

Poorman family gives \$153,000 to Ross Library

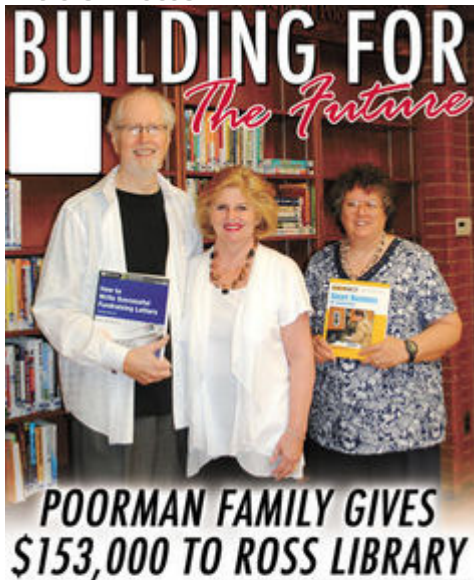
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LOCK HAVEN - Children marvel at the stone camels and lion in the lobby of the Ross Children's Library, soon to become the Youth Wing.

The Chinese stone art pieces must look life-sized to little ones who come to unlock their imaginations at the library.

They are among a collection of stone art and ancient sculpture donated to the facility by the Stephen Poorman family. The artworks date from the 16th century and represent the Ming Dynasty era (1368-1644). They are among those often considered the finest of Chinese ceramics, according to Mr. Poorman.

Article Photos



WENDY STIVER/THE EXPRESS

Pamela Poorman, right, sits with granddaughter Kathleen Elizabeth Simander next to one of the donated Chinese artworks. Colin Matthew Simander, left, tells Youth Services Director Nancy Antram about the lion his grandparents donated.

Ross Library patrons have remarked on the beauty of the sculpture and planter near the front door at 232 W. Main St.

And that is not all that is remarkable about Ross Library these days. In the main reading room, patrons note something else new and striking - a large business section.

A wealth of materials is now available in the "Entrepreneurship, Business and Finance" section, also contributed by Steve Poorman and wife Pamela. Working in conjunction with the library's board of directors, the Poormans contributed hundreds of books and financed the purchase of 150 more that are in the process of being catalogued. New books are added to the section every day, reported Diane Whitaker, the library's executive director.

"We are very appreciative of the support that Pamela and Stephen Poorman are providing Ross Library. We see their generosity making an immediate difference in the lives of

those who own and want to start a business," she said. "Their personal commitment is very helpful in allowing us to get closer to our goal of providing more in this collection, especially in the gas and oil areas."

The couple also are making other contributions to the library which, over time, will exceed \$153,000.

Mr. Poorman has directed his efforts on behalf of Ross Library toward improving the business section and filling it with new material.

"It will offer information on all the different segments of business, from finance to starting your own company to marketing," he said.

His significant contribution is intended to "not only provide information on start-ups, funding, how to value a business and other topics, it also will feature a full section of books relating to the business and social aspects of the gas and oil industry - including books that discuss the benefits and disadvantages of drilling activity."

The gas and oil resource materials have been chosen to illuminate both the business aspects of the industry and its social implications. Landowners considering leasing to the industry should find good information and "pretty much everything they want to know" at Ross Library, Mr. Poorman said.

Mrs. Poorman is supporting the expansion of the children's library into the Youth Wing that will provide reading materials to all younger age groups.

Long-range plans are to expand the current children's library on the second floor by taking out the walls and encompassing what is now the lobby. A community room also will be created, a project supported by Robbie Gould.

Mrs. Poorman said she recognizes the importance of the Ross children's section and its role in early literacy. Her grandchildren use the library and enjoy the fun that Youth Services Director Nancy Antram injects into reading.

The gift also will finance new signage for the facility, inside and out. Some of the new signs are already in place, including one relating the history of the Ross Library near the circulation desk. A sign thanking volunteers is on its way, Whitaker said.

In addition, patrons using the third-floor community room remark on the handsome table and mirror from Spain, also donated by the Poormans.

Their gift, structured through the Steve Poorman Trust, includes a monetary award for Lock Haven University students who express interest in or volunteer at Ross Library. Staff members at the Ross and LHU's Stevenson Library will choose the recipient.

The extensive, far-ranging contribution stemmed from a visit to the library, Mr. Poorman said.

"I came in looking for a book, and I noticed there were only a few shelves of really serious business books," he said. "I talked to Diane Whitaker about it the library has a lot of priorities and a lot of needs to fill. That conversation led to a discussion of a business section."

Mr. Poorman said he believes strongly in entrepreneurship and nurtures it in future business leaders by teaching the subject at more than one university. Now the local library's business section will support the spirit of entrepreneurship as well.

The gift also has made this "an exciting time" for the youth collection, Whitaker said.

"In conjunction with help from Robbie Gould, the Poormans are providing an opportunity for us to make a difference for the youth who use the library," she said. "With funds for a new collection for the middle-school ages, we have high hopes of tweens using the library."

Anyone interested in supporting Ross Library may do so in a host of ways, Whitaker said, including the establishment of gifts in their trust or will. Those considering a long-term gift are invited to contact her at 748-3321 or ross1@rosslibrary.org.