

# HLF News



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## 25 Years of Library Heroes

For 25 years the Humboldt Library Foundation has worked tirelessly to support the Humboldt County Library system. Essential to the success of our mission are library employees. For over two decades, patrons have relied on library staff for service support, resource information and reading recommendations. Perhaps most importantly, library staff also serve as key pillars of conversation and community.

Janice Nixon, Senior Library Assistant at the Humboldt County Kim Yerton Memorial Hoopa Branch Library, said "Libraries can provide a gateway to our communities. They provide a place where folks can connect with resources, learn new skills and meet new people."

HLF works closely with library staff to ensure that donor grants meet the needs of library users and programs. Staff play a critical role in ensuring that library materials and programs are relevant and useful to patrons. This work became even more critical during the COVID-19 pandemic.

After branch closures, library staff quickly pivoted to curbside pickup to enable access to library materials. Programs and book clubs were moved online and outdoor activities, such as the kids story walk, were promoted as a means of keeping the community connected.

Jessica Schlachter, Library Assistant II in the Acquisitions and Technical Services Department, said that her colleagues were critical sources of support for each other and for patrons during library closures.

"We're trying our hardest to get new books to patrons as soon as we can," she said. "And as for my help in the circulation department, curbside services were a huge pivot for us. I'm happy that we had a way to get books to patrons during that time, but I'm happier that we reopened for browsing!"

Library staff worked creatively during this crisis to ensure that community services remained accessible, despite their own risks. Ms. Nixon in the Hoopa Branch was exposed to the COVID-19 four times during her service.

"I have been quarantined 5 times now, 4 because of exposure, and once because I tested positive so I stayed home for about 3 weeks," she said. "Each time I was quarantined I would have to put a lot of my projects on hold, and when I would come back I would double the workload because there would be new projects with deadlines."

As we near the end of our 25th year, the Humboldt Library Foundation recognizes all library staff for the critical role they play in our community and in our mission.

We also have immense gratitude to everyone who has donated to the Humboldt Library Foundation over the past 25 years. Your donations not only support library programs, but also the amazing people behind the scenes.

"We really, really appreciate the donations that we receive," said Jessica. "I'm the person who puts the gift plates into the books, and it really warms my heart to see how many people care about the library."



## From the President's Desk by Elizabeth Murguia



*"A nation born in contradiction will fight forever over the meaning of its history. The past is an inheritance, a gift and a burden. It can't be shirked. There's nothing for it but to get to know it."*

Jill Lapore

Maybe it's the pandemic, or my own journey through the world of books, but I've been thinking a lot about what drives my rhythms of reading. Over the past months, the books I've chosen share a theme: to shine a light on the dark corners of American history.

Ron Chernow's biography of Ulysses S. Grant, *Grant*, is a very satisfying tome. Governing during the most tumultuous times of our shared American history, Grant has not been treated favorably over the years. Chernow sets out to reclaim his reputation and brilliantly illuminates the political forces that shaped the period. This is very readable. I came away with a much clearer understanding of the brutal treachery that brought down Reconstruction, where the seeds of Jim Crow were planted and the Civil Rights movement was born.

*How the Word Is Passed*, by Clint Smith, jumps to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and explores the legacy of slavery today. This is a poignant and personal journey for Smith, and brings a depth of understanding, particularly as the battle over critical race theory erupts across the landscape. Smith visits historic places, including Jefferson's Monticello, Angola Prison, Wall Street and other iconic sites, to examine what's been left out in the retelling. More than a travelogue, it is a riveting and personal effort to understand our past, and just how some of our most essential stories are hidden from view. Through interviews, detailed research, and an ability to capture place, Smith puts you at the heart of matter: how different would our country look if we fully understood what happened here?

