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ARIZONA HUMANITIES COUNCIL DONATES BOOKS TO NINE TRIBAL LIBRARIES

(Phoenix, AZ) – With diminishing budgets and tightening resources, the Arizona Humanities Council (AHC) recognized the urgent need to assist Arizona libraries in building their book collections. In working with a referral from Mary Villegas, Tribal Library Consultant at the Arizona State Library, the AHC identified nine Arizona tribal libraries that could benefit by sharing a donation of nearly 1,000 volumes. The libraries are Kaibab Paiute Indian Reservation Public Library (Fredonia), Ava Ich Asit Tribal Library (Fort Mohave Indian Tribe in Mohave Valley), McNary Community Library (White Mountain Apache Tribe in McNary), Colorado River Indian Tribes Library/Archive (Parker), San Xavier Learning Center Library (Tohono O’odham Nation in Tucson), Ak-Chin Indian Community Library (Maricopa), Ft. McDowell Yavapai Nation Library (Fountain Hills), Venito Garcia Library (Tohono O’odham Nation in Sells) and Ira H. Hayes Memorial Library (Gila River Indian Community in Sacaton).

“The contribution of nearly 1000 books to nine tribal libraries in Arizona reflects our deep commitment to the importance of stories as pathways to self-discovery and cultural awareness. We hope that readers of all ages will benefit from the wisdom and insights that these books carry,” commented Herb Paine, AHC Executive Director. Paine, who assumed the leadership role at AHC last year, uncovered a vast array of books in storage from previous editions of AHC’s *Arizona Book Festival*, an annual event bringing together avid readers, publishers and authors. In 2008, AHC suspended future editions of the *Arizona Book Festival* to explore new directions and options better aligned with contemporary issues and interests. Thus, Paine realized that the need to better utilize these stored texts became evident. New events are planned for Tempe this spring and in Central Phoenix this fall.

Melanie S. Toledo, Ak-Chin Indian Community Library Manager, remarked, “AHC’s donation of these books will be beneficial to the Ak-Chin Library because of the demand for certain books. For example, I noticed in the box of donated books was the children’s book, *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People’s Ears*. This particular book is a recipient of the Caldecott Medal and is in demand at our library, but due to the budget I opted to order one copy. With this donation, now the Ak-Chin Library will have two copies of this popular book, making it readily available for others to enjoy.”

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The donated books include favorites such as *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak and *The Harvest Birds* by Blanca López De Mariscal, as well as such significant titles as *Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry, Pulitzer prize-winning epic masterpiece of the American West; Newberry Medal winner *Holes* by Louis Sachar; and Leo Lionni's *Frederick*, a Caldecott Honor Book. The Newbery Medal, named for eighteenth-century British bookseller John Newbery, is awarded to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children. The Caldecott Medal, named in honor of nineteenth-century English illustrator Randolph Caldecott, is awarded to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children. Both awards are sponsored by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association.

The Arizona Humanities Council creates opportunities for sharing the diverse stories through critical thinking and public discussion, to better understand and appreciate one another, so that we can make informed decisions about our collective future. Founded in 1973, AHC is the Arizona affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. AHC is not a state agency. AHC supports public programming in the humanities that promotes understanding of human thoughts, actions, creations, and values. AHC works with museums, libraries, and other cultural and educational organizations to bring humanities programs to residents throughout Arizona. All AHC-supported activities must involve the humanities disciplines—history, literature, philosophy, and other studies that examine the human condition. For more information, visit AZHumanities.org.

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Melanie S. Toledo, manager of the Ak-Chin Indian Community Library, accepts a donation of non-fiction and fiction books from Herb Paine, Executive Director of the Arizona Humanities Council.