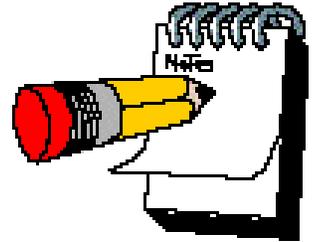


A Note from your Director

I have been asked to keep the Director's Message short because there are so many things to report about WSP! One thing I want to mention is please read the article "A Woman On Her Toes" to learn how WSP will be introduced to the community in April. So many people will be learning about us for the first time! Thank you Judy Fox, Nancy, Paula, Liz, Judy Darnell, Pat, Lynne and Angela for quickly writing kind things about Storybook Project and me.

Thank you volunteers and supporters for helping make WSP what it is today: a non-profit organization with over 90 volunteers at 5 women's prisons in Texas!

Judith



Houston: Storybook Has Landed!

The Houston area, after many months of preparation and eager anticipation, welcomed the first Women's Storybook Project volunteers into the Plane/Henley State Jail on January 24, 2009. Plane/Henley is located 35 miles north in of Houston in Dayton.

Prior to that date, Jo An Martin, Ilene Gray, Ellie Chaikind, and Karen Harrell had been busily making the connections necessary to get WSP off the ground. As a result of their efforts, Judy Fox and Judith Dullnig traveled to Houston in

(continued on page 3—Houston)



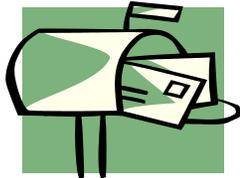
Ellie Chaikind, JoAn Martin, Warden Howard, JoAnn Innerarity and TDCJ Admin. Asst. Ms. Morrison with a cartload of tapes and books ready for mailing after the first Plane/Henley session.

Judith Dullnig: A Woman On Her Toes

Ballet Austin Guild annually honors 10 individuals who have distinguished themselves as outstanding volunteers through individual excellence and high levels of achievement. Ballet Austin Guild is very pleased to announce that Judith Dullnig has been selected for recognition as an outstanding volunteer for her work on behalf of Women's Storybook Project of Texas.

Judy Fox, Volunteer Chairman, nominated Judith to receive this honor. On March 4 at an honorary luncheon, Judy will introduce Judith to the Guild and Ballet Austin representatives.

Tuesday, April 7th is the date of the big Women On Their Toes event. The ten honorees will be introduced and presented on stage with special awards. The Storybook logo will be on the screen in the Renaissance Hotel ballroom and the emcee will tell a little about Storybook. Lunch will be served and the guest speaker will be Janine Turner. Slides about Storybook Project will be shown, and there will also be press opportunities. The press and about 300-500 people will be in attendance. Team Leaders have been invited to attend, but all interested volunteers are welcomed. Please contact Judith for details if you would like to attend.



Making Connections

A letter from the father of
a recipient child

1-15-09

Dear Judith Dullnig,
I just wanted to let you know
the overwhelming response from Channing
(Crystal, little 7 year old
daughter) to hear her mother's voice
& get the book. She had tears of
happiness in her eyes. This is one
of the nicest & most needed
programs anyone could ever think
of and carry through on it. This
sort of helps with the separation
of mother & daughter.

Thank you so
much.
Roger

P.S. Enclosed please find a small donation
check for use as needed

A Meeting of the Minds

On Thursday, February 19, Judith Dullnig treated the TDCJ and Windham School District staff who give their time to help WSP in their facilities to a luncheon. After a short presentation and the distribution of some materials, Judith opened the floor to questions and discussion. Those in attendance discussed the idea of generating a master list of volunteers and their license numbers, which would be kept at the gate of each facility to assist in the check in process. Unit related team leader concerns were discussed opening the channels of communication further. Another topic of discussion was the possibility of coordinating Storybook through the school district at every facility. As these issues were discussed, several of those in attendance offered to contact their local churches to expand our ever-growing volunteer base.



A happy ending to the luncheon for TDCJ staff and Windham School District staff: Judith Dullnig, Retired Warden Nancy Botkin, and Windham Counselor Courtney Kinsey.

What's Happening?



- **Women On Their Toes** award banquet is April 7, and our own Judith Dullnig is one of the 10 honorees.
- The **Sun City Community Association** sponsored the second annual Nonprofit Fair for its community of retirees on Friday, February 20. WSP volunteers and Sun City residents **Wanda Stimson, Topsy Woodson** and **Marge Gurrola** staffed a table for WSP and made several excellent contacts for increasing our volunteer base in Georgetown.
- **Sandy Hain**, a professional documentary maker in Palo Alto, California, has expressed great interest in doing a documentary on WSP. After visiting with Judith by telephone, the lengthy process of gaining permission from the prison system is in the works.



