

Cascade “Quotes”

WINTER

friends of the CASCADE LIBRARY

JANUARY 2019



Laurel Ingram Wins KDL’s ‘Volunteer of the Year’ Award for Entire Kent District Library System



Laurel Ingram (center), winner of the 2018 Patricia J. Kaiser Volunteer of the Year Award, is pictured here with Cascade Friends’ President Joe David and Cascade Branch Library Manager Vanessa Walstra.

The Kent District Library named Cascade branch volunteer Laurel Ingram its winner of the Patricia J. Kaiser Volunteer of the Year Award at its annual “Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon” on November 15 in the KDL Service Center.

Ingram told those in attendance at

the luncheon that she was “grateful for and appreciative of the recognition that reflects the efforts of the many dedicated volunteers at the Cascade branch library.

“It’s been a wonderful experience being part of the KDL system,” she said. “I love all of the volunteers who

work so, so, so hard.”

Ingram was selected over four other nominees based on a long and distinguished resume of service to various Friends organizations. She has been a Friend to several libraries in Wisconsin, Illinois and Michigan for 25 years, serving in many capacities.

At the Cascade branch, she has helped expand the operations and sales of the Friends-managed Chapter Two used book store in the library. She expanded the “basement volunteer staff” from 12 to 40 trained volunteers in her first 18 months at the helm of the sorting and bookstore team.

And, that was just the start. She also grew shelving capacity; introduced greater efficiency through specialization of functions; pioneered the sale of books online, which has grown to annual revenues of nearly \$25,000; organized a Marketing Team to leverage the experience of several business-oriented volunteers; implemented customer service enhancements (e.g., credit card payment and the “Request a Book” program); and created a top-tier training program to attract new volunteers and increase their productivity. *Continued pg. 8*

WINTER ISSUE

Laurel Ingram Wins KDL’s ‘Volunteer of the Year’ Award

1

The President’s Letter
2018 Annual Report to Members

2

Friends to Offer Two Scholarships
in 2019

4

Cascade Friends Make Pledge to Assist
Reading-Challenged Third Graders

6

Friend Recalls Homeless Kids’ Joy from
Books

6

Your Donated Collectibles Get Special
Handling by Friends

5

Editor in chief

Joe David

Editors

Carol Holquist

Debbie Straub

Design

Philip Van Sullichem

The President's Letter

2018 Annual Report to Members



The year just completed ushered in some changes in leadership and programs. But, more noteworthy than the changes were the things that remained the same: creativity, commitment and selfless dedication to the mission of the Friends by volunteers, members and library staff.

Those things contributed to a very successful year in 2018, from fundraising to support for a variety of programs and materials that added to the positive experience of Cascade library patrons.

Financial Results

Year-end 2018 results were not available at the time of publication of this newsletter. So, the results below compare year-to-date numbers for November 2018 to November 2017.

- Bookstore sales through November were \$34,488, up 18.5 percent over the same period in 2017.
- Indoor Sales Events saw sales of \$8,567, basically flat compared to 2017.
- The 4th of July Sale saw a decrease of 4 percent in sales to \$10,463. The Board is addressing this with some changes to the event (see below).
- Online sales grew precipitously to a net of \$18,100 at the end of November, an increase of 35.2 percent.
- Total Sales through November came in at \$71,617, an increase of 12.9 percent.

Program Support

The Friends provided \$23,550 to help fund special programs and the purchase of supplies for the library. This was a 3.7 percent increase over 2017. Some of the programs included the purchase of large-print books, reading club prizes, teen reading materials, craft supplies for kids, materials for summer reading programs, signage, e-books and more (e.g., carts, clocks, white boards, easels).

In addition, the Friends also supported, financially and with their time, events such as Book Discussions, Booked for Lunch and Flix@theLibrary (free movies for families). Due to their popularity and support of our mission, we will continue to support these kinds of events in 2019.

Membership & Volunteerism

Membership grew modestly in 2018, with a tick upwards in active memberships late in the year. At the end of November, we had 437 members compared to 402 at the end of 2017, an increase of 8.7 percent. Of total memberships, 281 (64.3 percent) were current on their dues compared to 263 (65.4%) at the end of 2017. We have received \$1,700 in membership dues through November, which continued to be a relatively small part of total income at 2.3 percent.

