



The Lisa Libraries

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Books

We would appreciate donations of new hardcover and paperback books for children ages 6 months to 18 years.

Areas of special need are Spanish language and bilingual books, classics, picture books, EZ Readers, and board books.

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Dear Friends,

Greetings from Kingston, New York! The last few months at the Lisa Libraries have been exciting. The number of requests for donations of books and libraries has continued to increase, and we've made our first-ever donations to organizations in Puerto Rico and Alaska. You can read more about these projects on the next page.

However, as requests build, the number of books being donated to the Lisa Libraries has remained the same. We're not exactly running out of books, but we are having trouble keeping up with the demand, and we don't like to turn down applications from worthy and eligible organizations. So ... I have one giant request to make of you, our friends who are already so generous to us. Please spread the word to anyone you can think of who might have new

children's books to send to the Lisa Libraries – anyone who's in children's publishing or who has access to children's books. We can use single or multiple copies of titles as long as they're new. ARCs are fine too. We need board books; hardcover and paperback picture books, middle-grade, and YA titles; fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and early readers. And we always have a need for books in Spanish.

If you're tidying up your desk or de-cluttering your office, or know a writer who's overrun with author copies, please think of the Lisa Libraries. Thank you so much for your continuing support and generosity. We couldn't do our work without you.

Gratefully,

Ann Martin

From the Executive Director

March was my third anniversary with the Lisa Libraries – and a perfect antidote to my retirement from a teaching career! I graduated from American University in Washington, DC, and always enjoy reading their magazine. When I spotted their request, "Would you like to pitch us a story?", I immediately responded with the following:

I am the Executive Director for the Lisa Libraries – a nonprofit begun by prolific author Ann M. Martin – to get books and small libraries to underserved children across the country. A small story about us would not only be interesting, but it could also make such a difference! Readers who work with eligible communities could reach out to us for donations and readers who work in publishing could share donations with us.



Maria, Ann, Ellen, Adrienne

They must have liked the idea – Adrienne Frank, Managing editor; Maria Jackson, art director; and Nick Parisse, portrait photographer, spent a January day with us at the Lisa Libraries. You can read the entire interview at <https://www.american.edu/magazine>.

Ellen

Puerto Rico

The Lisa Libraries has long wanted to establish a connection with Puerto Rico, and was finally able to do so after we were contacted by Forjando un Nuevo Comienzo (Forging a New Beginning) in Guaynabo. The organization provides many services to low-income and underserved communities, including an after-school tutoring program for children ages 5-12. Forjando sought to set up a small library for the children in the program, and also provide them with books to take home.

Figuring out how to ship the donation to Puerto Rico proved something of a challenge, but



Children receiving books at their after school tutoring program

eventually 250 titles in Spanish and English were on their way, and now the children served by Forjando on this storm-ravaged island have bright new books to challenge their minds and spark their imaginations.

Village Ranch

In Minnesota, the Village Ranch organization provides, among other things, residential care for teenage boys struggling with mood and behavioral disorders; the Village Ranch Alternative Program on the site is a tax-exempt school providing education to the residents, all of whom qualify for free and reduced lunch.

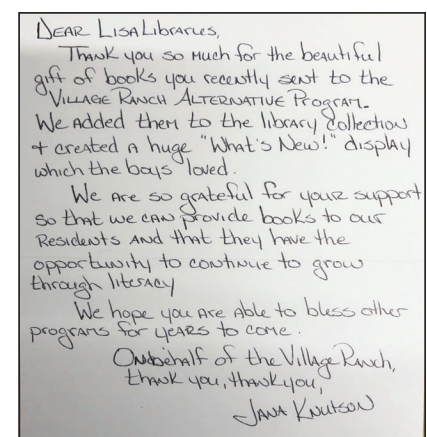
In November, The Lisa Libraries received a letter from a teacher at

the school that read in part, "Due to the nature of the residential placement, the boys have little to no access to the public library, leaving the school library as their primary source for books. Our small library is funded entirely through private donations and lives in a corner of the computer lab/conference room. Truly, it only exists because of the staff's unwavering belief that access to books is critical to the residents' experience and growth." The Lisa Libraries was more than happy to send the school an

Alaska

Ellen Luksberg, the Executive Director of the Lisa Libraries, sees new requests for book donations nearly every day, but one that she received at the beginning of last October particularly caught her eye - a four-page long handwritten letter from Alaska. Eventually, the request resulted in a donation to children in Alaska's foster-care system, but Autumn Smith, the writer of the letter, was requesting books not just for reading pleasure, but to help the children retain the culture of their native tribes. In Autumn's words, "In Alaska there are 229 federally recognized native tribes. There are approximately 3,000 children in the state foster care system and over half of those children are native Alaskan. What is woefully concerning...is that they lose their culture when they come into the foster care system." Autumn requested "books that focus on native language, culture, families, and animals." And that's what we were able to send to this caring and creative woman, in order to help brighten the lives of some of Alaska's neediest children while they explore their own cultures.

assortment of new books and CDs selected specifically for their library.



