



Fall 2012

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Friends of Dacus Library

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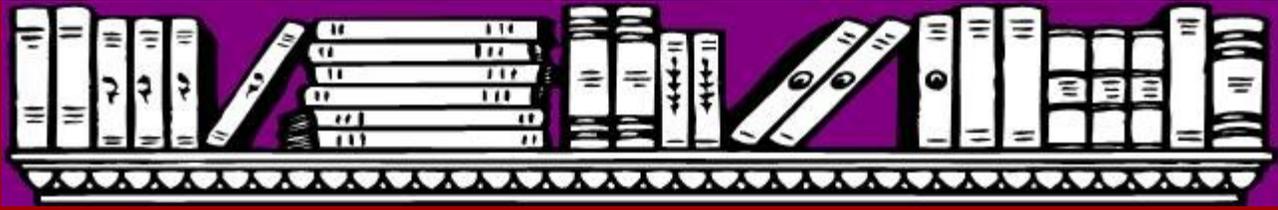


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Friends of Dacus Library Newsletter

Volume 7, Issue 2

Fall 2012

Cooney Regales Friends with Writing Experiences; Carlisles Become Life Members

Some fifty persons gathered in Tuttle Dining Room at Winthrop University on October 8 to be entertained by Caroline B. Cooney, who related her experiences as an author for young adults. She explained that the title of her remarks—“Life with Harold: A Writer Looks Back on 91 Novels for Young Adults”—was based on her struggles with her third child, Harold, whom she described as “a reluctant reader.”

Like most writers, Cooney was always finding inspiration in her own life. Her novel *Diamonds in the Shadow*, for example, was based on her church’s sponsorship of a family from Sierra Leon. She thought: What if a member of a sponsored family turned out to be a terrorist? That became the basis of her book.

Cooney indicated that, as a general rule, she preferred utopia to dystopia and liked to write books where “the good guys win.” Nevertheless, her books deal with real human situations, such as that encountered by the kidnapped Janie in *The Face on the Milk Carton*. Again, her popular book *They Never Came Back*, centered on a girl abandoned by her parents, who left their daughter behind in order to assure their own escape from the consequences of criminal activity.

In *Three Black Swans*, girls raised as cousins discover they are in fact identical sisters. Later, they find that there is yet another sister and that the three are identical triplets.

Cooney is currently working on a book on the children who came over on the

Mayflower. The idea for that book came from her reading of Nick Bunker’s *Making Haste From Babylon*, which dealt with the Pilgrim experience before departure and immediately after arriving in the new world. She went to England and Holland to do research and met with Bunker.

The author also gave a humorous account of her efforts to “relearn” Latin and to tackle Greek. Cooney said there were “10,000 reasons not to take ancient Greek, mainly verbs.” But, she said, she wanted to read Thucydides. She took a course at the University of South Carolina, and sadly noted that “the Greek it had taken so long to acquire was lost in five minutes.”

Since her move to Fort Mill, Cooney has written one SC novel, *The Lost Songs*. The story of a young girl and the discovery of a lost musical heritage was based on a poor African-American community near Fort Mill called Paradise—the name deriving from the beautiful songs of local black cleaning women.

Immediately after the author presentation, Dean Mark Herring inducted Rick and Kay Carlisle into the Friends of Dacus Library as Life Members. Residents of Rock Hill, they were recognized for their contributions to the library and higher education. Kim Lee’s and Nancy Cornwell-Daves’ memberships were given in absentia.



Cooney Speaking to Friends



Honorees Rick and Kay Carlisle with Dean Herring

Inside this issue:

- **Business Report of the Friends / Endowment to be Established** 2
- **Dean Herring** 3
- **Kay McSpadden Wins Norman Mailer Award** 4
- **A Note From the Chair** 5
- **Member Application** 6



"True friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity before it is entitled to the appellation."

- George Washington



Business Report: Elections, Assets, Endowment Status, and Merger of Friends & Library Advisory Board

The Friends of Dacus Library, gathered in their annual meeting on October 8, conducted a number of important items of business. Drs. Jack Weaver and Jane White were reelected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the group. Dr. Joye Berman and Mrs. Doris Leitner were elected to two-year terms on the Friends Board.

Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Ronnie W. Faulkner reported on the assets of the organization, which were as follows:

Friends of Dacus...	
Foundation Account	\$23,968.07
Fundraising Account	\$ 1,665.97
Total Assets	\$25,634.04

Total expenses for 2011-12 were \$1,560.47. Assuming similar expenses for 2012-13, the organization would be at approximately \$24,134.00.

This is why Faulkner encouraged renewals for 2013 by all current members. "We will definitely reach our \$25,000 goal for an endowment, but we need to have about \$2,000 on hand for organizational expenses," Faulkner said. "That is the reason the first Friends of Dacus Library Endowment Fund will not be started until the group has reached around \$27,000 in assets."

One of the most important items of business was the vote on the bylaws. After an explanation of the most important changes being proposed to the bylaws as a result of the planned merger of the Friends and the Library Advisory Board (LAB), the members present voted unanimously for all revisions.

The combined organization will be gradually instituted starting January 1, 2013. In recent years the Friends organization has had about 70 members,

with 7 serving on the Friends Board, whereas the Library Advisory Board has fluctuated between 6 and 11 members. The combined board will number 13.

In the coming year there will be at least two joint meetings of the Friends Board and the Library Advisory Board. At the Fall 2013 meeting will be the first official vote on the combined new Friends Board membership with the newly instituted staggered terms. The idea is that at least 6 of the new Board will be from the sitting members of the LAB.

"Most of the membership will not notice any substantive change," noted Faulkner. "The Friends of Dacus Library Board itself, however, will be directly impacted and will notice the changes immediately after the new year."

It is worth noting that in the past some of the largest benefactors of the Dacus Library have been on the Library Advisory Board, which was primarily a special projects funding organization. The Friends group, while it has always raised funds to support the library, has also sponsored author visits and book signings on campus, as well as other library-related activities. This will not change!

Endowment Level Reached: Friends Fund to be Established!

Thanks to all of our Friends, as of October 30th, the Friends group had reached a level sufficient to establish its first official Friends of Dacus Endowment Fund. On that date assets of the organization surpassed \$30,450. Kudos for your continued strong support!!!





The Serpent's Tooth ... Dean Herring

This space is often reserved for my verbose scribbles about our current needs. It's hard to pass up that opportunity, too, for I often feel about our needs like the proverbial old woman who lived in that shoe: we, too, have so many needs we don't know what to do.

But I'm refraining from that temptation—and it's a mighty one—to do something else, and something far more important. I'm using this space to say thank you.

It's fitting since this letter will appear before Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is the forgotten holiday, almost. We don't typically give gifts during this holiday or decorate our houses, or dress up in scary costumes. We don't throw wild, extravagant parties, either. Too many of our commercial businesses have dismissed the day as but a prelude to the Christmas glut. And for too many of us, it's a day when late afternoon or early evening the tryptophan kicks in, some sporting event comes on, and Dad and Granddad nod hypnagogically before the telly.

What appears to be missing in all this is the word "thanks." I'm as guilty as the next person (misery loves company you know), and perhaps even more so. But here I take this opportunity to redeem this space and say it out loud: **THANK YOU!**

Thank you for your support of Winthrop in general, whatever you do, in whatever way you give. Those of us here appreciate it more than you can know.

Thanks to those of you who support Dacus and/or Pettus Archives in whatever manner you do. My thanks to those of you who are lifetime Friends members. Many thanks to those of you who have served or who are serving on

either our Friends of Dacus board, or our library advisory board. Thanks to all you who serve on those boards and who also contribute to our many needs.

Thanks, too, to those of you who heeded our call to help with our renovations, whether this past summer in Dacus, or last year in Pettus Archives. Both those were grueling experiences but the end results have been nothing short of wondrous. We needed your financial help and you did not disappoint. If you have not been by the see the place, don't hesitate to come right away.

Heartfelt thanks to the very many of you who are members of the Friends of Dacus. You are legion and it is you who helped us to reach the \$25,000 minimum to establish an ongoing endowment in the name of the Friends.