It was another year of growth in the number and efforts of our volunteers. The number of active volunteers grew from 46 to 50, an increase of 8.7 percent, while the number of hours donated by volunteers increased from 7,068 in 2017 to a projected 7,408 in 2018, an increase of 4.8 percent. Hours donated annually have increased by 125% when compared to 2014. *Continued on page 3*

Friends Welcome New Volunteers in 2018



The Friends added 10 new volunteers in 2018, including the four pictured here: From left to right, Cathy Chan, Paula Ballast, Beverly Campbell and Bob Starck. Not pictured: Jim Austhof, Marti Chardon, Matt Crehan, Sandra Klinesteker, Judy Vana and Chris Van Raalte. They are part of a growing team of 50 "Basement Volunteers" who sort, box, price, list, sell and ship thousands of books each year.

President's Letter *Continued from page 2*

As discussed elsewhere in this issue, one of our volunteers, Laurel Ingram was selected as the Volunteer of the Year throughout the KDL system, which speaks to the level of commitment and dedication within our team of volunteers.

Communications

We continued to modernize our communications vehicles during the year, starting with a complete redesign of our cascadefriends.org website. We also took our first foray into the complex world of social media with the



creation of a Facebook page to help us share news about events with the community. And, we gave a facelift to our newsletter, Cascade Quotes, with more changes likely in the coming year, including the creation of a true digital edition to allow for timelier and less expensive communication.

2019 Initiatives

We are fortunate to have a dedicated group of volunteers who have achieved a great deal of success through hard work, planning and efficient operations. But, we're not resting on our "laurels." In fact, the Board prioritized 20 areas of opportunity in 2018 and has established ad hoc committees to address the top five priorities.

4th of July Committee: The 4th of July sale continues to be our flagship sales event each year. But, results have trended downward in recent years. While there are likely a number of factors in play, the intense heat and competition from other family events on the 4th are probably two primary deterrents. As a result, the 2019 sale will be a three-day event to give patrons more alternatives to shop. It will also be an indoor-outdoor event, with many popular categories of books inside the Wisner Center to give shoppers respite from the heat. More details will be provided as we get closer to the event.

Membership Committee: This committee will be taking a look at how other Friends organizations structure memberships, potential membership benefits and fees. We haven't made any changes in this area in many years and are likely lagging well behind the rest of the world.

Bylaws Committee: It has been quite a while since we have revisited our bylaws, which are a roadmap for our organization's actions and conduct. And, if you expect everyone in your organization to act in concert with your intended mission, you had better make sure you keep your bylaws up-to-date and well communicated. The committee will make recommendations to the complete board in the first quarter.

Procedures Committee: With more and more events to support and a rapidly increasing number of volunteers to train and oversee, it is no longer viable to entrust "standard operating procedures" to merely the brain cells of experienced volunteers. This committee is in the process of creating uniformity in the manner in which procedures are documented and ensuring that procedures are put into writing for the uninitiated.

Budgeting & Goal Setting: As previously noted, the Friends organization has increased in complexity and in the number and types of events we are supporting. While an annual budget has always been established in regards to financial support requested by the manager of the Cascade Library, we have not done the same in regards to the daily operations and Friends-sponsored events, such as Book Discussions, Booked for Lunch and Flix @the Library. So, in short, this committee will establish the framework for us to do a better job of creating annual budgets and revenue goals for the organization.



Friends to Offer Two Scholarships in 2019; Expand Eligibility to All FHPS Seniors



With the annual cost of attending a public university in Michigan often topping \$20,000 these days, it's no wonder that many high school seniors find themselves in search of scholarships. Well, the Friends of the Cascade Library just may have good news on that score for you or someone you know.

In 2008, we established a scholarship in memory of longtime

Friends volunteer Marilyn Meyer. Her tireless efforts on behalf of our organization from its founding in 1972 until her death in 2007 were instrumental in shaping our mission and related activities.

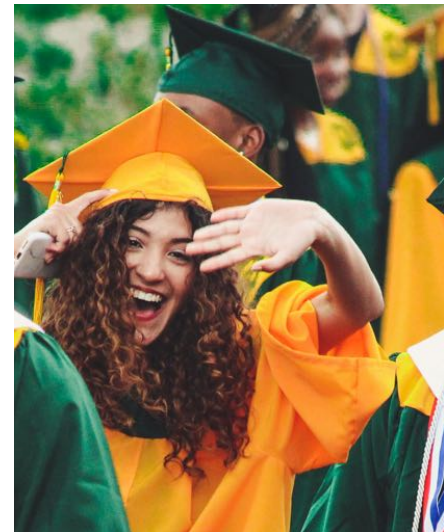
To this day the Friends continue to support the Cascade Library and its many services to the community through a network of dedicated volunteers. In 2019, in recognition of their efforts, the Friends

will now give two separate awards - each in the amount of \$1,500 - to two high school seniors attending either Forest Hills Central, Northern, or Eastern who best exemplify the volunteer spirit that motivated Mrs. Meyer and inspires today's Friends.

