

DONNELLSON PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWSLETTER
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June 2021

Issue #178

JUNE



**"June is the month of dreams, I think;
Gardeners watch their roses, pink.
Birds leave the nest and try their wings
And songbirds learn just how to sing.
Brides have planned for the perfect day
When to their love their vows will say.
June is a month of graduations;
Proud parents give congratulations.
The birth of baby girls and boys
Makes us look at tiny toys.
First communions are realized;
Decisions taken to change lives.
Recitals seem to be everywhere;
Dancing and music is in the air.
June is the month to sing your joy -
the month of dreams for you to enjoy."
~ Joan Adams Burchell**

Library Happenings

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

"The reflections and histories of men and women throughout the world are contained in books.... America's greatness is not only recorded in books, but it is also dependent upon each and every citizen being able to utilize public libraries."

— Terence COOKE (1921-1983)

As this newsletter reaches our readers, we are currently winding-down our Summer Reading Program. But we still have three blockbuster Wednesday morning programs coming up:

ISU Insect Zoo: Railroad Park: Wednesday, July 7, 10:00 a.m.

Come and see some unusual and large insect species with students from the Entomology Dept. at Iowa State University! Program lasts approximately 45 minutes.



Blank Park Zoo: Railroad Park: Wednesday, July 14, 10:00 a.m.

This program will show you four small animals that live in rain forests throughout the world.



Sheltered Reality: A rock band: Library Front Porch: Wednesday, July 21, 10:00 a.m.

Sheltered Reality was founded in late 1996 as a non-profit organization using music and education to reach out to audiences motivating them to advocate for those in need. The messages that are presented focus on facts and real-life stories from members that culminate in character education and ideas for action. Topics include personal empowerment, success at living out life dreams, as well as anti-bullying and other negative impacts on today's youth. This unique, percussive approach to performing challenges all to take what you love and share it, impacting others in a positive way. Join us for this fun, interactive program!



Outdoor Book Corps continues for Preschool kids until July 21, Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m.

Join us on the front porch of the library for books, movement activities, and a take-home activity kit until July 21.

Summer Reading Winners, so far.....

Owen Burgess and Lexi Kemper have won art kits! So have two other kids, who did not want their information published. We congratulate the winners, so far.....AND we still have art kits to give away!



C'mon, kids! Turn in your reading bookmarks and enter the drawing!

The Donnellson Book Core

In June, the Donnellson Book Core discussed *I Will Send Rain* by Rae Meadows. The discussion was lively and centered around the problems and joys of a farm family during the Great Depression and Dust Bowl, who had various struggles with the hardships and joys during the time.

The book for July's discussion is our newly purchased set, *Eligible* by Curtis Sittenfeld: Here is what Goodreads has to say about the book:

**Eligible: A Modern Retelling of Pride & Prejudice
(The Austen Project #4)**

by Curtis Sittenfeld (Goodreads Author)

3.61 · Rating details · 81,443 ratings · 10,816 reviews

This version of the Bennet family and Mr. Darcy is one that you have and have not met before: Liz is a magazine writer in her late thirties who, like her yoga instructor older sister, Jane, lives in New York City. When their father has a health scare, they return to their childhood home in Cincinnati to help and discover that the sprawling Tudor they grew up in is crumbling and the family is in disarray.

Youngest sisters Kitty and Lydia are too busy with their CrossFit workouts and Paleo diets to get jobs. Mary, the middle sister, is earning her third online master's degree and barely leaves her room, except for those mysterious Tuesday-night outings she will not discuss. And Mrs. Bennet has one thing on her mind: how to marry off her daughters, especially as Jane's fortieth birthday fast approaches.

Enter Chip Bingley, a handsome new-in-town doctor who recently appeared on the juggernaut reality TV dating show Eligible. At a Fourth of July barbecue, Chip takes an immediate interest in Jane, but Chip's friend, neurosurgeon Fitzwilliam Darcy, reveals himself to Liz to be much less charming. . . . And yet, first impressions can be deceiving.

