

Newsletter Vol. XXXXIV No. 4—Spring 2023

www.okfriends.net

Strengthening Libraries in Oklahoma through Friends of Libraries

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Libraries - Doors to Careers & Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning and career development are essential for

personal and professional growth, especially in a rapidly changing world. Libraries play a key role in supporting their patrons' learning and career goals, by providing access to information, resources, and opportunities.

Libraries identify patrons' needs with surveys, interviews, observations, and data. Libraries provide access to computers and WiFi for patrons to access online iob applications, résumé assistance. practice tests, practice interviewing, skill development, resources for veterans, and more.

Libraries collaborate with schools, colleges, nonprofits, businesses, and government agencies to offer programs, events, and resources that align with patrons' learning and career objectives. Collaborating with local organizations creates synergies and opportunities that benefit the library and the community.

Online learning platforms are becoming more popular and accessible with flexible, affordable, and options for learners. Libraries can promote online learning and provide access and support. Online learning platforms help patrons acquire new skills and knowledge at their own pace and convenience.

Depending on local needs, libraries foster lifelong learning and career development with learning spaces and opportunities for learning activities - reading, writing, researching, and collaborating. Libraries also offer learning opportunities programs, book clubs, study groups, mentors, tutors - encouraging patrons to learn from one another.

Libraries provide access to information for further learning - scholarships, grants, internships, and jobs. Some libraries are supporting Gale Presents: Excel Adult High School, offering adults an opportu-



Pictured is Marisela Lovato at her graduation from the Gale Presents: Excel Adult High School, celebrating with her family and friends at the Southwest Oklahoma City Library. She completed her high school diploma thanks to a scholarship from the Pioneer Library System.

nity to earn a diploma from an accredited online high school. Customizable course schedules have courses in over 100 languages, highly qualified instructors, and one-on-one tutoring.

Libraries provide many lifelong learning opportunities and facilitate access to jobs and formal and informal education, changing lives.

"How Can Libraries Support Lifelong Learning and Career Development for Their Patrons?" LinkedIn.com

Living Programs

25 Ready-to-Use Sustainable Library Programs for Libraries, edited by Elyssa Kroski (ALA, 2022), is a compilation of knowledge and information for libraries wanting eco-friendly programming. The book is divided into four parts: gardening, preservation, pioneer crafts, and homesteading programs.

Each of the 25 chapters by experts and professionals focuses on a specific program. Information includes a brief description, age range, costs, overview, equipment, and materials needed, as well as instructions and reading list

As a public/school librarian, I found several program suggestions applicable to my patrons. Chapter One focuses on the importance of connecting with local experts with little or no cost. Ideas that gained my attention: hydroponics, food dehydration, composting, and bee & pollinator education. An informative and diverse compilation for libraries interested in programs.

Teresia Jors, FOLIO Board

This newsletter is the official bulletin of the Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma, Inc., a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to provide information and assistance to strengthen libraries in Oklahoma through Friends of Libraries. It is published quarterly and mailed to members, public libraries and Friends of Libraries groups. Editors: Sharon Saulmon (ssaulmon@yahoo.com) and Linda Pye

From the President. . .



As I sit here in my den in western Oklahoma, the March wind howls. The wind chimes on my patio clang while every object outside not nailed down clashes and bangs, but the worst is the lonely, desolate sound as it seeps under doors and around windows and haunts my mind. I think I suffer from SAD (seasonal affective disorder), and it has nothing to do with lack of daylight; it manifests itself with the

onset of spring winds. We plains dwellers are yearly victims of this particular onslaught of nature. You are probably thinking that I should move to a less windy climate, but that is a subject for another time. To cope with this seasonal malady, I try to put my mind in another place. Here are a few of my windy-day musings.

First, my mind wanders to my recent visit to Whitewright, Texas, a tiny north Texas town where my father was born. I had never been there, so my husband and I decided to just go see it. Whitewright is a lovely little town with good restaurants, a remodeled downtown movie theater, a weekly newspaper, a beautiful school, and a municipal library. Of course, we had to visit that library. While small, it is filled with a little bit of everything, including an impressive collection of genealogical books and documents. The library was busy with parents and children and other patrons. The librarian was particularly friendly, knowledgeable about the town and surrounding area, and helpful.

