

KIDS NEED TO READ

INSPIRING IMAGINATION

March 2009 Newsletter

Kids Need to Read works to encourage a lifelong love of reading in all children.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

From time to time, I like to take a few moments to read the many beautiful [testimonials](#) that have been sent to Kids Need to Read. They remind me of the importance of fulfilling our mission. Upon reading our testimonials recently, I was struck by how many times the word “kindness” was used. This resonated with me, because the founding group of KNTR volunteers was originally formed to perform acts of kindness for no other reason than the joy to be found in doing so. Our motto was “Kindness is a Strength” and we lived it. This kindhearted giving soon led us to author PJ Haarsma and the founding of Kids Need to Read. I feel exceptionally blessed to have been able to watch a tiny seed of kindness grow into a foundation of charitable giving. I am humbled to read the recognition of kindness in the letters we receive, but overjoyed that our volunteers, who believed so deeply in the strength of kindness, can now witness its truth.

In turn, I would like to take this moment to thank all of our supporters whose great kindness makes the work of Kids Need to Read possible. Without your fundraising work and your many contributions, we would not receive letters of thanks for our kindness. **Those letters belong to all of our supporters** – please spend a few moments reading them and know that your kindness is a strength!

I expect to pass through this world but once; any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

– Stephan Grellet

Denise Gary
Executive Director



DONATIONS

A summary of our most recent book donations

Meeting the ChalleNGe in Wyoming

Kids Need to Read is proud to have donated forty books valued at \$540 to the Wyoming Youth ChalleNGe Program in Guernsey, Wyoming. This group is part of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program, a semi-military program that provides second chances to teens ages 16-19. Their dedicated volunteers and teachers work hard to provide books for their students – literally combing garage sales for suitable texts. Their funding is such that primary needs must come first, and books are hard to come by for them.

Kids Need to Read is happy to have helped this group continue their efforts to provide these kids with a better chance in life.



Helping Readers Rock Out in Arizona

Sonoran Science Academy in Tucson, Arizona is a non-profit, K-12 charter school working to build a library for its lower elementary student body. Due to lack of space, it currently does not have one, but the school's administration is dedicated to fostering a love for language arts in their students. Parent volunteer Charmaine Thomas proposed an after-school book club to encourage reading. Her idea was readily accepted, and the Rockin Readers Book Club was born. Since she was building her library collection from the ground up, Charmaine contacted Kids Need to Read in the hope that we could help her get started.

Kids Need to Read donated thirty-one books valued at \$400 to their library. At the time of our donation, the Rockin Readers Book Club had sixteen members, all children in second or third grade. Our donation consisted of books appropriate for ages 5-12 to allow for planned further expansion of the group.

Rebuilding Readers in Greensburg, Kansas

On May 4, 2007, a vicious tornado ripped through Greensburg, Kansas. Ninety-five percent of this city of 1,500 people was completely destroyed by the storm. Months later, schools reopened in trailers, and the town is still rebuilding over a year and a half after the tornado. There is little space for books in these improvised schools, but when a suggestion to help came in to Kids Need to Read, we responded. Forty books, worth \$540, were sent to help this city rebuild its high school library.

Kids Need to Read is grateful to Jill Stevens, who pointed us toward the Greensburg need, and we are honored to be helping this community to rebuild after such a terrible tragedy. Keep an eye out for future KNTR donations to Greensburg's elementary school. They asked us to hold off on donating to them due to lack of space, but you can bet that Kids Need to Read will be there to help when things change!

Fueling Caribbean Dreams

When librarian Brenda Rodriguez moved back to her native Puerto Rico after living in the United States, she discovered that her students at Borinquen Bilingual School and Sport Development Center in Aquadilla, did not have access to enough books appropriate for their reading levels. Borinquen Bilingual School is an elementary school that serves almost six hundred children. With the help of parental donations, the school started a library two years ago, but Brenda discovered that she did not have nearly enough books to meet the needs of the students.

