

411 MAIN STREET
DONNELLSON, IA 52625
FAX/TELEPHONE: 319-835-5545
E-MAIL: donnlibr@iowatelecom.net
WEB SITE: www.donnellson.lib.ia.us

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Issue #185



Library Happenings

Library Happenings are written and submitted by Brenda Knox, Director of the Donnellson Public Library, unless otherwise noted.

Director Gives Notice

After 22 years, I am ready to retire from my position as Library Director here in Donnellson. I am proud of what I have accomplished over the years, especially working with the Trustees, City and Community to build a new library in 2017. But jobs change with the times, and my free time has become more important to me than any job. I do not wish to have any reception for my retirement, which will probably be in March. However, it is always nice when people donate books in recognition of my work here, if you would be so inclined. Another thing you could do in my honor is join Friends of Donnellson Public Library and help the volunteers with projects and to buy needed things that are not in our budget! Memberships start at \$10.00/person per year, and meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

Preschool Story Hour Resumes!

I am so happy to report that Preschool Story Hour resumed in January with a small but attentive group of young kids. Marty Miller and I read books about snow, snowmen, and snowplows to the kids the past three weeks. The bitterly wintry weather kept some kids indoors this past week, but we still had one good little listener. Please join us for Preschool Story Hour on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Senior Crafternoon

In January, the class consisted of a “flower bar,” where participants could choose from several options to make a bouquet. Victoria Matlock also taught the participants how to make elegant bows with wire ribbon. Below is a photo of the class:



The entire group with their finished bouquets!

Senior Crafternoon for February 8 will be a spa day! Footbaths, manicures, and some surprises! We also thank Library clerk Toni Peterson for volunteering to help with Senior Crafternoon!

The Donnellson Book Core

The group discussed *Little Faith* by Nick Butler for their meeting in January. We had a good turnout on a cold night! The discussion was lively, and there was a lot of interest in the book’s message about churches that can take on a cult-like aspect for some members.

The book for February 21 is *Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes. We will once again visit the horseback librarians of Kentucky in this historical novel. Here is what Goodreads has to say:

From the author of Me Before You, set in Depression-era America, a breathtaking story of five extraordinary women and their remarkable journey through the mountains of Kentucky and beyond.

Alice Wright marries handsome American Bennett Van Cleve hoping to escape her stifling life in England. But small-town Kentucky quickly proves equally claustrophobic, especially living alongside her overbearing father-in-law. So when a call goes out for a team of women to deliver books as part of Eleanor Roosevelt's new traveling library, Alice signs on enthusiastically.

The leader, and soon Alice's greatest ally, is Margery, a smart-talking, self-sufficient woman who's never asked a man's permission for anything. They will be joined by three other singular women who become known as the Packhorse Librarians of Kentucky.

What happens to them—and to the men they love—becomes an unforgettable drama of loyalty, justice, humanity and passion. These heroic women refuse to be cowed by men or by convention. And though they face all kinds of dangers in a landscape that is at times breathtakingly beautiful, at others brutal, they're committed to their job: bringing books to people who have never had any, arming them with facts that will change their lives.

Based on a true story rooted in America's past, The Giver of Stars is unparalleled in its scope and epic in its storytelling. Funny, heartbreaking, enthralling, it is destined to become a modern classic—a richly rewarding novel of women's friendship, of true love, and of what happens when we reach beyond our grasp for the great beyond.

Friends of Donnellson Library Gifts:

The Friends of Donnellson Public Library gave the gift of a sturdy handmade light oak table/cabinet next to the copier. This is a wonderful asset, enabling the staff and patrons of the library some better options to collate, staple, and organize materials. Included is a drawer containing needed supplies, such as pens, paperclips, stapler, hole punch, etc. The table was designed and built by our master carpenter, John Hunold. He is also designing and building a new newspaper rack to match or light oak décor, also a gift from Friends.

The Friends also voted to purchase a safer stepladder for the staff and volunteers at the library at the January meeting. It has arrived and was assembled by Matt Crowe. It is available for use in the library and is stored in the Activity Room. We thank the Friends for these generous and useful gifts to our Library, and the DuPage Foundation, and library patrons.

Writers' Bloc



The January meeting of Writers' Bloc was held at 1 p.m. in the Local and Family History Department. Attending were Jan Blankenberg and Aaron and Diane Kruse. It was a short meeting since the December meeting was cancelled but members still had some news to pass on to each other. Jan is again writing poetry and sent a poem entitled "Sleighride" to the *Fort Madison Daily Democrat*. The poem was published under the title "*Winter Memories Are Special*" (since the

newspaper has the right to change words to their liking). Jan described the poem as a “look back on her childhood winter memories” of sledding down hills and playing in the snow with her friends. Jan also mentioned she forwarded her entries to the Lyrical Iowa Annual Poetry Competition for their 2022 contest. She entered poems in five categories: two in the adult general category, one haiku, one for the children’s category, and one for humorous verse. Winners will be announced after judges have read and selected the three hundred chosen poems which will be published in the *Lyrical Iowa* book of poetry for 2022. Our fingers are crossed and await the news of a winning poem entry!

