

Chet Hagan Memorial Public Relations Award

How It Began In 1991, the annual System/District Trustee Workshop program focused on the role of effective public relations in securing adequate funding for libraries. Chet Hagan, as a member of the System Board, was the prime mover in developing and arranging this well-received workshop program. Chet was then the editor of Bookends, the excellent publication of the Friends of the Reading-Berks Public Libraries. And so the Public Relations Award began with its first presentation to Chet Hagan on September 14, 1991.

Why a Hen? At that 1991 workshop, the following fable was told:

A goose is probably the most stupid creature that God ever created. When a goose lays an egg, what does she do? Does she flap her wings and lift her voice to the high heavens announcing the fact?

No! She waddles off as if she were ashamed of the feat and tells no one. What does the hen do when she lays an egg, which is much smaller than the fine specimen produced by the goose? She announces the fact to all who will hear! She lifts her voice in glee! She is proud of her product and wants the whole world to know about it.

What is the end result? There is usually more demand for hen eggs than there is for goose eggs. It pays to advertise. The hen knows this, but the goose doesn't.

The award made to Chet Hagan in 1991 consisted of a trophy featuring a hen – the Henny was born! In 1992, the System Board voted to add a dividend to the award by presenting the winning library with a check for \$250.

Remembering Chet Hagan Following Chet's death in 2002, the System Board and the Friends Board wished to honor his memory and his many contributions to library service development in Berks County. The annual PR award was therefore renamed The Chet Hagan Memorial Public Relations Award. The Friends added their own annual \$250 prize, bringing the total for the winning library to \$500.