Thanks to those of you who use our building: students, faculty, staff and community patrons. Without your ongoing use we in Dacus would be part of neither the 99% nor the 1% but part of that unemployed 8% that continues, sadly, to grow. We much appreciate your support!

I would be greatly remiss if I did not mention my thanks to the Dacus faculty and staff: Pat, Dot, Kaitlyn, Sandra, Charlene, Brenda, Ronnie, Pam, Bob, Andy, Carrie, Carol, Antje, Jackie, Ellen, Brittany, Robert, Tesfa, Spiro, Susan, Gale, Ann, Jannifer, Michaela, David, Jean, Gina and Nancy. I need to add, too, my grateful thanks to our many student workers. You are the ones who make our daily operations run smoothly. We could not function without you.



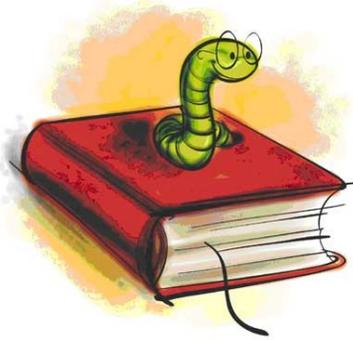
Dean Mark Y. Herring

Thanks are owed to all those support services—folks at Winthrop in facilities, campus police, information technology and myriad other departments and offices—who help us do what we do.

And lastly, many, many thanks to President Tony DiGiorgio, who has made the library a central focus of his administration and made possible all these gorgeous renovations, not to mention the ongoing support of all our programs.

I titled this essay with a quote from Shakespeare because I do think man's ingratitude—my own—is worse than a winter's wind because it is so constant and off-putting, regardless of the time of year. But some of you may have rubbed your chins in anticipation of La Rochefoucauld's maxim that the "gratitude of most men is but a secret desire to receive greater benefits." But honestly, I do not feel that way. I want to say it as plainly and as unvarnished as possible.

Thanks to all of you for your generosity to Dacus and Pettus. Here's hoping these greetings begin for you a warm and happy holiday season, and a great beginning to a new year.



“BOOKS ARE THE CARRIERS OF CIVILIZATION. WITHOUT BOOKS HISTORY IS SILENT, LITERATURE DUMB, SCIENCE CRIPPLED, THOUGHT AND SPECULATION AT A STANDSTILL.”

—BARBARA TUCHMAN



**Information Commons
Main Floor of Dacus
August 14, 2012**

Kay McSpadden Wins Norman Mailer Writing Award

Kay McSpadden, a teacher at York Comprehensive High School, a columnist for *The Charlotte Observer*, and a Life Member of the Friends of Dacus Library, was presented the Norman Mailer Writing Award for teachers writing fiction at a New York City gala on October 4, 2012. The award was presented by one of the judges, Garrison Keillor, well known author and public radio personality.

McSpadden won the award for her short story, “Why Women Moan in Bed” (available at the following link: <http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/About/Awards/Mailer/KayMcSpadden.pdf>). Jack Weaver, chairman of the Friends of Dacus, found the story to be “masterfully written and complexly plotted... Its intended audience is sophisticated adults, whose sense of humor is dark, and who recognize existential dilemmas and can laugh at them and at themselves.” Kay said that she “entered [the contest] on a lark” and “[winning] the award was quite a surprise!”

Kay flew to New York with her husband Randy for the big awards banquet at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. “The ballroom was lovely,” she said, “with a view over Columbus Circle.

Randy and I spent most of the cocktail party time chatting with Garrison Keillor, who had been one of the judges for the high school teacher section. He said some very generous things about my story, saying that it pulled him in so well that he read it all in one sitting, something he rarely does with fiction



Kay Presented Award by Garrison Keillor, Oct. 4, New York City

anymore.”

Some of the notable guests present included Muhammad Ali, who was extremely frail, Dick Cavett, Oliver Stone, and Alec Baldwin. Among the “literati” present were Joyce Carol Oates, Daniel Halpern, Robert Caro, Charles McGrath, Jon Giorno, Nicholas Foulkes, and others.

