



Tales from a Sisters Naturalist

by Jim Anderson

Summer reading works!

If there's one thing I've learned in the 90-some-odd years I've been traipsing around on this beautiful old planet Earth, it's the incredible value of libraries. The current one that's large in my life is, of course, our own Sisters Library which is part of the Deschutes Public Library System.

They offered a program for people of all ages this past summer that had a vital, personal impact in my home: Summer Reading. It took place from June 16 to August 18. For kids from ages 0-11 they offered a "Libraries Rock" (this year's library theme) reading log at the library and a free book, "Keep Reading!" in July, with special treat coupons. In August, it was a "Musical Surprise." Each week the library drew names and gave away puppets, science kits, and books.

Before August 18, summer readers filled out a grand prize coupon for a chance to win a family membership at the High Desert Museum or a bicycle. And if a summer reader completed at least 10 "Kindness Rocks" actions they were given extra entries to win the grand prize. The participants also had the opportunity to build a musical instrument and bring it to the library for display and get more Grand Prize coupons.

What a summer!

Our 9-year-old grandson, Truman, came to stay with us all summer while his father — Sisters High School grad Reuben — was in Texas creating training

films for the U.S. Army. Almost from the day he arrived, Tru wanted to go to the library to see what was happening and what he could participate in.

When the staff told him about Summer Reading, he went for it like a duck to water. We left the library with an armload of books on cats. Then it was wolves. Then it was the movie "Never Cry Wolf," followed by at least another 20 or 30 books on everything a nine-year-old wants to hold in his hands.

Tru was into it up to his elbows, but he missed out on the final drawings as he went back home to Brainerd, Minnesota, before the program ended.

But the big payoff came from his teacher, Kara DeVriendt of Discovery Woods School in Brainerd. I was curious if all the reading he did all summer had any impact on his schoolwork when he returned to school, and this was her reply:

"One can tell that Truman has a love for reading. He

chooses to read whenever he can in the classroom and shares that love with other students. He loves to participate in discussions during our read-aloud time, making connections to his own life and to other texts that he has read.

"In order for any child to form a love of reading, they must be exposed to books by adults who love reading. Parents are by far the most important influence in developing a love for reading early on. As a classroom teacher, I can tell when students have been gifted with that love of reading at home, and for students who have not, it makes my job harder but ever more important. Students like Truman make my job easier because they can help me spread the love of reading to all the students in our classroom."

Thanks again, Sisters Library, for providing the stimulus for children to keep reading, and for us grandparents to have a hand in providing our grandkids the understanding of libraries in their lives.



Sisters Library Supervisor Zoe Schumacher presenting my grandson, Truman Anderson, an award for his participation in the library's Summer Reading program.

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PHOTO BY ROB KERR

My Own Two Hands is Sisters Folk Festival's major arts fundraiser.

Sisters Folk Festival announces art theme

My Own Two Hands, Sisters Folk Festival's (SFF) annual art auction and fundraiser, plays an integral role in the creative lives of children in Sisters. Funds raised at the auction held in May support music programs and instruction; world-class musicians hosting workshops for youth; materials and supplies for art classes and scholarships to music and arts experiences for youth.

All of that is made possible by the generosity of donating artists.

Last year the community raised over \$100,000 for SFF programs.

In a statement, SFF said, "The 2019 theme 'We All Belong' exemplifies the sense of community we work to engender and support through the music and arts programs

of Sisters Folk Festival."

The Sisters Folk Festival is extending an invitation for artists to create a themed item and donate a piece of artwork for the auction. The 2019 deadline for submitting donations is Friday, March 15. The Sisters Folk Festival will announce detailed entry information in January and make it available at www.sistersfolkfestival.org.

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