

# BOOKISH IN BELEN

The Annual Letter of the Friends of the Belen Public Library

November 2024

**Season's Greetings,** friends and supporters. Like you, we are grateful for the **Belen Public Library**, a cultural cornerstone and essential resource for our small town. From public computers to Lego Club, from museum passes to audiobooks, from resume help to clothing upcycling, the library fulfills diverse community needs in a welcoming environment.

We also give thanks for the powerhouse team of librarians working to make the BPL a vibrant hub of information and entertainment: Kathleen Pickering, Danny Garcia, Madison Collister, Jo Anne Kassian, Jessica Rodgers, Sherry Baca, Katreena Kirkland.

This year, the Friends were happy to fund books for the nonfiction collection, graphic novels, guitars for the children's room, arm-chairs and games for the teen room, office furniture, arts & crafts supplies, and STEM kits, as well as performers, supplies, and prizes for the Summer Reading Program.

**Books on Becker**, the only dedicated bookstore in Valencia County, continues to raise critical operating funds for Friends initiatives and to wow customers from far and wide. Calling Belén their “secret treasure,” a Catron County couple drives 200 miles to the bookstore every few months to stock up on reading material.

On a banner day in September, Netflix staff decorating sets for a new series called *The Boroughs* purchased 34 boxes of books (over \$800) for their production. They hand-picked books from our various sections to reflect each show character's specific interests. We are ready for our close-up!

The bookstore's curb appeal and amenities were recently enhanced, thanks to a state Creative Industries Division grant secured by the City of Belen and Belen Main-Street Partnership. A decorative concrete

*continued*



## BOOKS ON BECKER

*a nonprofit secondhand bookstore operated by the Friends and staffed by volunteers*

**Seven rooms. Comfy chairs. Thousands of \$1 books.**

Hours: Tuesday thru Friday 12-5, Saturday 10-5

Address: 513 Becker Avenue (between 6th & 5th)

Phone: 505-785-2835 (during store hours)

Payment: Cash or credit card

Kids, tweens, and teens who visit the bookstore can each select two FREE books\* from their store sections every time they come in!

(High schoolers can select from YA or adult sections.)

Teachers and homeschoolers can select two FREE books\* that support their curriculum, every time they visit.

Book/media donations are welcome during store hours, but no textbooks, dictionaries, or encyclopedias, please.

Your purchases and book donations help fund library programs, scholarships, and community literacy. Thank you.

\*regular-price books

**Come find your treasure!**

walkway and patio, cantilevered umbrellas, and an accessible picnic table now grace the front entrance, and a diaper changing station is a handy addition to our public restroom.

Within the past year, the Friends accomplished:

- ◆ Giving away hundreds of free kids' books and healthy snacks at the National Night Out and Back to School events in August
- ◆ Supplying surplus books to Crossroads rehab center in ABQ, the dialysis center in Los Lunas, and the Baldwin Cabin Public Library in Datil; stocking local laundromats and Little Free Libraries
- ◆ Providing 250 new books for H2 Academic Scholarship Fund's youth referrals for Angel Tree gifts
- ◆ Funding local teachers' classroom needs, including manga, ukelele cases, a rocket launcher, a voice translator, and teaching aids and supplies—at Central ES, Belen Middle School, and La Merced ES
- ◆ Supplying the Belen Public Health Office with kids' and tween books for their young patients
- ◆ Presenting acoustic guitars to Debra Dockens and Ismael Ottley, dedicated students who committed to a full year of guitar lessons at the library
- ◆ Connecting the BPL to the Southwest Canine Corps of Volunteers to begin a read-to-the-dogs program
- ◆ Funding public performances by Cisne de Nuevo Mexico, a local folklorico dance troupe
- ◆ Donating funds to the Valencia County Literacy Council, Valencia County HeadStart, and Valencia Shelter Services
- ◆ Opening a bank CD account to securely invest a portion of our treasury and create a new revenue source.

If you would like to make a monetary donation, become a Friends member (starts at just \$10), or renew your membership, there are several ways to do so. Visit [www.booksonbecker.org/membership](http://www.booksonbecker.org/membership) for all the details.

***We now have quick & easy online payment options!***

Follow Friends of the Belen Public Library on 

Follow Books on Becker on  and 

Email us at: [connect@booksonbecker.org](mailto:connect@booksonbecker.org)

Bookstore sign image by Dorie Corrao  
Reading therapy dog image by LaNell Harrison

The Friends were pleased to present two \$1,000 Deborah Graham Memorial Scholarships, awarded each year to college-bound high school seniors in Belén. Elizabeth Borjas is attending UNM to study architecture, and Alexandra Almeida is pursuing a nursing degree at UNM-VC.

The adventuresome Belen Readers Book Club has been reading such diverse titles as *People of the Book*, *Appetite for America*, *This Tender Land*, and *Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers*. They meet monthly at the library.

We invite you to be an informal ambassador for literacy and to help grow our community of readers and thinkers. Tell a local family with children (from babies to high-schoolers) about our free-books-for-kids service at the bookstore (see page 1). Encourage an acquaintance of any age to acquire a library card and explore its free benefits. Remind your neighbor who struggles with reading that the BPL now has free tools to help with dyslexia, vision impairment, and other challenges. In other words, spread the joy of reading!

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