The next meeting will be 16 February, same time, same place. ~Written and submitted by Diane Kruse

Richard L. Proenneke Museum



Richard made a plaster cast of an Alaskan Timber Wolf print he came across.

From “One Man’s Wilderness” entry June 19, 1968

I saw a sharply defined wolf track in the mud. Next time down I must try a plaster cast of that.

In the afternoon while checking the country through the spotting scope, I gasped right out loud. I saw caribou all over the place! I couldn’t pass this up, so I loaded the canoe with my camera gear and the plaster of paris. These cows and calves were just beyond where the big wolf track was. I made record time down to the lower end of the lake.

First things first. I prepared the wolf track. It should be ready by the time I get back from stalking the caribou. The mud was very wet and I wondered if the plaster would set, but I filled the track up anyway with the thick mixture.

On the way back to the canoe . . . the plaster had not set up in the track. It was as soft as when I had put it down. I cut a piece of cardboard from a box I had in the canoe, for a base. I cut around the track and the plaster, pushed my fingers under from the opposite sides, lifted up, and set the whole blob like a cake onto the cardboard.

From Richard’s Journal “The Early Years” July 1, 1968

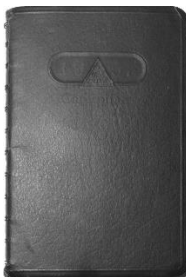
This morning I fashioned a box for the plaster cast of the wolf track. I found the proper size sawed off end of a cabin log. Made a 2 ¼” cut for the box and a 1 3/4” cut for the lid. Hollowed them out with wood auger and chisel and now have a neat box. I will mix some plaster and pour in. Then bed my cast in it and let it set.

On loan to the Richard L Proenneke Museum is the wolf print cast Richard made from the print he found at Twin Lakes.

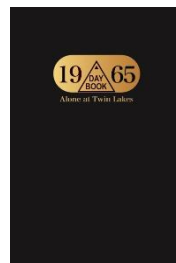
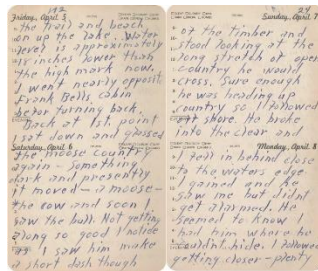


A majestic Caribou Bull in the tundra – Twin Lakes, AK

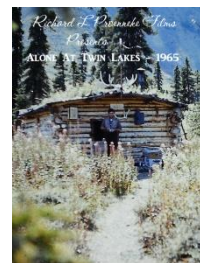
Don’t forget to pre-register for your copy of the upcoming new Richard Proenneke Journal “Alone At Twin Lakes – 1965” and the accompanying DVD Documentary to be released on Richard’s 106th Birthday, May 4, 2022.



The original 1957 Caterpillar Daybook & two pages from the Journal 1965”

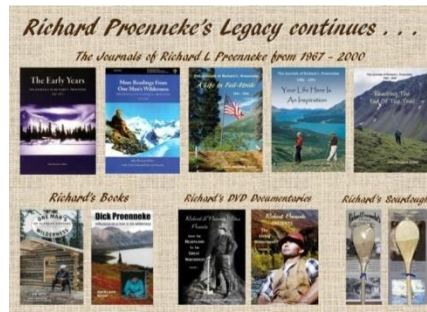


Published Journal and DVD Documentary “Alone At Twin Lakes -



To pre-register for your copy of the Journal, or DVD Documentary, or a copy of both please contact:

brie@richardproenneke.com



The complete set of the Journals of Richard L Proenneke and the book “One Man’s Wilderness;” the “Reflections on a man in his wilderness; DVD Documentaries, “From The Heartland To The Great Northwest” and “The Living Wilderness;” The Homeland and Kodiak Sourdough Starter Spoons are all available at the Donnellson Library or at our website: richardproenneke.com

Are you a Richard Proenneke fan? Would you like to learn more about this incredible man who grew up in our backyard? Consider joining us and lending a helping hand. Drop us a line at: Brie Anderson, Richard Proenneke Museum Curator: brie@richardproenneke.com Brenda Knox, Librarian bknox@donnellson.lib.ia.us

A January Suggested Reading

This month’s Suggested Reading is *Beyond Biden* by Newt Gingrich.

