

## Charbonneau Book club provides Christmas books for needy children

(by Caryl Thomas)

A group of Charbonneau women who love to read are trying to promote their love of reading and of books to many less fortunate children.

The Charbonneau Book Connection is a book club originally started by Caryl Thomas in 2003 for some of her friends who enjoy reading and discussing the books they read with each other. Originally called simply "The Charbonneau Book Club", these women decided to change the name of their organization to "The Charbonneau Book Connection" when another group took the name "Charbonneau Book Club" without realizing it was already in use.

As Charles W. Elliot stated, *"Books are the quietest and constant of friends. They are the most accessible and wisest of counselors and the most patient of teachers."*

The Charbonneau Book Connection, which has its own web site, meets once a month year round and has read around 150 books since they formed in 2003. Members alternate hosting the monthly discussions in their homes. Sue Oberg is the communications chairman in charge of the web site and emailing the members.

Approximately 10 years ago, this group decided to help promote reading by supplying books at Christmas time to children who cannot afford to buy their own books and may never have owned books of their own. Books are brought to the December meeting which is traditionally held at Susanna Holt's home and includes a chili pot luck dinner. This Christmas meal fits with a favorite quote by Frances Bacon, which says, *"Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some few are to be chewed and digested."*

This year the group, which consists of 15 women, collected over 50 books to be given to the Community Transitional School, which is a school for children who are homeless or otherwise at risk of school failure. The Community Transitional School is located on NE Killingsworth in Portland. Susanna Holt and Sue Eggleston are facilitating this worthwhile project.

Twice a year the members of the Charbonneau Book Connection recommend books they wish to read and then a group vote selects the upcoming books. In January, the women will be reading The Children of Willesden Lane by Mona Golabek and Lee Cohen. Discussion of the book will be supplemented by watching a DVD musical presentation by Mona Golabek. The February selection is The Rise of the Rocket Girls by Nathalia Holt.

*"Books, I found, have the power to make time stand still, retreat or fly into the future."* Says Jim Bishop. Occasionally, books can do this. But, at all times, reading a book sure beats doing housework!