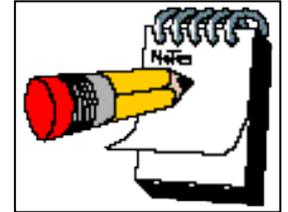


## A Note from your Director

As you'll see, another facility, Henley in Dayton, has begun Women's Storybook Project! We're now in 6 of the targeted 8 TDCJ female prisons.

Along with the excitement of getting closer to our goal of servicing all the female prisons where applicable, also come the challenges. One major difficulty has occurred, and I'm calling it the problem of "Stepping Down and Stepping Up".



After years, and in some cases, many years of leadership roles, volunteers are Stepping Down. I realize that this is part of the volunteer world, and I am VERY grateful to these volunteers who have served for years – some from almost the beginning of WSP. (See "Thank You" in this issue!) The problem now is the need for volunteers to please Step Up and fill these leadership vacancies. Will YOU Step Up and become a Co-Team Leader for Lane Murray? Cynthia Winer, a new volunteer, has already offered to be a Team Leader at Lane Murray, but we need one more! Will YOU Step Up to be on Book Notes' Staff? Everyone enjoys reading our quarterly newsletter, but we need help with this publication! (See "Volunteers Needed" for more detailed information on these positions.)



Please contact me if you are interested in Stepping Up or if you know of someone who might like to learn more about helping in these ways. Thank you for helping make WSP such a success!

Happy Spring,



### New Office Equipment

As with many rapidly growing and expanding organizations, Storybook has been faced with the dilemma of needing office equipment that the budget cannot stretch to cover. Over the past few years, Steve and Angela Nunley, owners of Pillars to Post, graciously used their business copier to publish Book Notes and later used a printer provided by WSP. That printer was no longer able to handle the increasing volume demands, and so the hunt for a solution was on.



*(New Office Equipment- continued from page 1)*

### Retired Educators Support WSP

*By Nancy Wallace*

Sometime early last Fall, I was asked to come to the Spring meeting and luncheon of the Alamo Heights Retired School Personnel group and speak to them about Storybook Project. I was delighted at the invitation but a bit nervous. These were the men and women whom I'd worked with for 13 years. To me, it's always more difficult to speak before one's peers. The good thing, though, when talking about Storybook, it is a program that virtually "sells" itself.

So, on March 6th, I made the Storybook presentation to this lovely group. Every person in that room had spent his/her career trying to make a difference in children's lives, whether they were teachers, counselors, speech

*(continued on page 5—Retired Educators)*



## 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

### A Change In Book Notes

As WSP grows and changes, so must this publication to meet its ever-changing needs. The Who's Who informational column will be accessible on our website soon.

### A Miraculous March at Woodman

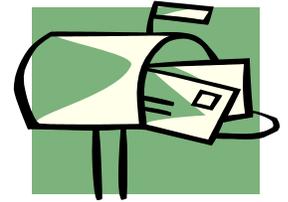
By Judy Darnell

As our team (Kelley Finkel, Susan Pintchovski, Patsy Graham, Monika Burgett and myself as team leader) headed for Woodman in March, we knew we had some challenges even before we were en route. The weather was very rainy and blustery. We had close to 65 children to read to, with only four volunteers to record the offenders and limited time to accomplish the task. We agreed on what measures we would resort to if all the offenders couldn't read to all of their children and vowed to do our best.

Not to worry; it turned out wonderfully well! Our guidance counselor, Ms. Cahee, our mentor, and especially the volunteers and the offenders, did a super ballet, organizing each other to maximize our efforts. It was a heartwarming sight to see the offenders arranging each other so everyone had a chance to read. "Come on, it's your turn before mine." "No, I just went." "Make sure, she's next." We finished up close to our allotted time, elated that our combined effort we got the job done! I'm so proud of everyone involved! 

