Books by the bundle
School librarians laud literary windfall

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Betty Oppenheimer, Sequim Gazette Staff Writer

“Wow, that’s great,” said Sequim High School librarian Nancy Woolley. “I would have been finished by now if I had the books. That’s incredible.”

Woolley and Hoquiam High’s Marsha Ondal are thrilled and surprised at the 18,000 worth of books donated to Sequim libraries by publishers represented at the West Coast Booksellers’ Association convention in Portland, Oregon.

In July, Pacific Northwest Bookcovers owner Marti McAllister Wolf submitted Sequim schools for consideration in 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,” she added, but she organized the rest as well. “I was given the books, but I had to drive to Sequim.”

When they found out about the donation, the school district paid for the remainder of the trip, said Woolley.

Woolley heard the books arrived last week, with over 1,000 volumes. They were divided into age-appropriate categories. There are books for the First Grammar school grades at the Community Center, books for the middle school, high school and the public library,” said McAllister Wolf.

The Rural Library Project began in 1982, when Ray Davis, a regional volunteer in the Pacific Northwest Bookellers’ Association, wrote to librarians in all 50 states to see what books were available for donation. Davis received a positive response and in 1983, the project was expanded to include all 50 states.

Each year, the bookellers association solicits donations of books from publishers in need of a transfer of used books to be nominated by member bookstores or publishers. The association chooses the winning entry based on need and the end of the show exhibitors donate any books they own, knowing that they will be a worthy cause.

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Betty Oppenheimer, Sequim High School librarian Nancy Woolley, and Helen Holter, librarian Marsha Ondal peruse the donated books at the Sequim High School library.

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The Sequim Gazette

Vol. 29, No. 39

Sequim’s hometown newspaper

Wednesday, September 25, 2002

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Bookstore owner’s efforts get results for Sequim libraries

Betty Oppenheimer Sequim Gazette Staff Writer

Each year, Marti McAllister Wolf of the Pacific Northwest Bookellers’ Association trade show and has seen other similar 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 heard that our school library 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 in town.”

Woolley said McAllister Wolf had not been aware of the program until she was selected by the exhibitors to donate books. Woolley had heard from the exhibitors at the show and was astonished.

She did not know how many books the school might have, but Woolley had heard that any new books would be a welcome addition.

“I felt like winning 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, there were several 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 books, donated copies of their latest publications.

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

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