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## **Madam President**

Over the course of writing this column I have been trying to give readers a fuller sense of what it means to have a public Library in a community, and to not take having one for granted. It is not just about having stacks of the latest book releases from which to draw, for free. No. It is much more than that.

So, I have tried to give you historical perspective, as with the multi-article telling of the story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and Jefferson's Monticello Library, and then of Ben Franklin's Junto Library. I have written about the Murrysville Community Library's Centennial Year just passed. I have given you my personal story and elevator speech. I have told you how Libraries have modernized in tune with a changing world, and told you, too, by analogy with for-profits, about why it matters to continue to do so. I have written about books, and about staff and Directors; some have guest-written for themselves. I have been trying recently to give you more chances to get to know some key Library people better, to raise them out of the quietude that they often prefer. With today's article, I want to uncover another key face, a special volunteer.

Connie Cauvel is the heart and soul of the Murrysville Community Library Foundation, the person who most embodies its ethos and the piston in the engine that keeps the wheels turning. She has been President of the Board of Directors for more years than most of us would be willing, and as long as I have been on the Board. That can suggest something other than periodic refreshment of ideas and purpose. But, in this case, no one would argue that. This is the exception.

Without Connie at the helm, who would keep this quote from Andrew Carnegie (inspired by Benjamin Franklin says Walter Isaacson in his 2003 eponymously titled book) in front of us? "A library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people." No one amongst us plants this seed nearly so well and with such commitment everywhere she goes in the community. She is, by analogy, our Connie Appleseed, always seeking to give rise to a new sprout of community support for the Murrysville Community Library.

The trademark pens that get passed out to friends and prospective friends of the Library are donated to the Foundation by one of the most generous persons in the community, Jim Hamilton. It is he, too, who donates the cost of special features that the Foundation runs in the Penn-Franklin News, including the annual "thank you page" with the roster of generous donors listed. It is Connie, however, above all of us, who passes out those pens with the most vigor and consistency, and articulates its intended message. It is Connie who strives to get the Penn-Franklin News' features done right, and submitted on time.

Behind the scenes, it is Connie, with the help of a couple of others, who keeps the "books" on which donor has donated what and when, so that we can have that thank you page at all. It is Connie who makes sure that the annual and special campaign

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letters get done, get folded, get into the right envelopes, get sealed, and get mailed. She doesn't do them all, but she makes sure that we do our share.

In 2011, Connie was the Municipality of Murrysville's Co-volunteer of the Year. The award was given for devotion in making the Library a focal point of pride in Murrysville. I can easily make the argument that she deserves that recognition every year for her sustained efforts. I hope that I have made it well enough here.

Charles B. Greenberg,  
Board Director, Murrysville Community Library Foundation