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COURTESY PHOTO

Students at Edwards Elementary School show off their copies of "Waverider," provided in a joint project of the Edwards and Vail Rotary Clubs and the Bookworm of Edwards.

Literacy project provides books to local students

Project includes a visit from 'Waverider' author Kazu Kibuishi

Vail Daily staff report
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The Edwards Rotary Club, the Vail Rotary Club, the Bookworm of Edwards, generous locals, and the Literacy Project have collaborated to get *Waverider*, a graphic novel created by best-selling author Kazu Kibuishi, into the hands of local third through eighth graders.

The Edwards Rotary Club in March awarded \$1,500 to the Literacy Project, while Vail Rotary contributed \$2,500 and the Bookworm sold the books at a discount while facilitating a book drive. As a result, 530 copies of *Waverider* were delivered, in conjunction with a visit to five local schools by the author.

"This project would not have been possible without support from the Vail Rotary Club, the Edwards Rotary Club, and several generous customers and community members," Ali Teague, Programs and Events Manager at the Bookworm said. "Thanks to these incredible groups and members of the community, we were able to promote literacy and inspire reluctant readers."

When the Literacy Project submitted the grant with the goal of purchasing 480 copies of *Waverider*, both Rotary clubs wanted to make reading and home library expansion more equitable for all children in the community.

"We are thrilled with the generous contributions from the Edwards and Vail Rotary Clubs and are always pleased to see literacy prioritized in our community," Literacy Project Executive Director Colleen Gray said. "It was great to not only meet but exceed our goal of the number of books these children received."

While Rotary's umbrella mission is "service above self," Teri Lester, President of the Edwards Rotary Club, noted there are many ways to fulfill that mission. "The Edwards Rotary Club supported this effort with a grant because it aligns with our education and literacy goals," Lester said. "When we can help provide literacy tools and books to the youth in our valley, our community thrives, which is why we wanted to help assure that each third through eighth-grade student at the school visits received *Waverider*."

To generate excitement around reading, introduce many students to their favorite author, and show them a possible future career path, Kibuishi visited the five schools and presented what a career as an author could look like. Additionally, he gave a live painting demonstration at each of the schools.

"We've heard amazing feedback on this project from teachers, educators and parents," Teague said. "As a local business we are deeply invested in our community and creating and supporting lifelong readers is what we're all about!"

For more information, go to The Literacy Project's website.




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