Speaking of helpful librarians, I am reminded of our excellent library staff here in Elk City. I realize that this dry, incessant wind is just exacerbating our ongoing drought. I need to drop by the Carnegie Library and check out a book on gardening in arid climates. I know the staff will help me find just what I am looking for and even put me on a waiting list for any books that are currently checked out.

Like an invisible foe, the wind continues to gust and batter everything in its path, and I think of how terrible it is for people living and working outside. The late Gary Paulsen was once such a person. He maintained that books and libraries saved him. As a street kid, he began spending his days at the library where a kind librarian viewed him as a patron, not a nuisance. He was allowed to check out books and was even granted a library card even though he had no credentials. That librarian had no way to know that Paulsen would turn out to be one of the greatest authors of books for young people.

My mind still seeking refuge from the wind, Gary Paulsen's story made me think of a book I just read. I was looking for something light and sweet after trudging through the harrowing immigration story told in *Solito* by Javier Samora, so I chose *The Little Wartime Library* by Kate Thompson. A bit of fluff it was not. Based on a real library, the book takes place in London during World War II. The Bethnal Green Library was destroyed during the Blitz. Some innovative and progressive thinking librarians gathered the remains and moved the library to the Bethnal Green underground tube station. The book delves into the

lives of the librarians and the patrons suffering from the trauma of war. The librarians were adamant that the working-class people and children should have the books they wanted, books that provided escape and respite from their daily lives, not the "educational" tomes that the erudite powers that be advocated.

The Little Wartime Library sent my mind skittering to another book that deals with censorship. I recently learned that the young-adult novel The Book Thief by Markus Zusak has been challenged in parts of the United States. The book takes place in Germany in 1939 during Hitler's forays into book banning and burning. The protagonist, a young girl, is so taken with books and learning to read that she takes books wherever she can find them and shares them with neighbors and a Jewish man hiding in their basement. One review said the story "is about the ability of books to feed the soul." How ironic that some would challenge and ban this book.

Finally, in my wind-challenged state of mind, I wondered if I would have to present a résumé of good deeds to enter heaven. I believe in grace, so I know that is not true, but I am going to put participation in FOLIO on my résumé just in case. We support libraries that by their very existence support the right to read, and that, my friends, is a good deed.

Judy Haught, President

FOLIO Board Actions

The FOLIO Board met on March 10, 2023. Discussions included:

- For the 2023 Endowment campaign FOLIO has met the goal of \$6,000, which will be matched by \$2,000 from the Kirkpatrick Family Fund. Thank you for your assistance.
- The Friends representatives from around the State gave reports that were inspiring with representatives from Eufaula, Poteau, Tuttle, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Shawnee, Moore, Claremore, Stillwater, Chickasha, South OKC, Stratford and Elk City. Stories of their successes are being planned for future newsletters.
- Having our Scholarship winners at the Awards program was very special. We wish them well as they continue their education and library careers. A past scholarship recipient stopped by the FOLIO table and shared her appreciation, stating that her scholarship assisted her in graduating without student loans and debts.
- By-law revisions were approved. Most of the recommended changes cleaned up some language, broadened timeframes for some flexibility in Annual Meeting timing, changed cooperating organization for Literary Landmarks to Oklahoma Center for the Book (OCB), and changed Legislative Committee to Advocacy Committee.
- Literary Landmarks will expand the committee to include OCB representatives and look for an Oklahoma foundry to manufacture plaques. OCB has a grant available.
- Membership is still down for this year. Please check that you, your Friends, and your Library have joined. Join at okfriends.net/membership.html.

Creative Approaches to Early Childhood Literacy

Three enthusiastic speakers presented ideas that successfully engaged young readers at their respective libraries during the FOLIO Annual Meeting. Tanya Organ, Lawton Community Engagement Director; Courtney Mayall, Library Director of Anadarko Community Library; and Linda Stineman, president of Friends of Elk City Carnegie Library shared many innovative programs to promote early childhood literacy.

Tanya Organ directs an Early Readers Academy that features age-based classes focused on school readiness skills for the youngest readers. She also oversees Take Your Child to the Library, which uses costumed characters to entice young readers. This program attracts a large audience, particularly when Pete the Cat appears. The Lawton Public Library features Kids' Writing Stations, where children become better readers by writing to their favorite characters. Another successful program is Sit, Stay, and Read that features children reading with dogs.

The Lawton Public Library focuses on parenting skills. as well. The newsletter features a monthly concept that gives advice for parents on early literacy, and the library partners with United Way in the Success by Six Program that gives parents tools for school readiness.

