



The Library Lookout

March 2004 Tel: 474-9072

Library News

By Katherine LeBlanc

Many exciting things are happening at the Library. Spring is on the way, and our calendar of events seems to be filling up rapidly.

We are gearing up for our Empire Falls book discussion on March 2nd at 6:00 p.m. at the Empire Grill. Françoise Labonte will be hosting this event and Mike Lambke and David Richards will be facilitators. At press time 41 people have signed up to attend. Space is limited to 50 and sign up is necessary at the Library by stopping in or calling 474-9072.

Recently Blynn and I were featured on Channel 11's Coffee Hour with Earl Boyd. It was a wonderful experience and we feel that we are finally reaching the public through different mediums to get the word out about how great our library is. Our press lunch scheduled for March 5th, is just the beginning in thanking the local area media, newspaper and television alike in helping to get the word out about our programs and changes.

On March 9th, Katherine will be speaking to the rotary club in regards to our upcoming programs.

March 10th is Blynn birthday, if you have a moment please pop in and wish him a happy birthday.

On March 11th at 7 p.m., Tim Gold will again be joining us for "There's Gold in your attic". A \$3.00 donation is requested for each item appraised. Please come and get your seats early because Tim always draws a large crowd.

March 13th the Bloomfield Garden Club will be sponsoring the "Plant a Flower Day" in the Children's Room. The children love to learn about seeds and take home a flower.

On Friday April 23rd, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, we will be hosting a Renaissance Faire at the library. We are in need of some items to make this Faire something special. Below please find a list of items that are requested. Thank you in advance for any help you can

give us.

bottled apple juice

floral foam

Beads

dry beans

brown paper lunch bags

bottled grape juice

yarn

aluminum foil

small Ziplocs (generic)

large Ziplocs (generic)

Any donations that you can make of these items would be greatly appreciated. Volunteers would also be welcome to man food and craft "booths". Again many thanks.

Be on the lookout for our Readers' Recipe cookbook due out this summer. We are very pleased to announce that Milton Christianson has completed a beautiful painting of the library that will adorn the cover. Milton's postcards and prints of the Library will also be on sale, with partial proceeds to be donated for our future expansion.

Our reception for teachers in January seemed to open up new doors for the History House, the Margaret Chase Smith Library and the Skowhegan Library. Seventy four teachers and principals attended and many contacts were made. Eight field trips and presentations have been scheduled for March.

Recently we received a donation from the Jeremiah Cromwell Disabilities Center. Twenty five books were sent to add to our collection. These books focus on the disabilities and abuses of children. Thank you to the center for the much needed addition in this area to our collection.

Many, many thanks go out to Kathy Hughes for completing a beautiful Cat in the Hat costume for me to wear. Her behind the scenes work and volunteering for story hour is greatly appreciated.

Our on-line card catalog is in! We will be inputting data very soon. Any volunteers would be greatly appreciated in this effort in order to make the catalog available to the public as soon as possible.

MEET A TRUSTEE

Toni Jo Blaisdell is perhaps known best, by most, as librarian of Skowhegan Area Middle School Library. Well, there is much more to this lady with sparkling eyes, warm manner, and bright smile. TJ grew up in the Skowhegan community, graduated from Skowhegan Area High School and went on to obtain her Associate's of Science Degree in Instructional Media Technology from the University of Maine at Farmington. She has been at SAMS for the past twenty-seven years. Toni Jo has been married for the past sixteen years (in April) and trades in her school librarian persona for an involved and very busy farmer's life for the summer. She and her husband have a farm, butcher shop, and roadside farm stand in Norridgewock. She throws a lot of hay during haying season too! She has been very active with the Skowhegan Fair for several years, especially with the famous Methodist Church Diner, which has always been a favorite for hungry fair goers. Active in the Methodist Church since becoming a choir member at the age of twelve, Toni Jo also acts as financial secretary for the church. She has been in this capacity since 1985. If any spare time appears in this friendly woman's life, she enjoys reading (of course), going to camp, and doing crafts.

TJ has been a trustee since nineteen ninety. It was then that Joe Penley approached her and asked if she would be interested in serving on a committee which she understood to mean being part of a group that would help choose books for the town library. Once she realized what was really involved she chose to go ahead with the commitment. She explained that some of the duties of the trustees involves setting policies, working closely with the director, maintaining the building, and acting sort of as "stewards of the library." She sees lots of good things happening at the library under the directorship of Blynn Currier and the staff. She says that "Volunteering is up and there seems to be more of a pro library movement in the community and overall."

As to the library as it is now and for what lies ahead, Toni Jo says she likes the building itself. "It's a beautiful building" and enjoys seeing the expansion of programs taking place. She thinks it would be nice to be able to accommodate all that can be offered and that "an addition will be an enhancement."

She believes that the trustees have a good group behind them between the Friends of the Library, the staff, and the community.

The library, itself, is fortunate and grateful to have a friend in the person of Toni Jo Blaisdell behind it. Thanks TJ.

EMPIRE FALLS QUILT

A signature quilt to commemorate the filming of Empire Falls has been completed by members of the Somerset Samplers. This quilt, which bears 18 signatures of cast and crew, will be auctioned off as a fund raiser for the library. Quilters who devoted Many hours to its creation include: Hilma Millett, Pat Cameron, Carmen Dickinson, Judy Cassidy and Corrilla Hastings. The quilt will be on display at all future library events, so be sure you take time to admire it -----and place your bid!

