



# The Lisa Libraries

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## Wish List

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.

## Recent Donations:

200+ books for a library,  
and to be given away to the children served by the Women's Resource Center to End Domestic Violence in Decatur, GA  
400+ books for migrant children for the Morris Heights Health Center in Bronx, NY  
200+ books for a school for the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan

**With the holidays approaching, if you need a gift for the person who has everything, please consider a donation to the Lisa Libraries. An acknowledgement card will be mailed to the gift recipient.**

**Are you following us on Facebook?**

[www.facebook.com/lisalibraries](https://www.facebook.com/lisalibraries)

**Have you visited our website?**

[www.LisaLibraries.org](http://www.LisaLibraries.org)



## Dear Friends,

As we slide into autumn and get ready for the holidays, it's hard to believe that 2023 is drawing to a close and that it's been nearly four years since the pandemic began. At the Lisa Libraries we spent much of 2020 adjusting to changes and figuring out how to carry on despite closures and limited staff. We were heartened, though, to see how those heading up organizations needing books from us were finding creative work-arounds for their programs - teachers who delivered books and learning materials to their students' homes, or volunteers who organized virtual programs complete with packages of supplies for families to pick up in order to continue the learning at home. This was encouraging, and as the months and years went by, things seemed to return to normal in the world of the Lisa Libraries. But this year, although both donations of books to us and requests for books from us have remained high (we've been busier than ever), we began to hear from program directors about the lingering effects of the pandemic, especially on children in under-served

areas. Test scores in reading and math have dropped sizably compared to 2019, and the test-score gaps between students in low-poverty and high-poverty schools have grown substantially. Marcia Vining at the Ignacio Community Library in Colorado (see their story inside) has witnessed a drop in library patrons since 2020, and the local schools now operate on a four-day week.

It's important that we continue to provide books to needy children in order to close these gaps. We need brand-new books at all levels from infancy through young adult, and all kinds of books - fiction, nonfiction, board books, leveled readers, and especially books in Spanish. We anticipate more than the usual number of requests in the upcoming months, and with your help, which has been both steadfast and very generous, we hope to be able to fulfill a record number.

With much gratitude,

*Ann Martin*

## People's Place

Founded in 1972, People's Place in Kingston, NY, is located just a few blocks from the Lisa Libraries, and for nearly ten years we have enjoyed a partnership with this caring and ever-evolving community resource. People's Place offers a wide variety of programs to anyone in Ulster County needing assistance. There's the Personal Care Closet located in the food pantry, offering patrons free toiletries; Talkin' Turkey, which provides all the fixings for a Thanksgiving feast; the Birthday Booth where a parent or guardian can pick up everything needed for a child's perfect birthday party, from a cake to a gift - and dozens more programs.

Our relationship with People's Place began in 2014 when we were approached to provide books for the "Your Choice" Food Pantry and for Project Santa. The pantry supplies healthy food, free of charge, to needy families, as well as kids' books, which parents can pick out for their children to enjoy and keep. Each December, Project Santa gifts youngsters with a toy, a game or craft, an article of winter



*Longtime PP volunteer Mike picking up books from Ellen, our Executive Director*

clothing, a stocking stuffer, and . . . a book. The partnership between People's Place and the Lisa Libraries has continued, and this year, we supplied over 300 books to Project Santa and an additional 300 books to the Summer Bookworm Program, which also offers parents the opportunity to choose books for their children to keep. We are pleased to be able to contribute to the work of our remarkable neighbor!

## Dewey the Bookmobile

In the Southwest corner of La Plata County, Colorado, surrounded by the Southern Ute Tribal Reservation, is the Ignacio Community Library (ICL), serving a rural population of Native American, Hispanic, and Caucasian community members. Ordinarily, the library is a bustling place, with nearly 100 children signed up each year for the Summer Reading Program alone. But post-Covid, the number of library patrons dropped significantly. The schools transitioned to a four-day week, and families tended to stay closer to home, many in areas lacking access to books other than in the library. So the library was awarded a grant to purchase and retrofit a vehicle to be used as a bookmobile, eventually



named Dewey. The only things missing were the books.

That was when Marcia Vining of the ICL reached out to the Lisa Libraries requesting “children’s books both for checkout and also to offer to children the first time they visit the bookmobile.” Dewey serves patrons of all ages, but especially children, over 60% of whom qualify for

free or reduced lunch in the district schools, and makes stops at an apartment complex, a mobile home park, and grange halls, among other places. It provides library resources such as printers and the internet, and is now stocked with books, including almost 200 from the Lisa Libraries.

