

PNBA Rural Library Project Fall Show 2002 Recipients Sequim, Washington Library

THE SEQUIM GAZETTE

Wednesday, October 9, 2002 A-9

Books by the bundle School librarians laud literary windfall

BETTY OPPENHEIMER
Sequim Gazette Staff

"What loot," said Sequim High School librarian Nancy Woolley. "I would have been happy if we had received three or four books. This is incredible."

Woolley and Helen Haller librarian Marsha Omdal are thrilled and amazed at the \$16,000 worth of books donated to Sequim libraries by publishers represented at the recent Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association convention in Portland.

In July, Pacific Mist Books owner Marti McAllister Wolf submitted Sequim schools for consideration to receive this year's Rural Library Project donation. By mid-August, she was advised that her entry had been chosen. After the convention, exhibitors were encouraged to donate leftover books to the project, which McAllister Wolf arranged to have delivered to the Sequim High School library.

"I didn't know I was supposed to arrange to bring the books home myself, so I filled my small car with 300 books, and had some friends bring the rest to Seattle," said McAllister Wolf.

When they found out about the donation, the school district paid freight for the re-

mainder of the trip, said Woolley.

When the books arrived last week, the women counted 1,337 volumes. They sorted them into age-appropriate categories.

"There are books for the First Teacher pre-school program at the Community School, books for both elementary schools, the middle school, the high school and the public library," said McAllister Wolf.

The Rural Library Project began in 1992, when Kate Joest, a regular volunteer at the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association trade show, saw that many booksellers discarded for free or at little cost the books left over at the end of the show. She arranged for a batch of books to be donated to help a school in Southern Oregon which had lost all of its books when its library burned down. The effort was so well received that since then the program has been adopted by the association itself.

Each year, the booksellers association calls for entries of rural libraries in need of a transfusion of new books to be nominated by member bookstores or publishers. The association chooses the winning entry based on need and at the end of the show exhibitors donate any books they can, knowing that they will go to a worthy cause.



Sequim High School librarian Nancy Woolley and Helen Haller librarian Marsha Omdal peruse more than 1,300 books donated by publishers after Pacific Mist Books owner Marti McAllister Wolf submitted a statement of Sequim's need for new books to the Pacific Northwest booksellers Association's Rural Library Project.

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SEQUIM'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2002

Bookstore owner's efforts get results for Sequim libraries

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Each year Marti McAllister Wolf has attended the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association trade show and has seen other school systems take home books donated to the Rural Library Project by exhibitors after the show ends.

This year, she did something about it — she entered Sequim High School into the program, and "won" hundreds of books in every conceivable category for the school district.

"I had heard that our school li-

brary was impacted by budget cuts and that their collection of books was getting old," said McAllister Wolf. "I called Nancy Woolley, librarian at the high school to learn more."

Woolley told McAllister Wolf that the average copyright date of books in the high school's collection is 1978, and many categories of books are sadly lacking in breadth. McAllister Wolf added a cover letter to Woolley's explanation of the condition of the high school library's collection, and mailed off the entry in mid-July. In August, she received a call from Michael Pritiken, coordinator of the Rural Library Program, telling her

that Sequim had been selected to be the recipient of any books donated by exhibitors at the end of the trade show in Portland, Ore.



WOLF

She didn't know how many books the honor might bestow, but Woolley had made clear that any new books would be a wonderful addition. "I felt like I won the lottery," said McAllister Wolf. "All he told me was that I had to stay after the show ended to help

pack up the donations, and get them to Sequim."

Throughout the show, fliers were distributed, asking booth vendors to contribute to the cause, letting them know that Sequim's collection was extremely old and that failed school levies had caused budget constraints for school librarians. When the show ended, she and Pritiken set up shop in a small room off the exhibition hall.

"When I got there, there were eight or 10 boxes of books, and I was excited and pleased. As they kept being brought in, I was amazed. By the time the show had been packed up and exhibitors had left, I was

overwhelmed and stunned!"

She was left with about 60 cases of books — biographies, children's books, educational books, history books, all genres of fiction, computer books and more. Some of the exhibitors left their entire display's worth of books, rather than take them home. Many authors, who had their own booths, donated copies of their latest publications.

McAllister Wolf brought back 20 cases in her small car, and has arranged for the other 40 cases to be delivered within a week by her distributor, Partners West in Renton.

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