I was engrossed by two novels that lay bare the difficult truths about the impact of US foreign policy on the people of Afghanistan and the Middle East. Omar El Akkad brings to his fiction a reporter's keen observation in *What Strange Paradise* and *American War*, based on his real-life experience covering Afghanistan, Guantánamo and the Arab Spring. *What Strange Paradise* explores the global refugee crisis through the eyes of a child, washed ashore on a strange island. Set in the future, *American War* imagines a second American Civil War. Ocean rise has caused mass migration from both coasts to the center of the country, Columbus, Ohio is now the nation's capital and Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia have seceded from the Union. The novel tells the story of a young woman born in Louisiana and raised in refugee camps. It is a story of displacement and revenge that could be set in Afghanistan or Iraq, but this time it is America's turn. A dystopian futuristic novel is not in my comfort zone, but I could not put this one down.

"I read so I can live more than one life in more than one place. "

Anne Tyler

## HLF Gives \$75,000 For New Books and Materials

The Humboldt Library Foundation presented the Humboldt County Library system with \$75,000 to purchase new books and materials for local library branches, bringing year-to-date grant funding up to \$101,000.

The library system will purchase new young adult and children's novels and audio visuals and access to the McNaughton leased books program for newly released and popular titles. This grant funding also includes allocations from the Hun Kwan Goh Memorial Fund for materials on Thailand, China and other parts of Asia as well as the Sally Upatisringa Mystery Fund for mystery novels.

"The Foundation's support is always greatly valued, even in the best of times. But COVID-19 has taken its toll on the library's collection, due to a double-whammy of reduced monetary donations and a lengthy moratorium on donations of physical media," said Library Acquisitions Manager Michael Logan. "This grant from the Foundation takes on even greater weight than usual, allowing us to continue getting up-to-date, useful and popular books and AV. It's a huge boon for the entire Humboldt County community, and we're extremely fortunate to have the HLF's support, through thick and thin."

HLF Board President Elizabeth Murguia said, "The Humboldt Library Foundation plays a key role in ensuring that library books and materials are fresh and relevant to patrons. Purchasing new material is costly and we're thrilled that patrons will continue to find new and interesting releases."

HLF provides grants to the library system yearly to purchase and refresh existing materials. The McNaughton leased books program ensures library patrons' continued access to new and popular titles without the expense of direct book purchases.

## Mission Accomplished! \$50,000 Raised for Cargo Van

With a recent \$7,000 grant from The McLean Foundation, the Humboldt Library Foundation reached its fundraising goal to purchase a cargo van for a new home delivery program. Thank you to our generous donors for stepping up to bring this exciting new service to library users. Patrons who are homebound, lack access to transportation or have other difficulties utilizing library services, will now be able to place an order and have the materials delivered to their door. Look for the cargo van rollout in 2022. We'll keep you updated.

### Thank You to Our Donors (\$1,000+)

Bonnie Neely • Coast Central Credit Union • Pacific Gas and Electric • Premier Financial Group • Terri Clark • Tom and Stephanie Perrett Community Fund • Papa & Barkley • Pierson Building Center Mercer Fraser • Recology Humboldt • Redwood Capital Bank • Humboldt Democratic Central Committee • Soroptimist International of Eureka • Sally Upatisringa/Elizabeth Murguia Fund • Humboldt Library Foundation • The McLean Foundation



## From the Director's Desk

by Chris Cooper

After four years of planning, negotiations and conversations, the people of Southern Humboldt have a vibrant new library. The library is part of the Garberville Campus Complex and includes the Humboldt County Sheriff Department's substation and a community conference room. The complex is the first in the County's efforts to move more of its services to a campus-style



model. It was truly a team effort.

The Humboldt County Library is fortunate to have creative County staff and generous support from community-based organizations, foundations and philanthropic individuals. The County's ADA Compliance team, ADA Compliance Coordinator Karen Clower, ADA Carpenter Lindsey Day and Project Manager, Travis Smith, guided the project with patience, creativity and enthusiasm. Karen provided creative support and assistance in making sure that library choices were appropriate in providing access for all. Lindsey designed and built a beautiful state-of-the-art service desk and mobile bookcases. Travis provided outstanding ongoing communication and guided the project with patience and encouragement. He was extremely good-natured when faced with delays and challenges.

