



## Between Friends

### My Books for Soldiers Experience

by Linda Wagers



Vivian Selecman (left) and Linda Wagers (right) are actively involved with “Books for Soldiers.”

My experience with Books For Soldiers began with Vivian Selecman. I met Vivian through the Blount County Newcomer’s Club where, at nearly every meeting, I would hear Vivian’s plea to the membership for donations to help pay for shipping boxes of books to soldiers overseas. I was always willing to contribute whatever money I could because I am former military myself and am eager to show my support for our troops.

One afternoon after our Scrabble Club had met at Vivian’s home, she told me all about the Books For Soldiers program. She is always in need of helpers within the Friends of the Library to box up and mail books to soldiers. She wanted to recruit me, too. I learned a lot about the project that day; when she brought the

Books For Soldiers web site up on her computer and showed me some of the requests posted by the soldiers, I was immediately drawn in and wanted to participate. As we browsed through the site I noticed that many of the posted requests included DVDs and toiletries and snacks and a varied list of things the soldiers were hoping somebody would send. Since the Friends of the Library only fills requests for books, I felt that I wanted to do more. So, instead of helping Vivian and her group, I signed up with Books For Soldiers as an Individual Volunteer and began responding to the soldiers’ requests from my home computer. I initially went through my bookshelf and my DVDs and picked out the ones I could spare. Then I

*continued on page 4*

***Don’t Miss the Fall Book Sale! October 22nd-24th!***

## President's Message

Greeting to all Friends of the Library! It's hard to believe another year is almost over. When it's time for the Fall book sale, you know the holidays can't be far behind. Be sure to mark your calendar for Thursday, October 22, from noon until 6:00 p.m. That's your special day (Friends of the Library only) to pick up some great books at great prices. Remember, they make great presents for the upcoming holidays.

In September, your Board of Directors sponsored (and attended) a workshop about new ways of reaching out to the community. Telephones, mail, and paper are the ways of the past – *blogs, podcasts, twitter, flickr* and others are the new way to communicate, especially for younger folks. You'll be hearing more about this as we try to keep up with the changes in technology.

Finally, we thank you all for your support of the Library – our community's greatest asset. Our membership is over 1000 now, and still growing. With the current economic situation, this kind of support says a lot about our community. We all our library.

Sincerely,  
*Phil Baker*, President

## Social Networking



Above: Genny Carter, Public Relations & Data Coordinator for State of TN, spoke at the library Sept. 22 in three sessions about social networking, including Twitter and Facebook.

## Welcome to your Fall "Between Friends" Trivia Quiz

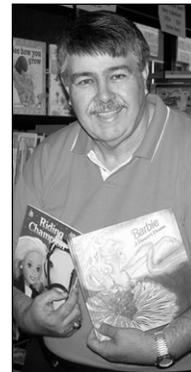
Here is our fall trivia quiz, aimed at our juvenile set. You are asked to identify the main character of each question. Please send your responses to Editor, Blount County FOL, 508 Cusick Street, Maryville, TN 37804.

Responses must arrive no later than one week after the

last day of the fall quarterly book sale. Two winners will be drawn from the correct responses and each will be able to select eight books, videotapes or DVD's from the FOL regular collection. Collectibles are excluded.

### Trivia Questions

1. His nose grew whenever he told a lie.
2. She kept house for seven little men until she ate a poisoned apple.
3. He fell asleep in the forest and awakened 20 years later.
4. He walked across the country planting fruit tree seeds.
5. He was a lumberjack with a big blue ox.
6. He found a magic lamp in the wilds of Arabia.
7. She lost her shoe at a formal dance.
8. He loved Farmer McGregor's garden.
9. He won an impossible race against an over-confident and faster animal.
10. She magically appeared carrying an umbrella to become a nanny for two children.



Above: Winners of the July Trivia Quiz.

## Blount County Library Archives Room

by Jane Bennett

**B**ehind Locked Library Doors:  
Precious? Mysterious? Costly?  
One of a Kind? All of these???

Blount County Library has a locked room, albeit what is in it is clearly visible to all in the reference department because it is entirely made of glass. Inside one sees an urn, reminiscent, from afar, of a Greek or Roman treasure. Might it contain the relic remains of a pre-historic Indian chief, or Egyptian rose dust. Alas, this one is empty.

According to Lisa Tipton and Melinda Rust, archivists in the reference department, Kathleen Christy, head of reference, and Lorene Smith, former library staff member and presently a volunteer in the genealogy department, this urn is simply mysterious: in other words, no one has a clue how it got there or what it was for.

This mysterious urn may be reminiscent of DaVinci Code intrigue, but the real treasures of this archive room are the Blount County historical documents.