Volunteer Team staffing table at Sun City Non-Profit Fair: Wanda, Topsy, and Marge.

As an outgrowth of this meeting, unit lunches with the WSP team leaders, and appropriate TDCJ and Windham staff will be scheduled this spring for each facility, allowing team leaders to put faces to the names they often encounter but seldom meet. These luncheons will allow for continued dialogue between the team leaders and those who make it possible at their facilities as they work together to solve problems. Judith also received permission from Warden Strong at Lane Murray to take photographs of volunteers and offenders for future presentations and Book Note articles.

(Houston- continued from page 1)

December to meet with three organizations that had expressed interest in supporting WSP. Karen Harrell's group, Bad Women of the Bible, had mailers and donations ready. Houston Congregation for Reformed Judaism (lead by Rabbi Steven Gross, a close friend of Felicia Kutchey's brother who is a rabbi in Atlanta!) had a gathering of interested members on Mitzvah Day, Dec. 7, and invited the two to speak about WSP. Two volunteers from that meeting signed up and have completed training, readying for the long awaited opening of WSP at Plane/Henley. The final meeting was with the Community Relations Manager of a Houston Barnes and Noble where the possibility of working together during their 2009 Holiday Book Drive was discussed.

All that remained was to get a list of eligible offenders and their children. Warden Wilhelmina Howard posted a description of the program and was amazed and overwhelmed with the 200 qualified offenders who applied. Warden Howard struggled with the elimination process to get it down to ten mothers. Judith, Jo An Martin (acting team leader), and two other new volunteers, Jo Ann Innerarity and Ellie Chaikind, met with these ten offenders in an emotional and moving first time experience at Plane/Henley.

Jo Ann Innerarity and Ellie expressed delight in the variety and quality of the books and noted that offenders were insightful in the book choices and appreciative of this opportunity. The experience of surrendering their drivers' licenses and being patted down was well worth it in light of what happened once they were inside. They liked the circle introductions at the beginning because it helped them to establish a sense of continuity when they return for the next session.

They noted that the offenders' comments in the closing circle were interesting and touching as they explained the reasons for their book choices. For example, "I know my child is too old for this book, *I'll Love You Forever*, but my mother read it to me and I want my daughter to know I will always love her" or "My son loves adventure, and so I know *Treasure Island* will be perfect for him." Judith related the following

story: As I was writing addresses down, one girl was close to tears, and I assured her it was alright to cry. The offender responded with, "Oh, we don't cry here". That same offender shared her thoughts with the closing circle with tears streaming down her face.

What an emotional time for all involved! Acting Team Leader, JoAn Martin, commented, "Having been no nearer a prison than a TV show, I was impressed with the gracious attitude of the women. They were friendly and open, and very grateful for the opportunity to make this connection with their children." Jo An went on to say, "My concern became finding more volunteers so we could we could expand the program to include more women. I am on a mission to spread the word. Everyone I talk to is interested in finding out more about Storybook Project." All the volunteers are hopeful and anxious to return to see what kinds of communication the offenders may have received from their children.

With an increase in volunteers, Judith is in hopes of offering the program to more Plane/Henley offenders in the near future. She will be going back to the Houston area soon to talk to her Episcopal pals in hopes of finding additional special women to volunteer one Saturday a month. In addition, Susan Pintchovski will be contacting National Council of Jewish Women groups in Houston. The jail is about a 50-minute drive from Houston. If you have friends or family who would be interested, please contact Judith Dullnig.



Can you help?

Contact
Judith Dullnig
(512) 560-8739

We need volunteers for the following dates and times. Contact Felicia Kutchey, if you can help, at r2fkutchey1@yahoo.com

- Mar. 21 - 2 Volunteers (Lane Murray)
- Apr. 11 - 1 Volunteer (Woodman)
- Apr. 18 - 2 Volunteers (Lane Murray)
- May 9 - 1 Volunteer (Woodman)
- June 13 - 1 Volunteer (Woodman)
- June 13 - 2 Volunteers (Mt. View)



Volunteer Spotlight

Judy Darnell and
Liz Davis

Judy Darnell and Liz Davis, residents of Austin, are team leaders for Woodman Jail. Both have given several years of dedicated effort to Storybook, and their involvement is greatly appreciated.

Judy and her husband, Andy, have two sons, Will and Rob who live in north Texas. Andy is the Medical Director at Oakwood Woman's Center in Round Rock where he is also an anesthesiologist.

