

Local librarian to be honored

Alli Chase, Eagle, selected for 'Concerned Citizen Award'

By Heather Ruenz
SLN STAFF

Alli Chase, director of Alice Baker Library in Eagle, will be presented the "Concerned Citizen Award" from the Wisconsin Art Education Association at the 2023 Fall Conference on Oct. 26.

Chase was nominated for the award by Deborah Gordhamer, library secretary at Eagle Elementary School, and Beth Dobberstein.

"Alli has been an outstanding individual contributor to the arts at Eagle Elementary School. (She) has spent many hours working in conjunction with the art teacher at EES to help bring the arts of her fellow students to the community," Gordhamer said in her letter.

She went on to say Chase helped in multiple ways including to organize several Youth Art Month exhibits, fund the Kaleidoscope Garden, and in authoring a grant request to acquire snowshoes for the kids at Eagle Elementary.

"The snowshoes are also

available to be checked out through the Alice Baker Library. She has provided art related resources from the Alice Baker library for our EES teachers," Gordhamer said.

"Alli truly is a Concerned Citizen for the Arts in her community," she added.

Dobberstein, in her recommendation letter, explained that Chase has spent 10 years supporting the arts in Eagle and at Eagle Elementary School followed by several examples of Chase's efforts.

"Alli hosted the local YAM show at the Alice Baker Library in Eagle. She also had organized an art show for teens and adults where she provided mini canvases for them," Dobberstein wrote.

Additionally, she went on to explain, Chase also promoted the show on the library website and through social media.

"She personally invited state representatives and the village board, who both attended. Over 150 people from the community attended this year," Dobberstein said.

In addition, according to Dobberstein, Chase partnered with the local art teacher to write a grant to purchase a kaleidoscope sculpture that integrates art and science. She also arranged for the artists to attend the opening and extensive press coverage.

"Another partnership occurred between the art teacher and Alli involved the purchase of 30 sets of snowshoes for the students of Eagle Elementary. The art teacher takes the students on the nature trail to do an observation of winter landscapes and then make art," Dobberstein said.

Additionally, she said in her letter, Chase also goes to the school to read to the students and provides resources for all of the teachers.

Chase said she was surprised and humbled when she learned she would be receiving the award at the WAEA conference in Wisconsin Rapids.

"I am going to be attending the art conference – my first – as a librarian and hope to be inspired and bring ideas back

to the library," Chase said.

"I have always appreciated and advocated for the arts," she added.

Chase's love and appreciation for the arts began when she was a child as her mom used to take her to the Waukesha Symphony, the Milwaukee Rep and the Milwaukee Art Museum.

While in high school, Chase went on language-culture-art trips through Europe and later in life was invited to be on the Milwaukee Art committee. She also participated in a focus group related to arts and economic development.

A letter from the Board of the Wisconsin Art Education Association informing Chase of the award said her service to art education in Wisconsin has been tremendous.

"The Wisconsin Art Education Association is pleased to recognize the efforts you have made with the presentation of this award. Your dedication and continued commitment to art education is commendable and greatly appreciated," it said.