Kids Need to Read was thrilled to get such an enthusiastic letter and sent 30 books, valued at \$380, to the Borinquen Bilingual School. Kids Need to Read sends thanks to Brenda for all of her hard work getting kids to read. We are delighted to help the Borinquen Bilingual School make some Caribbean dreams come true!

Odessa Brown Children's Clinic Partnership

The Odessa Brown Children's Clinic in Seattle, Washington, is a perfect match to The Kids Need to Read Foundation. We both understand the importance of reading and want to help get books into the hands of children. Kids Need to Read has formed a partnership with the Odessa Brown Children's Clinic to do just that.

Odessa Brown gives books to every child who comes in for a well child check-up. Not only do they give a book to the patient, but also to any siblings who are with them. The clinic receives partial funding from the national Reach Out and Read program, but due to massive budget cuts, it is not enough. Kids Need to Read is working with the Odessa Brown Children's Clinic to supply books to all children who come in for a well child check-up, as well as any acute visits. To start, the foundation is going to be giving the clinic 2,400 books annually. That number will grow, as we do, to 3,600 books annually.

Kids Need to Read is proud to be working with such a wonderful group of people. We commend the Odessa Brown Children's Clinic for their commitment to children and the community they serve. We look forward to helping them achieve their worthy goal!

[DONATE TODAY](#) and help KNTR inspire more readers!

FEATURED TESTIMONIALS

Letters from donation recipients

Chris Naughton, Chairperson, Library Improvements Committee
B. F. Norton Elementary School
Cumberland, Rhode Island

Thank you so much! We cannot express how grateful we are to be receiving these books! These books will be a true asset to our library.

Thank you so much for donating them to us, as they will not only improve our library but, will truly enhance our student's education! Thank you for caring.

From all of us at B. F. Norton Elementary School and especially the Library Improvements Committee, THANK YOU!

Donna Jordon, Branch Supervisory Clerk
Eagleville Bicentennial Public Library
Eagleville, Tennessee

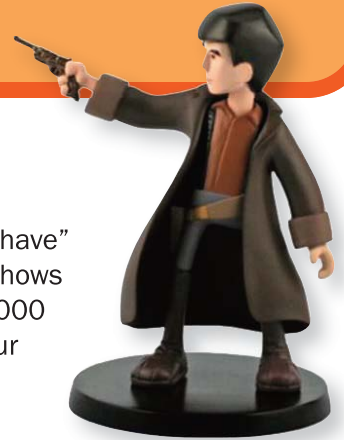
The shipment of the 72 books arrived today. The books are absolutely wonderful and the kids will certainly enjoy them. I will put them out on display so it will draw their attention to the new selection.

Your organization is awesome and I can't thank you enough for your generous gift of these books.

[Read more testimonials.](#)

FUNDRAISING

An update of recent fundraising efforts by our volunteers and sponsors



QMx Limited Edition Mal Maquette

QMx is donating a portion of the proceeds from their limited-edition “I Aim to Misbehave” Mal maquette to Kids Need to Read. The 4.5-inch resin statue is hand-painted and shows Mal with his gun drawn and browncoat billowing behind him. There were only 1,000 “I Aim to Misbehave” limited-edition maquettes made. Read more and place your order at [QMx's website](#).

Limited Edition *Serenity* Comic Book

The California Browncoats, together with Dark Horse comics, developed the Limited Edition *Serenity: Better Days #1* comic book featuring an exclusive cover limited to 5,000 copies. The cover is the pencil art version of the rare *Dark Horse 100* cover done by series artist Will Conrad. KNTR *Serenity* comics can be bought at the Kids Need to Read [eBay store](#).

Giving is Good for the Soul – and the Body

The Kids Need to Read Foundation has been blessed with many wonderful and interesting ways to raise needed funds since its creation, and this current fundraiser is no exception. Kazia Hodges, a Kids Need to Read volunteer, has created a website called Healthy Giving. She hopes to use this tool to inspire her own personal weight loss journey while simultaneously raising money for Kids Need to Read.