The previous library, a temporary structure built in 1985, was demolished. Garberville Library Branch Manager Kay Sheldon provided curbside services from the County Department of Health and Human Services Social Services Center across the street from the building site. Kay has provided a steady presence and flexibility as the project timeline was extended. Thanks to DHHS Facility coordinators Vonnie Fierro and Kelly Golden for providing a venue for community library access during construction. The community benefited from the continuity of wi-fi access and library service

during the project. I appreciate the expertise of DHHS Information Services, with a shout out to Darrel Cline, working with County Information Technology, and props to Jason Moore, for setting up telecommunications infrastructure.

Working with County Public Works, Library Operations Manager Ronda Wittenberg secured a location in front of the Garberville Post Office for Bookmobile All-Star Adrienne Quiros to provide additional temporary library service to Southern Humboldt residents. Ray's Food Place Manager Tony Wilson hosted the library's book return drop over the course of the building project.

The new library features an inviting lobby with comfortable furniture funded by the McLean Foundation, including comfortable and stylish upholstered chairs, café seating and tables and outlets to charge electronic devices and plug in laptops or tablets. Tablets are available for check out at the library's service desk. There is a hydration station providing filtered water, ADA restrooms, and coming soon, a community art wall.

The new Garberville Library will provide library visitors with access to high-speed broadband, which provides dramatically faster and more reliable bandwidth through CENIC's California Research and Education Network. With this service, the public is connected with increased speeds, many times their earlier capacity. The library is also outfitted with three brand new public access computers.

The main area of the library features dynamic, colorful children's furniture funded by the Humboldt Library Foundation. There is an overhead projector to accommodate library classes, programs, events, lectures and movie viewing. *(Continued on Page 7)*



## Annual Gala Update

## Supporter Spotlight

Due to the pandemic, we won't be holding our *Annual Holiday Gala* in person this year. We have cancelled the dinner party, the music and the auction. But we have not cancelled the reason for which we typically gather – to celebrate the public library and raise funds to help meet the dreams and aspirations of our community.

The Gala is our major fundraiser for the year and we're hoping you'll participate and help us reach our fundraising goal of \$75,000.

The library counts on our support. So please consider becoming a patron at any one of the following levels -- or simply make a donation that fits your circumstance right now. If you've already donated, thank you!

### PATRON LEVELS

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### Julie Fulkerson

"I still have books from my early childhood. Surprisingly, I can quote from many of them. The rhymes and images live in my head. (Helen Everett was a friend of the family and made sure there was no end to good books at home, in the College Elementary School Library and HSU when she was Head Librarian.) I just gave a gift of a book to a newborn. Can't start too early. Our libraries are the most important resource, perhaps more so than when I was a child. With care, libraries are a deep reservoir even when all internet systems fail."



### Sharon Ferrett

"I love Libraries. Growing up on a farm in Michigan, the mobile library was my link to the larger world. Reading became my passion and fostered curiosity and a lifelong love of learning. I went from a one room schoolhouse to University of Michigan and Michigan State University where I earned a Ph.D. I owe so much to libraries and the wonderful librarians who encouraged me to read the armful of books I took out each week."



### Lilia Mizer

"I remember the day my dad took me to get my library card. I was three years old full of exuberance and I couldn't even write my name well enough to sign the card myself...Reading novels and learning from many different characters has taught me so much about who I want to be and who I don't want to be. I can't imagine my life without the myriad of stories, plots, characters and, most importantly, the authors that breathed existence into their dreams."



## Book Notes

### Reading with Young Children Improves Literacy Skills

by Cindy Chesbro

When my children were pre-school age, I worked in a Community College pre-school daycare facility. I always had many picture books available around the house in baskets, in their rooms and even in the bathtub. I would take them to story hour at the local library and I would check out as many as 40 picture books that I would use to read at home with my boys and to take to my preschool class.