The House Children

The passionate and dedicated volunteers at the Lisa Libraries have many interests: music, travel, art, gardening, and writing. Heidi Daniele, who began volunteering here in 2017, has just published her first book, *The House Children*, a historical novel set in Ireland in the 1940s and 1950s.

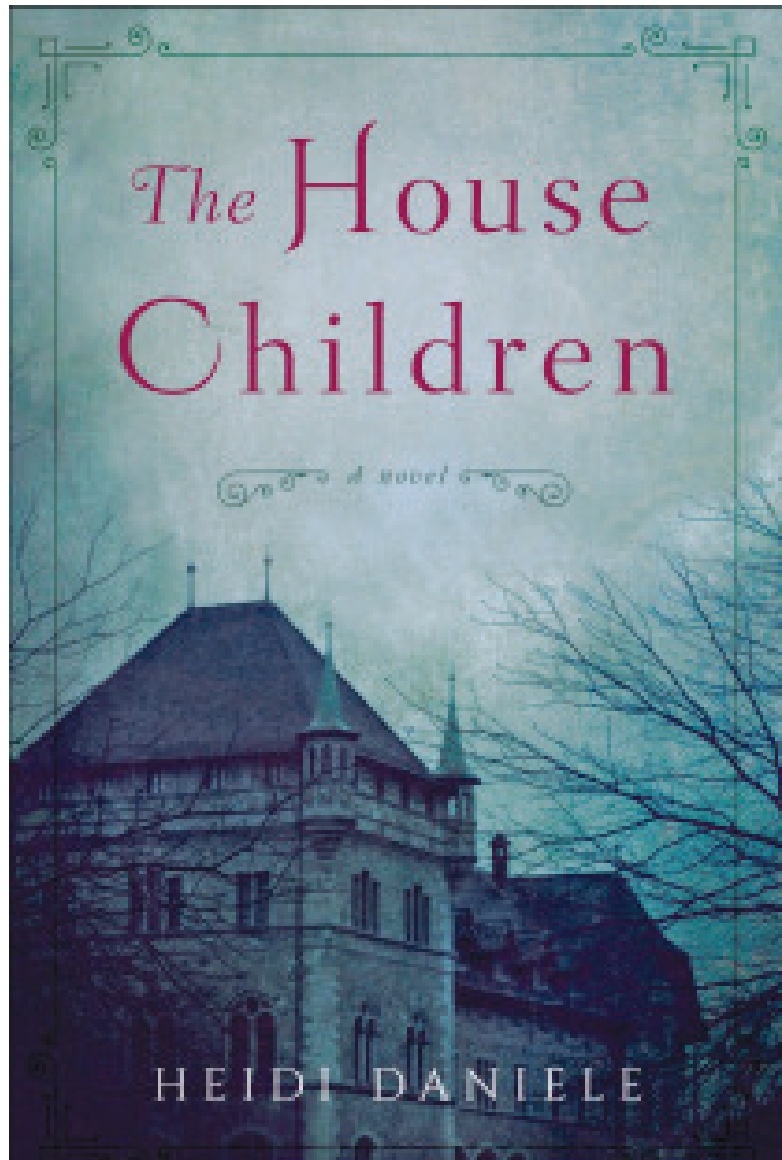
Heidi grew up in New Rochelle, NY, a voracious reader who regularly visited her local library, and had an interest in her Irish and German heritage. But it wasn't until 1999 when she was attending an event for a family friend in the small town of Ballinasloe, Ireland, that she began to entertain the idea of writing a book.

There she overheard a conversation that would lead to years of research and eventually to *The House Children*. The conversation was about a book called *Fear of the Collar*, by Patrick Touher, an account of the author's experience at the Artane Industrial School, run by the Christian Brothers. The industrial schools were similar to orphanages and, says Heidi, "were rarely spoken about in Ireland until they became a political issue as the result of a report published in 2009 by The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, which divulged many unknown facts about these facilities."

Heidi located women who had lived in the industrial schools, scoured the Internet for information on the area she

would be writing about, and traveled back to Ballinasloe. What emerged was the fictional story of Mary Margaret Joyce, sent by a judge at the age of six to Saint Thomas Industrial School, the harsh years she spent there with the nuns, and her search for her biological family.

Congratulations to Heidi on her compelling debut, which Kirkus Reviews heralded as "An unassuming but riveting tale of the hardships and ultimate rewards of family."



Ann and Heidi at Barnes & Noble gift wrapping fundraiser for the Lisa Libraries

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