Regular followers of political news will immediately recognize the author as the former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives – historian, analyst, politician, chairman of Gingrich 360 (a multimedia production and consulting company), author of forty-one books, and husband of Callista Gingrich, former ambassador to the Holy See).

As the title of the Suggested Reading suggests, the book focuses on the political and economic path of the United States to follow from now, including the elections of 2022 and 2024. The summary reads “*Beyond Biden* is dedicated to the millions of Americans who suffered, endured, and prevailed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. It was their courage and patriotism that carried our country through one of the worst crises in our nation’s history. Because of their triumph, we look forward to an exciting and prosperous future.”

Along the way, the author spends entire chapters offering explanations of the impact of Big Tech on our elections and culture through social media platforms and political activism, the definition of what ‘woke’ means and how it is impacting our nation, ‘cancel culture’ vs. free speech, and an examination of the state of human rights in our country, the need for energy independence, our jobs and supply chain, and an in-depth examination of the threat of cyber war today.

Highly recommended for any reader confused by the various slogans and terms used by the New Left (cancel culture, wokeism, equity over equality, etc.), concern over some of the massive

~ Larry Crawford, a local Donnellson resident with an interest in the town itself and the surrounding areas, donated a 100-year anniversary Donnellson coin to the Department. He also purchased several town maps to add to his collection of Donnellson information

~ Pat Morrison donated several old city directories from Burlington, Fort Madison, Keokuk, and Mt. Pleasant for our reference shelves. These directories contain pertinent information on residents and business addresses plus their old telephone number during the year of the directory. They are excellent references for genealogy research.

Pat also donated background information on pioneer cemeteries. Included were newsletters which contain information as to when the Pioneer Cemetery Association was established, where cemeteries are located, and has some information about upkeep and repairs done on certain cemetery sites.

A file was set up for the pioneer cemeteries in the last couple of months and the prior information donated by Pat will add background information needed to assist with directions and repairs to the cemeteries.

Local & Family History Display Update

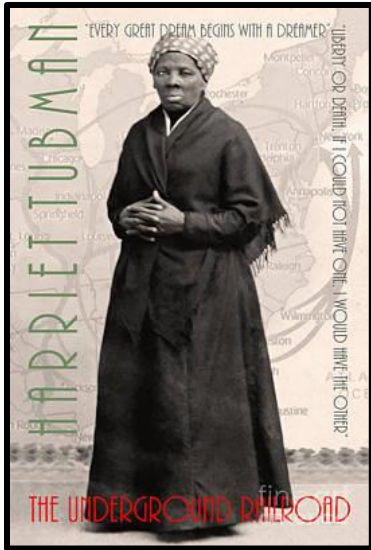
~ Pat and David Lau, who donated the White House Christmas tree ornaments for the month of December, thanked the department after receiving photos of the display since they moved from the Donnellson area.

~ Because of the catch-up from the holidays and the poor weather conditions, no display was created for the month of January. However, there will be a display on the Underground Railroad for Black History Month.

~ Diane Kruse visited the Crew Library in Salem, IA as well as the Lewelling Quaker Museum to obtain information on the Underground Railroad for the February display. She obtained a book on patchwork quilts for the code used by those who moved a group of slaves across to the free states. The fourteen patches were important as they were a code for escape routes for the slaves since it was illegal to teach them to read or write.

Also included in the display is the well-known Harriet Tubman who led hundreds of slaves to freedom and never lost one of them, Frederick Douglass who played a key role as an abolitionist and confidant to President Lincoln, and a copy of the Proclamation of Emancipation (sic) of 1861-63 signed by the President. Even though there were many places across Lee County and surrounding counties who were members of the Underground Railroad, two local areas of interest in the display include Salem, IA and Denmark, IA. Books on the local history of Denmark and Salem as well as other historical books on the Underground on display were provided by our Donnellson Library. Below are samples of photographs which will be in the display.

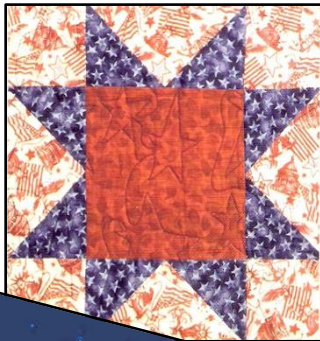
If there is interest in learning more about this topic, a visit to the Lewelling Quaker Museum is worth the trip, as well as checking out the books chosen for display. In addition, Denmark has a Historical Society which provides information on their part in the Underground Railroad.



Harriet Tubman



Lewelling House, Salem, IA



Code Patch indicating the North Star

Newsletter Editor, Diane P. Kruse, Retirees4Now@aol.com