## Making Connections

A letter from a  
thankful grandmother



Attention: Judith Dullnig, Director

*This is a wonderful program that I think is well worth anyone investing in for the sake of children of parents that are incarcerated for some time. I am a grandmother that benefited from it for the first time for my two grandchildren this weekend.*

*I received two books for my two grandchildren and the tapes that went with them as their mother read to them with a minute or two to tell them how much she loved them and missed them. The seven-year old boy who has Aspergers is having a hard time coping with missing his mother. He had never been without his mother in his life.*

*W---, my grandson, sat in my lap as we listened to the tape several times while his mother read the book to him. He was just in tears and wanted to know when he was going to get to see his mother. He wanted to know if she was going to get better soon and come home to him. He said he loved her and missed her so much. I asked him if he enjoyed hearing her voice on the tape. He said, "Of course! I love my Mommy!"*

*As soon as E---, the three year old child, heard her Mother's voice, she ran to the tape recorder as though it were a telephone and started to pat it. She said in a loud voice for her mommy to hear, "I love you Mommy! I love you Mommy! I miss you so much. I miss you. Hurry and get better and come home. I love you. Do you hear me? I LOVE YOU MOMMY!"*

*W--- sat in my lap and E--- sat in W---'s lap as their mother read the books to them on tape. They both were holding onto each other and me as we had a good cry and then listened a few more times to the tape as I held the books for them to read along and/or look at the pictures.*

*I thank the women that have taken their time and talents to do this for the incarcerated mothers. It means a great deal to the children. On behalf of the children, I thank all the people who have contributed money to the program to make it possible.*

*Sincerely,*

*A Thankful Grandmother*

Angela found a prospective deal on a 2009 Toshiba "e Studio" color copier, but deal or not, WSP didn't have the funding. Judith decided to mail out a first-ever fundraising letter. The response was awesome! WSP not only received ample donations for the copier, but also for a new computer! Dan Fisher of Copier 1, from whom the copier was purchased, liked the concept of Storybook so much that he agreed to provide free delivery and toner for life! Steve Nunley donated the time and effort to connect and adjust the copier and is now in the process of ordering a new Dell desktop computer for the office as well.

A heart-felt thank you goes out to all who donated time, money, or materials to make this happen. The new office equipment will facilitate accomplishing the many tasks necessary to run an organization of this size.



- **Lark Anthony** for your many years as a volunteer. Lark often answered the SOS calls when volunteers were needed at the last minute. You will be missed!
- **Susanna Busico** for your years as a Team Leader at Lane Murray. WSP is grateful for the time you gave.
- **Mona Carver** for updating our Facebook page whenever she was given news and for all the time you spent on getting WSP up and running during this age of social media.
- **AnnMarie Olson, DDS**, for volunteering to update the WSP Facebook page. AnnMarie, her team, and patients collected books for us during the holidays. She likes us on Facebook!
- **Wanda Stimson** for helping on the grant application committee.

- **Nancy Snyder** for writing thank you notes for WSP.
- **Brenda Dykes** for arranging the radio show interview. Many community service projects are eager to be highlighted on that program.
- **Bill Buchanan**, President and General Manager at KSHN Radio, for inviting WSP to be on his show.
- **Retired Warden Nancy Botkin**, our mentor, for answering an SOS call! We were really short volunteers for Lane Murray, and she was able to help. Somehow, she had no difficulty getting approval!
- **Sandy Nelson** and **Laura Edge** for accepting Team Leader roles at Plane/Henley.
- **Len Arnold, Jill Bacon, Marty Barrick, Sandy and David Carey, Rhonda Chandler, Linda Cox, Karen Donovan, Eugenia Graham, Gail Massad, Jill Miller, Pam Rhodes, Octavia Smith, Nancy Snyder, Pat Yeargain, Gay Wood**, and an **anonymous donor** for your great response to the first WSP fundraiser letter. Storybook now has a copier and will soon have a computer at the office.
- **Rhonda Chandler** for making a special trip to the Plane facility to transfer supplies to WSP's new storage cabinet.