The set of 12 books were purchased by the active members of the Donnellson Book Core, and will be ready to share with other book clubs in Iowa after our discussion July 19 at 7:00 p.m. If you would like to join the book group, the librarians can order a book through interlibrary loan for you and take your information for the discussion moderator.



Writers' Bloc

The Writers Bloc group met in the library meeting room at 1p.m. on June 16th. Three members were present: Jan Blankenburg and Diane and Aaron Kruse.

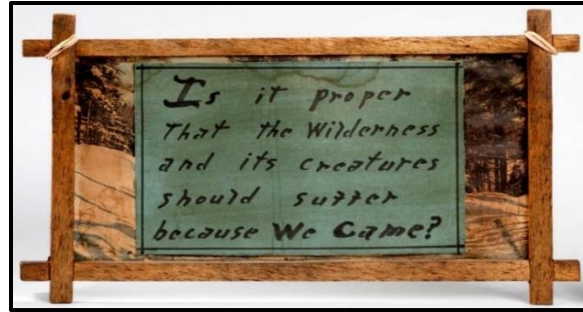
Aaron presented some quite unusual descriptive wording from the Dean Koonz book entitled *The Whispering Room* to share with Jan and Diane. The wording encouraged a quite lengthy comical group conversation.

Jan shared many of her writings including poems and essays she wrote during May. She stated she gets her inspiration from photographs in magazines and includes them in her creative writing as suggested by her daughter-in-law Lucinda. All her compositions are filed in binders so she can share with others at meetings, friends, and family members. Several of her works have been used in Local & Family History displays and received compliments. She also announced she won 1st Honorable Mention in the Iowa Poetry annual contest in the humorous category for her work entitled "Food for Thought".

Diane continues to be creative in writing for and collecting information for her monthly newsletter. Since the month of May was designated as National Military month, she decided to continue honoring all our Veterans in all wars through the 4th of July with a special display. The month of June includes D-Day (June 6) and three celebrations during the week of June 14: The birthday of the U.S. Army and National Flag Day (June 14). It is noted the entire week of June 14 is considered National Flag Week. Diane has written a special article at the end of this newsletter to include a story of the USS White River (LFR-536) which played an important role in the Vietnam War.

The next Writers' Bloc meeting will be July 21 at 1 p.m. ~ **Written and submitted by Diane Kruse**

Richard L Proenneke Museum



"Richard Proenneke posing in front of a U.S. Navy vehicle, taking a break from his work in 1952 at the US Naval Air Station at Kodiak, AK."

Before moving to Twin Lakes AK, Richard worked at the US Naval Air Station on Kodiak Island, AK for about 8 years. He would also fish commercially for salmon at Chignik; worked for a defense contractor as a powerhouse operator and mechanic at Cape Chiniak. Richard began working for himself in 1964 as a contractor which allowed him more flexibility to visit Twin Lakes for several weeks at a time.

Richard met "Spike" & Hope Carrithers while working at Cape Chiniak around 1962, and invited Richard to Twin Lakes for a visit, his first trip to Twin Lakes.

To learn more about Richard's life, check out the two new DVD Documentaries "From The Heartland To the Great Northwest" and "The Living Wilderness" available July 14th.

Documentary Volume I - "From The Heartland To the Great Northwest" This Documentary represents Richard Proenneke's beginning into the art of film making from the very first attempts in the late 1930's at his home in Primrose, Iowa and his move to the Wilkinson Ranch in Heppner, Oregon in early 1940; the disruption of WW II and his entry into the US Navy; to Portland Oregon and his preparation to make the move to Alaska.

Documentary Volume II - "The Living Wilderness"

In this Documentary Richard, now living on Kodiak Island, AK, continues to document his life through film, recording his experiences at Kodiak, Sawmill Lake and Cape Chiniak. He would meet "Spike" and Hope Carrithers, Sam Keith, Babe Alsworth, Terry and Vic Gill. Entering a new path, Richard sets out on a new course at Twin Lakes, from the challenges of winter survival to salvaging a crashed plane.