The idea is simple. Sponsors pledge a donation for each pound Kazia loses from January 23, 2009 until May 23, 2009, and the money goes directly to Kids Need to Read. One-time donations are also accepted.

If you would like more information on this project, or if you would like to pledge a donation, please go to the [Healthy Giving website](#).

Geek Giving – Strength in Numbers

The idea that a little can go a long way is the driving force behind [geek-giving.org](#), a new website designed to help raise money for charity.

The group challenges the geeks of the world to donate to charity just one percent of what they would normally spend attending science fiction conventions and events. That may not seem like much, but if even half of convention attendees participated, that one percent could add up to a whole lot very quickly.

The Kids Need to Read Foundation is one of the chosen beneficiaries of this program, and we send a hearty thank you to [geek-giving.org](#) for including us in their program. If you would like more information about this unique fundraising idea, please visit the [geek-giving.org website](#).

Heartwarming Holiday Gift

Holiday traditions are part of what make holidays special. For one family in Santa Cruz, California, Christmas means a time of giving. Each year, instead of exchanging presents, the Boone family gets together and decides on a joint charity donation.

After researching The Kids Need to Read Foundation, the Boones decided to honor us with their 2008 gift. Kids Need to Read received a \$250 donation accompanied by this hand-written note.

We grew up with a love for reading, and we like that your organization is really based on fostering that love in children through providing great books to libraries and schools. We found you because we are also Nathan Fillion fans, and this just makes us appreciate him even more! Keep up the wonderful work, and good luck in the coming year!

Jill, Cristie and Curtis Boone

The Kids Need to Read Foundation salutes the Boone family's holiday tradition of charity, and hopes that their generosity is paid back to them in spades for keeping the true spirit of giving alive and well in these tough times.

Austin Browncoats eStore Supports KNTR

The Austin Browncoats host [Whedon Wares: The Browncoat Store](#) where customers can find a wide array of Browncoat goodies with all proceeds going to charity. Every quarter, Whedon Wares chooses a new charity to support with the proceeds from its sales. The first quarter of 2009 was dedicated to Kids Need to Read!

Big Damn Fan Films Fundraiser for KNTR

Big Damn Fan Films, creators of the upcoming film *Browncoats: Redemption*, are sponsoring a fundraiser through [Facebook Causes](#) to help "Get Kids Need to Read to Dragon*Con 2009". The group has raised approximately \$1,600 for Kids Need to Read so far! The money will be used to provide a booth, marketing materials and appropriate signage for Kids Need to Read at Dragon*Con. Thank you to all those who have participated in this fundraiser; your donations will help us inform more people about our mission to put exciting, new books into the hands of children! We look forward to attending Dragon*Con!

[DONATE TODAY](#) and help KNTR inspire more readers!

EVENTS

Event recaps and calendar of upcoming conferences

Austin Browncoats Tout KNTR at CreationCon and the Browncoat Ball

The Austin Browncoats sponsored fundraising events and helped spread the word about KNTR's mission at the Browncoat Ball and Creation's "Salute to *Firefly* and *Serenity*," raising approximately \$1,700 for the foundation.

Big Damn Fan Films Promote KNTR at FarPoint

Big Damn Fan Films attended the FarPoint Convention in Baltimore, Maryland on February 13-15, where they gave out Kids Need to Read buttons and bookmarks, and sold 12 of the KNTR limited edition *Serenity* Comics, raising \$120 for the foundation.

KNTR at ICON 2008

The Kids Need to Read Foundation would be nothing without our amazing volunteers and sponsors. Here is a report by Suze Bolduc from her weekend at ICON 33 this past November!

