

# Show of Hands

Fairfax County Public Library  
Volunteer Newsletter

Fall 2008

## Fairfax Partnership for Youth Honors Oakton Volunteer

**P**atty McCloy, a youth volunteer at the Oakton Library, was among nine young people honored at the Fairfax Partnership for Youth awards breakfast on Oct. 28. McCloy received the countywide Youth Volunteer High School Award for 2008. The recognition includes a \$500 monetary award.

Her major project involved processing the 500 or so books on the suggested Fairfax County Public Schools summer reading list so the books could be moved to a special section that provided easy access to parents and students during the summer. She helped gather the lists from the schools, used the library online catalog to reserve the books electronically and then physically processed them. McCloy also prepared material for children's programs and entered data required for statistics and record-keeping.

In nominating McCloy, Oakton's Youth Services Manager Nancy Bronez noted that McCloy was indispensable in helping her supervise some of the 100 other youth volunteers during the course of the year. "Patty models leadership to the other volunteers," Bronez wrote.

For McCloy, who was new to the area, volunteering at Oakton was a way to become more involved. "Having just moved from Jamaica to the Oakton community, it was great to have a place where I could experience being back in the U.S.," she said. "I have met so many great people. I would encourage other students to get involved in their communities as well."



Patty McCloy, a youth volunteer at Oakton Library, was honored by the Fairfax Partnership for Youth with the Youth Volunteer High School Award 2008.

## Teen Volunteer Fairs Attract a Crowd



Teens browse volunteer opportunities with the Fairfax County Department of Recreation and Community Services at the Centreville Regional Library's Teen Volunteer Fair.

**F**our teen volunteer fairs at library branches in October helped connect local organizations with teens looking for volunteer service opportunities. These successful events, held at the George Mason, Sherwood, Centreville and Pohick Regional Libraries, attracted several hundred teens and their parents.

At each event students had the opportunity to visit tables staffed by area nonprofit agencies and learn about their volunteer needs. Organizations ranged from the Fancy Cats Rescue Team to the Fairfax County Park Authority and Fairfax County Department of Community and Recreation Services.

Some students were looking for one-time volunteer opportunities to fulfill school service hours requirements. Others were in search of an ongoing way to give back to the community.

"Outreach events like this are a key way that we connect with the community and find volunteers to help with our programs," said Devin Thornton, who represented the Fairfax County Department of Community and Recreation Services at all four fairs. Some library Friends groups also took advantage of the fairs and used them to recruit teens to help with their always busy and popular book sales.

## Get in Touch With Lynn; Turn Your Radio On

If your radio dial happens to pause on WAMU's "Metro Connection" on Friday afternoons, it's possible you may hear the pull-up-a-chair voice of a Great Falls Library volunteer, Lynn Mobley, reflecting on something extraordinary about the ordinary. Lynn has been featured five times over the past months. Her audio-essays are two-minute, 30-second commentaries on subjects like ramps (the delicious wild leek delicacies that signal springtime), polling place dynamics, finding one's voice (literally, beyond singing in the shower to wedding ceremonies) or the cooperative waltz of traffic circles.

Lynn has volunteered at the Great Falls Library since 2002. She recently won a Star Volunteer Award for Exceptional Service. Lynn's interest in writing took tangible form in 2004 when she began taking courses at the Bethesda Writer's Center. Encouraged by one of her instructors, Katie Davis, an NPR producer, Lynn submitted her work to WAMU's Metro Connection, a program featuring local community topics. Now she is gaining "regular" status.

She dreams of writing a novel someday, but for now the short essay form is a comfortable focus. To us, the listening audience, her insights and language roll smoothly over the air with a soft cadence and we stop, ponder and nod with fresh recognition of old truths.

— Lois Glick, Great Falls Library



Great Falls volunteer Lynn Mobley is also a local radio celebrity. She reflects on what's extraordinary about the ordinary in essays aired on WAMU's "Metro Connection."

