**East Central Arkansas Regional Library System
410 E. Merriman Avenue, Wynne AR 72396

PRESS RELEASE**

Date: January 29, 2016
For more information, contact John Paul Myrick at 870-238-3850.
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**FORMER RESIDENT, COMMUNITY LEADER LEAVES GIFT TO LIBRARY**

WYNNE, AR. The late Joanna B. Block of Wynne is remembered by many Wynne residents for her love of life and for her hard work and support for numerous community activities. Her love for her community will live on through a substantial gift left by her estate to the Cross County Library.

Mrs. Block was born in Herrin, Illinois, the youngest daughter of Dr. John Curtis Black and Maude Oliver Black of Corning, Arkansas. Her father practiced medicine in hospitals operated by the United Mine Workers in southern Illinois until declining health led him to retire with his family to Bradenton, Florida. Joanna graduated from Manatee High School in 1938, and, after a year at Shorter College, entered the University of Arkansas. Here she excelled in her studies, joined the Pi Beta Phi sorority, and met a charming young man from Wynne, Arkansas, who would become her husband in 1944. As the wife of a Navy officer, Joanna moved first to Greenwich, Rhode Island, and then to San Francisco and San Diego. With World War II won and her husband mustered out of the Navy, Joanna and David Block Jr. along with their six-week-old son, returned to Wynne. Mr. Block would become the President of First National Bank of Wynne, and, according to her obituary in the *Los Angeles Times*, Mrs. Block became “everything else. Joanna thrived as mother, homemaker, volunteer par excellence, and part of a circle of friends that partied, traveled, and enjoyed life together.” She was active in numerous community and civic organizations, including the Wynne PTA, and once served as President of the Friends of the Cross County Library. Mrs. Block regularly helped raise funds for the library and its projects. After Mr. Block’s death in 1993, she left Wynne, eventually settling in Los Angeles near her daughter. Mrs. Block passed away in 2014, leaving behind a sister, a son, two daughters, and many family and friends.

In a meeting on January 19th, the County Library Board, in receipt of Mrs. Block’s generous bequest, decided to use the Block gift as the basis for an “Expansion Fund” to help cover the costs of expansion of the Cross County Library. Donations to the fund may be made at the Cross County Library, 410 East Merriman, Wynne, 72396. Donations may also be arranged through the Friends of the Cross County Library.