The Journals of Richard L. Proenneke



The Richard Proenneke Museum is looking for a volunteer to help with the wide variety of functions related to the Richard Proenneke Museum with flexible volunteer hours. We are needing someone with the following knowledge/experience and should have basic computer skills in the following:

Microsoft Windows 10, Microsoft Word, 2010, Microsoft Excel 2010

Microsoft Office Publisher 2007 or higher would be helpful.

If you are interested in volunteering and being a part of a wonderful and unique experience, please contact:

Brenda Knox, Librarian: bknox@donnellson.lib.ia.us

Brie Anderson, Richard Proenneke Museum Curator: brie@richardproenneke.com

Summer Book Sale



Friends of the Donnellson Library Book Sale



**Jean Kruse, Sharon Meierotto,
Deb Bailey, Diane Kruse**

WHAT A SALE! AND THERE WAS “SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!”



The Friends of Donnellson Library held their first book sale of 2021 during Donnellson's Yard Sale Day, Saturday, June 19, from 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at The American Legion Hall, 419 N. Oak Street, Donnellson, IA. Because of the overwhelming donation of books by our many patrons, other organizations, and the Donnellson Library we are very proud to report we exceeded our sales for every book sale in June (and even September) ever since the library has held book sales. All books were sold for a free-will donation. This sale added \$1,261 for our Friends library fund account.

The donation of children's books appeared to be one of the largest collections received. Other large donations included books on cooking, gardening, hobbies, historical, political, inspirational, and religious topics. In addition, there were collections of favorite authors such as Clive Cussler, Tom Clancy, John Sanford, Nora Roberts, Fern Michaels, and many more. Westerns from Louis L'Amour and other known western writers filled several boxes. Also, children and adult favorite audio books and DVDs were available with many categories to choose from. We suggested to our patrons "If you like an author, take the entire box—reading material will keep you busy for months. More than a few patrons walked away with a box or several cloth bags as they came prepared to buy according to their "book shopping list".

Because of the offer by the American Legion to use their hall as our venue, we had customers strolling through the tables of books from 7:45 a.m. until mid-afternoon. There were very few times we did not have patrons asking questions or watching patrons going back around the 29 tables to find more books to add to their pile.

The Friends added three new additions to the book sale this year to share with our patrons AND all three turned out to be very popular.

~ Pre-packaged snacks and water were sold during the sale – donated by Library Director Brenda Knox.

~ If you never had a blind date with a book, patrons found out and most of the “blind books” were sold along with their favorite authors. **You do not know what book it is! That is the fun.**

~ The final addition was created for our county outdoorsmen who love hunting and fishing. The donation of this huge collection had volumes of hard back books, coffee table books with beautiful photographs, and many were boxed as a collection covering hunting for deer, elk, pheasant, turkeys, etc. in Iowa or out-of-state hunts across the United States. Also, if you were interested in or participated in an organized African safari hunting for wild game, there were books of interesting stories by those who experienced the hunt.

A huge thank you goes out to the Friends from the book sorters and organizers, to our publicity team, and our set-up and cleanup crews who donated their time to make this an outstanding event. And thank you to our many patrons who supported our effort. Several patrons stated they watch for our sales every year and bring their own sacks to carry their treasures home. Another comment we heard was “You guys have the best book sale in the area”. See you all in September! ~**Written and submitted by Diane Kruse**

A June Suggested Reading

This month’s suggested reading is by two authors, Matt Eversmann, First Sergeant Retired from the U.S. Army, and James Patterson, a world-famous writer of police and psychological thrillers. The selection is *Walk in My Combat Boots*, a collection of short stories from active and retired military personnel, largely from combat experiences and a few from post-service experience. Matt Eversmann spent 20 years in the army, largely as a ranger. He served in Somalia during the *Black Hawk Down* episode. He also saw notable service in Iraq in the 10th Mountain Division.

