

"There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world; love of books is the best of all." – Jackie Kennedy

Dear supporter of Starr Readers,

3,990!!!

That is the number of how many books were delivered by Starr Readers to children in Rio Grande City in 2010! Last year many of you read the Starr Readers letter about children who don't have books and you said, "No! Not on my watch", you pulled out your checkbook and you helped. That number is not a typo: 3,990 delivered. I personally thank you and would like to emphasize your donation did not go unnoticed. Because of your devotion to this project ***Starr Readers operates with tax-exempt status***. It takes time, money, perseverance and you.

What a year 2011 has been: we have been contacted by numerous organizations to donate used books including one from a private donor in Colorado Springs, CO who asked if I could pick up a collection of a few thousand books she'd like to donate for free. The catch? I had to pick them up. Using a few airline miles to fly there while accepting the generosity of one long-time donor (who footed the bill for the U-Haul to drive them back) enabled the mission to be accomplished: a fourteen hour drive which was worth every minute; we continue to sort the books while deciding the placement in the libraries. And a special "thanks" to NetJets captain, Charley Wilson, for putting Starr Readers in touch with her. Still, the main goal is always new, unused books so that EVERY individual child receives their very own book that has never been used; one they can hold, read over and over, and find a little place they can put it for safekeeping. For many of these children it may be the only book they will ever own and perhaps is the only gift they will receive this Christmas.

This year the goals are:

1. to reach every child through sixth grade with a book intended for their age group - approximately 6,000 books. Trust me, with your help it can be done.
2. to provide popular mainstream titles such as "Scary Stories To Tell In The Dark", "Raven Hill Mysteries", "Flip and Flop" and "Penguins, Penguins Everywhere!"
3. to continue to increase donations and make Texas proud to be home to a foundation of a well-respected charitable organization.

This year, not only are we partnered with Scholastic Books but we have also been accepted to partner with First Book! Both will provide deep discounts for Starr Readers with more titles to choose from; with every book delivered, a child's imagination is reached. Regardless of one's financial situation a book can enlighten a child to the world around: looking for a winning, gold ticket as in "Roald Dahl's "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory", or guarding a rare pearl as in Scott O'Dell's "The Black Pearl". Books bring hope and inspiration to a child's life. Books are ***magic***.

And, every year when Starr Readers arrives, the kids show us they are thrilled: there is no warmer hug than one from a child. We have always been welcomed with hot chocolate, smiles and grace. Also, there is always time to read a story with them – such joy! The librarians and teachers work very hard applying for grants to improve the lives of their students and Starr Readers is proud to be an organization that is able to help in the pursuit of that goal. Please send a check in the self-stamped provided envelope - the canceled check is your receipt – and a thousand thank-you(s)!

Merry Christmas to you and your loved ones!

Karen Furlong
Founder

P.S. The letters have gone out earlier than usual as we anticipate the process to take longer this year. As is tradition, I will drive the books down to the border the second week in December. Please send your donation ASAP so the books can be ordered, shipped, received and sorted! Also, please read the latest article in "The Dallas Morning News" by writer Mercedes Olivera which is tentatively slated for publication on Thanksgiving.