## Thao Le's "Payback" to the Library

At Woodrow Wilson Library we have a wonderful volunteer, Thao Le, who teaches one-on-one computer sessions in English and Vietnamese. She is a George Mason University student who gives up an evening every week to help beginning computer users. At first she did the class one hour a week, then two hours, and recently she said, "Two hours is not enough to fit in all my students, so I want to do three hours." This resulted in the branch being able to offer her helpful sessions at 6 p.m., 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. every Thursday. Thao explained that she is doing it because she loves to help people, and she wants to help the library as "payback" for what the library did for her.

When she was 13 years old, her family, consisting of herself, her parents and three brothers, immigrated from Vietnam to the U. S. Because the parents had to work and the children knew no English, they were told to stay home after school and never go out anywhere. The one exception was the library. Since it was right across the street, they could go to the branch. Thao explained they were all nervous about being in a new country and a new school, but at the Woodrow Wilson Library they found an employee who spoke Vietnamese and was very friendly and helpful. The library staff always smiled at them and made them feel so welcomed and at home in the library that they went there every day to do their homework. They were able to get assistance with homework and even translation when needed. They were all serious students and did well in school, but that help from the library really gave them a good start in their new country.

Thao explained that she understands how important it is to have diligence and patience. As a teacher of computer skills, she has her students take notes and gives them homework to do. She has her students e-mail her to show the skills they have learned which enables her to answer their questions. Her volunteer teaching goes beyond her actual hours in the library. She has a loyal following of students who want to keep coming back to learn more and stop by the information desk to tell us how wonderful Miss Thao is. How fortunate Woodrow Wilson Library and the community are to have her as a computer tutor!

— Kathryn Young, Woodrow Wilson Library



Volunteer Thao Le (right) with one of the students she helps during three hours of one-on-one tutoring she offers each week at the Woodrow Wilson Library.

## Volunteer Artists Paint Mural at the Pohick Regional Library

Volunteers play an integral part in the daily operation of a library. Pohick Regional Library has completed building a special area designed for parents and children to read together. Called the "Read to Me" area, the space was created to encourage lifelong learning and promote early literacy and reading readiness. Children will be encouraged to play with shapes, letters, numbers and other objects to promote learning. The space had been empty for quite some time, so a decision was made to transform it into something useful for children and parents. Part of the project involved turning blank white walls into visions of artistic beauty.

Staff contacted art teachers in the area to find out if there would be any teens interested in receiving volunteer hours for painting a mural on the "Read to Me" area walls. Many teachers responded and were excited to offer this opportunity to their students. Staff chose South County Secondary School for the project. Ellen Sanders became the contact person, and she found three young artists in the school's Art Honor Society who were interested in helping Pohick out.

Caitlin Ray, Natasha Weyant and Laila Cruz created designs for the area with a theme centered on animals reading. The young women developed several different scenes. They completed more than 70 hours of service sketching and painting the designs that now make up the beautiful mural. As they painted, parents and children walked by and were amazed at the work being done. By the end of two weeks the artists placed finishing touches on the mural, and it was ready to open. Now that the "Read to Me" area is officially open, parents and children have the opportunity to spend time reading together thanks to these talented and dedicated volunteers.



Volunteer artists, Caitlin Ray, Natasha Weyant and Laila Cruz, members of the South County Secondary School Art Honor Society donated more than 70 hours to create a mural at the Pohick Regional Library.

— Ashley Jefferson, Pohick Regional Library

## Scholarships for Volunteers

To help enhance Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) and to express appreciation to dedicated volunteers who contribute valuable time and expertise, continuing education scholarships are available through the Library Foundation's Friends Scholarship Fund.

The Friends Scholarship Fund provides several full or partial scholarships a year ranging from \$150 to \$1,000 to support the continuing education of individuals within the Fairfax County Public Library system. Applications are accepted and scholarships issued twice a year. Applications will be accepted with closing dates of June 15 and December 15 each year for events taking place six months before or after the closing date chosen.

Scholarship applications and forms are available online at [www.FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org](http://www.FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org). If you have any questions about any aspect of the application process, or to contribute to the Friends Scholarship Fund, call the foundation at 703-324-8300; e-mail [info@FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org](mailto:info@FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org); or visit or see [www.FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org](http://www.FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org). Mail applications and donations to: Fairfax Library Foundation 12000 Government Center Pkwy, Suite 329, Fairfax, VA 22035.



