

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the  
Upper Skagit Library Foundation and its Board of Directors  
March 25, 2018, 1:00-3:00 p.m., at the Concrete Theatre**

Laurie Thomas, President of the Upper Skagit Library Foundation (USLF), welcomed everyone and summarized what would be covered at the meeting. Then she called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

**Approval of USLF Annual Meeting Minutes for March 19, 2017**

Laurie asked for a motion to approve the March 19, 2017 USLF Annual Meeting Minutes. She explained that everyone who had paid dues within the last 12 months would be eligible to vote, and that members had been emailed a link to the minutes on the Foundation's website. Rob Thomas moved to approve the minutes and Ingeborg Hightower seconded the motion. Laurie called for a vote and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**Approval of USLF Board Meeting Minutes for February 3, 2018**

Next, Laurie asked the USLF Board of Directors to approve the Minutes of their recent board meeting on February 3, 2018, as distributed by Secretary Becky Schmidt. Rob Thomas moved to approve the minutes and Barb Trask seconded the motion. Laurie called for a vote and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**USLF Treasurer's Report**

Laurie thanked Carol Barnett for compiling last year's Treasurer's Report. She stated that in 2017 we took in over \$12,000 in ordinary income plus \$4,000 temporarily restricted for the new library. Of our ordinary income, 79% came as donations or dues and 20% from book sales. We spent roughly \$3,000. Of this, 98% went for library programs, equipment or community events; 2% was for operations. Laurie stated that as of December 31, 2017, USLF's account balance was over \$61,000, of which about \$39,000 is donor-restricted to equip or enhance the new library and roughly \$200 must be used for library programs.

Laurie was pleased to report that the Foundation's board of directors recently approved the use of \$50,000 for the new library and \$3,000 for library programs or supplies in 2018. This plan reserves more than \$8,000 of USLF's current funds for future needs of the library.

**USLF Board of Directors**

The President then noted that the three-year terms of all USLF board members expire in 2018. Laurie explained that their terms can be extended by vote of Members. Sacha Buller, Sharon Dillon, Sherry Hornbeck, Carrie Newby, Kevik Rensink, Becky Schmidt, Val Stafford, Laurie Thomas, Rob Thomas and Barb Trask have all offered to stay on the board for another term if so elected. Laurie said she was delighted to have their continued involvement. She called for a motion to elect these ten individuals to another term. Eve Syapin moved to elect

these 10 USLF board members to another term and Ingeborg Hightower seconded the motion. Laurie called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

At this point, Laurie asked the audience to join her in thanking the two board members, Carol Barnett and Nancy Johnson, who were stepping down. Carol Barnett has served as Treasurer for the last two years. Nancy Johnson has helped the library since well before it even opened its doors in 2005.

### **Nomination and Election of New USLF Board Members**

Laurie explained that she had asked Cheri Cook-Blodgett and Barb Trask to help identify two people willing to stand for election to the board to fill the seats vacated by Carol and Nancy. She invited Cheri to tell the audience about the two candidates, Kay Santosha and Rowena Watson.

Cheri stepped up to the podium and offered short biographies on each candidate. Kay Santosha moved from Maine to Marblemount in 1998. She is an avid reader, especially enjoying historical fiction and non-fiction books. Dear to her heart is growing food and flowers in her gardens. Kay is clergy in Eckankar, the path to spiritual freedom, and has actively followed this path for over 30 years.

Rowena Watson has lived in Concrete for 30 years. She worked at National Parks for much of that time, now home care aide. She was president of the parent-teacher organization while her children were in school. Kay is here today, but Rowena could not be with us. She is in the Grand Canyon. Both candidates are big fans of the library.

Cheri moved to elect the two new candidates and John Boggs seconded the motion. Cheri asked if there were any questions or discussion and then called for a vote. Kay Santosha and Rowena Watson were unanimously elected as the two new USLF board members for a three-year term.

### **USLF Cascade Days Annual Book Sale**

Laurie reminded the audience that an important source of USLF support for the library is the annual book sale held during Concrete's Cascade Days. She said John and Gail Boggs have done an outstanding job organizing this sale for the past few years, and last year the book sale raised \$2,400 for library programs and equipment. Laurie thanked John and Gail and expressed her delight that they had agreed to organize the book sale again this year. She invited Gail Boggs up to the podium to talk about the need for volunteers.

Gail noted that the Cascade Days Book Sale would be on August 18<sup>th</sup> this year and encouraged everyone to mark their calendars. She also said in order to be successful, they needed two things: 1) plenty of books to sell; and, 2) volunteers to staff book sale. She said the donated books could be brought to the library where they will then be taken to the storage unit to be sorted into categories. She explained that there was a sign-up sheet on the front table, with specific time slots to sign up as a volunteer to staff the book sale in August. She said volunteers could also contact her later to sign up.