MARCH 10 AND 11 EVENTS

Two interesting evenings are scheduled on consecutive days next week at the library. Wednesday, March 10 is the date for our regular FOL meeting at 7 PM. Mary Stuart has arranged to bring some of her students from the Margaret Chase Smith School to perform a "Readers' Theater". On Thursday, March 11 at 7 PM, Tim Gould will present a program called "There's Gold in Your Attic". Tim has agreed to evaluate items which you might like to bring to the event, so take a look in your "attic" and discover the value of some long-forgotten family treasure! We're asking for a donation to the library of \$3 per item.

MAY BOOK SALE

This year, instead of the usual lawn sale, we have decided to concentrate on books at the annual sale at the Hastings' barn on May 22 & 23. Donations of books in good condition may be brought directly to the farm at any time. Other events to take place on the same days (such as the sale of hot dogs and refreshments) are in the planning stage. We welcome your ideas, and would also be happy to have some volunteers for set-up, selling, or clean-up. If you have some suggestions or a few spare hours, please contact Corrilla (474-3949) or Maureen (858-0448).

BOOK REPORT

by Roger Jarvais

Dark Eagle, written by John Ensor Harr, is a novel that reads like a historical biographical account of Benedict Arnold's years during the American Revolution. Many books have been written about this tragic figure in our history, but this novel is also a factual presentation of his life and actions during this rebellious period. We find that he is human and quite extraordinary, but has human frailties as well. He is deeply principled with traditional family values and is willing to die for the *cause* if need be. One sees his personal perspective and relives other points of view through actual narratives of period personalities that are interlaced within the story.

The book depicts Arnold as a military genius and hero of the battle at Valcour Bay, the relief of Fort Stanwix, and the victory at Saratoga. As the leader of a rag tag volunteer militia army, his bravery, valor, and military success distinguishes him as one of General Washington's top commanders in the entire Continental Army during the Northern Campaign. Battle wounds that are almost mortal leave him scarred and disillusioned during a long period of convalescence. It is during this period he falls in love with the beautiful Peggy Shippen of Philadelphia, the daughter of a local judge sympathetic to the British. Washington places Arnold, who is not physically fit for battlefield command, in charge of the city of Philadelphia, which was occupied by the British the previous winter. Ben tries to maintain peace between rebels, Tory sympathizers, and neutral citizens. It is a time of much uncertainty and questionable loyalties. Congress does not reimburse him for financial losses the war has caused and fails to appreciate his sacrifices to the *cause*. He questions values and struggles to endure in the face of all he has experienced. It is a time of contrasting ideology. Trying to do his duty by remaining to be fair to the citizens of Philadelphia, causes his loyalty to be questioned by some political leaders. Ben is charged with several counts of misconduct, including "misuse of his authority", by his enemies in Congress. The unappreciated hero now has to face a court martial to clear his name.

The anguish and inner struggles within Arnold give rise to his plan to end the war and bring peace to the land in such turmoil. The events that unfold

are a matter of record. The reasons are more complicated and the reader is left to empathize with the tragic figure the Indians call "Dark Eagle."



Pat Watts, principal of Bloomfield Elementary School, chats with Children's Librarian, Katherine LeBlanc, at the reception for teachers in January.



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BECOME A FRIEND OF YOUR LIBRARY

The Friends of the Skowhegan Free Public Library, a not for profit group dedicated to supporting and improving the Library for all members of the community, invite you to join us. Dues are \$10. Individuals, \$8. Seniors and Students, and \$15. for families. We normally meet at the Library the second Wednesday of every other month, unless scheduling conflicts require another date. For more information, call Corilla Hastings. (474-3949)

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Please complete this form and mail to Skowhegan Free Public Library, Elm Street, Skowhegan Maine 04976

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip Code _____

Calendar of Events

MARCH

Every Wednesday Story and Craft Hour, 10 am in the Children's Room

March 2 Library Trustee meeting, 4 pm at the library The public is welcome to attend.

March 2 *Empire Falls* Book Discussion. 6 pm at the Empire Grill

March 8 Skowhegan Town Meeting, 6 pm in the Municipal Building The budget will be voted on.

March 10 FOL meeting at 7pm Reader's Theater by Margaret Chase Smith School Students

March 11 "There's Gold in Your Attic" by Tim Gould, 7pm at the library

APRIL

Every Wednesday Story and Craft Hour, 10 am in the Children's Room

April 6 Library Trustee meeting, 4 pm at the library The public is welcome to attend.

April 23 Renaissance Faire 10am to 3pm at the library



The Library Lookout
Friends of the Skowhegan
Free Public Library
c/o Skowhegan Free Public Library
Elm Street
Skowhegan, ME 04976

Your Librarians are:
Library Director Blynn Currier,
Assistant Librarian François Labonte,
Children's Librarian Katherine Connell,
And Thelma butler

Your Library trustees are:
Bill Laney, Warren shay,
Lee Granville, Toni Jo Blaisdell
And Carol Jarvais

Friends Officers are:
Corrilla Hastings, Pres.,
Jim Foster, V.P.,
Maureen Calder, Sec.
Corrilla Hastings, treas