The stories related in this selection range from National Guard response in the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Towers to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Vietnam. They relate a realistic (because they are true experiences) view of combat, whether from medics or pilots or battalion commanders. Many shows young people who grew up in military families, others who for one reason or other just wanted to serve this country. What is most striking in these stories is the sense of dedication to country, unit, and buddies. Threaded through the entire book are the incidents of seriously wounded soldiers who’s first stated desire is to get back to their units and friends.

Perhaps more heartbreaking than heartwarming are the stories of the young people who leave the service and find civilian life a difficult and confusing proposition, lacking in order and clarity and purpose. For any veteran, this selection will definitely be of interest. For any citizen, when you see a veteran of combat or peacetime duty, this book gives a better idea of the experience which shapes that veteran. ~ **Written and submitted by Aaron Kruse**

Local & Family History Department

Seven requests were received in the Department during the month of June. Both Diane Kruse and Sharon Meierotto worked on research. Three requests are updates of previous newsletter articles, and four are new ones.

~ **UPDATE:** Kim Townsend Spangrude forwarded a final account of her trip to Iowa in search of Thomas Townsend, her 3X great grandfather who came to Iowa with his family about 1860 and detailed the footsteps of her Townsend Family who settled in Primrose, Iowa.

Her primary goal was to find out where Thomas died and where he was buried. Kim told of her adventure to Sharon Cemetery after an afternoon of looking through files and cemetery books in the Donnellson Library Local & Family History Department assisted by Sharon Meierotto. Her contact at the cemetery was Dennis Grossman, superintendent. In looking through the plot book information indicated Thomas was buried along with four other people at different points in time. Kim noted since Thomas was a very poor farmer and a Quaker, his son Noah, executor of Thomas' estate, probably could not afford a headstone. The probate papers for his estate only stated he was buried "on or about February 23, 1876". His grave is now documented in Find a Grave #117178551.

Her secondary goal was to try to get a better understanding of her Quaker Townsend family's activities and the role they played in the Iowa Underground Railroad. The best known was James Townsend, friend, and ally of John Brown the abolitionist.

In addition to being successful on a whirlwind trip through Iowa, Kim had the opportunity to visit the Fort Madison Lee County Courthouse, the County Clerk's office, the North Lee County Historical Society (Andy Andrews), had a tour of the Quaker homes in Denmark (Linda Roxberg), and visited the Lewelling House in Salem. Kim stated the tours were very beneficial and it helped her to understand the complicated web Quakers wove in hiding runaway slaves from house to house and town to town. It also showed how the issue divided the Quaker communities.

Kim mentioned she is forwarding a copy of a book by her cousin Jason Townsend who wrote about the Townsends, the Woods, and the alliances families formed to operate the Underground Railroad. All information located and forwarded from Kim Townsend Spangrude will be filed in a family file. Information taken from Kim's travel report through Iowa.

~ **UPDATE:** During the month of April, the Local & Family History Department received a telephone request from Gay Simpson doing research for a client who is a descendant of Anna Perkins Graves. Gay asked for any information we had on file for Anna so that her client could apply to the DAR organization. During June, the client visited the history department and said thank you for the information – she was able to file forms to join the prestigious organization.

~ **UPDATE:** In the December 2020, a telephone request was received from Sara Jane Ruggles about searching for Peter Derr and his family records. Many documents were found but because COVID hit, the library closed research did not continue from my end. In June of this year an e-mail was received to pass along a document Sara had been searching for two years. A private

historian found Peter's probate record and it is the first document that lists all of Peter Derr's children from both marriages. A copy of the probate record was forwarded for our file in the Local & Family History Department.

~ **NEW:** Received an e-mail request for information on members of the Samuel Bentzinger Family from Dean Thomson. He forwarded several pieces of information of his own to add to the Samuel Bentzinger Family album. In turn, information was returned to add to his family book.