A copy of the 2019 scholarship guidelines and an application form are available at the Information Desk

in the Cascade Library, in the counseling office at each of the three high schools in the Forest Hills district and on the Friends' website at www.cascadefriends.org.

An application form and all accompanying documents must be returned to the Friends no later than March 15, 2019. So don't delay getting started on that application. For more information, contact Debbie Straub at EditorDAS@aol.com (please put "Friends Scholarship" in the subject line).



January Book Sale

One Day Clearance Sale



Your Donated Collectibles Get Special Handling by Friends

It's not unusual for book-loving families to amass an eclectic collection of titles over the course of decades or even generations. But, often there may be a better use for them than taking up space and collecting dust in your study, loft or basement.

Books can almost become members of the family for some people. So, it's understandable that inertia, sentimentality or uncertainty on how they will be treated if donated can keep them languishing on shelves too long.

The Friends of the Cascade Library have been finding good homes for all types of books for many years, including collectibles. In the process, we have raised enough money to help fund special projects and other needs not covered in the library's budget.

The community has been so generous in the past when it comes to donating all types of collectibles and

higher valued items. So, the Friends would like to thank you for your past support and encourage you to continue bringing us your treasures. We carefully research any items that we suspect have special value and sell them at our store on eBay.

If you are considering a donation of collectibles to the Friends and have questions, here is some information that might help you:

Q. How do I make a donation?

A. There is a large bin on the south side of the library where you can donate your books any time of the day. If you have a very large collection or one that you feel may have very valuable items, you can contact Laurel Ingram ww.ingram@comcast.net or Nancy Harper jharper868@comcast.net to arrange a meeting.

Q. What types of items are you interested in having donated?

A. Books, puzzles, games, DVDs, CDs, vinyl records and sheet music

(not VHS tapes) top the list. Keep in mind that much of what is donated is not collectible. But, we can still sell those items in our bookstore and at sales events.

Q. How can I tell if something is collectible or high valued?

A. We wish there was an easy answer to that. Items that are first editions, signed, old, rare, unique and even quirky can have higher value. Most people don't know what is collectible or higher valued. So, please donate what you have, and we will make the determination.

Q. How can I get a tax deduction form for my donation?

A. You can pick up a tax deduction form at the information desk in the library during regular hours of operation.



Saturday the 26th from 10 am to 3 pm

One day to purchase hardcover books, children's books, and a selection of CDs, DVDs and LPs. Bargain bag of books for \$10.



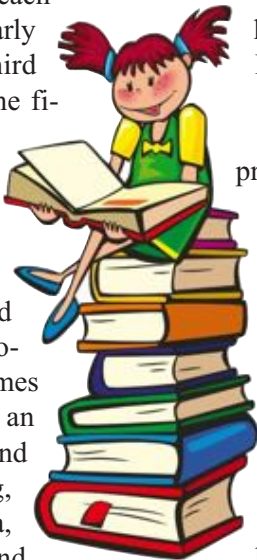
Cascade Friends Make Pledge to Assist Reading-Challenged Third Graders

The Cascade Friends of the Library board recently voted unanimously to join the KDL Outreach Team in its efforts to assist nearly 1,000 reading-challenged third graders by making a one-time financial pledge of \$5,000 to provide each child with a new book.

The books will be purchased by the KDL Collection Development team and distributed through Bookmobile operators at their story times and classroom visits, and as an end-of-year gift to publicize and emphasize summer reading, according to Vanessa Walstra, Cascade Library manager and Friends' board member.

"This is more than just a financial gift from the Friends," Walstra

explained. "It is a gift of hope and new vistas to many of these children who have never even had a book of their own. It is an essential 'priming the pump' component of the overall program being developed by the Outreach Team to develop and enhance reading interest and skills in our children."



A 20-year research study, completed in 2010 by the University of Nevada, Reno, showed that the presence of books in a home increases the level of education achieved by children.

But, how much of a difference can one book make?

"Obviously, we can't know for certain," said Board President Joe David. "But, based on the experiences of some of our Board members (see related article below), even one book can mean a lot. Plus, we saw it as one essential element in a comprehensive program designed to help motivate and excite children about reading. It didn't take us long to reach a unanimous decision that we feel has long-term positive ramifications for the children and the community."

The full program is currently in development and will be implemented throughout 2019. The KDL Outreach staff will provide quarterly updates on how the money is being spent and the reaction of the children and staff involved in the process.