One such treasure is the W.O. Garner photo collection. In 1987 a California woman wrote that an ancestor of hers, W.O. Garner, had lived in Blount County in the 1890's and taken pictures. She wondered if this library would like to have them. Of course they did, and she sent a huge box of glass plates (negatives). These plates are very carefully preserved in the archives room. Some of the pictures have been developed and those pictures are stored there as well (Senator Lamar Alexander has one framed in his office.) Dr. Elgin Kintner and Lorene Smith had some of the pictures developed and published a book, *Blount County Remembered*, which is available in the library. The developed series can be viewed at [www.blountlibrary.org](http://www.blountlibrary.org).



Above: The Mystery Vase

A John Collins painting of Montvale Springs Hotel is also preserved here.

Also, in this archives room are city directories and yearbooks from the local high schools (Some years are missing and the library will be happy to have donated copies).

Family histories from Friendsville and Louisville and a hard bound edition of *Calderwood Memories* are stored here too.

Archivists, at present, are busily preserving several cabinets of documents which cannot be in the harsh library lights until they are put on archival papers. UV filters on the lights provide some protection. These librarians have had to be trained in the art of preservation of these documents which are so important to local history. Special very expensive boxes are bought to encase these documents. There are photos of local scenes, old books, histories of local communities, Maryville Polytechnical High School & Commercial College, among others.

The already cataloged materials are available to library card holders. According to Lisa Tipton, one can obtain card file numbers, and, according to Lisa, by "either loaning the reference librarian their first born potty trained child, library card, or car keys, they can use the books in the reference department, copy them, photograph them, scan to USB drives, etc. No one is allowed to take the materials out of the reference section."

Having a collection of materials depicting several generations of an entire community is, after all, priceless, not just for the local inhabitants searching for their ancestors, but for anyone who loves to understand more fully the way of life of this area in a bygone era.

## Fall 2009 Donations

**Mary Baugues**

**Sylvia Cappa**

**Wayne & Bernice Forshay**

**Araby Greene**

**N. Z. McKinnon Jr.**

**Richard & Ann Ray**

**Judith Spies**

**Green Meadow Country Club**

**Duplicate Bridge Club**

**In Memory of Phil Payne**

*from Ruth Lakey*

## My Books for Soldiers Experience

*continued from page 1*

started buying bargain DVDs at Wal-Mart and because I was a member of Friends of the Library, Vivian suggested that I pick out books from the donations in the library basement to send to the soldiers.

My initial effort began in late 2006 and by the end of that year I had shipped at least 30 packages overseas. In 2007, I sent upwards of 185. From my experience in the service – 4 years in the US Navy and 4 years in the California Army National Guard – I know that the most important thing to a soldier or sailor away from home is mail. Regardless of your surroundings, if you get something at Mail Call you're happy. If you don't get anything, it's awful. So when I sent a package containing books and DVDs and snacks, etc... I wanted to include a letter to the soldier who would be receiving it. I drafted a letter on my computer that I could keep and change names, addresses and other details where appropriate. My letter told that I was a widow and a recent transplant to Tennessee from California, telling a little bit about how I came to make the move and describing the beautiful scenery, the wildlife, the peacefulness of the countryside, and also telling about my two dogs, Betsy and Wags. I tried to tailor each letter to add something specific to that soldier. To the MPs I would write about my husband being an MP Company Commander in the Cal Guard; to a soldier in a forward area I would write about my hometown of Casa Grande, Arizona and that I had a good idea of what it was like to live in a desert. I usually included a post card of a scenic view of Tennessee as well.

One day I received a letter in the mail thanking me for the package that I had sent. I was thrilled. Then I got another, then another, and because I included my email address in my letterhead, I got a few emails from soldiers as well. Their letters and emails told of their own lives, their families, their kids and told how much my package

had meant to them. I did the best I could to fulfill requests. One soldier asked for a book on how to be a gentleman. I had to order it from Hastings because there weren't any on their shelves. In fact, there were a couple of times when I special ordered books for soldiers.

Dictionaries translating English to Spanish and English to French and other languages cropped up on the Books For Soldiers request list sometimes. I sent my own English/Spanish dictionary to one soldier in a medical unit and in her thank you letter she included several bills of Iraqi money – called Dinars. She sent several 250 Dinar notes and I looked it up and found it was worth about 11 cents.

