

HLF News

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William 'Bill' Pierson is well known for his generous nature and for giving back to the community he loves. He has been an enduring and generous contributor to the Humboldt Library Foundation since its inception. When asked why the library, Bill said, "Initially, I was so impressed by the community effort to build the new Main Branch – it was such a monument to initiative and looking to the future that I wanted to support the Foundation's work to support that effort. But I came to realize it was more than that. What the library represents is invaluable. It's free and accessible to everyone, and even more importantly it represents the foundation of our civilization and the values we cherish as a nation."

Bill Pierson and Pierson Building Center contribute generously to many organizations across Humboldt County. Connecting community to art inspires Bill's giving strategy. That commitment has contributed to a thriving and vivid cultural identity for Humboldt County. Artists, students, musicians, actors and the community organizations that support these endeavors have all benefited generously from his passion. Bill recalled that during the early 90's when cut-backs in school funding resulted in the elimination of art and music programs, teachers came to Pierson's looking for help with the purchase of school art supplies. They were glad to step up and help, but he felt strongly that cutting art and music programming diminished the quality of education in an area that demands greater support.

He considers it a privilege to be able to support the community. But it is a quality that seems to come naturally to the Pierson family. Ernie Pierson, Bill's father, who led by example, donated land and helped support local organizations such as the Boy Scouts and the Greater Eureka Chamber of Commerce. A treasured family story about Ernie is that as he bought up vacant lots in Eureka after WW II (before a Pierson home was built), he'd clear the lot, grade and sand it, mark the bases and put up a sign that read: "Have Fun. E. Pierson."

Bill joined the family business in 1971, initially taking on responsibility for the garden center and nursery. It was his vision that created the parklike setting we still enjoy today -- the fish pond, fireplace, books and welcoming atmosphere all reflect Bill's love of nature, and place high value on art. Of course today, Pierson Building Center, or more fondly 'The Big Hammer,' reflects Bill's leadership and ongoing commitment to the community – a thriving local business that values its customers and employees and celebrates the county's rich history.

A successful businessman, Bill is also a highly regarded photographer. He creates exceptionally stunning black and white images that reflect a lifelong study of light in nature. For many years he printed in his own darkroom,



but transitioned more recently to producing high quality gallery-ready digital prints. Bill has been executing his art for over 40 years. His work can be seen in select local businesses and his annual exhibits at Piante Gallery are an eagerly anticipated feature at Arts Alive in Old Town Eureka.

From the President's Desk *by Elizabeth Murguia*



"The greatest gift is the passion for reading. It is cheap, it consoles, it distracts, it excites, it gives you knowledge of the world and experience of a wide kind. It is a moral illumination."

Elizabeth Hardwick

I had the good fortune to travel with friends to Washington, DC, in the spring where we soaked up the wonders of the Library of Congress, the US Supreme Court, Statuary Hall, the night-time Memorial Tour and the cherry blossoms in full splendor. A road trip through northern Virginia extended the pleasure, visiting the Presidential homes of the Founding Fathers – George Washington's *Mount Vernon*, Thomas Jefferson's *Monticello*, James Madison's *Montpelier* and James Monroe's *Oak Hill*. The gardens were spectacular and the docent-led tours thought-provoking.

I returned home to delve into Andrea Wulf's *Founding Gardeners*, which explores the shared passion for gardening of the revolutionary founders. Amateur botanists, Wulf reveals how their shared interest in gardening deeply underscored the principles of our founding. Adams, Jefferson, Washington, Madison and Franklin all promoted the development of native plants with a distinct fervor, believing one way to break the stranglehold of England was to 'grow our own.' They ordered, shared and made gifts of *seed boxes* from Bartram's Nursery near Philadelphia that featured native plants of North America. She describes a tour of Bartram's garden that helped break the deadlock at the Constitutional Convention; how George Washington was not only the father of our country but may have been the father of the first compost pit in America, and how Madison may have been the first to argue for preserving the environment. Wulf does not shy away from the great moral paradox of the period, slavery. You cannot overlook the fact that slaves did the back-breaking work that terraced Monticello or planted sugar maples in the dead of winter at Mount Vernon. Her extensive research at the presidential homes, reading volumes of letters and diaries, weaves agriculture and gardening into the very foundation of our nation.

We also drove the Shenandoah National Parkway, visiting Harper's Ferry and Civil War battle sites Antietam and Gettysburg. I was reminded of the searing *Killer Angels*, by Michael Shaara. If you haven't read it, or it's been a long while (like me), do pick it up. It is such a vivid retelling of the battle of Gettysburg; I could hear the soldiers' voices standing on Little Round-Top.

