

# bookish

JUDITH'S  
READING  
ROOM  
NEWSLETTER

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From top left: Chandler Cornwell, Kelsey Fisher, Anthony Baker, and Erin D'Amelio

## STUDENTS EMERGE AS LEADERS AS A RESULT OF VOLUNTEER WORK

### JUDITH'S READING ROOM POSITIVELY IMPACTS THE FUTURES OF LOCAL YOUTH

It began by chance. After reading an article on Judith's Reading Room in the newspaper months earlier, Erin D'Amelio contacted Cathy Leiber and asked about internships available.

"When it came time to look for internships, I wondered what I really wanted to do with my time," says D'Amelio. "Judith's Reading Room floated back to the front of my brain."

Since D'Amelio took initiative and reached out, a vibrant student volunteer program has enhanced Judith's Reading Room's outreach. College students have volunteered year-round both for college credit and work experience. Currently, there are two college volunteers, both from Lafayette College, for the Spring 2014 semester: Chandler Cornwell, who is overseeing administrative support and the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and Anthony Baker, who is helping to redesign the website.

"As an English and Computer Science double major, I am always looking for ways to combine my

majors," says Baker. "Judith's Reading Room seemed like a perfect way for me to do that."

Each volunteer brings their own unique skill set and interests, which are honed to the organization's mission by *(continued on page 2)*

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Judith's Reading Room  
**AT A  
GLANCE**

**73** LIBRARIES  
**1677** Volunteers

SIX STATES  
IL, NJ,  
NY, OR,  
PA, & VA

**\$774,595**  
value of books donated  
**77,263 Books**

Afghanistan  
Bhutan  
China  
India  
Iraq  
Namibia

**12 COUNTRIES**  
Albania  
Cambodia  
Costa Rica  
Indonesia  
Japan  
Nigeria

# VOLUNTEERING 101

## A HANDY GUIDE TO VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT JUDITH'S READING ROOM

Judith's Reading Room has volunteer opportunities for all ages! Here are just a few examples of what you can do:

### ORGANIZE A BOOK DRIVE

Gently-read children's books are always in demand. You can organize a book drive at your school or organization easily with our help. It's a great way to introduce Judith's Reading Room to your friends and coworkers.

### PROMOTE & ORGANIZE EVENTS

There are many events, such as the Barnes & Noble Book Fair, that could be organized in your community to benefit Judith's Reading Room.

### ORGANIZE & INVENTORY BOOKS

Organization is the key to finding the exact books for the precise audience. With our new inventory system in place, we are ready and able to process the books that are not only in our storage but also arriving each day.

### BOX BOOKS

Our most popular and fun activity is boxing books for the troops at our monthly Boxing Parties. For just the cost of shipping the box you pack, you can provide our veterans and servicemen and women with a much-needed escape from military life.



Jared Fantasia and the 2,091 books he collected for China

## STUDENT LEADERS (cont. from page 1)

co-founder and President Cathy Leiber.

"Working with Cathy has been and will continue to be a rewarding experience," says Cornwell. "She is always helping me to find the task or job that I can do that will make the most impact at Judith's Reading Room and in my own personal skill set. These skills, and the people I meet who are more than happy to work with me and to give me whatever help they can, will be invaluable to me as I move forward to the next stage of my life, and I am so grateful that I am here."

Kelsey Fisher, who volunteered over the summer and currently attends Marywood University, concurs: "Volunteering was an open and organic experience, so much so that I could be of assistance wherever my interests took me. One week I was reading to children, the next I was aiding in press coverage, the next I was organizing volunteer events. Judith's Reading Room is as authentic as they come – there's always room for anyone willing to fight the good fight, for education and offering people the simple pleasure of reading."