I had another great weekend at ICON (www.iowa-icon.com) at my table for Kids Need to Read! I was concerned that the economic problems cascading down on us would cause a dip in our donations and found out that I was VERY wrong! The folks at Icon opened their hearts (and their wallets) to give us an astounding pile of donations — \$140. That's over and above the silent auction and sale of Jayne hats! We had the support of many familiar faces from OSFest and made many new friends who took loads of information about Kids Need to Read and our Holiday Store. All in all, \$350 was raised over the weekend. And I was assured that we'd be more than welcome to come back next year!

Everyone at KNTR would like to thank Suze for her continued support! We look forward to working with her, and all of our sponsors, in the years to come.

UPCOMING EVENTS

***The Softwire: Wormhole Pirates on Orbis 3* Book Launch and KNTR Fundraiser**
Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 2615 Vista Way, Oceanside, California (760) 529-0106
April 18, 2009
3:00 PM

Plan to join us for some space pirate fun as we welcome a new book for kids and raise money for KNTR! Twenty-five percent of all proceeds from event book sales that day will be donated to Kids Need to Read. Special guests to attend.

DemiCon 20
Des Moines, Iowa
Hotel Fort Des Moines
May 1-3, 2009

KNTR sponsor Suze Bolduc will be running an information table for Kids Need to Read, where she will sell Jayne Cobb hats and Special Edition *Serenity: Better Days* #1 comic books, conduct a silent auction, and hand out KNTR buttons and bookmarks.

Dragon*Con
Atlanta, Georgia
September 4-7, 2009

This event will take place at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta, Atlanta Hilton, Sheraton Atlanta and the Atlanta Marriott Marquis.

A booth is being provided to KNTR courtesy of Big Damn Fan Films' Facebook Cause. The Austin Browncoats will also be fundraising for Kids Need to Read. Join KNTR, Big Damn Fan Films and the Austin Browncoats at Dragon*Con, the largest multi-media, popular culture convention focusing on science fiction and fantasy, gaming, comics, literature, art, music, and film in the US.

[View our upcoming events calendar.](#)

NEWS

Stay up to date with everything happening at Kids Need to Read

Auction Block

The Kids Need to Read eBay Store has been a busy place these last few months! We launched our new eBay store by holding our first annual Kids Need to Read Holiday Store fundraiser, and BOY were we happy with the results! We raised \$2,170.00! Kids Need to Read would like to give a BIG thank you to everyone who supported the Holiday Store. Whether you donated an item or purchased something, you made a difference, and we really appreciate your help. We are already starting to pull items together for this year's store. It is going to be bigger and better than our last one!



Our eBay store continues to be popular. We have a few items that will be in our store inventory regularly. The first are our copies of *Serenity: Better Days #1* comic signed by Alan Tudyk. These are the comics that were discussed by Alan Tudyk and Nathan Fillion at Dragon*Con in September 2008. A great item to add to your collection! We are also offering our popular, unsigned, Terrifyn' Space Monkeys! That's right, now you too can cozy up with your own little space snuggler . . . or should that be smuggler? Last, but certainly not least, are our copies of San Diego Comic-Con Limited Edition *Serenity: Better Days #1* Exclusive Variant comic book. This special comic features Will Conrad's rare *Dark Horse 100* cover, but in its pencil art form! These comics were a joint venture between Dark Horse Comics and the California Browncoats and were sold at San Diego Comic-Con 2008 with all the proceeds going to The Kids Need to Read Foundation. There were only 5,000 copies made, so these are an especially rare collector's item!

We will be holding our monthly auctions on the first Sunday of every month. We have been pulling together an impressive collection of items that are sure to bring a smile to the face of any Browncoat. The Kids Need to Read Auctions will have several *Serenity/Firefly* items signed by Nathan Fillion and Alan Tudyk, as well as a very special item signed by all but one of the main cast! For you Nathan Fillion fans, we will have some special treats as well. We have not forgotten our other sci-fi fans either. Coming up we will have an item from the long running *Babylon 5* series signed by Jerry Doyle! This is just a taste of what is to come, so stay tuned!

As always, we welcome donations of items for auction. If you have something you would like to donate, please send an email to me at debbie@kidsneedtoread.org. We welcome all items, whether they are sci-fi related or not!

