

NEWS RELEASE

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June 6, 2013

SEDALIA AREA LITERACY COUNCIL DONATES LOCALLY PUBLISHED BOOKS TO NEWBORNS AT BOTHWELL

Sometimes when necessity is the mother of invention, the results are spectacular. That was the case for the Sedalia Area Literacy Council recently.

“For years, we’ve been purchasing books that we deliver to Bothwell Regional Health Center to be given to the parents of each newborn at the hospital,” said Literacy Council President Betty Albrecht. “But when it came time to buy more books a couple of years ago, we found they were more than we could afford.”

That’s when the light bulb of invention was lit.

“We had talked off and on about doing our own book, so this just seemed like the right time to tackle that project,” Albrecht said.

A committee consisting of Albrecht, Kathleen Boswell, Nancy Richmond and Linda Allcorn, librarian at Boonslick Regional Library, was formed. Their brainstorm led them to contact Karen Lynch, chairperson of the council’s bookmark contest. Together, they devised the plan to take art from the annual bookmark contest, which includes 4th graders in the five Sedalia public elementary schools, and use it to illustrate a book of nursery rhymes.

With the help of Laurie Schirlls, of the Boys and Girls Clubs of West Central Missouri, who did the layout, publishing and bindery, and with a cover designed by Janice Hargrave, the art teacher at Horace Mann and Washington Elementary Schools, the book was developed and published.

The first installment of 500 books was presented to Bothwell’s Nursery on Thursday, June 6. The supply will last the Nursery about 10 months since



Lana Kelly, left, director of the Women’s Health Unit at Bothwell Regional Health Center; Kathleen Boswell and Betty Albrecht, members of the Sedalia Area Literacy Council; and Bonnie Killion, supervisor of the hospital’s Nursery, show some of the books the Literacy Council donated to the parents of newborns at the hospital.

Bothwell delivers close to 600 babies a year. Another 350 books were given to the University Extension's Family and Consumer Education program.

"I think this is a fantastic thing the Literacy Council does for the community," said Women's Health Director Lana Kelly. "It helps stress to parents the benefits of reading to children at a very early age and the important role parents play in their child's education. I'm so glad the ladies at the Literacy Council let us be part of this project."

The book includes bookmark art from the 2011-12 and 2012-13 fourth-grade classes, and each student who had artwork in the book received a complimentary copy. Copies also were given to the libraries and art teachers at each of the five schools.

"We are very proud of it," Albrecht said of the book. "That's always been one of our major projects because it fits so well with our mission of 'building a reader and a library one book at a time.' "

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