“As you can imagine,” observed McSpadden, “the food and wine were fabulous, and as you can also probably imagine, I was too nervous to eat or drink much.”

In addition to a cash award of \$10,000, Kay received a fellowship to participate in the prestigious Norman Mailer Writer’s Colony at the Mailer home at Provincetown on Cape Cod during the summer of 2013.

McSpadden, a Winthrop alumna, previously authored *Feeding the Ghosts*, a novel which was a finalist in the 2004 Novello Contest. Her book *Notes from a Classroom* (2007) was praised by *Publisher’s Weekly* for its “hard-earned wisdom, gentle humor and memorable student portraits.”



Friends of Dacus Library



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A Note from the Chair...



Board Members

Effective Jan. 1, 2012:

Marsha Bollinger
Ronnie Faulkner
Janet Gray
Marilyn Sarow
Mickey Taylor
Jack Weaver (Chair)
Jane White

One of the benefits of retirement is seriously attacking the endless supply of unread books and articles. I probably learned to do so from the example of my paternal grandfather, who operated a country store during the 1920's and '30's, ordered books by the barrel, and spent his time between customers reading. During the early years of World War II, when my parents, a brother and I had to move in and care for his widow, I enjoyed reading some of the works he had collected. In the fifth grade, I astounded my classmates by doing book reports on *HAMLET*, *MERCHANT OF VENICE*, *THE LUSITANIA'S LAST VOYAGE*, and *MY LADY, NICOTINE*. (I also read the poems of Longfellow, some novels of Scott, and verses by Jean Ingelow.) From uncles, I borrowed novels of Jack London, James Oliver Curwood, and Zane Grey. Without realizing it, I was reading promiscuously, following the advice of John Milton in the *AREOPAGITICA*. Recently, I revisited an *AARP BULLETIN* article on "Not Growing Old" by Bill Moyer, and a volume of essays titled *THE NATURE OF THE IMPOSSIBLE* by a series of authors doing chapters on the sciences, music, philosophy, religion, and literature. I had no problem buying into Moyer's refusal to give in to Annie Domini. Unfortunately, the book was published about 1980 and now exemplifies the impossibility of predicting what can be achieved by creative thinkers.

Ever notice what a teacher writes about when s(he) lacks a subject? He (can't speak for the female version) writes about the art of writing or lectures on the subject using a literary example, such as how Wordsworth offers a lesson on both writing and parenting in his poem, "Michael." As you can see, reading can and should be educational. Teachers have also been known to develop research projects which will require travel

and this allows publication, as well as lesson plans. What do professional writers do? Like other teachers, they must constantly educate themselves. Friends of Dacus had a good example in our recent banquet speaker, Caroline B. Cooney, who both taught and entertained us. As the author of ninety-two published books written for teenagers and with some fifteen million copies in print, she clearly has found and cultivated an audience. She also has had to find and develop many topics for her books. To tell a story, an author must create a conflict and then resolve it. Her work *THE FACE ON THE MILK CARTON* does that by having Janie discover that she is also Jennie and that she is possessed of two sets of parents. With the help of her boyfriend, she solves the problem. The story has a happy ending. Its humanity made it a bestseller (three million copies) and a television movie. Her ninety-second novel, *THE LOST SONGS*, was made possible by Ms. Cooney's move from Connecticut to S.C. In the new environment, she found a setting which again inspired her, using some local geography and customs to present and solve problems of four teenagers, who get to know themselves by learning to know each other. Characters are believable, as well as sympathetic, the plot moves with ease, and the style is maturely pleasant. The book includes lyrics for the "lost songs" (also composed by Ms. Cooney) and suggests the vocal styles in which they were sung, artfully making use of Ms. Cooney's love of a second art.

While Ms. Cooney researches her next work, a story about the children who came over on the Mayflower, I can concentrate on the serious work of reading. It's a tough job, but someone must do it and I seem to have the stamina for reading, if not writing. As the Fairy Godmother in Walt Disney's version of Cinderella sang, "Impossible things are happening every day."

Membership Application : The Friends of Dacus Library (Mail to address in box below)

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