

A Short History of Greer Library Friends  
By Susan Kulbacki November 2020

The A V Greer Memorial Library started as a volunteer library established by Postmaster Florence Greer Crosby in 1959. Agnes Rogers became the volunteer librarian in 1971. She added best sellers and upgraded the library by raising funds with bake sales and an annual quilt raffle. In October 1975 Apache County created the Apache County Library District, funded by a secondary property tax, and comprising seven libraries.

In 1975 Agnes became the first paid librarian. Ramona Harp was the Library Manager from 1992 until 2014 when she retired. Susan Kulbacki worked as Manager until 2018. Felipa Earl currently manages both the Round Valley and the Greer Libraries.

In September of 1998 the Greer Library Friends (GLF) was established by a group of community women who met after they heard that the library was closing due to lack of housing. Apache County Library District Director Judith Pepple also attended the meeting. She described how library friends groups worked and how to achieve its formation.

Eleanor Meyers organized the meeting and became the first GLF President. Among the founding members were Ramona Harp, Manager of the Greer Library, Billy McEntire, Margaret Kurtz, Isabel Perry, Janet Pegnam, Nadine Stanley, Ardis Schildkraut, Ruth Duperret, Carolyn Curran and Susan Kulbacki.

The group saved the library and arrangements were made with Molly Butler's Restaurant to lease their basement for the library. Previously the library was located in Janet and Peter Pegnam's building on Main Street.

Gradually the Articles of Organization were drafted including; the purpose of the organization, categories of membership, dues, duties of officers, allocations of funds, etc.

Following the move, the GLF made the annual quilt to raffle and organized bake and book sales to raise money for the library.

When Eleanor left Billy McEntire became President of the GLF and continued to pursue its purposes. The Library District supplied books, audios, videos, magazine, newspapers and operating expenses. The group grew to 59 members who continued to work with the Library Manager, Ramona Harp, and Apache County Library District to make the library an exceptional one.

In 2004 Carol Unangst was President. In 2005 Becky Christian became President. The Ragel Family Greer Community Center, which was under construction, contracted with the Apache County Library District to lease the north end of the Community Center for the library. The lease still remains a reliable source of income for the Center.

An aggressive effort was made by GLF to raise money to purchase much of the furnishings for the new library. Volunteers from GLF helped move into the new space. The Grand Opening was on May 28, 2005.

In 2007 the GLF published a hardbound book Memories from Greer Tales Told of a Unique Arizona Village, edited by Nadine Stanley and Bill Quimby. The memories were compiled from “old timers” and “new” by the GLF over a 3 year period. It is sold out.

Kay Wild became the next President from 2008 to 2012. Her love and skill of quilt making created a Renaissance in the raffle quilt with fantastic color and thoughtful design elements. Kay’s number one accomplishment was forming the Book Discussion Group and the processes of ordering the Group’s books so they would be available in quantity for library patrons.

During Kay’s term the GLF expanded the purpose of the organization to make education of the community a secondary goal by promoting speakers, author’s luncheons and workshops.

As the community needs grew, Movie Nights, Writer’s Workshops, Ladies Teas, Game Days and Craft Classes were added to GLF programs along with many enjoyable Pot Lucks.

Tina Phillips was the next President from 2012 to 2019. She possessed great community spirit and when appropriate shared the GLF fundraising profits with other Greer Community Non-profits. Donations were made to the Community Center for use of their facilities and for the new storage building, Music From Greer, The Butterfly Museum and the Greer Civic Association.

Tina broke ground for the Butterfly Garden and coordinating with the Community Center, started its cultivation on the south side of the Community Center.

In 2019 Susan Kulbacki became President and continued all the GLF programing. She also managed the establishment of the Butterfly Garden, ordering pavers, designing, buying plants, and organizing volunteers to plant and maintain the Garden.

In 2020 under the cloud of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the library closed temporarily and then opened with limited hours. On May 24 the Carol Meka Memorial Bench was installed in the Butterfly Garden. On July 25 the Tina Phillip’s Memorial Butterfly Garden was dedicated and a sign installed.

While face to face meetings were limited, the GLF turned to the internet to function. The Book Discussion Group met on ZOOM. The GLF joined the Greer Community Center in making a new web site with a page for GLF. With the kind help from Steve Williams, the GLF established a U-Tube account that started online book reviews and records GLF events.

We are so lucky to have a beautiful library. We thank all the GLF for their dedication and generous efforts that have made the GLF a vibrant community organization.