Courtney Mayall spoke about Story Time at the Park and Baby and You Story Time. She also emphasized using nonfiction books during story time to teach concepts such as colors and shapes. Sensory items are also good teaching tools for story time.

All three libraries have StoryWalks®, and Courtney does Moonlight StoryWalks® using flashlights. She also presented the idea of Book Bundles for children with books, activities, and songs.

Linda Stineman enumerated several programs in which the Elk City Carnegie Library participates. Summer readers finished 8,400 books in 2022, and the Friends members helped fill 2,332 Take and Make craft bags. The Youth Library holds regular STEM and STEAM classes and is starting a chess club.

During COVID, the schools provided lunches to children. The parents would drive through and pick up the children's lunches and then receive age-appropriate books for their children from the Friends. The books were taken from the stash of books awaiting the book sale, and each contained a bookmark with library information. The Friends also donated books to local daycare centers and to summer-school students.

An ongoing project of the Elk City Friends is Bundles for Babies. Great Plains Regional Medical Center at Elk City delivers approximately 30 babies each month. Each new parent receives a handmade bag containing two books for babies and information about the library and the Friends organization. One book of nursery rhymes is provided by the First National Bank of Elk City with ideas for parents on how to use the book to engage infants and promote learning. The Friends have received help in packing the bags from the high-school honor society, and various groups, including Girl Scouts & guilters, have sewn bags.

Each speaker touted the benefits of StoryWalks® and the creative ways to use them. They also all encouraged

community support for childhood literacy projects.

Judy Haught, President, FOLIO

Building Advocates All Around

FOLIO sponsored the first session of FOLIO Day activities on March 10 with a Panel presentation entitled "In Your Corner: Building Advocates All Around." Molly Dettman, a Teacher Librarian and OLA's chair of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Intellectual Freedom Roundtable, moderated the panel. Panelists were Natalie Currie, ODL Director, and Karl Siewert, Emerging and Immersive Technology Librarian at UCO. The panelists shared their perspectives.

What is your #1 tip for being an effective library advocate? We need more than friends. We need advocates and allies, people willing to step out for what's important to libraries. It is important to build relationships, especially with legislators and their staff; know the influencers in your community, and invite them to events.

What are good examples of what libraries do that people need to be more aware of? Libraries provide more than books! Tell library stories and experiences to others, sharing great happenings in the library. Develop stories for the media.

How should I respond to a misinformation post on social media? Have a social media policy and plan in place. Respond with facts and professionalism, not emotion; you don't always have to respond.

What should you do if you have a Representative who is not open to questions or conversations about libraries or intellectual freedom? Don't give up! Look to the next election. Work with their staff. Figure out what is important to them; find a new angle to approach them; build relationships; start early before the session starts; and find a common ground outside of library issues.

How do we advocate for libraries without creating controversy? Build relationships; find common ground. There will always be some discord, become comfortable with discord, and create a space for sharing and discussion.



How can we help move libraries forward? Libraries are always moving forward! They are usually the first in new technology and are a community hub for new ideas. Know the community needs and interests and work around those needs.

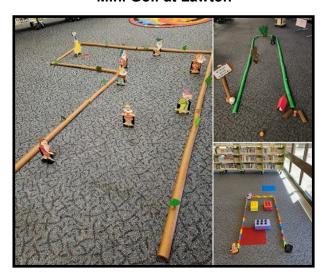
Are there any resources, people to follow to stay on the 'up and up' of library advocacy? OLA Advocacy committee, various Facebook pages, ALA Intellectual Freedom Blog, ALA.org/advocacy.

The main take-away from panelists'answers and ensuing discussion was how important it is to build relationships within the community, with library patrons, with community influencers and leaders. Advocates must not be afraid to stand up for the library and its very important role in the community as a hub for not only books and other resources but as the focal point of intellectual freedom.

Angie Lewis, FOLIO Vice President

News from Around the State

Mini Golf at Lawton



Friends of the Lawton Public Library hosted a Mini Golf event at the Library on March 3 from 7:00-10:00 p.m. It was advertised as a fundraiser, and the suggested donation was \$2 per person or \$10 per family. No registration was required.

Library staff and an excited customer created the 18 holes, using a variety of props. Each hole had a theme, including Dr. Seuss, big foot, fairy tales, Stephen King's It, and dinosaurs. Pool noodles were a favorite tool to build lanes for the balls, but books, bookends, shelving, sneeze guards, and other items were used to create holes.

