

Friends of the Library
Bradford Memorial Library
611 S. Washington, El Dorado, KS 67042

News Release/ Public Information

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El Dorado Friends of the Library

By T. Boren

“Tis the good reader that makes the good book...” Ralph Waldo Emerson

I expect my friend, Laura, died sometime ago now. I knew her in the mid 1970's; we both worked at a local restaurant where I worked through my high school years. I lost track of Laura over the passage of years but she left upon me an indelible impression. One I have come to better appreciate over a half century later.

Laura was a sweet, cherubic figure; kind of elfish, though short and grandmotherly, a twinkle in her eye and an alarmingly outgoing personality was her trademark towards everyone she'd meet. She'd been widowed sometime before I met her, and her children were then grown and moved away. Her pride in cheerfully reporting all their accomplishments and adventures to all of her acquaintances were shared as if one and all were related to her family.

She was a cypher to me initially, I didn't quite know how or why such a winsome and obviously well educated lady would actually spend time and energy getting to know some gangly, nerdy, self-conscious kid like me. We weren't related, she wasn't a teacher, she wasn't selling anything---what did I matter to warrant her notice?

Over time we became aware of common interests. She even had an appreciation for all types of music and could discuss the lyrics and styles of many current pop artists of the time! It was interesting to me that she even seemed to struggle with how that music was a way for people to come to grips with societal problems.

But without doubt, I soon learned that Laura was a true bibliophile! Her interest in all forms of literature was a very core virtue to her mind. When she discovered that I was an avid reader, we arrived at a different juncture in our relationship. We traded books and synopsis while cooking and cleaning in the kitchen.

Thereafter, we often discussed books and classroom assignments that held particular interest or undiscovered truths to be considered. She was as apt to discuss how Zane Grey described a vast desert scene in colorful detail as she would remark another time about a particular obscure perspective from one of Kurt Vonnegut's novels. Her reading interests were as diverse as the racks of a library---from the ridiculous to the sublime!

Having lived through World War II and now in the Cold War Era, she was haunted by the images of book burnings and the use of propaganda by all parties as dangerous to free societies. She was sure that a free press and open publishing of all ideas were important for people to read BOTH sides of issues and make up their own minds about matters of importance. I learned from her that it is vital to struggle to read books that may be outside one's comfort zone to appreciate the opinions, perspectives and experiences of the author before making or taking a position.

What does this have to do with the Friends of the Library? Perhaps my friend said it best when I once asked her why she read so much and had such a variety of interests?

She told me it was her experience and observations of people that created a theory for her; this theory was that if you continually read and thus continue to feed your brain; your mind will never grow old.

I know Laura has long since passed on; but I feel that she wisely and purposefully shared her passion for being a lifelong learner through sharing and celebrating the gift of reading with me those fifty some years ago. That probably led me to sharing with the El Dorado Friends of the Library.

Herein is the lesson; you can be a friend to someone else who needs the gift of reading and the appreciation of that gift through your acts of benevolence, sharing activities and other ways to support the Bradford Memorial Library and the Friends of the Library. Consider joining the Bradford Memorial Friends of the Library. There's no telling how long your sharing will influence someone's life. Thank you, Laura.

Spangles promotes Friends of the Library with Nite-Out Promotions

The El Dorado Spangles restaurant has partnered with the Friends of the Library to donate a portion of their proceeds on designated Friends of the Library Nite-outs. On these dates, everyone who enjoys Spangle's delicious food and frozen treats; can help promote the Friends of the Library by informing the wait staff that they would like to help the Friends of the Library. Anyone who is a Friends of the Library member may contact friends and family on these dates to remind them to take their families to a great restaurant and help a great promotion! Share these dates with everyone you know. Everyone is a winner! Save the dates and pass them along to friends and family:

Tuesday Aug 15th, 2023 5-8 pm

Tuesday Oct 17th, 2023 5-8 pm

Tuesday Dec 19th, 2023 5-8 pm

Our special thanks to local Spangle's manager, Sarina Beckel, her staff and, of course, Rene Stevens, Director of Operations!

T. Boren

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