

Book Notes



PROGRAMS

Women's Storybook Project is proud to welcome Susan Pekoe to our team of volunteer leaders.



Susan Pekoe

We're sure you've noticed that your reminder's and SOS's are now coming from Susan Pekoe!

She has graciously agreed to become our scheduling chair, as Dugie will be moving on and up to a new role in program management. Susan has been volunteering for a few years now and is a gifted organizer. We are so thankful she is taking on this role! Our calendar will be changing just a bit and will be coming out more often, for less than 6 months. Watch for news and instructions. Welcome Susan!



Alli Paul

Alli Paul joined us from the LBJ Graduate School of Public Affairs this Spring Semester as an intern and

has truly been a gift to the WSP office! She has worked on an archive newsletter file, grant prospecting, the Mother's Day giving campaign and preparing an intern training manual all while finishing up her master's degree.

She has prepared us well to welcome in a summer intern! It has been a gift to work with her and we wish her all the best as she prepares for her next move to an NGO in the Middle East. Thank You Alli!

Have You Read?



WSP has a growing WISH LIST of books that are being requested by the moms we serve. The books that we bring to the units are donated, and they are fantastic! This does mean that we are not always able to meet a specific request. If you, or someone you know is interested in donating a book, or books, to the program – Here is a list of some titles and authors that are very popular and would be appreciated. They'd also probably be popular with any small people in your life!

[Paw Patrol](#), [Peppa Pig](#), [Superhero Books](#), [Captain Underpants](#), [Dogman](#), [Bad Kitty](#), [Skippyjohn Jones](#), [Amelia Bedelia](#), [Books by Judy Blume](#) and [Nancy Tillman](#), [My Little Pony](#).

For Valentine's Day, Volunteers gathered at the WSP Offices for an Open House. We enjoyed beautiful music by Riley Edwards from the Austin Classical Guitar Society and refreshments courtesy of Tiff's Treats and Trader Joe's. We honored long time volunteers and welcomed new ones. Many who had never been to the new offices were able to find us (thankfully!) and see where the behind the scenes action happens.



Nancy Botkin, Jessica Cirullo, Rebeca Gonzalez-Farias, Dugie Graham

MEDIA/AWARDS

Check out the latest episode of [Read With You](#) on Apple Podcasts. The guest is WSP founder Judith Dullnig and the topic is "Reading to Children is Vital- No Matter Where They Are". This internationally followed podcast is well done and we were thrilled to be included! When you have listened, please leave a podcast review on itunes, and thanks!



Read With You

KVUE proudly announced the winners of the 31st annual Five Who Care and Five Kids Who Care community service awards on April 23rd. Judith Dullnig was honored as one of the Five Who Care!

KVUE's website states: "Every year, KVUE honors 10 people in the community who give their time and talents to help others. With different professions, different ages, and different backgrounds, these 10 extraordinary people are changing lives in our local community every day." We agree!



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Linda Carey

Tell me how you first got involved with WSP

I ran into my friend Vickie Blumhagen in HEB, who is now a team leader, and she mentioned she had volunteered with Storybook Project in a women's prison that day, and described her experience, and I said "You can DO THAT?" I went home, googled the website, and signed up for training that evening.



Linda Carey

What do you wish other people knew about us?

How really special the experience is, and how very grateful and gracious the moms are who participate in our program. Through tears and laughter, the connections we make are unforgettable.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about (donating, volunteering, etc.)?

That this program makes a very profound difference. We hear it every single time we get together with the moms in prison. A child is starting to forgive the mom for being in prison, a grandparent has begun to allow the children to visit, a child tells the mom "I can't believe you remember that was

my favorite book", and the mom is able to say "OF COURSE I remember that was your favorite book - my memory of reading that together is the most precious thing I have".

A mom says she sees her child's grades improve dramatically, because the child suddenly wants to read. We hear these stories so often in our circle time.

Also, I have to give Judith Dulling kudos here, because I don't think I've ever met another person who has more "fire in their belly" for a project than she has for Storybook. She is very inspirational!

Pick up a copy of O: The Oprah Magazine this month and turn to page 30. There is a new feature - "The High Five." Page compiler Melissa Simpler says that it's a list of things to cheer about this month. It's great to get a high five from the Oprah crew!