~ **NEW:** Received a snail mail request from Lincoln Ekle for information about his great grandparents. Some information was located but more research is in progress. It was noted in research the request for burial was done by the WPA since both died during the Depression.

~ **NEW:** Many interesting memorabilia donations were accepted and volunteers are in the process marking for appropriate files. Orion Lowenberg donated Donnellson memorabilia as well as her DHS letters; Lori Welch donated family photos (Hulsebus file); a package was found in the library book drop (unidentified) containing DHS and Central letters

~ **NEW:** A walk-in request for a Keokuk address in 1974 or before for Laura Arnold Steffens.

~ During June volunteers continued to keep the informational files expanding even though not as quickly as previous months due to preparations for the upcoming June 19 book sale and working on requests submitted for genealogy research. Sharon Meierotto continues to update Lee County obituaries and Diane Kruse continues filing with the local Illinois, Missouri, and Van Buren obits. Roberta Krehbiel continued sort through her many treasures of memorabilia to pass on to the Local & Family History Department. Mary Davis continued to paste obituaries from local Illinois, Missouri, and Van Buren County. Thank you, ladies, for your assistance in helping bring the information up to date for the month of June.

~ Work continues to update the list of donated family albums. The Local and Family History Department has three shelves of family history albums for patrons' use for family research. To date, the department count is 100 albums. The family albums are filed in alphabetical order in the rear of the room on the lower shelves. If you have a family album you would like to donate, we will be happy to accept your copy or make a copy and return the original to you.

~ The request sent by Daniel Svendsen Betts in search of the old Sugar Creek Norwegian settlement settled by immigrants from Sweden and Norway in the mid-1800s is still pending. He was also curious about the Quaker house of worship built on Ommund Oleson's land near the old Melrose Station in Des Moines Township. Files relating to the settlement are being reviewed. If anyone has information they would like to share about this settlement/church, please contact the Local & Family History Department.

~ Work continues for the Mary Ann Engel, daughter of Leonard G. Haase, e-mail request regarding an old *Madisonia* which mentioned her grandfather George Bentzinger. The article was reprinted from a letter (author unknown). Mary Ann was curious as to who might have written the letter because even though it gave some information about La Crew, the article did not cover a lot of history about the town. She was also interested in finding out where her mother and grandmother

taught a rural school, the Galland schoolhouse and its dedication as her father was Superintendent of Schools and dedicated the replica schoolhouse, and information on La Crew. Information for this project is still being researched.

Historical George Perkins Update

In the April 2021 newsletter an article entitled “The Historical Background on Revolutionary War Hero George W. Perkins” and a photo of the memorial monument dedicated by the State of Iowa in his honor in 1907 at Sharon Cemetery was recorded. In June, the Local Family & History Department received three aerial photographs via John Stuekerjuergen courtesy of Steve Cruickshank, two are posted below. According to John, we do not run across many photos from that era of crowds and individuals who are not posing for the camera and more than likely not duplicated.

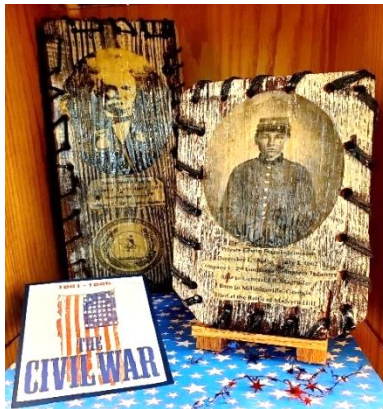


A large crowd outside the Sharon Church for the George Perkins Monument Dedication (two photos) – Courtesy of Steve Cruickshank via John Stuekerjuergen



Local and Family History Department Display

A new display was created for the month of June through the 4th of July. **The display covered our military heroes in all the wars** as well as D-Day, National Flag Day/Week, and end with July 4th. Photos by Carole Landes Elston.

