

BOOKISH IN BELEN

The Annual Letter of the Friends of the Belen Public Library

November 2023

Season's Greetings, readers and friends of libraries and literacy.

As the holidays approach, we're giving thanks for our members, volunteers, donors, grantors, bookstore patrons, municipal and community partners, neighbors, and, naturally, the library at the heart of Belén.

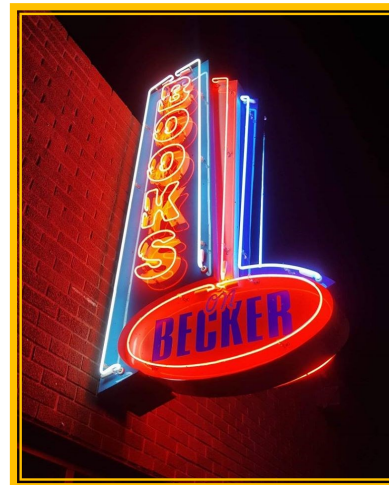
We are proud to support the Belen Public Library, a cultural cornerstone and essential resource for our community. This year, the Friends funded emerging reader books and a play structure for the Children's Room; furniture, books, and media for the Teen Room; arts & crafts supplies for both rooms; and nonfiction books and guitars for circulation. In addition, we contributed to the library's new MakerSpace and the popular Summer Reading Programs.

Books on Becker, our secondhand bookstore in downtown Belén, opened five years ago and continues to provide the joy of reading and the adventure of treasure hunting to locals as well as visitors from near and far. A patron who lives in Iowa even stockpiles her gently used books and drops them at the store for donation whenever she's in town!

"Best bookstore anywhere" is a compliment we receive regularly from visitors. In fact, Books on Becker was named one of five finalists for the state's Top Bookstore by the 2023 NM Entertainment Awards.

The bookstore recently underwent a couple of makeovers. We first replaced a slew of unsightly old ceiling tiles using grant funding from the Belen MainStreet Partnership and Wells Fargo. Then the Friends funded replacement of the fluorescent light fixtures (most of which flickered and buzzed theatrically) with LED fixtures, vastly improving both the customer browsing experience and our energy footprint.

continued



BOOKS ON BECKER

a nonprofit secondhand bookstore

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

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

Address: 513 Becker Avenue in the Belen Arts District

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

Book 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!

Books on Becker is the steady, enduring engine that powers the Friends' treasury. We are grateful every day for the space provided by the City of Belén, the incredible variety of books gifted by donors, and the vibrant marketplace created by customers and volunteers. It all adds up to our continuing ability to fund the library and community literacy.

Local musician Tony DeNardo was a fundraising dynamo this past year, donating a generous percentage from his regular gigs at Tractor Brewing, Ribs, and Chavez Brothers Winery to the Friends, for the benefit of the library. He also held two fundraising concerts at the library.

In addition to fulfilling library needs, the Friends were able to contribute to area literacy this year by:

- ◆ Donating funds to the Valencia County Literacy Council and Valencia County HeadStart
- ◆ Stocking local Little Free Libraries and laundromats with surplus books from the bookstore
- ◆ Donating over 250 new children's and tween books to the Belen Public Health Office
- ◆ Funding local teachers' classroom wish lists—everything from graphic novels and bilingual books to calculators and math manipulatives—at La Merced ES, La Promesa ES, Dennis Chavez ES, and Belen Middle School
- ◆ Supplying the county domestic violence shelters with books, backpacks, art supplies, puzzles, and board games—all donated by community members or the Friends during the KOAT Book Drive
- ◆ Giving away 200 free kids' books at the National Night Out event at Anna Becker Park.

If you would like to make a financial donation to support library programs and local literacy, send a check made out to *Friends of the BPL* to 333 Becker Avenue, Belen NM 87002, or make a donation with cash, check, or credit card at Books on Becker. Any amount is greatly appreciated!

Follow **Friends of the Belen Public Library** and **Books on Becker** on Facebook.

NEW! We're now on Instagram at: [books.on.becker](https://www.instagram.com/books.on.becker)

Email us at: connect@booksonbecker.org

Bookstore sign image by Dorie Corrao
Young reader image by Ungie Dávila

This year, the Friends again funded two \$1,000 Deborah Graham Memorial Scholarships, awarded to college-bound high school seniors in Belén. Jamie Williams is attending UNM to study sign language and interpretation and Ezra Guest is attending Colorado Christian University to study business.

Also in 2023, we launched our new member benefit, a membership card that offers a bookstore discount. For information about Friends membership, email:

join@booksonbecker.org

Finally, the Belen Readers Book Club continues to gather monthly at the library and offer a convivial setting where local bookworms can feast on a wide variety of contemporary titles and swap reading recommendations.

We wish for you and yours a season full of **cheer**, a New Year full of **promise**, and, of course, **time to read**.

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