And there was a support unit of all women who emailed me regularly. They sent pictures of themselves and even sent a picture of them opening one of my packages, and another picture of them holding a sign saying "Thank You Linda. We love U". When I asked them to let me know what they'd most like me to send over, their unit sergeant said she would like each of the women to have designer sheets for their beds. They were all so tired of Army white sheets; she thought they'd really appreciate sheets of different colors, with flowers and stripes, etc.... I went to Penney's and bought 7 sets of twin size sheets in various colors and patterns and sent them right over. But the gifts didn't just go one way. One day a package arrived and it was a beautiful throw showing the emblem of the 27th Brigade Support Battalion. A note was included with it from the wife of the Company Commander of the Battalion. She had been asked to send it by the women of the unit I was communicating with – as a thank you for my gifts. And that wasn't all. During our regular emails, I had told the unit sergeant that I was getting ready to host Scrabble Club at my house and that my vacuum cleaner had conked out just when I needed it

*continued on page 5*

---

## “Books for Soldiers” Update

*Since the first of July, seven active volunteers have sent 66 boxes to our troops. These have included 36 CDs or DVDs and 988 books. Some were children's books for parents to be recorded reading to their children. The total for postage for these items was \$380. During the same time period we received \$448 in donations for postage, from the collection jar and from 7 individuals. The troops are often too busy to write but appreciate the efforts.*

*If you wish to donate, mail your check to Friends of the Library, 508 N. Cusick Street, Maryville TN 37804. Please designate that it is for the Books for Soldiers program.*

---

*continued from page 4*

the most. Within a couple of days, a new vacuum cleaner was delivered by UPS. The soldiers had ordered it for me. I was stunned by their kindness. What a thoughtful and generous thing to do, and from a war zone! (I didn't want to tell them that my house has a Beem interior vacuum system and that's what had been giving me problems.)

By the time my participation in Books For Soldiers was in full swing, I was taking advantage of the 10 for \$10 specials at Kroger to stock up on toothpaste, deodorant and floss. I shopped at the Dollar Store for Sudoku books and playing cards and packs of pencils and pens. I purchased hand warmers in the winter and sent cases and cases of Cool Pops in the summer. My friends would donate books and magazines and toiletries for me to

send. I turned my den into a virtual supply depot with all the items I'd accumulated to put together packages for soldiers. At Girls Scout cookie time, I purchased over \$300 worth of cookies and shipped them, sometimes in full cases, over to Iraq.

Whenever a package included books that I had garnered from the library basement, I mentioned the Blount County Friends of the Library in my letter. Subsequently, on more than one occasion, the soldier sent a thank you letter or email to me and to Vivian for the FOL as well. And while nobody does this kind of volunteer work for any personal gain or reward, getting a short note, scribbled in pencil on a scrap of paper saying 'Thank You' from a grateful soldier is better than anything for making me feel necessary and proud.

## FOL purchases display case for Bookmark Café



Above: Bookmark Café Manager Claudia Draine is proud to present the new refrigerated display case purchased with proceeds from the Friends of the Library's used book sale.

## Many resources are available at the Library

In a depressed economy, a bright light on the horizon continues to be the Blount County Public Library where many free resources and services are available to any Blount County resident.

While a complete list of resources isn't possible, we'll try to provide a sample so that you can pass along the information to family, friends and neighbors.

Professional Reference Librarians are available to assist people of the community in finding information about any type of information.

**Audio-Video Room:** New release movies on DVD along with older movies on DVD or VHS are available for one-week check-out, free. For travel or for those with low vision, audiobooks are available on CD or audiotape. Music CDs are also available. The Children's Library also has movies on DVD or VHS as well as audiobooks for children.

**Internet Computers:** Almost 40 internet computers are available to the public for one hour per day per person (up to a possible two hours if there's no waiting list). People can use the computers to file or check in for unemployment benefits, compile resumes, complete online job applications, do job searches, pay bills online or complete multiple other tasks.

**Job Resources:** Many resources are available at the library for job seekers:

- Job website lists and a "Resources for Displaced Workers" Directory that lists community resources which assist with health care and health insurance, housing, utilities, financial needs, food pantries, clothing, transportation, school needs for children, training and re-training, pet supplies, free or low-cost leisure activities, community agencies which offer assistance.

- "Filing Online for Unemployment Benefits" brochure provides step-by-step assistance with filing for benefits on an internet computer.

- Brochures which explain health care and insurance options for low or no income: AccessTN, CoverTN, CoverKids, CoverRx, TennCare, and TennderCare.

- Books, periodicals and book lists for Job Seekers.
- Current daily newspapers for local print media.
- Tennessee Electronic Library (available through the library website: [www.blountlibrary.org](http://www.blountlibrary.org) and click on "Electronic Resources" then "Tennessee Electronic Library") offers:

- \* access to complete articles and some graphics in more than 10,000 periodicals,

- \* Job & Career Resources (resume, interview skills,
- \* Learning Express Library (free job search & career building courses)

- \* InfoTrac Vocations, Careers & Technical Education

- \* InfoTrac Small Business Collection

- \* Consumer Health Information

- \* Research

- \* Test Prep

- \* Newspapers

- \* Genealogy

Small Business Start-up information is available online through TEL and various websites as well as in books and periodicals.