A recent trip to Montana and I was back full circle to Jefferson. This time I was able to listen to another old favorite, Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage*. It definitely holds up, especially while driving along the Lewis and Clark Trail in Idaho and Montana, with the Bitter Roots and Lolo Pass in your view-shed. You appreciate more fully Jefferson's obsessive directions to the expedition's young explorers that led to the study of natural history of the American Wilderness.

All good reads, especially during this vivid election cycle – another layer of our nation's politics, flawed but courageous, underscoring the need to always reach for a more perfect union.

It's all there – in your public library. Enjoy!

Book Blurb

By Pam Cavanagh, HLF Board Member

The Kitchen House is an engaging first novel authored by Kathleen Grissom. The novel takes place in the antebellum south, late 1700s, early 1800s, specifically on Tall Oaks tobacco plantation.

The characterization and story line(s) weave together effortlessly. Two characters, Lavina and Belle, alternate chapters as they narrate the story. Lavina at age seven arrives on the plantation after she was orphaned aboard ship when she and her Irish parents were immigrating to America. The shock of losing her parents on the ship causes her to become mute for some time. She is taken to the plantation and becomes an indentured servant while placed in the care of Belle, the master's illegitimate daughter. Contrasts between the two are readily noticeable: Lavina is white with an Irish accent and Belle is black with a southern dialect. Despite their differences, they develop a close, loving relationship.

As Lavina becomes older she is eventually accepted to frequent the "big house." At the same time, she has lived, experienced the life of a slave in that time period. She simultaneously lives in two worlds. Belle has a prominent place in the kitchen house. She experiences trials mulatto women dealt with at that time when white plantation owners sired the women's children.

The Kitchen House has eternal, timeless appeal. You, gentle reader, have likely encountered situations that produce conflicting situations and emotions to some degree. Kathleen Grissom's characters exude a sense of reality as they find their way through various situations. The strength to endure tragedy and come through it with love and loyalty powers *The Kitchen House*.

In Memory of Marge Custis – The Indomitable

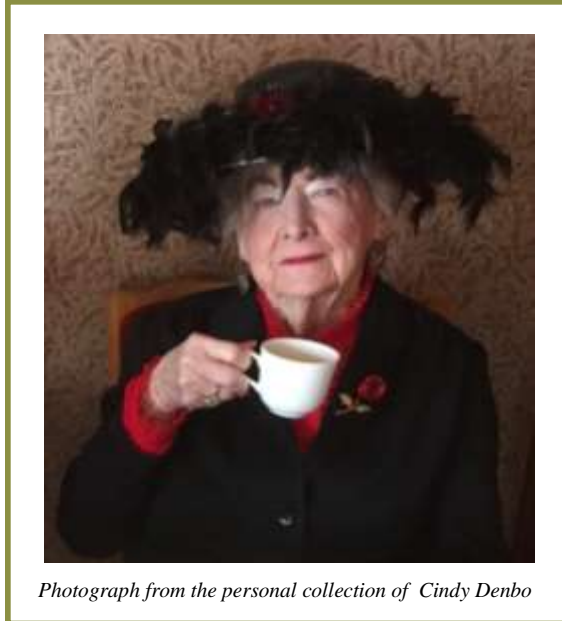
We lost one of our own in June. Marge Custis, long-time library advocate and co-founder of the Humboldt Library Foundation, passed away suddenly. Marge was a community leader, superb fundraiser and spirited advocate for many causes, but particularly for children. To honor her, HLF has created the *Marge Custis Fund*. Contributions made in her memory and *all* proceeds from the 2016 Holiday Gala will be given to the library to benefit the children of Humboldt County.

In 2007, when Marge received the Helen Everett Award, the following remarks were made that reflected our admiration. They still do. *Elizabeth Murguia, Board President*

Marge Custis, 2007 Helen Everett Award Honoree

She hails from South Dakota, just like Laura Ingalls Wilder, Tom Brokaw, Sitting Bull and the *Wizard of Oz* creator, Frank L. Baum. South Dakota, the landscape Theodore Roosevelt credited with shaping his determination and strong leadership style. Impressive fellow actors -- and Marge Custis shares the qualities we most admire in them: inquisitive, determined, strong, principled, loyal, imaginative.

She was shaped by a loving family. Marge's parents valued education and encouraged their daughter to be strong and independent. Belle Fourche, South Dakota was home and after high school graduation, she attended business school. Her first job was at the First National Bank of the Black Hills – a connection to finances and accounting that served her well and forged the path that has served our community so well.