Once again, thank you for all of your support! Everyone here at The Kids Need to Read Foundation is grateful for all that you do to help our cause.

[Visit the Kids Need to Read eBay store.](#)

A New Look for the New Year

In January, we unveiled our newly redesigned website. The new website was made possible due to the hard work of KNTR volunteers and staff Tabetha Wallace, Pepper Hodge, Denise Gary, Kristen Klein and PJ Haarsma. Together they created a colorful, streamlined, and more informative website for the foundation.

[Be sure to check out our new website.](#)

Dr. James Blasingame Joins KNTR Board of Directors

Kids Need to Read is thrilled to announce the newest addition to its Board of Directors, Dr. James Blasingame. James is an associate professor of English at Arizona State University, where he teaches methods courses in the teaching of writing and young adult literature, and supervises student teachers. He is president of the Arizona English Teachers' Association, president-elect of the National Council of Teachers of English's Assembly on Literature for Adolescents, and served on the committee that wrote the Arizona Department of Education Writing Standards. He is editor of *The ALAN Review*, the publication on young adult literature of the National Council of Teachers of English, and creates the Books for Adolescents pages of the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, the teen literacy publication of the International Reading Association. James received the Arizona State University 2008 Professor of the Year Award, the 2007 Arizona State University Professor of the Year Special Recognition Award, and was named the 2007 Arizona State University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Distinguished Teacher of the Humanities.

Kids Need to Read is honored to have such a distinguished member of the education community serve on its board.

[See all our board members.](#)

Michael's Book Bytes

Michael is a seventh grade student who loves to read and cook. That's right, cook! He joined Kids Need to Read because he thought that it would be a great opportunity to help everyone open up to literacy.

Michael's blogs include interviews with authors James A. Owen, Dean Lorey, Kara Kingsley, J. S. Lewis, and Brandon Mull. Most recently, he has submitted book reviews of Stephenie Meyer's novels *Twilight* and *The Host* and Adeline Yen Mah's *Chinese Cinderella*.

[Read Michael's Book Bytes blog.](#)

Kids Need to Read Merchandise

Help promote literacy at your school or office with our shiny line of mousepads and mugs ... perfect for students and teachers! While you are there, be sure to check out our complete line of shirts and accessories.

The net proceeds from our CafePress store will help us buy more books for schools and libraries. Thanks for shopping!

[Visit our store today!](#)

FROM THE FOUNDER

With the current state of the economy, asking people to give to a charity must be one of the toughest things to do. People are losing their jobs, their homes and their self esteem. "How could they possibly want to buy books for school kids," you might ask? What we should be asking is, "How could they not?" When governments give billions to bailouts, bankers and bombs, it is our children who lose the most. Education gets slashed, programs get cut, and libraries are closed. How anyone can see a future for mankind when we refuse to put education above everything else is beyond me. Although I'm very hopeful for the current administration, we cannot deny that this country has a history of this shortsightedness.

I feel that what The Kids Need to Read Foundation is doing is now more important than ever. We cannot rise above our condition if we do not invest in our future -- and our future depends upon the education of our children. These words have been echoed many times before, but The Kids Need to Read Foundation puts this belief into practice.

I want to thank everyone who is working so hard during these tough times, especially when things seem futile. I do see a future where everyone embraces the importance of education over bonuses and bombs. It may even be with the children whom we help today.



About KNTR

Kids Need to Read is a children's literacy foundation established by children's author PJ Haarsma and actor Nathan Fillion. The foundation is supported by a global group of volunteers whose dream is to get more books into the hands of the children who need them.

Kids Need to Read raises money to buy books for under-funded schools and libraries, as well as for organizations who give books to children. Funds are raised through various fundraising events.

Kids Need to Read donates from an official book list that includes a variety of well-reviewed books for preschool to teenaged children. The foundation especially strives to donate books that appeal to reluctant readers.



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