*"Storybook is a blessing for me and my family. I just reconciled my relationship with my Dad in 2011. I haven't seen him in 4 years. For Christmas 2011 I read a book to my children. My Dad is a truck driver and not home that much. But for Christmas he was able to be home and sat down with my family and when he heard my voice for the first time in 4 years, he started crying. I am his first child out of 5 kids. Even though I am 22 years old, I am still his little girl. Me being in prison with a lengthy sentence is very hard for my family...Storybook makes it a little easier for them to cope with the pain. Thank you!!! God Bless all of you." SJ*



## Volunteer Spotlight

### Kathryn Louise Turner

May 11, 1939 - March 10, 2012

The Volunteer Spotlight for this issue of Book Notes is a tribute to a staunch supporter and volunteer for Women’s Storybook Project, Kathryn Louise Turner of Austin. Kathryn passed away suddenly on March 10, 2012. She is survived by her husband Dave; her children Michael, Carol Sue, and Jim; her sister Carolyn and many cherished members of her beloved family.

Kathryn graduated from the Menonite Hospital School of Nursing in Bloomington, Illinois as an RN. During her 35+ years as a nurse, her most rewarding time was at the Blackstock Family Health Center in Austin. She was the charge nurse for a number of years before health reasons forced her to retire. She taught, trained, mentored, and guided so many health care professionals with her genuine love and compassion for the care of ALL people! She



encouraged everyone to celebrate all that connects us to one another and to always remember how much you are cared for.

In 2006, Kathryn and Dave delivered a large bag of books to Judith's home after reading about WSP in the Austin American Statesman. When her health permitted, she began to volunteer for WSP at Gatesville units. On many occasions, Kathryn would also drive volunteers when there was a need for a driver. Her children said that their mom talked about WSP to everyone and was honored to be in the program. In lieu of flowers, Kathryn requested that donations be made to Women's Storybook Project. The Kathryn Turner Book Fund has been established as a result. Her daughter, Carol, wrote a note expressing the gratitude of the family and reiterating that her mother “absolutely loved it and believed in it so much. We

will always remember the joy in her voice as she told us stories from her visits.”

One of her favorite sayings was “to love and be loved is to feel the sun from both sides.” Storybook Project will truly miss the warmth of Kathryn’s 🍷 love.

### Perspective from a St. Edward's Intern

by Brogan Ward

I have always felt a call to the prison ministry and was anticipating my first trip with Women’s Storybook Project. I was also a little nervous because I really had no idea what to expect. I am grateful that I kept an open mind and had a very positive and enriching experience.

I traveled to Gatesville with a car full of sweet and welcoming women. They shared with me their experiences with this fine organization and settled my nerves with some of the letters of appreciation from inmates’ families. When we got to the actual prison, I felt prepared and ready for anything.

What I encountered was a group of women with a lot of emotions, and it was beautiful. We had a discussion group, and it was so moving I

was tearing up the whole time. I think I may have gotten more from the experience than the incarcerated women, despite their exuberant gratitude. After we shared, all of the volunteers went to separate rooms and the inmates came in one by one with their books to be recorded. It was heart-warming to watch the mothers light up as they left messages for their children. This experience was excellent, and I can’t wait to go back. 🍷



WSP’s two new interns from St. Edward’s University: Brogan Ward (left) and Ellie Meyer) right.



## What's Happening?

- WSP is now in 6 of the targeted 8 female TDCJ prisons. As Warden Howard wished, WSP is at Henley, part of the Plane/Henley complex in Dayton. Ellie Chaikind, JoAnn Innerarity and Laura Edge are the Team Leaders. In the photo below, the two teams are on their way to the January visit.



- WSP's office is moving! We have the same address, 701 E. 11<sup>th</sup>; but we will be moving to a different part of the building. The people at Texas Transportation Motor Association will paint the new rooms and help move our equipment and supplies.
- Janet Abbey, Cathy Foster, Jorene Williams, and Linda Robertson attended a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner at the Plane facility. It was an opportunity for volunteers to learn about other service programs and to meet their volunteers. Abbey said, "We all enjoyed meeting volunteers from other backgrounds and learning how many of the women's lives were impacted through love and kindness. All together we are making a difference in offering hope. Not only was it fun to meet volunteers, but the food was good, too!" Food dishes were brought and shared by all.
- On March 1, Brenda Dykes, Wynona Montgomery and Judith Dullnig made a radio debut with Bill Buchanan on KSHN Radio, Liberty-Dayton, Texas. For 30 minutes, Bill

asked questions about WSP, and Brenda, Wynona and Judith responded. It was a great opportunity to inform the community about WSP. Before they left the station, a listener called and wanted to know how to volunteer. You'll soon be able to listen to the interview on our website.

