Dreisbach Award
for Exemplary Service to Berks County Libraries

This is the highest honor the System presents. Established in 1996, this award is named for Dr. Dodson E. Dreisbach, founding member of the Friends of Berks County Public Libraries, and first president of the System Advisory Board. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to public library service development.

Previous Winners of the Dreisbach Award

2003  Sara R. Mack  2004  Pat and Garland Bear  *  2005  Friends of Berks County Public Libraries  *
2007  Commissioner Judy Schwank  *  2010  Linda Baer  *  2010  Julie Rinehart  *  2011  Joan Cook  *
2013  Sandra Hanson  *  2014  Liz Eshelman  *  2016  Mary Young  *  2017  Vicki Steinberg and Pam Hilbert  *
2018  Reneé Dietrich  *  2020/21  Jennifer Smilko

The Chet Hagan Memorial Public Relations Award

How It Began  In 1991, the annual System/District Trustee Workshop program focused on the role of effective public relations in securing adequate funding for libraries. Chet Hagan, as a member of the System Board, was the prime mover in developing and arranging this well-received workshop program. Chet was then the editor of Bookends, the excellent publication of the Friends of the Reading-Berks Public Libraries. And so the Public Relations Award began with its first presentation to Chet Hagan on September 14, 1991.

Why a Hen?  At that 1991 workshop, the following fable was told:

A goose is probably the most stupid creature that God ever created. When a goose lays an egg, what does she do? Does she flap her wings and lift her voice to the high heavens announcing the fact? No! She waddles off as if she were ashamed of the feat and tells no one.

What does the hen do when she lays an egg, which is much smaller than the fine specimen produced by the goose? She announces the fact to all who will hear! She lifts her voice in glee! She is proud of her product and wants the whole world to know about it.

What is the end result? There is usually more demand for hen eggs than there is for goose eggs. It pays to advertise. The hen knows this, but the goose doesn’t.

The award made to Chet Hagan in 1991 consisted of a trophy featuring a hen — the Henny was born! In 1992, the System Board voted to add a dividend to the award by presenting the winning library with a check for $250.

Remembering Chet Hagan  Following Chet’s death in 2002, the System Board and the Friends Board wished to honor his memory and his many contributions to library service development in Berks County. The annual PR award was therefore renamed The Chet Hagan Memorial Public Relations Award. The Friends added their own annual $250 prize, bringing the total for the winning library to $500. Currently, the award is co-sponsored by the County of Berks and Friends of Berks County Public Libraries.
CELEBRATING LIBRARIES
Program of Awards

Award recipients are selected by the System Advisory Board from among nominations submitted by staff, trustees and Friends of member libraries.

Welcome and Introductions .................................................. Amy Resh, Library System Administrator

Greetings from the District Center ........................................... Becky Wanamaker, District Consultant

Presentation of Awards

Dreisbach Award For Exemplary Service — Presented in recognition of an individual or group’s outstanding contributions to public library service development.

Mike Najarian, Reading Public Library & District Library Center

Linda Baer Friend of the Year — Presented in honor of Linda Baer, past President of the Friends of Berks County Public Libraries and recognizes the significant and substantial commitment of time, energy and creativity of a single member of a local library Friends organization. The award includes a $100 cash prize sponsored by the Friends of the Berks County Public Libraries.

Annette Heffelfinger, Kutztown

Trustee of the Year — Presented to a public library trustee (or entire board of trustees) in recognition of outstanding leadership of a System-member library.

Michel Micozzi, Reading Bernville Community Library Board of Trustees

Outstanding Local Business — Presented to a local business or local office of a regional, state or national corporation in recognition of its support of public library services.

Redner’s Markets, Hamburg
Firefly Bookstore, Kutztown
LJ’s Fitness, Womelsdorf

Outstanding Library Director — Presented to a member library director who fosters cooperation and collaboration among member libraries, shares time and talent with other libraries on county-wide initiatives, and has an effective and resourceful impact on the community.

Debe Donley, Bernville

Outstanding Library Staff Member — Presented to a staff member at a member library who demonstrates exemplary library service and has an effective and resourceful impact on the community.

Egon Cools, Reading NE Carol Donahue, Village Leah Ruth, Robesonia
Barbara Orkis, Bernville Linda Capozello, Reading Main

Outstanding Library Volunteer — This award is presented to a distinguished volunteer who has made noteworthy contributions to the library that is above and beyond what is reasonably expected.

Betsy Reifsnyder, Bernville Janet Barr, Hamburg Tyler Jones, Exeter
Caroline Edwards, Womelsdorf Weston Niemczyk, Muhlenberg

Outstanding Fundraising Effort — Presented in recognition of a onetime or ongoing fundraising project that is especially creative or unique. The amount of funds raised is not a factor in determining the recipient of this award.

The Haunted Library, Bernville Rock the Library, Village
Fire and Ice Festival, Womelsdorf

Outstanding Program — Presented in recognition of a member library for the presentation of an adult, young adult, or children’s program of exceptional interest or creativity.

Food for Thought, Reading Main Manny in the Wild, Village
Summer Reading Program, Bernville Spice Club, Hamburg
Beyond Kutztown, Kutztown Death Cafe, Exeter

Chet Hagan Memorial Public Relations Award — Presented to a library that demonstrates excellent public relations activities carried out during the year.

Reading Public Library

Sponsored by Berks County Public Libraries and the Friends of Berks County Public Libraries