## **Highlights from the Upper Skagit Library Director**

Laurie invited Brooke Pederson, Upper Skagit Library (USL) Director, up to the podium to share highlights of recent activities at the Library.

Brooke shared a slide of her six current employees, which she said happily comprises a full staff. She noted that Tess Carroll has filled Cora Thomas' position. Tess commutes from the Day Creek area and has background in business. Beth Easterday is from the local area, and in addition to working at the Library, serves on the Concrete Town Council. She will be tasked with running more of the Library's children's and youth programs. Chazlyn Lovely rounds out the team, serving as an additional substitute and taking care of more of the Library's social media presence online.

Next, Brooke described the wonderful Library programs in 2017 that truly celebrated books, reading and creative writing. She noted that the Upper Skagit Library hosted the Washington State Poet Laureate Tod Marshall; celebrated book launches with local authors Karen Smith, Marie Phillips, Nicola Pearson, Monica Crosson, and the Young Authors Club from Concrete Elementary. The Library encouraged creativity with a Blackout Poetry Contest and a library bookmark design contest. To engage kids and families, the USL facilitated Read to a Dog Day, Cache in Concrete, Teen Why Dewey Read? Reading Challenge, and provided a variety of activities during the USL's Summer Reading Program.

Everyone is asking "When are you moving to the new library site?" Brooke said. She gave a brief update of where the Library is at present. This summer they will be installing air conditioning and a new roof on the facility. USL's Project Manager, Roger Howard, is consulting with an electrician on full lighting design, as well as investigating some structural issues related to the roof. Staff and Building Task Force members are compiling information and wish lists for interior furnishing and details. Brooke noted that the Library wants to encourage continued fundraising since these are major expenses. Stay tuned for more details, she said.

Last month, the Library's Board of Trustees got together to come up with a New Strategic Plan for 2018-2019, copies of which were available on the table up front. The current board members are Em Beals, Bill Pfeifer, Carol McCormick, Gal Boggs, and Linden Jordan. Brooke explained that having these goals to focus on will help USL better navigate through the changes and growth that the Library will be experiencing as they move into and adjust their bigger, better library facility.

Finally, Brooke invited everyone to attend the second annual Young Authors at the public library on March 31<sup>st</sup>. This event serves as an opportunity for everyone to celebrate the hard work and creativity of young authors in our community, giving them an occasion to share their work with the reading public. After their original works are accepted into the library collection, they are cataloged and available for check out.

Brooke ended by thanking everyone for supporting "your Upper Skagit Library."

## **USLF Volunteer Awards**

Laurie thanked Brooke for the update and asked that she stay at the podium to help with the Volunteer Awards. Laurie said that the USLF thought it would be nice to recognize two Foundation members who volunteer a lot, wearing many hats to enrich our community.

First, Bill Pfeifer was honored. Laurie said that in addition to serving as a Library Trustee, Bill volunteers in support of many organizations in town—Saturday Market, KSVU,

Heritage Museum, community action, Democratic party, as well as playing the keyboard at many local events and fundraisers. Laurie asked the audience to join her in thanking Bill, and handed him a token of our appreciation.

Next, Laurie recognized Val Stafford. Besides being the Vice President of the Library Foundation, Val runs the Concrete Theatre with her husband, Fred, and hosts numerous cultural and educational events for the community there. Val is President of Concrete's Chamber of Commerce, and is involved in organizing parades, fun runs, Ghost Walk, and local Eagle Festival events. Plus, she helps a great many people stay healthy, fit and positive through fitness classes here and through online support groups. Laurie, again, asked the audience to join her in thanking Val for all she does to help make Concrete a great place to live. She then handed her a token of appreciation.

### **Guest Speaker, Anu Taranath**

Before introducing the guest speaker, Laurie elaborated a bit about the Humanities Washington Speakers Bureau program, our co-sponsor in hosting Anu Taranath. Humanities Washington is a nonprofit dedicated to sparking conversation and critical thinking. Thanks to support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Boeing Company, the Washington Secretary of State and many private donors, Humanities Washington Speakers Bureau presenters visit all corners of the state. Laurie encouraged the audience to visit their website to find out more.

Then Laurie introduced the guest speaker, Anu Taranath, who has a B.A. from the University of California, Riverside and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego. She's been at the UW since 2001, where she is now a senior lecturer specializing in global literature, identity, race, and equity. She is the recipient of University of Washington's Distinguished Teaching Award and a "Best of Seattle" designation from the Seattle Weekly, as well as multiple Fulbright awards and fellowships. She also works as a consultant for schools, colleges, libraries, community organizations, and government agencies on social justice and global issues. She works to deepen our comfort with uncomfortable topics and works toward equity and social justice.