Raised in the Northeast, Judy went to Nashville, Tennessee, to attend Vanderbilt University. She graduated with a BA in English and History. It was there that she met her native-Texan husband. When he returned to Texas to attend medical school in San Antonio, Judy



Judy Darnell and Liz Davis

became a Texas resident and has been here ever since. She taught every grade from 7th to freshmen at Southern Methodist University and also was a tutor for learning disabled children. She moved to the Austin area in 2000 in response to a job opportunity for her husband.

Judy's interests include reading, singing, and movies. A special interest of hers has become more than a hobby. Fascinated by gems, she studied to become a gemologist and now does specialized jewelry sales. Clients describe to her what piece they would like made, and she fills the orders with her contacts around town.

Judy has two favorite quotes. The first is, "How important is it?" which she uses to remind herself and others not to fret about the small

stuff in life. The second, "Keep your side of the street clean" is a quote she has carried throughout her life reminding her to refrain from responding to rudeness of others with more of the same.

A mutual friend who knew Judith Dullnig introduced Judy to WSP during its first year. Upon meeting, Judith asked Judy if she "had a minute...here take a seat" and instantly sold the concept to Judy who immediately signed up. She finds it wonderful and worthwhile and intends to stay with the program indefinitely. When Judith decided to delegate responsibility to team leaders, she asked Judy to take the position for Woodman Jail.

Judy states definitively, "I believe through my education I know the value of reading and through the testimony of mothers, children, and caretakers, I know this project has a major impact." Judy, we thank you for the major impact you have had on making WSP a reality.

Judy's co leader is Liz Davis. She and her husband, Tom, have two children: a son, Brian (28), who has achieved his goal to be a rocket scientist (but forgot to wish to be an employed rocket scientist!), and a daughter, Lauren (25), in nursing school.

Liz grew up in Waco, Texas, where her parents (he from Philadelphia and she from Australia) settled to raise their family. Liz attended a small Lutheran school, Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, where she earned a degree in social work. Working at a residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed teens and trying to save the world on the front lines proved just too hard, and she began her second career as a legal assistant. Ultimately, this led her to the University of Texas where she earned her law degree. Early in her career, she was reminded once again how much she hated conflict. By this time, her husband had morphed from a humble, low-paid restaurant manager to the CEO of his own BBQ restaurant (he owns Scholz Garten and Green Mesquite) allowing Liz to abandon the front lines of law and take part-time legal jobs and help at the restaurants for the next 15 years. In January of this year, she

(continued on page 7—Volunteer)

Barnes and Noble: Another Success Story

The Holiday Book Drive at the Arboretum and Brodie Lane Barnes and Noble netted approximately 1,800 wonderful books in addition to gift certificates and financial donations. WSP is especially grateful to Caren Creech Berlanga and Jo Virgil, community relation managers (CRM) at the participating locations, for their efforts on our behalf. We would like to wish Jo good luck on her new mission. Also, best wishes to Caren, who has moved to the San Antonio area where she is involved in opening a new B&N. She promises to keep WSP in mind in her new location next holiday season. WSP looks forward to working with Lisa Langlinais, the new CRN at Arboretum B&N.

Many dedicated volunteers also took time during the busy season to greet customers and explain Storybook. Ronit Kulick and her two young sons were amongst those who helped. She relates their experience below:

"I signed up to volunteer Saturday from 3-5 but couldn't find a babysitter. I didn't want to miss this opportunity and decided to take my 2 kids with me: Daniel, a 9 year old, and Ben, a 4 year old. I figured they could read books and play in the kids' section while I was telling people about our project at the front of the store.

It didn't take more than a few minutes before they came back and wanted to help me. They each took a stack of fliers and with big smiles handed them to people who entered the store. Of course, people smiled back at them! When one lady came to the store particularly to buy one book for our project (she heard about it in Temple Beth Shalom), Daniel convinced her to buy two books recommending books that he liked. As more people entered the store, the kids started telling them about the project and were very delighted to see people respond by buying books. I happened to go to the cashier area and saw that one lady bought five books.

One lady entered the store but didn't have much time to listen to us (her husband wanted to get coffee). However, she came back, asked us about our project, and asked if we accept donations since they had decided to do donations instead of gifts this year. I said that I think we do because we do need money to rent a car and pay for gas every time we drive to Gatesville. She wrote us a check for \$150!!! I was amazed and thanked her; I told her that this is very generous.

