



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, leveled readers, and board books.

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Dear Friends,

This fall our executive director, Ellen Luksberg, noted that she was hearing from more and more family-oriented organizations in search of children's books. This was right up Ellen's alley, since in her words, "It's always about family. Reading with my three grandchildren, Bari, Mallory, and Jackson (ages three, eight, and ten), helps keep me current and on point when I'm choosing books for outgoing libraries. And lately I've been counting on my husband, Marc, to help with the heavy lifting at the Lisa Libraries - literally. Usually books, but recently it was a new mini fridge for our workspace!"

Three organizations in particular caught Ellen's attention this year. When Family Reading Partners' Program Services Manager, Nancy Zemen, first contacted the Lisa Libraries, it was late 2020 and she requested books for a "volunteer organization that collaborates with parents by modeling reading and conversation around books using quality children's literature." She contacted us again this year for books to stock the Family Engagement Bus. For more information and fabulous photos of this truly engaging bus, see page 2 of the newsletter.

Another standout organization for Ellen is Family Business that serves low-income families throughout the state of Connecticut. "We've sent them more than 300 books over the past year for their many wonderful projects," Ellen writes, "including Operation Little Steps, Care Package Project, Free Summer Meal Program, and Literacy Initiative."



Seated from left to right: Jess, Valorie, Joyce, Ann, Ellen, Arlene, and Francesca celebrating a Covid-safe Volunteers Appreciation Dinner

Finally, Spencer Swain from Families First in Cabarras County, NC, contacted Ellen about their new home visiting initiative. He wrote, "We partner with neighborhoods and Title 1 schools to help young families break generational cycles of poverty and combat community isolation, inequalities, limited English proficiencies, and addictions. Home-visiting is the heartbeat of our organization, connecting families isolated from the community with the necessary tools to level the playing field and close achievement gaps." Ellen was happy to send Spencer the 100 books he requested. And so was I.

From Ellen and her family, from me and my family, and of course from the entire Lisa Libraries family, thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity over the years, and especially during the last couple of years. Thanks to you, the Lisa Libraries is happily moving forward.

Gratefully,

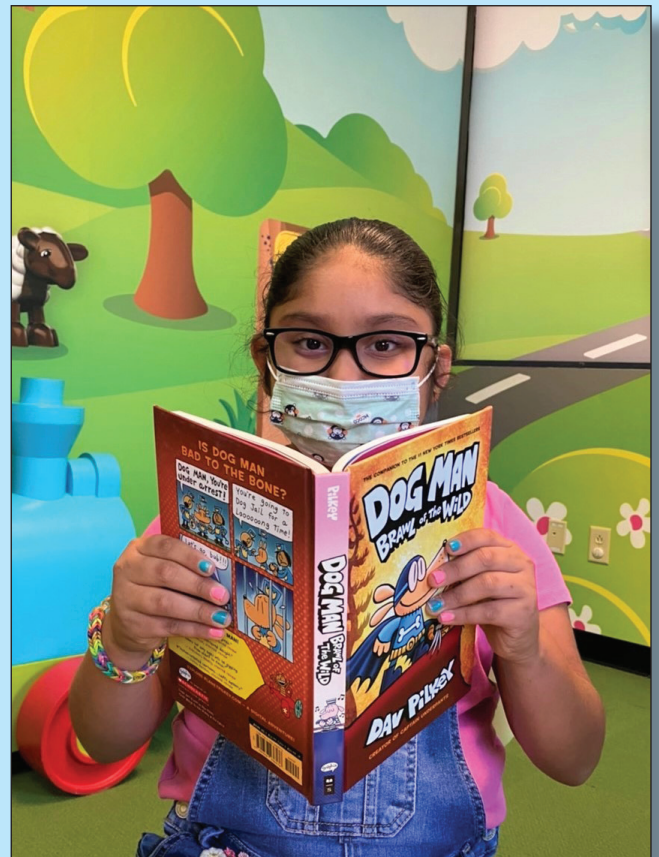
Ann Martin
Ellen Luksberg



The new Family Engagement bus, operated by the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Public School Foundation, that travels to low-income neighborhoods offering services – including book loans – to local students.



Budding readers in a preschool class operated by Child's Path in Collier County, FL. Their mission is to set children from economically needy families on the path to a love of lifelong learning.



A happy fan of Dav Pilkey's books at Bryan's House in Dallas, TX, dedicated to providing intervention for underserved families who have a child with special medical needs.



Happy readers in the DePaul Community Resources foster care program. The books help the children transition to new homes.



LEAP (Leadership, Education and Athletics in Partnership) is a New Haven education and youth development nonprofit serving up to 1000 children each year, with a focus on literacy, enrichment, and mentorship. This summer, 430 LEAP children read and took home books, including books from the Lisa Libraries.



A note from Shaina Stamp with Horizons at the Ethel Walker School, says it all: "Younger Horizons students partnered with older students to read during 2021 summer programming. Reading Buddies was a tremendous success and our older girls were wonderful mentors and teachers for our younger students."

And Speaking of Families...

The Lisa Libraries has been approached by some very determined and creative young people – some still in elementary school – for books for literacy organizations they've started. But we were mightily impressed by the Majumdar family in New Jersey. We first heard from Anurag Majumdar, a pre-med student at Washington University in MO, last fall when he wrote requesting books for Hope Express Foundation, a nonprofit organization he had begun in order to provide books to children in underfunded areas. "I've always been an avid reader," he told us, "so volunteering at the local library as a middle schooler was something I looked forward to weekly. One such week, I was cleaning out after a book sale when I was told to get rid of hundreds of remaining books that went unsold. Books are considered sacred in my religion, so throwing away perfectly good books was unfathomable."



Sujaya and Souvik Majumdar picking up books

What did Anurag do? "I started a . . . project to make books available to underprivileged children in our community." This was in 2017 and since then Anurag has "expanded the operations to NY, PA and very recently to MO, donating more than 14,000 books to children's hospitals and schools." The Lisa Libraries gave 340 books to Hope Express.

Several months later we

received a letter from a junior at South Brunswick High School in NJ. "I am a Girl Scout," she wrote, "and as a part of my Gold Award Project, I am working on literacy awareness and book donation campaigns targeted towards underprivileged kids in the community." Her name was Anushka Majumdar, and she's Anurag's sister. We donated 164 books to her.

To make this a true family affair, rather than shipping the cartons of books to Anurag and Anushka, their parents offered to drive from NJ up to the Lisa Libraries (twice) to pick up the books. Thank you to the entire Majumdar family!



Anurag delivering books to St. Louis Children's Hospital

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