**Genealogy:** HeritageQuest Online is available through the library website at any internet computer anywhere. Access this genealogy database by going to the library website at [www.blountlibrary.org](http://www.blountlibrary.org), click on "Electronic Resources," "Tennessee Electronic Library" and "HeritageQuest Online." HeritageQuest gives access to census information; newspapers; PERSI index of genealogy and local history articles; books, Freedman's Bank, Revolutionary War and U.S. Serial Set.

Ancestry.com genealogy database is available at any internet computer at the Blount County Public Library.

Informational Programs are provided by speakers with expertise in a wide array of services, resources and interests throughout the month of every month.

Concerts are provided by professional, semi-professional and amateur musicians. Usually at least one concert is offered each month, with multiple concerts in August for the Hot Summer Nights concert series and in December for the Holiday concert series.

**Theatre:** The Tennessee Stage Company of professional actors has presented a Shakespearean play in the summer for the past four years out on the library's front lawn. High school drama classes and local acting companies have also presented plays at the library.

**Festivals:** Usually the library presents at least one festival per year: Heritage Festival, International Festival, Book Festival, Hispanic Festival, and more.

**R.E.A.D.S.** permits library card holders to download books to home computer, Ipad or MP3 player from the library website home page at [www.blountlibrary.org](http://www.blountlibrary.org).

For further information about other library programs or services, call the library at 982-0981 or visit the Web site at [www.blountlibrary.org](http://www.blountlibrary.org).

To print a one-page monthly calendar of events at the Blount County Library, go to the library Web site at [www.blountlibrary.org](http://www.blountlibrary.org), and click on the calendar icon at right side of Home Page to view the monthly calendar of events in printable format. To sign up to receive a monthly calendar by email, click on "Programs and Events" on the Home Page; scroll down and click on [libnews@blounttn.org](mailto:libnews@blounttn.org) and put "subscribe" in the subject line.

---

## Flag presented to Friends of Library



Phil Baker and Carol Trammel, BCFOL Friends officers, display the HHC27th Brigade donated flag.

Recently a flag was sent to Linda Wagers to give to the Friends of the Library after she developed a correspondence with the 27th Brigade Support Battalion stationed behind the lines in Iraq. She had sent them a letter explaining what the Friends were doing in the Books for Soldiers program and had sent them several boxes including books from the Friends. *The flag came with this letter:*



*Note: The wife of the commander of the support battalion explained that the horses in their emblem displayed herein had been replaced with helicopters.*

### HHC27th Brigade Support Battalion

This is to Certify that Books for Soldiers  
has been nominated and officially  
accepted as an honorary member of  
HHC, 27th Brigade Support Battalion,  
4th Brigade Combat Team,  
1st Cavalry Division.

Given at forward Operating Base  
Marez, Mosul, Iraq.

Freddie L. Mathews, 1SG, USA First Sergeant  
Robin R. Evans CPT, OD Commanding Officer



508 N. Cusick St.  
Maryville, TN 37804

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. postage paid  
Permit #216  
Maryville, Tennessee

**Don't Miss the Fall Book Sale! Oct. 22-24!**

## Fall Book Sale Promises Great Selection

**Thursday, October 22, Noon to 6 pm (for Friends of the Library Members Only)**

**Friday, October 24th and Saturday, October 24, 9 am to 5 pm.**

There will be more than 50,000 books available at the Blount County Friends of the Library Book Sale. We have a wide selection of books in every category and many are in mint condition. More great books come in every day and our upcoming sale promises to be even bigger and better. If you love to read, if you love books, this is a Book Bargain Event you cannot miss. *A table with Christmas books of all kinds and Spanish materials will be featured as well as a new group of collectibles. Many free books will also be available.*

### Some Collectible Titles for October Fall FOL Book Sale

Penny Myers, our sleuth in uncovering and pricing collectible books for our sales, has discovered and valued the following listed "one of a kind" books for our October sale:

- Stride Toward Freedom-the Montgomery story.  
Martin Luther King's first book
- Diamonds, the Evolution of the Ball Park
- Jane's American Fighting Ships and Fighting aircraft of World War II
- The Glorious American Quilt Book
- A pocket size New Testament with Bronze cover-given to soldiers in World War II

- Some rare science fiction books, including the Alpha Control Manuel, and the Lost in Space Handbook and 25th Anniversary Edition
- Some wonderful children's collectibles-many rare titles and several sets like The Happy Hollisters, book trails and child craft  
*There will also be Regional titles available, including;*
- The autobiography of Major William McTeer
- Tennessee Tales
- The History of the Bank of Maryville
- Stories of Tennessee
- A rare copy of Let Us Now Praise Famous Men  
by James Agee