

# BOOKISH IN BELEN

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Belen Public Library

February 2022

## Belen Public Library Programs & Services

### UPDATE

The library is only open for:

- ▶ curbside pickup
- ▶ computer station use by appointment
- ▶ scheduled programs

Face masks and quick touchless temperature checks are required inside.

Staff hours are Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

To reserve materials for curbside pickup, log in to your account at:

<https://belen.biblionix.com/catalog/>

To reserve a computer station, call 505-966-2600.

To request the public meeting room, call Stephanie Wallace at 505-966-2606.

### Computer classes

Tuesdays & Saturdays at noon

RSVP to Jessica Rodgers at 505-966-2601.

### Teen Fiction Writing classes

Wednesdays & Saturdays

Call Danny Garcia at 505-966-2603.

### Tai Chi

Thursdays 10 to 11 a.m.

### Girls Who Code

Saturdays at 10 a.m.

Call Summer Ludwig at 505-966-2608.

333 Becker Avenue  
Belen, New Mexico  
505-966-2600  
[belenpubliclibrary@gmail.com](mailto:belenpubliclibrary@gmail.com)



A bevy of Bradfords  
A passel of Pattersons  
A googol of Grishams  
A cluster of Cusslers  
Boatloads of biographies  
A wealth of westerns  
Legions of literary fiction  
A raft of romances

An astonishing abundance of appealing art books

Explore the embarrassment of riches at

### BOOKS ON BECKER

a nonprofit secondhand bookstore  
where meandering, browsing, and daydreaming  
are strongly encouraged.

Seven rooms. Comfy chairs. Thousands of books. Great prices.

Winter hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Address: 513 Becker Avenue in the Belen Arts District

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

Your purchases help fund Library programs and scholarships.

*Come find your treasure!*

## Library Board of Trustees Looks to the Future

*How do you see the Belen Public Library evolving? What do you think is the greatest challenge the library faces? Why does the library matter?* These are some of the questions we recently asked the members of the Belen library board, commonly referred to as “the trustees.” Their answers provide a snapshot of the library’s present and an intriguing glimpse into its future.

The Belen library board is an administrative board of the City of Belén, as set forth in the Belen Municipal Code, the compilation of ordinances—or local laws—enacted by the city council. The library board acts in an advisory capacity, assisting the city council and mayor in the “efficient and economical management and operation” of the library. This includes the Harvey House Museum, a branch of the library.

Library board members are appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council. The library director is considered an executive board member, per the Municipal Code. Ten voting members serve two-year terms that begin in July and end in June; members may serve multiple consecutive terms. The library board meets quarterly.

Currently serving as library trustees are:

Danny Bernal, Jr.	Tina Hite
Paula Castillo	Kathleen Pickering
Holly Chavez	Charles Rundles
Stephen Cohen	Andrew E. Salas
Leslee Gill	Mary Swenson



**Holly Chavez** is co-owner of H2 Academic Solutions, a K-12 tutoring service in Belén. Her long-term vision for the library is “to ensure that the library continues to evolve as a community resource center throughout this part of the county. The library has done an exceptional job in embracing digital media resources as well as maintaining a strong connection to our traditional books. In the same manner, the library continues to support brick and mortar extensions such as the Harvey House while implementing out of this world programing such as the NASA project.”

She adds, “The library’s greatest challenge is to keep the community aware of all the opportunities the library offers each member of the community. The reach of the library is far beyond housing a fantastic selection of books. It is a center of interaction, learning, and community growth. I look forward to being part of the evolution of this essential community resource and am proud of what the library accomplishes every day for the greater Belén area.”

*continued on page 4*

*For an impoverished child whose family could not afford to buy books, the library was the open door to wonder and achievement ... I had the wit to charge through that door and make the most of it. —ISAAC ASIMOV*

### Read. Discuss. Repeat.

*Laura Sanchez*

Like to read? Wish you had a chance to discuss the books you read? Come join us at the [Belen Readers Book Club](#). It meets on the third Monday of every month at 10:00 a.m. at the Belen Public Library. And you don’t have to live in Belén to participate.

Our selections tend toward popular fiction, mysteries, and historical fiction. Recent history is also popular, particularly Southwestern locations. Recent selections included *Little Fires Everywhere*, *The Zookeeper’s Wife*, *Where’d You Go, Bernadette?*, *The Giver of Stars*, and *The Four Winds*.

Or if you wish to start your own book club, the library is available for meetings. Call Stephanie Wallace at 505-966-2606 to reserve the public meeting room.

## Top Ten Library Patrons of 2021

Savvy readers and frugal families know that the Belen Public Library is one of the best deals in town. It offers a wealth of books and DVDs—from classic to contemporary—for free. The library recently identified the ten cardholders who had saved the most in 2021 by borrowing materials from the library instead of purchasing them. In fact, the Top Ten Patrons saved a total of \$37,105 in 2021. Wow!

Top Ten Patrons were each awarded a \$20 gift certificate to Books on Becker, provided by the Friends board.

We recognize them below and include their comments about their BPL experiences and book recommendations.