Library staff and families were invited to preview and test on the Friday before the event. This allowed staff to tweak their holes and get in a bit of practice time on the greens. On the event night, there were over 80 people who participated. The course went through the children's area, fiction, nonfiction, by the computer lab, and by the front desk.

Staff learned a lot of lessons along the way. If any group is interested in this type of event, feel free to reach out to library staff at libraryhelp@lawtonok.gov.

Kristin Herr, Library Director, Lawton

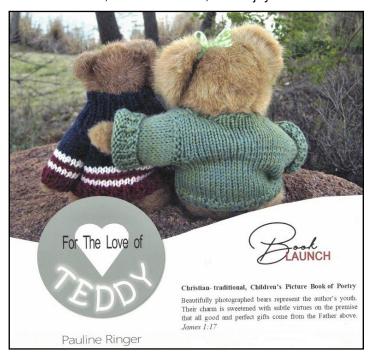
Chili Fundraiser at McLoud

Friends of the McLoud Public Library held their first Annual Chili Fundraising Lunch at the McLoud Masonic Lodge in January. Desserts were available for an additional charge. The Masonic Lodge matched the funds the Friends raised, making the event very successful!



Author Visit in Sayre

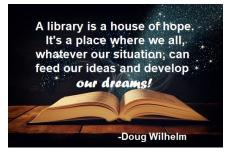
Local author Paula Ringer held her book launch for her children's book, *For the Love of Teddy*, sponsored by the Sayre Friends of the Library. Patrons were invited to hear about the book, meet the author, and enjoy some treats.



Writing Contest at Tulsa



The Friends of the Tulsa City-County Libraries is sponsoring an Adult Creative Writing Contest this spring. They are also continuing their "Books Sandwiched In" program, featuring such books as *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus, *With the End in Mind* by Kathryn Mannix, and *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks.



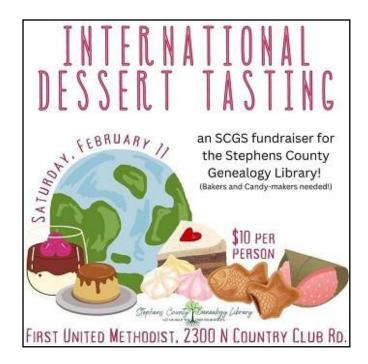
News from Around the State

Father-Daughter Dance at Sayre

The Friends of the Sayre Public Library held a Father-Daughter Dance in March. Tickets were \$20 per couple and \$5 for each additional daughter. Tickets had to be purchased in advance. All proceeds will be to support the Library by funding reading programs, such as Summer Reading. A photographer was present to take photos.



Sweets Galore



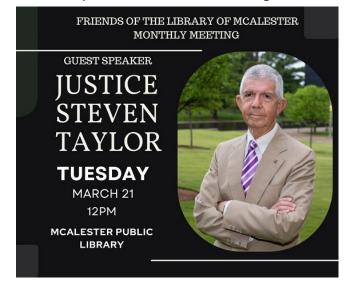
Local bakers and candy makers participated in the Stephens County Genealogical Society Fundraiser.

Non-Event Fundraiser

For some people, the best fundraising event is no event at all. "Stay Home and Read a Book Ball" encourages participants to hole up at home with a good book - solo but in solidarity with other bibliophiles. In lieu of a "reservation," donors may give online. One group asked a well-known novelist to be the unofficial chairman for marketing.

LibraryStrategiesConsulting.org

Speakers at Friends Meetings



Does your Friends groups have a speaker at your Friends of the Library meeting? Friends have found that a well-known speaker(s) improves attendance. The Friends of the Library of McAlester featured Justice Steven Taylor as speaker.

Friends of the Will Rogers Library's recent meeting had speakers sharing Books You Love with the city manager, high school principal, an elementary school principal, and a 10-year-old sharing a favorite book. This is a proven, popular series in Claremore.

Fundraising ideas from Around the Country

* Sergeant Bluff Public Library (IA) had a huge success with a Pizza, Pub and Puzzle fundraiser at the local golf club. They had it over two nights because of the number of teams. (Four pay \$100, and they compete with the

other teams to eat a large one topping pizza, drink 18 beers, and put a 300-piece puzzle together. Participants had a blast and asked at the end when the next one would be.

