

At Home in Kensington – Noyes Library

July-August 1991

A community is marked by the people and events that call it home. In Kensington, your friends and neighbors have been hard at work making you community a better place. Take time this summer to explore the local parks and libraries, get to know you neighbors, and gear up for an exciting fall.

The Stars – Near and Far – Still Come Out for Noyes Library

“Before the words were out of our mouth, people were asking how they could help,” says Barbara Hutchinson, leader of the effort to save the Noyes Children’s Library in Kensington from closing due to county budget cuts. Word of the effort to save the region’s first library – now nearly 100 years old and still in its original small wooden home – brought forth an outpouring of community and national support.

Overall, more than 200 community volunteers pitched in with one-time or ongoing help to the effort. One volunteer who couldn’t leave home spent countless hour hand lettering the dozens of elegant signs for the benefit auction in June. Barbara and her “core committee,” of 19 volunteers spent days and evenings on the phone, driving, marking personal contacts, and meeting to plan and arrange the special events that raised the money needed to continue the library’s longstanding Tuesday- Thursday-Saturday schedule.

The results have been spectacular. Community donations have grown to more than \$24,000, with the Town of Kensington contributing \$5,000 and civic groups, business, and many individuals also providing support. A grant of \$10,000 has come from the National Home library Fund.

The showcase event—the June auction at Strathmore Hall Arts Center — was an evening of fun that added \$23,000 more to the fundraising total. The people who came that night sampled fresh fruit and other treats donated by local businesses. Just to name a few – Anne and Jimmy Hawkins of Hawkins Produce in Kensington contributed 40 pounds of grapes. Fresh Fields and the American Café both contributed many delicious snacks. The stunning flowers and flower arrangements were the donations of the American Plant Food and Johnson’s Garden Center. Everyone who donated their time, money, imaginative items for the auction, or other help deserves a hearty thanks – each donation made a difference.

These events over the last few months in Kensington have also helped pout the national spotlight on the crucial role of public libraries in providing opportunities and access for people of all ages in a community. Now attention is turning to the future and the ongoing efforts needed to maintain the public-private partnership that rescued Noyes this year. And the offers to help continue – starting with hair trimming “Cut-a-Thon,” on September 8.