are with Women's Storybook Project.

(continued on page 6 - Tips and Hints)



*At Pruetts' on the way to Gatesville
(Back) Shirley Meyer, Lynne Riley, Angela Nunley, Nancy Wallace, Judy Darnell
(Front) Pat Roberts, Susan Pintchovski,
Pat Yeargain, Ellen Loeb*

2. Leave valuables locked in your car. (Purses, cell phones, etc.)

INSIDE THE FACILITY:

1. Set up of the room: Prior to our arrival, the room at the facility will have been set up. Books will be laid out according to age, chairs will be in a circle, and recording stations will be set up. Each station will have a tape recorder, mailers, and a pen. Usually, mentors (selected offenders) will be in charge of setting up.

2. Opening Circle time: The visit will begin with the offenders arriving and sitting in a circle with the volunteers. We go around the circle introducing ourselves. The offenders are encouraged to tell about their child(ren) and share how the project has affected them. Volunteers are encouraged to give basic information about themselves such as number of children, why you want to be involved in this project, etc. When the circle time ends, volunteers go to their stations.

3. Book selection: The mother will select a book for her child. While she is waiting for a station to be free, she is encouraged to read through the book and to write a short inscription in the front of the book to her child.

HINTS:

- *Smile, introduce yourself, and help the mother feel comfortable.*
- *If a mother becomes emotional, give her time to regain composure. Talk about other things (your hobby, your family, etc.) to help her.*
- *Ask the mother before you start taping if she needs any help with words in the book. If a mother is struggling, offer to read the page with her **BEFORE** taping it, then allow her to read it while the recorder is running. If the mother makes a mistake while reading, just continue taping unless she requests to do it over. **MISTAKES ARE OK!***
- *Personal messages: Be sure that personal messages are short and to the point.*

4. The recording station:

- A. Write the child's name and the title of the book on the tape's label (side A).
- B. Remind the mother to allow about 6 seconds to pass after you start the recorder and before she begins speaking, as there is a short lead on the tape.
- C. Invite the mother to give a **SHORT** personal message before she begins reading.
- D. After the personal message, rewind and check to see that the tape is working properly.
- E. Tape the mother reading the book. If the book is very short, invite the mother to talk about the pictures on the pages as well as reading the words. If it is a chapter book, the mother only reads the first chapter. (She might want to invite the child to continue reading the book and to write her a letter telling her what is happening in the book.)
- F. After the book has ended, invite the mother to make a closing personal statement.
- G. Punch out the tabs on the tape to prevent it from being accidentally recorded over.
- H. If the mother has additional children, she should go and select another book for another child and wait for a station to open up again. We attempt to allow every offender to read to each of her children before we leave. Once the mother has read to all of her children, she will take the mailer to the volunteer in charge of addressing the envelopes.

5. Closing Circle Time: After everyone has finished reading, in some facilities we gather once more in the circle. This is a time of sharing about the experience or talking about parenting skills. A leader might invite the mothers to tell one way they connected to their child during this time or a feeling they had. Volunteers might say how they felt during the experience, etc. After circle time, the visit ends. 🍷

(Hug a Child—continued from page 1)

of your efforts, you have truly “hugged” him or her.

The process of applying to become a volunteer takes some time but is well worth your efforts. Here’s what you need to do:

- 1) First, please contact Volunteer Coordinator, Judy Fox at jzfox@sbcglobal.net and let her know you would like to volunteer for any of the positions discussed in “A Village of Volunteers”. If you have questions, ask Judy to call you, and she will get back to you. If you do not have e-mail, you can reach Judy at 512-292-4155.
- 2) If you wish to volunteer at the prisons taping the offenders as they read to their children, you must complete the volunteer application for Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). The Website is www.tdcj.state.tx.us. Type in “volunteer application” in the search box and click “submit”. Click on option #2 (Rehabilitation and Reentry Programs Division Volunteer Services Program). On the next page select Volunteer Application and print the application. Complete it, writing “Storybook Project” at the top, and mail it to the address for volunteer services found at the top.
- 3) The approval process usually takes about 4-6 weeks. Once you have received the approval letter from TDCJ, contact Judy Fox. In spite of what the letter states, you ARE allowed to make 1-2 visits to Gatesville for a “hands-on” experience to see if this program is right for

you. Judy will make arrangements for these initial visits.

- 4) Once you are sure that prison volunteering is for you, call Judy Fox again, and she will assist you in scheduling the required 3 hour TDCJ training. This must be completed within 6 months of receiving your approval letter.
- 5) After training is completed, email Judy so your contact information can be given to the scheduler. You will begin receiving emails regarding openings and needs and will be free to sign up for the monthly schedules at the Gatesville facilities (Woodman, Hilltop, or Lane Murray). You will then be contacted regarding carpooling locations and times.

As you can see, Judy will be ready to assist you in completing the volunteer sign up process. It just takes a quick email or call to her to get you started on your way to “hugging” a child in need!

Another Way to Help

Many people and businesses want to help, but don’t always have the time to volunteer. If you’d like to help by sending a tax deductible monetary donation, please make a check payable to Austin Community Foundation (comment line should say ACF/Storybook Project) and mail it to Austin Community Foundation, PO 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

Judith Dullnig, Coordinator
Judy Fox, Volunteer Chair
Felicia Kutchey, Scheduling Chair
Sylvia Fitz, Supplies Chair
Kathy Brothers, Communications Chair
Pat Roberts, Newsletter Chair
Angela Nunley, Newsletter Production Chair
Nancy Wallace, Lane Murray Team Leader
Paula Jameson, Lane Murray Team Leader
Judy Darnell, Woodman Team Leader
Liz Davis, Woodman Team Leader
Pat Roberts, Hilltop Team Leader
Lynne Riley, Hilltop Team Leader

jjdull@earthlink.net
jzfox@sbcglobal.net
r2fkutchey1@yahoo.com
sylvia.fitz@sbcglobal.net
kdbrothers@hotmail.com
pastrob@swbell.net
angelanunley@gmail.com
nweichertwallace@satx.rr.com
tmys@austin.rr.com
adarnell@austin.rr.com
bbqliz@austin.rr.com
patsrob@swbell.net
lynne_riley@sbcglobal.net





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



November 3, 2003
Dear who ever gets this note,
Please Let My Mom, Gina
Keep Reading the books on
tape, one more thing
I Love hearing her voice,
by Cameron