The impact hasn't just been felt at Judith's Reading Room. Marissa Bottino, student volunteer for the Spring 2013 semester and Muhlenberg College graduate, credits Judith's Reading Room with helping her in her current career. "It taught me to take initiative, remain curious, and always seek to grow and expand my ways of thinking. Inspiring children [through Judith's Reading Room's outreach] sparked my interest in pursuing both an editorial internship and School and Library Marketing position in Penguin Group Publishing's Young Readers division."

Erin D'Amelio, who started it all, is currently serving as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA) in Malaysia. "Working at Judith's Reading Room has given me a better understanding of [literacy]," D'Amelio writes via email from Malaysia, "and the organization has certainly inspired me to continue working on issues of literacy throughout the rest of my career."

Jared Fantasia, a Northampton Area High School junior and frequent volunteer, says it best: "If you are looking for a rewarding volunteer experience, look no further than Judith's Reading Room!"

# events

## MARCH

3

Boxing Party #48  
Celebrate our 4th anniversary of boxing books for troops stationed far from home!  
5 East 3rd Street  
5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

## APRIL

7

Boxing Party #49  
Put some SPRING in your step by boxing books for our troops!  
5 East 3rd Street  
5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

## MAY

5

Boxing Party #50  
Celebrate the mothers serving far from home by sending a special Mother's Day note!  
5 East 3rd Street  
5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

## WHAT'S ON YOUR NIGHTSTAND?

**WE ASK SCOTT LEIBER, CO-FOUNDER OF JUDITH'S READING ROOM AND TREASURER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ABOUT HIS NIGHTSTAND**

What is special about your nightstand?

My nightstand not only represents my preferred choice in subject matter but also represents the various media by which I receive that subject matter; namely, traditional hard copy books, audio books and electronic books. With time being at such a premium, I have been utilizing my daily commute to and from the office to power through a constant stream of audio books, which the clock would otherwise be holding their readable brethren hostage on the old "to be gotten to pile." The audio book I am currently enjoying is the second volume of *The Autobiography of Mark Twain*, the first volume of which I also consumed in audio form (see box displayed in picture.) My NOOK allows me to have many of the several books I am reading at any given time with me at all times in electronic form. Most of these electronic books are also accessible on my Smartphone in the event I am kept waiting in the car or in a reception area.

Do you judge a book by its cover?

I judge a book by whether or not the subject matter was handled in an interesting manner. Since I tend to read mostly biography, history and nonfiction in general, one becomes familiar with the style and approach of a Robert Caro, a Doris Kearns Goodwin, a David McCullough or a Malcolm Gladwell. Since going into one of their books already interested in the topic, I am predisposed to the subject matter. As a consequence, I am looking forward to a level of creativity that will be both entertaining as well as informative. A classic example of this level of creativity for me is represented in Robert Caro's first volume of his biography of President Lyndon Johnson with his chapter entitled "Sad Irons," in which he poignantly sets forth the singular plight of the pioneer woman typical of the West Texas geography that spawned LBJ. In a similar vein is Doris Kearns Goodwin's description of Rose Kennedy's maturing years with her struggles against traditional norms for women in *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*. The reader comes away with a clear sense of the lineage from Rose Kennedy to Eunice Kennedy to Maria Shriver.

What genre do you find yourself reading the most?

As noted above, my focus is nonfiction with a strong leaning toward biography. My goal in my reading is to gain insight as to why we are where we are from the interplay of the past. It is a constant process of connecting the dots by adding more and more threads to what ties us to that past. Since each historian interprets for him or herself the specific subject matter at hand, it is then for me, the reader, to add the author's contribution to my understanding and move on accordingly. Within this context, I add to my sense of political history a very strong dose of cultural history as well. Many show business entrepreneurs, composers, song writers and personalities whose biographies I have read over the years come to mind from the early founders of the motion picture industry to the icons of stage and screen. These individuals helped to shape, influence and change our society in their particular way just as politicians did in theirs. I recently finished *The*

*Gershwins and Me* by Michael Feinstein, and I am currently in the middle of *Frank: The Voice*, a biography of Frank Sinatra by James Kaplan.