- WSP was a recipient of a \$500 grant and a box of books from Sun City Kiwanis in Georgetown.
- WSP is exploring making the transition from recording on tapes to recording on CD's. A pilot program is being planned for a Gatesville facility in the near future.



### *(Retired Educators—continued from page 1)*

pathologists, administrators, librarians, secretaries, nurses, - whatever. The audience was extremely receptive to the concepts and ideals that are the cornerstone of Storybook. The restaurant where the meeting was held did not have any accommodations for encompassing our wonderful DVD that tells Storybook's "story" into the program, so the presentation had to be made "a cappella." The response was terrific! After I gave a brief history of Storybook and how the program works, I shared three letters from caregivers and three letters from the recipients of the books. There was laughter and tears as the audience experienced the depth of this program and its importance to the children AND to their families.

The retired educators in that room reached into their hearts and their pockets or purses to support Storybook Project. They donated 33 books and almost \$300 that day! Now, keep in mind that retired teachers have not received a cost of living increase since 2001! Are you with me? That's the power of Storybook Project! What a privilege it is to be part of such an amazing program! "A little idea with a great big impact"! 🍷



## Can you help? Volunteers Needed

- WSP is in need of a **co-team leader for Lane Murray**. The new Team Leader will alternate with Cynthia Winer, therefore only going to Gatesville every other month on the third Saturday. As a Team Leader, she would be responsible for receiving the names and addresses of the children prior to her session, submitting volunteer names and supplies going to the prison, overseeing the circle time, completing administrative work during the session, verifying the number of tapes and books prior to sealing packages and mailing them the following Monday, sending for any reimbursements, and reporting the number of books/tapes mailed and the cost of mailing and transportation to Dugie Graham. Assistance in learning these tasks is available.



- Ron Stimson is preparing to Step Down from Book Notes and Pat Roberts will be taking over some of this role. Someone to **help gather news** and work with Pat Roberts and Judith is needed. This could be someone who doesn't volunteer at prison, but who would like to be part of the Book Notes Staff.



- Those of you who are **users of Facebook**, please add Women's Storybook Project as a "friend". If you already have WSP linked to your page, then please remember to hit the like button or the share button every time you see a post.



*"Storybook helps me put "Neosporin" on the scar that I have caused in my child's life. Thank you for making it possible." - an incarcerated mother*

## Storybook Volunteers Getting the Word Out



On February 17, WSP Volunteers Marge Gurrola, Laurie Benavides, and Wanda Stimson staffed an exhibit table at the fifth Annual Sun City Nonprofit Fair in Georgetown. WSP was just one of many organizations soliciting volunteers and making their services known to this active senior community. Four potential volunteers were identified and brochures were given to many visitors to the WSP table. Many thanks to all those dedicated volunteers who give their time for events such as this! 🍷

## Transformation

*As experienced by Sandy Carey*

After our March recording session at Hilltop, I marveled at the response of one particular offender to the Storybook experience. During the closing circle, she had commented that when she walked through the door to the classroom where I was waiting to record her, she was "no longer an offender. I was just a MOTHER."

And indeed she was. She turned the book toward me as she read, and it was unmistakable that in her mind, I had been transformed into her son. She lost herself in the reading, and animatedly talked to him about every picture. It was apparent that for a few minutes, she "escaped" the confines of the prison to spend some quality time with her three year old son. I am so blessed to have the opportunity to witness moments like this with Storybook. 🍷

## Music at Mountain View

By Linda Cox

At the 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Grammy Awards in February, rapper LL Cool J spoke poignantly to a star-studded audience of the universal language of music and its power to bring people together.