## Books for Backpacks

Like many recent retirees, Elizabeth Hughes didn’t stay retired for long. After 33 years as an elementary teacher, she took a job as the children’s librarian at the Powell County Public Library in Eastern Kentucky, a position she assumed in order to continue working with children. In her letter to the Lisa Libraries she wrote, “I am trying to make an impact on the families in this small community.” The library is located in the town of Stanton in a rural area “with little industry and opportunity,” as well as little funding for the programs Elizabeth hoped to start. One of her first programs involved



themed backpacks for children to check out as they would library books. Each backpack contains a book, a toy, and an activity. An example: a copy of *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, a stuffed mouse toy, and a package of cookie mix – a project for the family to work on together. The backpacks

began flying out of the library and Elizabeth wanted to expand the program, but so far had been spending her own money on the project. She contacted the Lisa Libraries, and Ellen Luksberg hand-picked a selection of hardcover picture books she felt would lend themselves to themes. Several months later we heard from Elizabeth again. She was starting an after-school cooking class at the library and had everything she needed – except children’s cookbooks. We were happy to help out again. And will be happy to help out with future projects for this creative and dedicated librarian.



## Global Citizens

In Tampa, Florida, at-risk and lower-income children are offered the chance to access high-quality learning experiences that might not ordinarily be available to them. ReDefiners World Languages provides in-person language classes in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Arabic to children in pre-K through fifth grade, as well as to adults - in order both to boost language proficiency and to “see U.S. citizens embrace multilingualism and celebrate multiculturalism.” Since the organization was founded in 2016 over 4000 students have gone through the program, with over 2000 students engaged this year alone.

ReDefiners continues to expand. In February, a monthly literacy program, Family Reading Time, was launched.

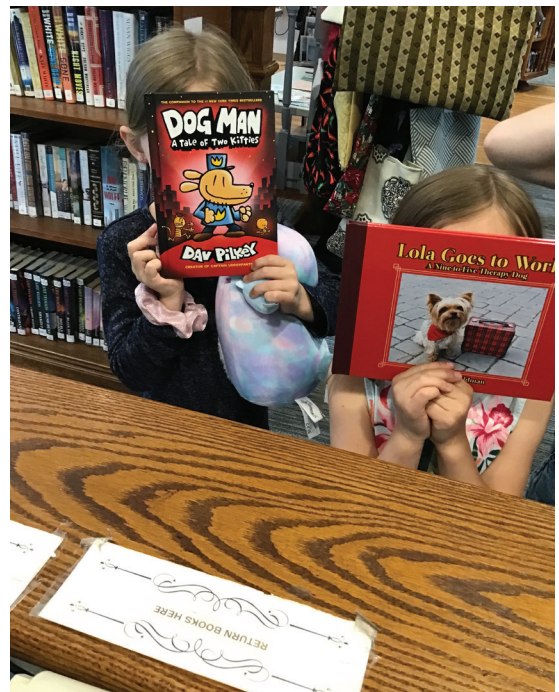


And in October, Raquel Pullaro, the development director, reached out to the Lisa Libraries for books for their in-house library. “We would like to build our library

for students and teachers to use during classes and our summer program,” she wrote. We were happy to provide ReDefiners with 75 brand-new culturally diverse titles.

## Storytime and Strawberries

Worcester is a tiny rural town in New York, with a population of just over 2000, and a per capita income of \$15,752. Anne Nassar, the director of the Worcester Schenevus Library, who originally contacted the Lisa Libraries in 2022, noted that the majority of library patrons are financially disadvantaged, with 30% of Worcester students eligible for free or reduced lunch. She was looking for books for the children who would be attending the summer Storytime program, books that could be given to the children to take home and keep. We happily sent her 100 books. And this year we were just as happy to send her 226 books to give to the kids attending the annual Strawberry Festival!



Over the summer we received a request from an organization in a tiny under-served town with a Title 1 school in which over 1/3 of the students are eligible for free lunch. We sent them 180 books and then received this note:

Dear Lisa Libraries,

I wanted you to know that even though I love my job, it is hard. Oftentimes, with no financial support from the state, I feel alone and as if it is an upward slog. I believe deeply in what I do - providing resources for this small, rural community. And so, some days I make it through by reminding myself that the people here deserve what any other community has.

Receiving the books from Lisa Libraries was such a boost! It was fuel and provided me with energy to keep at it. By sending the boxes of beautiful books, you are reminding me that I am not alone. You and others are cheering me on and working alongside me to help me serve the people in this community.

I needed the boost. I needed to remember that I am not alone. Thank you for your amazing gift; it will be loved by many and it provided me with that needed fuel.

With heartfelt thanks -



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