What is the best book you have ever read?

I am finding the experience of *The Autobiography of Mark Twain* to be very interesting on several levels. First of all, the work, of course, is in the author's own "voice" as opposed to the many characters within his novels. Published in 2010, most of the autobiography did not see the light of day for 100 years after Mark Twain's death in 1910. The author stipulated as such in his will due to the sardonic nature of his reminiscences of past friends, acquaintances and logically enemies. He did not want the direct recipients of his vitriol or their children to be embarrassed while still living. The structure of the autobiography is very interesting as well, in that it is not at all linear but rather a complex quilt of thought-provoking, entertaining and tragic vignettes recalling all the different personalities and events of the author's life. As a reader, one definitely gets the sense that Mark Twain, although now gone over 100 years, would have fit in perfectly with our modern forms of communication such as the Internet, email, Twitter, et al. I highly recommend both volumes for all Mark Twain fans.

What book are you most looking forward to reading?

As evidenced in the picture of my nightstand, *The Bully Pulpit* by Doris Kearns Goodwin is patiently awaiting my gaze. The book outlines the complex relationship between Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft and the most prominent U.S. journalists of the early 1900s. I first heard about this book while attending a conference up in Boston about seven years ago where Doris Kearns Goodwin was the keynote speaker. Of course, at that time, Goodwin's book, *A Team of Rivals* about Abraham Lincoln and his cabinet, had just been published, and that is what she was principally speaking about. However, she did mention that she had just started working on the Teddy Roosevelt book. By the way, all attendees of the conference received an autographed copy of *A Team of Rivals*, and that copy is also pictured in my nightstand photo.

Want your nightstand featured here? Just email us a picture of your nightstand and the answer to our five questions! [info@judithsreadingroom.org](mailto:info@judithsreadingroom.org)



### Selections from Scott's Nightstand:

NOOK

*Autobiography of Mark Twain*  
*The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* Edmund Morris  
*A Terrible Glory* James Donovan  
*D-Day* Antony Beevor

*Theodore Rex* Edmund Morris  
*Team of Rivals* Doris Kearns Goodwin  
*The Bully Pulpit* Doris Kearns Goodwin  
*The Monuments Men* Robert Edsel  
*A Thousand Days* Arthur Schlesinger



**JUDITH'S**  
**READING ROOM**

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BETHLEHEM, PA 18015

**bookish**

[www.judithsreadingroom.org](http://www.judithsreadingroom.org) | [www.facebook.com/JudithsReadingRoom](https://www.facebook.com/JudithsReadingRoom) | [www.twitter.com/JReadingRm](https://www.twitter.com/JReadingRm)



Judith's Reading Room was established in 2010 in memory of Judith F. Krug, cousin to the founders of the organization. Judy was a librarian for over 40 years and served as the Director of the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom. In 1982, during one of the nation's periodic censorship epidemics, Judy established Banned Books Week, a celebration of authors, their literature, and the Constitution's protection of free expression.

In her memory, Judith's Reading Room donates libraries and ships books to people who do not have access to books in America and around the world.

## VOLUNTEER OF THE **MONTH:** **DORIS LEIBER**

Doris, who hails from the San Francisco Bay Area, was Judith F. Krug's aunt and is the mother of co-founder Scott Leiber. Every year when she visits the Leiber clan she volunteers at Judith's Reading Room. In April, 2013, Judith's Reading Room honored Doris by agreeing to ship 50 new and gently-read children's books every other month to the Canandaigua,

New York VA hospital. The hospital reached out to the organization because they said they were seeing many young vets with children, who had nothing to read in the waiting rooms. Dedicating these shipments to Canandaigua was a natural because Doris is a native New Yorker, a veteran of World War II, and a mother of five! Doris, a member of the Greatest Generation and Navy veteran, WWII, where she served as a WAVE based in the Bay Area, will turn 91 in August. Thank you, Doris, for your service to our country and to Judith's Reading Room!

