

My Soapbox: Put a library on your Christmas list

By Ann Knudson

Most Mensans love reading. Unfortunately, a lot of children don't. That hurts their schoolwork, and in the long run, hurts us all. The poorly educated have a hard time finding work, which makes them a burden on the rest of us.

Whatever their other merits, Harry Potter books have one overwhelming virtue: they make kids want to read. Lots of kids. Kids who don't normally read.

What fools we would be to let this opportunity go by.

Does your local school library have those books? If not, may I suggest you donate them a copy or two? Plus the rest of the series as they come out over the next few years?

The librarian will love you, and so will the kids. Bismarck kids go on waiting lists for weeks to get a turn on those books. Not all parents take their kids to city libraries, but all kids go to school. Most school libraries run on a shoestring, with only tiny budgets for new material, so don't assume they'll buy the Potter books. Put a library on your Christmas list!

(If for some reason you can't stand Harry Potter, talk to your local school librarian about what else she could use. A newspaper or magazine subscription? Some Dr. Seuss books? The Lord of the Rings trilogy? Or, if you can't afford anything new, how about thinning out your crowded bookshelves and giving them whatever is age-appropriate?)

Election Update

At the Question the Candidates Picnic held in Valley City, editor Shirley Starke and I met LocSec candidate Brian Tinker and Deputy LocSec candidate Gay Rawson. Barring last-minute surprises, such as a write-in candidate, they will be our new officers, since Karen Swanay has withdrawn from the race.

I am happy to say that ND Mensa will be in good hands. Brian has some sensible plans for revitalizing the group, starting with training several proctors so possible Mensans can be tested without having to drive across the state. Gay will be an able assistant. We needed some fresh blood, and we're getting it.

I would like to thank the other members of the Nominating Committee for their service to ND Mensa: Jocelyn Sloan, Jerry Slag and Bob Galbraith. Thank You!

Prairie Dawg by email poll results show interest

I recently sent out a message by email asking ND Mensa members if they would like to receive the Prairie Dawg by email. That would save work in

folding and stapling, would save money in printing and postage, and the Dawg would arrive faster. So far, 13 members have replied in the affirmative.

Since not everybody has an email address listed in the material I got from national Mensa, some people were left out of the poll. There were also a couple of messages that bounced back to me, probably due to typos in the address. If you did not receive the Prairie Dawg poll question but would like to get the Dawg by email, please send me a message at kann2@qwest.net.