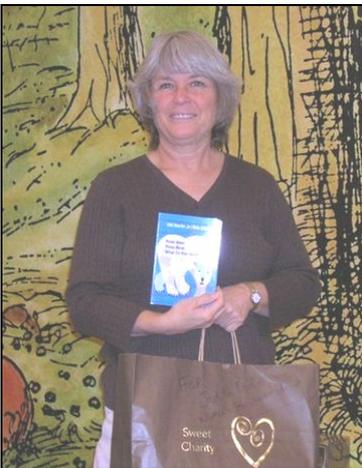
My son Daniel had a competition with me to see who could get more people to buy books. It was a wonderful experience! My kids really enjoyed it and felt rewarded when people took the time to listen to them and then went to purchase books. Afterwards, on the way home, I explained to them that what they had done today is a good deed or a "mitzvah", so it was also a learning opportunity for them.

My kids and I truly had a wonderful experience. We would love to do this again next year!"

Barnes and Noble has been a marvelous source of support for Storybook, and next year we are hopeful that WSP will be included in the Holiday Book Drive in three major Texas cities: Austin, San Antonio, and Houston. Thank you, Barnes and Noble!



Barnes and Noble at Arboretum; CRM Caren Creech Berlanga and incoming CRM Lisa Langlinais



Barnes and Noble at Brodie, CRM Jo Virgil, longtime supporter of Storybook

Out and Around Storybook Land



RECORDER USE ALERT

Team Leaders and Volunteers,

To be sure that the recording of the offender sounds correct when their child receives it, please double check that the **Rec Time setting is set on NORMAL and the Speed Control is set in the middle**, as show in this picture.

Thanks!

Crowded into the car like sardines, these happy volunteers are making the short trip from the Shell station to Hilltop in cheery style! (L to R) Charlie Heine, Marty Barrick, Lark Anthony, Wanda Stimson, and Lynne Riley. Pat Roberts was the driver and photographer



This December group of volunteers included several new faces as they shared lunch at Pruett's in Gatesville prior to going to Lane Murray and Hilltop.

(continued from page 4—**Volunteer**)

took a new job as a receptionist/legal secretary/legal assistant for three part time lawyers and two CPA's at Hilgers & Ugarte, PC where she enjoys combining the nitty gritty of legal work with some of the thought but none of the bullying.

During the lull in working full time, Liz volunteered for St. Mark's outreach committee (including Storybook in its infant stages) and worked in the church office. Other interests include reading and walking (she says she has probably been around Lady Bird Lake enough that she might as well have walked around the world!). Staying in shape, enjoying her family, traveling, and helping the world to be a little better are top priorities for Liz.

Her desire to help improve the world encouraged her to move beyond her initial reluctance to commit to working with women in prison. After a year behind the scenes, she finally decided four years ago to go every two or three months. Then, two years ago, she agreed to be co-leader with Judy at Woodman and now volunteers nearly every month. She feels the time spent with the offenders is rewarding as they are constantly surprising her with their comments and are so grateful for the opportunity to relate to their kids. As she says, "I do enjoy my Saturdays with Storybook. I enjoy the offenders, prison teachers, and fellow volunteers. One off beat thing I do enjoy is casually telling friends, 'Oh, I have to

go to prison today' and watching their shock and then getting to explain a little about the program!" 



- **Jayn Maiken** an immense thank you for all the time you have spent working on our data base!
- **Jeri Saper** for telling Kim Bohls about WSP. Kim then suggested Storybook as a holiday community service project to the Westlake Swim Team. This is a wonderful example of kids helping kids!
- **Ellie Chaikind** for introducing Sandy Hain to WSP. Sandy, a professional documentary producer, is interested in doing a documentary on WSP.
- **Gina Lunsford**, librarian at The Woodlands Christian Academy, for presenting our project to the Academy. As a result, students and parents, wanting to bring families together and to encourage children to read, donated their change from their purchases as the school's fall book fair to WSP.
- **Charlene Cole**, Mission Coordinator, for collecting books from Covenant Presbyterian Church.

 **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

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
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| Felicia Kutchev , Scheduling Chair | r2fkutchev1@yahoo.com |
| Sylvia Fitz , Supplies Chair | sfitz22@austin.rr.com |
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| Pat Roberts , Newsletter Chair | pastrob@swbell.net |
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| Angela Nunley , Mt. View Team Leader | angelanunley@gmail.com |
| Ruby Russo , Mt. View Team Leader | whoisrubyrusso@yahoo.com |





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



What's it take to get from this:

YOU!!



We need volunteers for the following dates and times. Contact Felicia if you can help.

- **Mar. 21 - 2 Volunteers (Lane Murray)**
- **Apr. 11 - 1 Volunteer (Woodman)**
- **Apr. 18 - 2 Volunteers (Lane Murray)**
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