### **Donal Coggins** saved \$7,101

I am a voracious reader. I have read 4,160 books from the Belen Library in the past 10 years. I like mysteries, crime and romantic novels. You and your staff have been more than accommodating during the time I have been unable to get around due to my broken ankle. I think my favorite author is Stuart Woods. I haven't found one of his books I haven't thoroughly enjoyed. I also like John Grisham and Iris Johansen. Thank you so much for all you do for our community.

### **Natasha J. Baca** saved \$4,827

Beatrice and Miriam said any "Skippyjon Jones" book by Judith Byron Schachner. These books are about a silly Siamese cat with a big imagination who believes he is a chihuahua and goes on hilarious adventures through his closet. They said they like these books because they "rhyme, they are funny & we learn some cool Spanish words"! And thanks to the summer reading program, the girls were gifted a nifty Skippyjon Jones puppet.



Here's an example of some of the catchy lines in one of the books:

*My name is Skippito Friskito.  
I fear not a single bandito.  
My manners are mellow.  
I'm sweet like the Jell-o.  
I get the job done, yes, indeed-o.*

### **Mark C. Baca** saved \$4,722

### **Ann Sullivan** saved \$4,428

Thanks to the Belen Public Library, I did not have to be stuck in the day-to-day grayness that was such a part of 2021. I went back into the near-past and traveled to the Moon and Mars with the first female astronauts; immersed myself in the weird and intriguing worlds of vampires and were creatures in several parts of the country from Louisiana to the Pacific Northwest; traveled with interesting characters around the world and across time to solve mysteries, save lives and destroy evil; and comforted myself with a range of interesting new recipes to spice up life at the most basic of levels.

I can swear to the fact that the Belen Public Library shelves contain wonders and adventures that transcend time and place and reality, available free to all of us. What a treasure.

### **Brenda Ramirez** saved \$3,204

### **Darlene Torres** saved \$3,015

### **David O. Schmidt** saved \$3,000

### **Francesca Castillo** saved \$2,408

We were extremely fortunate to have access to library books and lots of help from Belen's wonderful librarians this past year! After picking up loads of nature themed books we'd come home and start exploring. The children's library has so many wonderful options that helped so much in our homeschool year. We especially loved all the moon and outer space picture books. I was able to let the kids research while I read and attempted recipes from *Magnolia Table* magazine. The library is a wonderful service for the community!

### **Pamela Doster** saved \$2,320

Our daughter Makayla (6) is the one who checks out the books. She said her favorite author is Mo Willems. She said it is because he writes funny stories. I think she has read all of his books the library has multiple times.

### **Kelsi Brown** saved \$2,080

## Library Trustees

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**Andrew Salas** is city manager for the City of Belén and treasurer of the board of trustees. His long-term vision for the library is for it to “become known as the City of Belén’s essential, go-to learning repository and clearinghouse. The library should continually evolve to accommodate new learning methodologies, entertainment preferences, and to foster the acquisition of necessary credentials and certifications.”

A short-term goal he’d like to see accomplished at the library is achieving “a thorough understanding of best-practices in the experience of other similar institutions.” Salas sees the importance of considering “innovative means to remain relevant and desirable” and implementing “the best practices and ideas that fit our culture and situation.” Moreover, he thinks the greatest challenge faced by the library is “keeping pace with ... how people keep informed, educated and entertained.”

Asked to describe the library’s role in the community, he asserts, “To provide learning and entertainment services not otherwise easily obtainable in the open market. Also to serve as a ‘public square’ where matters of community interest and concern can be explored, investigated, and celebrated ... The library should see itself as the community’s catalyst for learning, credentialing, entertainment and a place to celebrate and showcase our culture.”

**Mary Swenson** is the newest appointee to the board of trustees, selected by newly elected Mayor Robert Noblin. She retired from a career that encompassed advertising, accounting, procurement, logistics, and customer service. She has traveled extensively throughout the U.S., Mexico, and Canada and has lived overseas.

She is “eager to learn more about what programs we have available for the residents of our community. The library should be a community hub, providing a variety of services, not only connecting people to ideas, but also connecting people to each other.”

Swenson thinks the library’s main goal should be “to enhance the quality of life within our community. One important aspect of that goal is to improve literacy skills for every child through programs that are fun and interesting as well as educational.” She continues, “... we on the board need to continue to pursue and follow-up on programs that reach out to people not using the library.”

She concludes, “One of our long-term goals will undoubtedly be expansion in the form of an updated space design flow. We currently have a good variety of literature in our stacks, a number of computer stations, and an appealing children’s area, but space is limited.”

- ▶ **Anonymous donor**, for donating a beautiful new steam mop for the bookstore
- ▶ **Judy Chicago, Donald Woodman, and Through the Flower Art Space**, for donating a beautiful new heavy-duty dolly for the bookstore
- ▶ **Belen Moose Lodge #1680**, for a generous donation of \$500 for enhancements to the bookstore
- ▶ **Ursula Hill & Peter Lupsha**, for a generous donation of \$100 to the Friends

¡Muchas Gracias!

*Bookstore photo courtesy of Dorie Corrao*

### Connect with Us

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 Newsletter & general inquiries: [connect@booksonbecker.org](mailto:connect@booksonbecker.org)

 Follow [Books on Becker](#), [Belen Public Library](#), and [Belen Harvey House Museum](#) on Facebook

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[www.booksonbecker.org/newsarchive](http://www.booksonbecker.org/newsarchive)

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