Photograph from the personal collection of Cindy Denbo

Marge met and married the love of her life, Max Custis. Max was a gentle, quiet and thoughtful man; well-loved by his friends, family and community. He was a doer, too – but perhaps more shy than Marge. And when his employment brought the family to Humboldt County, it set Marge on a powerful course. Marge recounts that when Max was asked by his employer to become involved in community activities, he declined (respectfully, I'm sure) but he offered up Marge as his substitute. "Can my wife do it?" he asked. And do it she did. They were a team, and happily, Crown Simpson accepted the offer and Marge was launched on her own career of community involvement. She started with United Way and went on to the local chapter of the American Red Cross. She became a prodigious fundraiser and her involvement branched out to a long list of community organizations, not only with the Humboldt Library Foundation, but at Hospice of Humboldt, CASA, KEET TV, Six Rivers Planned Parenthood, the Salvation Army, Redwoods United, Easter Seals, PTA, Camp Fire – and the list goes on.

Marge is her own force of nature. She believes one should give back to the community in which you live. She is remarkable. In the library community, she has raised money to support the public library for three decades. Many in the audience tonight can attest to her support and hard work for your organization. Simply put, she knows how to get things done.

Local Legacies Collection Courtesy HCL Staff

Imagine being part of a B-24 flight crew in World War II, spending time in a German POW camp, growing up in a logging camp or casting your line into rivers teeming with fish. These are a few of the stories found in over 200 oral history interviews of Humboldt County residents conducted and recorded by local high school students from 1999 - 2000.

You can listen to these and many others from this unique collection of memories, now available from the Humboldt County Library. The interviews with the best sound quality and broadest community appeal were selected by the Library for conversion from cassette tapes to CDs and MP3 CDs.

The Library of Congress Local Legacies program and the Humboldt Area Foundation sponsored the oral history audio recordings as an extension of a grant funded video project that began in 1998 with the intent to “retain cultural knowledge and traditions and to pass those on to younger generations”.

The audio interviews focused on four areas, each with a specific set of questions for the participants: Living Biographies, Salmon and Streams, Timber and Forests: postwar to present, 1946 - 1999 and Veterans.

The cassette tape recordings were donated to the Humboldt County Library at the conclusion of the Local Legacies project and included a signed release from each interviewee allowing the Library to use the tapes for educational purposes and reproduction on the Internet.

Recently the Local Legacies oral history collection was chosen as a special focus area by the Humboldt Library Foundation. A grant from Eureka Rotary and matching funds from the HLF made it possible to convert selected tapes to CDs and MP3 CDs for circulation to patrons, as was originally intended. Conversion and digitization of the tapes were done by Bongo Boy Studio in McKinleyville.

Each of the four areas of the Local Legacies collection may be checked out in the Library’s book-on-CD format and the entire collection is available as a book-on-MP3 CD.



Humboldt County Library’s Director of Library Services to Retire

Having arrived in May, 2007 to serve as Director of Library Services, Victor Zazueta has announced his retirement effective the end of October, 2016. With a master’s degree in Library and Information Studies Victor came to the Humboldt County Library system from Imperial Valley College where he was the Reference Librarian.

When asked what he felt was his greatest accomplishment Victor said, “I feel one of my greatest achievements was moving the Humboldt County Library to faster Internet connections. When I started in May of 2007, five out of eleven sites were still using dial-up connections to communicate with the Main Library and the outside world through the internet. By 2010 most of these sites had been moved to faster internet connections through a Bill and Melinda Gates Broadband Grant and through use of Federal and State subsidies, which made faster connectivity affordable for the County Library. In August, 2016, after working on it for nearly two years, the Eureka Main Library, the Arcata branch and Fortuna branch sites will be moving again to gigabyte connections.”



Victor will return to the Imperial Valley to enjoy his retirement with his wife Cathy. All of us with HLF wish Victor a happy and productive retirement and thank him for his years of service.

Thanks to Our Donors January 1—August 31, 2106

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Children's Non-Fiction: Sharing the World with Young People By Jeanine Lancaster, Youth Services Librarian

Lions and tigers and bears, oh my! Reading non-fiction books can delight, thrill and amaze a reader. It can also enlarge one's world through new knowledge, understanding and awareness. This is important for adults and essential for children and teens, who have a more limited experience of the world. One of the best ways to explore new ideas is through the lives and work of fascinating people.

New books in the Humboldt County Library, for instance, introduce young readers to William Kamkwamba (*The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*), José Guadalupe Posada (*Funny Bones*) and Mary Garber (*Miss Mary Reporting*). Kamkwamba was a teenager when he built a windmill out of scrap metal and old bicycle parts to bring electricity to his village in Malawi. Posada drew amazing and amusing calaveras – skeletons carrying out everyday activities – that are popular in Day of the Dead celebrations. Garber was a groundbreaking sportswriter who championed young athletes who were not getting the attention they deserved.