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# Volunteer Opportunities at the Fairfax County Public Library

The Fairfax County Public Library is recruiting volunteers. Please help us advertise our opportunities by sharing this list with friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, schools, clubs or places of worship – wherever someone may be able to help.

## Fall 2008

### Alexandria

**Teach Internet Basics to adults** at the John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Dr. Contact Kathryn Alleman at 703-971-0010; [Kathryn.Alleman@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Kathryn.Alleman@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Sort and select donations** for the John Marshall Library Friends' book sale. Help is needed daily to keep the book sale shelves replenished with new and appealing items. Contact Sohelee Ditu at 703-971-0010; [Sohelee.Ditu@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Sohelee.Ditu@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Adopt-a-Shelf or pull hold requests** off the shelves at the Sherwood Regional Library. Good attention to detail required and some computer skills preferred. Put your skills and creativity to work. We especially welcome those willing to put their hands to work **mending books, straightening items** on our shelves or **tending our garden**. We're also looking for **folks with an MLS degree** to work with our customers at the information desk. Contact David Hanlon at 703-765-3645; [David.Hanlon@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:David.Hanlon@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### Annandale

**Adopt-a-Shelf** volunteers are needed at George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike. Duties include reading spine labels, reshelving books that are out of order, pulling books that belong to other branches and determining which books need mending. Bilingual skills a plus but not required. Contact David Meisky 703-259-3800; [David.Meisky@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:David.Meisky@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### Burke

Volunteer at the county's newest library branch, Burke Centre, 5935 Freds Oak Road **checking in books or locating books on the shelves for customers**. Contact Jerry Herrera at 703-249-1520; [Gerardo.Herrera@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Gerardo.Herrera@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Shelve and shelf read in the children's picture book area** at the Pohick Regional Library. Contact Florence Whipple at 703-644-7333; [Florence.Whipple@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Florence.Whipple@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### Centreville

**Help others improve their English**. Do one-on-one tutoring or co-lead conversation groups for people who want to practice and improve their English skills at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. The greatest need is for evening and weekend sessions.

Put your green thumb to good use! A motivated person who can offer suggestions on how to improve the land-

scaping is needed **to start and run a team of gardening volunteers**. Contact Margaret Kositch at 703-830-2223; [Margaret.Kositch@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Margaret.Kositch@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### Fairfax (Government Center)

Volunteer at Library Administration, 12000 Government Center Parkway, **reading and copying newspaper articles** in the Marketing and Communications Office. Contact Linda Gifford at 703-324-8324; [Linda.Gifford@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Linda.Gifford@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Assist the Grants Office** with research. Contact Vera Fessler at 703-324-8311; [Vera.Fessler@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Vera.Fessler@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### Fairfax (Countywide)

Volunteers with experience teaching or leading children's programs are needed to help the library's Early Literacy Outreach Specialist with the **Ready to Read program**, by reading books aloud at preschools and childcare centers. Volunteers can work in an area of the county that is most convenient for them. Contact Renee Edwards at 703-324-8413; [Renee.Edwards@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Renee.Edwards@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### Falls Church

An individual, a group or a garden club is needed to **adopt a garden**. The overgrown garden needs a plan, soil preparation, planting and ongoing maintenance. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike. Contact Rita Mayer at 703-790-8088; [Rita.Mayer@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Rita.Mayer@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Volunteers are also needed to **maintain the library grounds** outside and pick up litter and debris. Other volunteer needs include an **assistant for the English Conversation Group**, 7-8:45 p.m. Tuesday evenings and a **computer tutor knowledgeable in Microsoft Office**, available evenings. Contact Linda Prante 703-790-8088; [Linda.Prante@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Linda.Prante@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Other volunteer opportunities may be available as well, and training is available for all positions. For more information, contact the branch/department where you are interested in volunteering. For a list of volunteer coordinators and their contact information, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library). Then click on "Do You Know ... How to Volunteer at the Library?"**



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Visit the library's Web site at: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library).



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