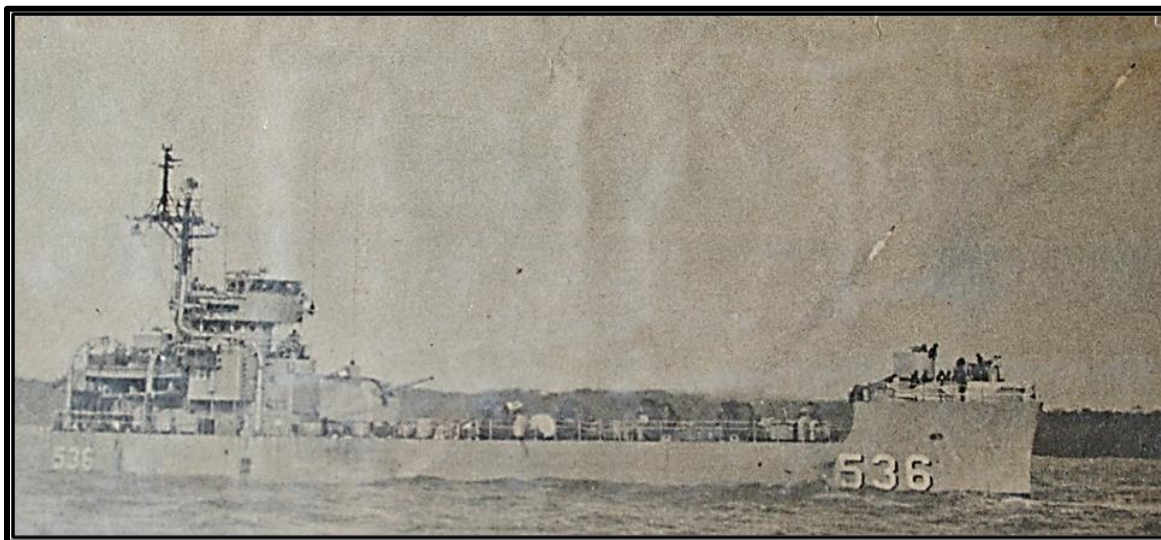


Those among us with personal memories of the Vietnam War, whether in uniform or not, can certainly relate to the trials of those of served there.



Below is an article on the “Ghost Ship” USS White River (LFR-536) which played a very important role during the Vietnam War. William H. Jeffers of Donnellson, IA served on the USS White River from 1966 to 1968.

To the enemy attempting to infiltrate South Vietnam from the north via routes along the coastal region of I Corps and their Viet Cong counterparts entrenched in the swampy area IV Corps, there was a ghost haunting them from the South China Sea with a rain of terror and destruction. Chugging up and down the coast of South Vietnam, the Seventh Fleet rocket-firing ship USS White River (LFR) looked like a harmless vessel carrying out harmless missions. But, the “White River” had the fire power of six destroyers.



The photo above shows the USS White River on duty in the South China Sea. Notice the two rockets fired over the ship’s bow.

The White River was described as small, as ships go, and carries the Navy designation of LFR for Inshore Fire Support Ship. But the crew’s attitude strives to prove size is no barrier and LFR really stands for “Lets Fire Rockets”. The ship unleashed her fiery rockets and gunfire any time of day or night to deal significant blows to the enemy’s ability to move men and supplies.

However, if the White River was a ghost to the enemy and a majority of the Seventh Fleet, it certainly was no stranger to the Swift boats and Coast Guard cutters operating in “Market Time.” It is their main source of ice cream and considered itself a Good Humor Man to these crafts.

Mr. Jeffers passed away on Memorial Day 2021. He was a member of the Keokuk American Legion and the Mobile Riverine Force Association. He was buried at Oakland Cemetery, Vincennes, IA with full military rites.

Information for this article was taken from a newspaper article entitled “Ghost Ship Spooks Enemy” written by Michael D. McGougan, USN with a photo by Phan Stephen L. Howk, USN.
~ **Newsletter Editor, Diane P. Kruse, Retirees4Now@aol.com**