The day before, a group of women from very different walks of life had already discovered the transformative power of music in the most unlikely of places—the small library of the Mountain View prison unit. The volunteers would later agree that they would not be the same after this experience, and that is was likely that some of the offenders would also feel transformed in some small way.

The group of volunteers arrived at the unit and were greeted with the most thorough pat down most of us had ever experienced. We even had to soap up our wedding rings to try to get them off for the first time in many years. If we were beginning to think that our officer was going to make our visit challenging, she soon allayed our fears by telling us that the offenders had been looking forward to our visit for an entire month. This was their first Storybook day, and they were very excited. They were so excited that the officer, knowing the value of Storybook, had decided to come in on her day off to help as a volunteer—despite the fact that it was her birthday!

Our group leader Betsy McCrain gathered the women in the opening circle and very artfully put the nervous women at ease with a mixture of humor and humility. We had an unusual number of grandmothers in our group of offenders, and one of the offender's children also had a birthday that day. We told them that this was going to be fun—and it was! The offenders read to their children as if they were present in the room—talking to them about the illustrations, telling them when to turn the pages, and singing to them.

As we gathered for our closing circle, two things conspired to keep us together longer than usual. One of the women had just been getting ready to read when the officer told her she had visitors and had to leave. It turned out to be her children, and, while she was excited to see them, she was nearly in tears at having to miss her chance at reading them their books. She decided to cut her visit with the children short and race back, just as the closing circle was gathering. The officer was accommodating, although we had to rush to get her books

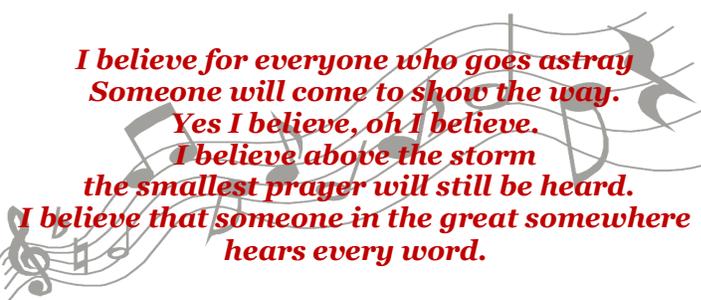
read. But finally we were all finished and gathered, and we began talking about the books and the Storybook experience. And then the officer looked out the window very seriously. A fight had broken out somewhere else in the compound and, she said, no one was going anywhere for a while. But no one in the circle batted an eye—the mood in the library was still joyful and excited, and the offenders were still expressing their gratitude and excitement about their experiences.



The volunteers talked about how much we enjoyed their singing to their children, and convinced one of the young grandmothers to sing the song that she had just sung in chapel the last week. She gave us a beautiful rendition of "You Are My Sunshine," admitting that her mother had told her that she "had a voice for singing to babies." Then volunteers Octavia Smith and Nancy Snyder revealed that they were in their church choir and were cajoled into singing a song together—they chose "Don't

Fence Me In," to the ironic laughter of the circle as we sat waiting for lockdown to end.

Finally, a shy offender spoke up: "I'll sing something if nobody looks at me." So while we all studied the ceiling and bookshelves, we heard a Grammy-worthy version of "I Believe" that spoke to the deepest hopes and faith of everyone present:



We all felt that this song reached the deepest places of our hearts and many offenders and volunteers alike were quietly weeping. This moment was elevated out of the ordinary, as all differences melted away and we were together in the presence of a Spirit beyond our limited and fallible selves. As we applauded, the shy offender covered her head with her hood in embarrassment. The officer gave us a moment to congratulate her before announcing that we had to leave quickly for count. She had chosen to be there on her birthday, reminding us that while the officers have a serious job to do, their dedication and wisdom is what allows these potentially transformative experiences to occur. 🎵



700 East 11th Street  
Austin, TX 78701



**The Children**

*Win!*



*Win!*



**The Prison**



**The Caregiver**

*Win!*



**The Volunteers**



**The Mothers**