Friend Recalls Homeless Kids' Joy from Books

Is there anything more heartwarming than seeing the delight in a child's eyes when they receive a special gift?

Friends volunteer, Nancy Harper, doesn't think so. In fact, several years ago, she and her daughter, Jill Marrese, had the privilege of giving some children just such a gift. The children, many of them homeless and living in cars and tents in a national forest in Florida, had never had a book of their own. Since they attended the school where Jill and her husband, Jim, volunteer, she thought it would be wonderful to find a way to give each child a book.

Nancy saw a way to help by enlisting some of her personal friends and a few of her Friends at the library to donate funds to purchase books from the Chapter Two bookstore. They carefully selected age-appropriate books and shipped them to Jill and Jim.

When the books were distributed, the classrooms bubbled with excitement. And, it wasn't long before Nancy got word from Jill about the children's responses to the books they had chosen.

One boy said that he "wanted the longest book they had." A little girl jumped up and down, urging her classmates not to choose the book she wanted. They not only didn't take her book, but they made sure no one else did! She left that day with the book of her dreams.

Nancy recalled that some children couldn't wait to read to their dogs or their grandmothers, and one boy said, "I don't know where I'm going to be tonight, but I'm bringing my book with me!" Another child wrote her name and Jill's in her book, then drew a heart with angel wings around the names.

The kids excitedly told and retold the stories they read - of nature and adventure, of Miley Cyrus and Captain Underpants, of princesses and super heroes.

A single book can bring so much joy to a child who doesn't take it for granted. And, thanks to the generosity of anonymous benefactors hundreds of miles away, a group of Florida kids were able to experience that joy.



Please Take a Minute to Renew Your Membership

If your Friends' membership has expired or will soon, please start off the new year by renewing your commitment to the Friends. Your membership expiration date is printed on this newsletter's address label.

To renew your membership, please complete the form provided below and return it to the address shown, along with your payment, or drop it off the next time you visit the library. We hope you will also consider making a one-time, tax deductible donation to the Friends to help support the many worthwhile events and projects sponsored by the Friends to enrich our community.

While the primary benefit of membership is the positive impact you can have on children and adults who patronize the library and its programs, you also earn "Early Bird" privileges at most of our book sales events, which gives you the first shot at our most popular book titles.

If your membership is already active, we thank you very much for your support. But, if it has lapsed, we hope you will take a few minutes now to renew your friendship with the Friends of the Cascade Library.

Membership Application

I would like to: Enroll as a New Member Renew My Membership

First Name:	Last Name:	Today's Date:	
Address:	City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:	Email Address:		

Membership Types & Fees:

(Please select one)

- Student (\$5 annually)
- Senior (\$5 annually)
- 2 Seniors (\$10 annually)
- Individual Adult (\$10 annually)
- Family (\$15 annually)
- Contributor (\$25 annually)
- Life Patron (\$100 one-time)

To reduce expenses and conserve resources, we will distribute your newsletter and other communications via email unless you ask us not to by checking this box.

Have You Considered a Donation?

If you would like to augment your membership fees with a one-time donation, please indicate the amount below and then add it to your membership fees when you submit payment. Thanks!

- \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$125 Other: _____

Please make your check payable to *Friends of the Cascade Library* and mail, with this form, to 2870 Jacksmith Ave SE; Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Volunteer Opportunities

Would you like to spend a couple hours per week supporting the efforts of the Friends? Indicate your interests below and we will contact you to discuss them.

- Book Sale Events
- Booked 4 Lunch
- Book Sorting & Boxing
- Marketing & Membership
- Book Discussions
- Online Sales Support (research, shipping, etc.)
- Chapter Two Bookstore
- I'm not sure. Please contact me to discuss.

friends
of the CASCADE LIBRARY

Friends Helped Get the Season Started by Decorating the Library's Christmas Tree



The Friends' Christmas elves showed up in force to decorate the Cascade branch tree on December 2. Pictured standing, from the left, are Laurel Ingram, Bob Straub, Roberta Craig, Ellen Gray and Lexi Straub. Kneeling are Nora Ingram, Anneke Van Ast, August Ingram and Hank Van Ast.

KDL Volunteer of the Year Award continued from page 1

Joe David, president of the Cascade Friends of the Library board, said it didn't take an award for the organization to know how fortunate it is to have someone with Ingram's passion and talents to help lead the volunteer group's daily activities.

"Everyone at the Cascade branch knows how much Laurel contributes to our success," he said. "But what's really great is that now everyone in the KDL organization knows, too."