The title of her presentation was "Not Just for Kids: How Children's Literature Inspires Bold Conversations." Anu began her presentation by saying she would like to have an interactive conversation with the audience about the topic.

By way of introduction, Anu said her family immigrated from India in 1970. As a person of color in America, she was raised in a culture of racism. Although she had loving parents, she felt lost and invisible outside her home. She read all the time, but noticed that people of color were not included as characters in any of the books she read. She experienced discrimination by other unhappy children who looked to bully those beneath them.

She said she has been at the UW for the past 18 years. Her activities include: 1) Teaching about race, gender, identity, and difference issues; 2) Directing study abroad programs; 3) Serving as a Humanities Washington speaker, which she highlights as one of the best things she does; and 4) Serving as a consultant to navigate tricky issues to facilitate conversations

Anu shared a story about tutoring a black female 10<sup>th</sup> grader (Aintu), years ago. Every attempt she made to connect to Aintu was met with a sullen silent impasse. Stymied, Anu decided to bring three children's books to the next tutoring session. The books were Ultra Violet

Catastrophe, Socks for Supper, and Miss Suzy—all books somehow relating to race, identity and difference issues. She sat down in a chair and began reading the books aloud to herself, as Aintu was seated in a chair that faced the wall, away from her tutor. Slowly, Aintu began to turn around and listen, and eventually picked up all three books to read to herself. Meanwhile, Anu, took a low-key stance, looking at her fingernails. Slowly, Aintu opened up and asked Anu why the characters in most books are all white. It mattered to her because she wasn't white. When Anu showed her books that featured characters that weren't white, Aintu thought that was pretty cool. Over the years, they forged a friendship, and Aintu has now graduated from college and attributes Anu with saving her life by introducing her to books.

To illustrate her point about people of color not being featured in enough books, Anu quoted the statistic that in 1985, out of 2,500 trade children's books, only 18 featured African Americans. In 2002, out of 3,150 trade children's books, only 69 featured African Americans. Sadly, only about 10% of children's books feature minorities. Schools are now more racially segregated than in the 1960's, which has contributed to the "Us versus Them" mindset.

To stimulate a conversation and discussion with the audience, Anu asked several questions. First, she asked, "What are all the ways that young people today routinely see and hear from people both like and unlike themselves?"

Secondly, she asked, "When you were young, did you have access to books? If so, what kind of books did you read? What kinds of characters did you read about?"

Thirdly, Anu posed these questions: "Does what I've described resonate for you? Did you talk about race when you were growing up? What did it feel like?"

Finally, Anu said: "We get uncomfortable when stakes are high, opinions vary, and emotions run strong. Where do we feel this in our bodies?"

Many audience members were prompted to contribute to this discussion.

Anu recommended several books to help with identity, race and gender and displayed them on the stage.

- Red or Blue, I Like You
- Let's Talk About Race by Julius Lester
- Jafta's Mother by Hugh Lewis
- Jafta
- Jafta, The Homecoming
- Tan to Tamarind
- Binbin's Braids
- The Okay Book by Todd Parr
- It's Okay to Be Different

She closed by alerting the audience to a campaign born around the country called WE NEED DIVERSE BOOKS, whose mission statement reads "so that all good multicultural good stories will someday just be good stories."

Valerie Stafford thanked Anu for her inspiring and though-provoking presentation and gave her a gift from Sauk Mountain Pottery to help her remember her visit to the Upper Skagit.

Laurie Thomas thanked Val and Fred for hosting the meeting, Barb Trask for organizing, Becky Schmidt and Nancy Johnson for providing cookies and everyone for attending. She invited everyone up front to meet Anu and enjoy some refreshments. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:  
Becky Schmidt, March 26, 2018  
USLF Secretary

LIST OF ATTENDEES – USLF MEETING  
March 24, 2018

Keith Alesse  
Carol Barnett \*\*\*  
Gail Boggs  
John Boggs  
Sacha Buller \*  
Cheri Cook-Blodgett  
Pam Cronkrite  
Ingeborg Hightower  
Shery Hornbeck \*  
Lynn Johnson  
Nancy Johnson \*\*\*  
Carol McCormick  
Jason Miller  
Leslie Moore  
Nicola Murray  
Pam Pedersen  
Sonja Pedersen  
Brooke Pederson  
Debra Peterson  
Bill Pfeifer  
Sally Pfeifer  
Doris Pollack  
Kay Santosha \*\*  
Becky Schmidt \*  
Nancy Sparkowich  
Val Stafford \*  
Eve Syapin  
Kathy Thomas  
Laurie Thomas \*  
Rob Thomas \*  
Barb Trask \*  
Ger van den Engh  
Anu Taranath, speaker

\* USLF Board of Directors  
\*\* newly elected Board member  
\*\*\* outgoing Board member