At the center where I worked, we celebrated National Reading Day where the teachers would dress up in a book character and read the book and then the children would vote on which one they enjoyed the best. (Literacy and math skills) I dressed up as the bear from Jill Murphy's "Whatever Next," with a box on my body and a colander on my head as the bear did in the book, dressed going to the moon.

Reading to children as early as infancy enhances their literacy skills. Vocabulary skills are also increased. According to research, children who are read to more frequently and from an earlier age tend to have a greater interest in literacy, exhibit superior literacy skills during the preschool and school years, choose reading more frequently, initiate reading sessions on their own and show greater engagement during reading sessions (Lonigan 1994; Scarborough and Dobrich 1994).

I still have many of the books that I bought when my children were young. It is hard to let go of them. My children are in their 30s now. We have a Little Free Library at our house and I occasionally put a few books in it to invite children to read.

I would encourage you to read with your grandchildren or, better yet, take them to one of the story hours at one of the local libraries, of course when it is safe. When you read to preschoolers ask them questions about the book to engage their thinking. Do a cooking or art project around the book. "Stone Soup" by Marcia Brown is a great one to do a cooking activity with and children are intrigued to put a stone in soup. Express your love of books to encourage children to read.

"You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child. "

Dr. Seuss

### Yes, Young People Still Like Books

by Ciara Emery

My love of reading started at a public library. I was a competitive kindergartner living in a small town in California's Central Valley. My teacher, Ms. Berry, gave me a copy of Junie B. Jones and I was hooked--except for the fact that I couldn't read.

My teacher read to me and my grandparents read to me, but I was extremely frustrated by the fact that there were worlds of stories out there that I could not access myself. So my Nana took me to the library and I grabbed every copy of the Junie B. Jones series I could find--and I taught myself how to read.

This love, curiosity and competitiveness for reading followed me through the rest of my academic career. Ask me about the time I tried to read *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas in fifth grade. Hint: it didn't go so well.



Ciara and her Papa Kenneth Emery after she got her first grade reading award bookmark

In the last two decades, with the popularization of e-readers and the internet, there has been a consistent myth that young people don't have the patience or attention span to pick up a good book.

I'm here to dispel that myth.

According to 2019 data from the Pew Research Center, 81% of young adults ages 18-29 have read a book (in any format) in the last year. Only 67% of 50-64-year-olds and 68% of aged 65+ report doing so.

It is true that young people are engaging with the book industry in different ways. There is an uptick in the popularity of e-books. New apps for iPhone and Android have changed the way books are discussed and consumed. Influencers are discussing their favorite books on apps like TikTok and are becoming a major force in the book marketing business.

According to Pew, however, while library visits have trended downward in the last several years, young people are slightly more likely than other age groups to visit their public library and access library online services. In a 2016 survey, millennials rated libraries higher than any other generation for their trustworthiness and helpfulness in obtaining new information.

Younger generations are engaging with books and literature of all kinds and we're ready to support our local libraries. Stop on by and ask us what we're reading.

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If you are 70.5 or older you can make a gift to the Humboldt Library Foundation directly from your IRA without paying income tax on the distribution.

For more information talk to your financial advisor or tax accountant or email [hlf@humboldt1.com](mailto:hlf@humboldt1.com).

### Continued from Page 4: Garberville Library

Last but not least, the library is full of new books. We appreciate Friends of the Garberville Library President Liz Davidson and Southern Humboldt Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Leann Green for their fundraising efforts.

Gratitude also goes to Vocality Credit Union, Garberville Rotary, Soroptimist International of the Redwoods, Green Diamond Resource Company and private donors for their generous support. Thanks to HCL staff Rachel Harwood, Jeanine Lancaster, Michael Logan and Kay Sheldon for selecting materials to build this collection for an increasingly diverse community.

I am looking forward to seeing the library grow and thrive with community enthusiasm, involvement and support.



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