- * Little Falls Public Library (NY) had a successful letter campaign fundraiser and for their robotics program had a \$12 per plate spaghetti dinner at the Elks Lodge, which sold out.
- * An Indiana library touted their book sale that they tie in with the citywide yard sale.
- * A Wisconsin library has a fundraiser on a different theme each year Game Show, Camping, Hawaiian Luau, Frank Sinatra, etc.
- * Booked for Life is a fundraiser. A donor gives a substantial gift, and a book on a topic of their choice is purchased with a nameplate in their honor.
- * Live events Invite local musicians, poets or authors to make some noise with live performances and readings.
- * Book-themed party, bringing a classic story to life with well-known book, i.e., Great Gatsby Gala.
- * Silent auction with attendees bidding on big-ticket items which are donated by local organizations.

FOLIO Scholarships

Thanks to everyone who donated to FOLIO's Endowment Campaign. This year FOLIO was able to give three \$1,000 scholarships. Your gift does make a difference. The 2022 FOLIO Scholarship winners are Josh Caudill, Kathryn J. Hall, and Katherine Witzig.



Josh Caudill received a BA in Biblical Languages and an MA in Linguistic Anthrolopogy. He is working on his MLIS at the University of Oklahoma. He is currently serving as the Information Services Dept. Interim Manager at the Pioneer Library System Central branch. He is a part of PLS' annual leadership training program, IMPACT. He is working

on a project to evaluate systemwide database offerings as well as part of multiple committees and teams at Central, including the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Taskforce and the Branch Promotions Team, as well as serving as a branch point person for the library's involvement with the Unite Us, coordinated care network, and part of the system's graphic design team. Josh serves on two Oklahoma Library Association (OLA) Committees: Tribal Libraries and Marketing & Communications.

He believes that "the public library is a shared space wherein two radical things are true: all community members can find resources and all community members can be stakeholders. Public libraries strive to serve all people, not only through implementation of nondiscriminatory policy and passive efforts to discourage prejudice, but through collection policies which prioritize diversity and active training which equips staff to overcome challenges of implicit bias."



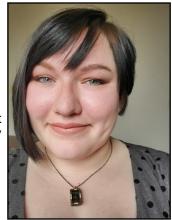
Kathryn Hall received her BS from the University of Tennessee and is currently working on her MLIS at Valdosta State University. She will graduate in May, 2023. She is currently working as an Interlibrary Loan & Circulation Specialist at Cameron University's Eugene D. McMahon Library in Lawton. She is serving on the Office of Teaching and Learning Events Committee at Cameron and served on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and

the Materials Management Committee at the Nashville Public Library. She also worked to support families new to homeschooling during the pandemic by connecting them with experienced homeschool parents and other resources.

Kathryn states, "Working in libraries, I feel like I have found the perfect fit for myself. For someone who spent a large part of her youth lost and struggling, I never imagined finding this. This is what I imagine finding home or family feels like, and it has made such an impression on me that I wish for others to find this same feeling or purpose. Whether it be in libraries or something else beautifully unique, if I can help others discover their spark, I will feel successful."

Katherine Witzig received her BA in English and Spanish from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and is currently working on her MLIS there also. She is currently serving as Library Administrative Assistant at the Oklahoma City University Law Library. She is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and is working to incorpo-

rate this way of being into all of her endeavors. She is serving as the Chair of the OLA Tribal Library Committee and is participating on the advisory board of AlumniTIES Grand education program that is designing instruction for information professionals to submit proposed alterations to Library of Congress Subject Headings.



Katherine shared that "Upon completion of my degree, I want to prioritize making connections between libraries of

all kinds and Indigenous communities to support the success of Native individuals and students and increasing visibility of Native information professionals so that we can influence the culture of libraries."

Sandra Austin, FOLIO Scholarship Committee Chair

FOLIO Hall of Fame Award

Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma honors a person who has given outstanding and dedicated service. This year

the FOLIO Board honored Bill Young for his enthusiastic and exceptional service to FOLIO over the years as Public Information Officer, Okla. Department of Libraries.

Bill and his department were instrumental in making FOLIO's recent grant projects successful - Financial Fitness@YourLibrary and Ready2Read@YourLibrary.

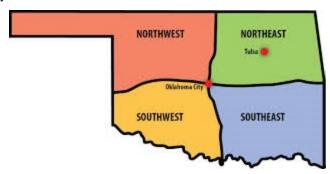


He assisted with FOLIO's inclusion in Reading Round-Up and Let's Talk about It OK projects. He was always making people aware of the impact of libraries, leading to such projects as Read Y'All. FOLIO is so pleased to recognize Bill for his commitment to Oklahoma libraries and welcomes him to the FOLIO Advisory Board. Bill Young is pictured with FOLIO President Judy Haught.

