

Soroptimists project puts books on bookshelves

Ashland High School students contributed time, expertise to the community program

February 03, 2009

The “Soroptimists Strong Girls Strong Women” program, a joint project between Soroptimists International of Ashland and Helman Elementary School, has enlisted wide circles of the community.

One prong of the program is to provide books with positive female characters for girls in grades K-1. Donations of new books from Boyds Mills Press together with books purchased with credits from local used book donations have provided a source of books for the six girls participating in this part of the program. To provide a place for the girls to keep their books, Matt Naylor and Garrett Tygerson, seniors in John Weston’s woodshop class at Ashland High School, made six bookcases as their senior project.

When discussing building the bookcases, Matt said he appreciated the challenge of using his math skills to maximize the yield from the wood they purchased with a \$100 donation from the Soroptimists. Garrett said he appreciated the life-skills he acquired through the woodshop class and knows not all high schools have such programs available.

The project provided a business perspective on manufacturing in mass production since they cut all the parts before assembling the six bookcases. Both Matt and Garrett agreed they felt relief and satisfaction when the cut pieces fit together perfectly. Both seniors gave kudos to Weston.

The bookcases, along with a second delivery of books, were given to the girls. Anissa Lamberg and her mother, Kimberly Thompson, were delighted to receive a bookcase and the books. Anissa will now have a place to keep her new books and library books.

Other parts of the Soroptimists Strong Girls Strong Women program include Lunch Buddy mentors for girls in grades 2-3. Thirty-five women from Soroptimists, AAUW, and the community are serving as Lunch Buddies.

For girls in grades 4-5 an after school program focusing on science and math, careers, and the environment is offered. In the fall, SOU Associate Professor in Physics Ellen Siem worked with Helman teacher Trish Dorr to provide a science and math program. For the winter term six field trips are planned to introduce the girls to careers in forensic science, law enforcement, coaching and P.E., health care, animal care, and theater costume design.

Soroptimists of Ashland, a volunteer service organization for business and professional women who improve the lives of women and girls locally and globally, appreciates the community’s time and donations to the Soroptimists Strong Girls Strong Women program. For information contact Sara Brown at 482-5561.



Anissa Lamberg holds a stack of books as she and her mother, Kimberly Thompson, pose in front of bookshelves created as part of a Soroptimists program.