Thanks to the generosity of the Humboldt Library Foundation, we have added other books about civil rights, sports and outdoor adventures, Lego building and computer coding, dance and jazz and rock and roll, oceans and weather and microbiology and a host of other topics. The books are dispersed throughout the Humboldt County Library system for all to share.

Helping fund these purchases for the community is important not only to those who support children and the library, but also to anyone who cares passionately about any cause, subject, idea or hobby. For if young people don't also learn to be passionate about the same cause, who will carry it into the future? Thank you to all those who have donated funds!



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Buy a Book Campaign

This year the Humboldt Library Foundation's 'Buy a Book' campaign has targeted the Children's non-fiction collection. While storybooks, chapter books and fiction for children are chock full with new and timeless titles, the non-fiction is out of date.

Non-Fiction Children's Collection, What's Possible!

- New maps, new geography, explore the ocean floor or the highest peak. Kids are naturally curious and with new materials we can foster even more interest.
- Know a child crazy about space travel, the universe, why stars shine in the night? New books will spark the curiosity of the youngest.
- Dinosaurs fascinate and reptiles intrigue, or is it bugs under rocks that interest your youngster? New interactive and colorful materials will provide a greater understanding of the world around us.

Did You Know?

- The library circulated over 667,000 items last year.
- There are currently 98,856 library card holders in Humboldt County; 18,507 are held by youth.

So make your donation today. Use the enclosed envelope, or please visit our website at www.humboldtlibraryfoundation.org and use the Donate button. Buy a Book today in honor or memory of a friend.

1 Book ~ \$25

2 Books ~ \$50

3 Books ~ \$75

4 Books ~ \$100

Buy A Shelf ~ \$500

"Libraries are reservoirs of strength, grace and wit, reminders of order, calm and continuity, lakes of mental energy, neither warm nor cold, light nor dark.... In any library in the world, I am at home, unselfconscious, still and absorbed."

Germaine Greer

HLF Legacy Circle

*Join members of the Legacy Circle.
Remember HLF in your will or estate plans.*

The HLF Legacy Circle is made up of individuals who have remembered the Humboldt Library Foundation in their will or estate planning. Their gift will grow the HLF Endowment Fund, a long term strategy to enhance the library services in perpetuity.

For every new Legacy Circle member added during 2016, Ed Olsgard and Michele McKeegan will match the commitment with a \$250 contribution. So please consider today - planning now will provide immediate and long-term support for the public library.

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2016 Humboldt Library Foundation Grants

This year the Humboldt Library Foundation has been pleased to present the Humboldt County Library with a total of \$67,000 in grants.

Our 2016 calendar year grant of \$65,000 earmarked \$28,000 for new books and materials circulated across the library system; it provided \$20,000 to underwrite the popular research database system "EBSCO" and to purchase library patron computer stations and Note Books; there was an additional \$2,000 for staff enrichment opportunities and a \$1,500 down payment in support of the ever popular biennial Children's Author's Festival.

HLF has also increased our participation in underwriting the McNaughton book leasing program to \$10,000 a year. This two-year commitment is in conjunction with additional funding provided by the Friends of the Library of Garberville, Rio Dell, Arcata, Blue Lake, Willow Creek, Trinidad and McKinleyville branch libraries and the Bookmobile. The McNaughton program allows branch managers to select "Best Sellers" or very popular titles tailored to their branch. The books remain at the branch library and are incredibly popular with readers. The increase in funding will allow each branch to carry more titles.

Most recently, HLF matched a \$1000 grant received from the Humboldt Sponsors and presented \$2000 to the library in support of the 2016 "Read for the Win" themed Summer Reading Program. The monies funded an immediate need in the development of the library's collection for the youth of our county, specifically children 6 to 12 years old, selecting titles that aligned with this year's theme. The Summer Reading Program took place mid-June through mid-August and, as always, was a popular, fun and educational program for the children of our community.

It's the generosity of the organizations and individuals in our community that help HLF financially help our library system remain a vibrant Humboldt County asset. Thank you.

"A library is a good place to go when you feel unhappy, for there, in a book, you may find encouragement and comfort. A library is a good place to go when you feel bewildered or undecided, for there, in a book, you may have your question answered."

E. B. White



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Arcata Branch

500 Seventh St. 707-822-5954

Blue Lake Branch

1100 Greenwood Ave. 707-668-4207

Ferndale Branch

807 Main St. 707-786-9559

Fortuna Branch

775 14th St. 707-725-3460

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715 Cedar St. 707-923-2230

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McKinleyville Branch

1606 Pickett Rd. 707-839-4459

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715 Wildwood Ave. 707-764-3333

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2016 Helen Everett Award Recipient

William Pierson

RSVP by November 1

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