Photo by Melinda Howard, FOLIO Board

Need Help? Call your FOLIO Ambassador.

FOLIO has Outreach Ambassadors who are ready and willing to talk or consult with your Friends' groups or your officers. We want to help you be successful and strengthen your library. Let us know how we can assist you.



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- FOLIO Newsletter deadline June 15, 2023
- National Library Week April 23-29, 2023
- Library Workers' Day April 24, 2023
- Library Outreach Day April 25, 2023
- Children's Book Week May 1-7, 2023
- FOLIO Newsletter deadline August 15, 2023
- Library Card Sign-Up Month September
- Banned Books Week October 1-7, 2023
- TeenTober October
- National Friends of Libraries Week October 15-21, 2023
- FOLIO Newsletter deadline October 30, 2023

Yes! I want to join FOLIO and Be a Friend of Oklahoma Libraries!

Join FOLIO! Being a Friend will. . .

- Provide networking opportunities to make new friends and to share information and ideas about programs, activities, fundraising, legal issues, and great books to enjoy;
- Award scholarships to library support staff;
- Recognize outstanding Friends of the Library with awards for annual Best Friends and Friends of Library Week;
- Showcase the work of Oklahoma Friends in the quarterly newsletter and on Facebook;
- Honor esteemed Oklahoma authors through Literary Landmarks;
- Assist Friends groups with incorporation or reactivation;
- Advocate for library support.

Find out more about FOLIO at www.okfriends.net and Facebook—@ FOLIOOKFriends

Your membership dues and donations are the primary source of funds to support FOLIO's mission which is to strengthen Libraries through Friends of Libraries.

New members are always welcome.

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\$20 Individual Membership\$25 Friends Group Membership\$30 Library Membership

Contributions above the minimum dues further support FOLIO's mission, are greatly appreciated, and are tax deductible as a charitable contribution.

Name:
(Name of Individual, Friends group, Library or Corporate Business) Address:
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FOLIO—We are Friends helping Friends!



Mail to: FOLIO Treasurer P.O. Box 702585, Tulsa, OK 74170





P. O. Box 702585 Tulsa, OK 74170

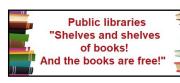
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Featured Author Mariana Llanos

FOLIO was pleased to have award-winning children's book author as the featured speaker at the FOLIO Annual Meeting. Mariana Llanos, recent winner of the Oklahoma Book Award and honored by a Library of Congress award for *Run*, *Little Chaski*, spoke of her love of libraries, her early reading experiences, and shared PowerPoint slides of her new book, *Benita and the Night Creatures*.

Llanos was born and raised in Peru, at a time when public and private libraries were not commonly available. She was lucky in that her parents, both journalists, owned a number of books and discussed them with her. She was a bit shocked when she first entered a public library in Oklahoma City, where she presently resides. "Shelves and shelves of books! And the books were free!" She went on to mention how friendly the staff was and how, as she



struggled to write, the available computers helped her until she could afford one of her own.

She emphasized how reading was a kind of rescue for her. She characterized her early years in the title of her presentation, "The Girl Who Lived in Books." Growing up in the outskirts of Lima, Peru, the proximity of the woods and mountains was a positive influence. But given the political turmoil in the 1980s, the terrorist bombings and killings that filled the newspapers and awakened her at night, she realized there was "a better place inside a book."

Those experiences led to her next publication, *Benita and the Night Creatures*. Benita wants nothing more than to read her book in bed, but she is troubled by three ghostly creatures who emerge from under the bed on subsequent nights. She continues to read, determined to ignore the scary sounds...until she's had enough. "Can you all be quiet?" she yells. They are surprised as she goes on to explain that she's reading. "What's reading?" they want to know, and she explains. Before long all three of them join Benita, look at the "words floating on the page." When a fourth ghost emerges, they join Benita in shushing it so they can all continue reading.

It's a charming story, vividly illustrated and, as in the case with *Run*, *Little Chaski*, the story is followed by short invitations to learn more about the subject of the book.

Mariana Llanos is an engaging speaker and personality.



Her website is <u>www.marianallanos.com</u>.

Dr. Bill Hagen, FOLIO Board