DONATIONS

If you've been reading the WSP newsletter for these past few years, you have become acquainted with Beshar Garcia. Beshar is an amazing young man who was drawn to the program after speaking to Megan Hedgecock at the Barnes and Noble Book Fair, when he was 8 years old. Well, now Beshar is 13 and has just completed his Bar Mitzvah.



He chose to continue to support Women's Storybook Project as he worked on his service with a goal of raising \$1300. Exceeding his goal, as usual, Beshar raised over \$3,000 to help connect children to their incarcerated mothers. The photo here shows him speaking to the WSP luncheon on April 25. Thank you, Beshar!

THANK YOU

Thank you so much to our most recent donors!



- Junior League of Austin
- James and Ellen Balthazar
- Grant Me the Wisdom Foundation
- Literati Books
- Jon and Judith Dullnig
- Pan American Round Table of Austin
- Rotary Foundation of Austin
- St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and School

Amplify Austin donors: Thank you!
We made our goal! New computers are on their way!

And to ALL the generous donors who contributed to the Third Annual Women's Storybook Luncheon!

STORYBOOK LUNCHEON



L-R; Melody Southall, Rori Gallagher, Rachel Pry and Sun Connor

We held the 3rd Annual Women's Storybook Project Luncheon on April 25th at the Austin Country Club.

The event was a great success —new friends and donors filled 27 tables and pledged \$90,000 over the next three years. A big THANK YOU to our underwriters, table hosts, guests and volunteers for making this event such a success!

The luncheon represented another milestone for WSP: we continued to build our "Reader's Circle." Sixteen new members joined in support of the WSP mission to connect children with their incarcerated mothers through the joy of literature, bringing our total Reader's Circle membership to 50!

It is our hope that this support program will continue to garner new members and enable the organization to expand into more Texas Department of Criminal Justice units.



L-R; Jeri Saper, Trish Lawrence, Nancy Wallace, and Emilie Crimmins

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 31

WSP Board Meeting
WSP Office 10-12 am

June 6

We're excited to be one of the featured nonprofits seeking new board leaders at Mission Capital's Board Summit on June 6.

If you have been thinking about joining a nonprofit board of directors, including ours, the Board Summit is for you!

When: 6:00-8:30pm on June 6, 2019
Where: Bullock Texas State History Museum at 1800 Congress, Austin

To Register, visit Mission Capital online at www.missioncapital.org/events/board-summit

June 9

Team Leader Lunch and Learn
WSP Office 1-3 pm

Upcoming TDCJ Training Opportunities

7/20	12:00 – 4:00	Austin
9/7	9:00 – 1:00	Georgetown
10/19	12:00 – 4:00	Austin
11/2	1:00 – 5:00	Kyle

Volunteers in need of their 2-year refresher training may also train online.

For more information go to www.TDCJ.State.Tx.Us

Prison volunteers, remember to sign up through our website so we can add you to our database and give you correct info on TDCJ trainings.

Hello,

I am a 14 year old girl that lives in Colorado because my mom is in prison. My mom terry has sent me a book from your program and I would like to say I absolutely loved it getting to hear her voice was just the best thing in the world. I love this program and I think it is amazing you guys are doing this. I opened the package and I was not expecting this but I bursted into tears of joy for receiving such an amazing present she picked a book that I used to read when I was little I love skippyjon jones and getting this while shes been in prison for over a year means a lot to me I hope you guys can expand this project all over the states and it warms my heart knowing you guys are doing this for a no-profit you guys are amazing in every way and I hope this project continues.

Much love,
Jessica

Volunteer Opportunities

We're always looking for volunteers. If you are available for office tasks, committee work, social media or other things please call or email the office at 512-861-5110 or info@storybookproject.org!

"Dear Storybook volunteers: You all have made a huge impact on me and babies life. It's definitely lightened the burden on our hearts. I want you all to know you've blessed me and my family in such a tremendous way. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart."

Reminder: No leggings or tight fitting clothes allowed in the units



*To whom it may concern:
I am the Grandmother of.....and the mother of inmate.....at the
Hilltop Unit. I would just like to take this time to say that Storybook is a
blessing to my grandson. He loves getting the books. When he sees me going to
the mail and I bring the mail back in the house, he asks “Gana did my mom
send me another book?”*

*Whoever came up with the Storybook Program is a blessing. It helps my
grandson hear his mother’s voice and connect with his mom on a level no one
can understand but my grandson and his mother.
Thank you for bringing this joy into my household.*

A Caregiver

