

FOCL POINT

Branford Friends See Record Profits From Book Sale



Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library in Branford set a record with their fall book sale on the town green, raising more than \$72,000. To keep expenses down they solicited businesses for donations. They have moved into a new warehouse with more space for book sale operations.

SAVE THE DATE!

(For information on honoring your group see Page 3)

Friends of Connecticut Libraries Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony
Saturday Morning, June 15, 2024

Avon Free Public Library Community Room, 281 Country Club Road

Speaker — Lynn Katz, author of the kids’ book “Chester and the Magic Eight Ball”

It’s Back! FOCL Forum Is Now Up and Running Again

After almost a year, the FOCL Forum is back up and running! Thanks to the efforts of FOCL board members, with much research and some trials, it was put to the test.

The primary criteria was to create/restore the Forum to its previous self with the plan of keeping it technologically current as time moves on. Ease of

(Continued on page 2)



Former President Honored

A former president of Friends of Connecticut Libraries, Barbara Leonard, left, receives the Lillian Levin Meritorious Service Award from the current president, Pam Monahan at the November meeting. A donation was made in her honor to her home library in Avon.

Inside this Issue:	New board member	2	FOCL Board Changes	3
	Awards	3	Friends Around the State	4

Forum, continued

(Continued from page 1)

use and administrator controls were two important areas that were explored.

Demonstrations to the board of the proposed new FOCL Forum were provided at a recent board meeting. After more fixes, then approval, the Forum was up and running the next day.

An electronic letter was sent to all members, and many have signed up. We have board members who are monitoring the site to provide answers and to keep the posts on the board relevant to members, and to watch out for spam.

As a reminder, it is very easy to become a member of FOCL Forum:

1. Go to our website – www.foclib.org
2. Click on FOCL-Forum (under the Resources tab)
3. Follow the instructions on how to subscribe
4. You will receive an e-mail after you have been registered
5. Once subscribed, you can post and respond to messages

That's it.

As mentioned above the administrator will approve your entrance into the FOCL Forum. Please check the spam/trash folder in your email program if you do not receive an email within a few days.

The book sales tab is also revitalized for you to promote your book sales.

Enjoy reconnecting with our fellow FOCL members!

Avon's Berman Joins FOCL Board

Lisa Berman has joined the FOCL Board.

She joined the Friends of the Avon Free Public Library Board in 2012 and is current president and book sale coordinator.

Berman is also co-chair and co-founder of the Regional Book Sale Meetings. She is a connector for Friends groups and community organizations by promoting access to local and state resources.

Berman is always looking for new fundraising and program ideas and her "personal" wish list includes a library cat!

She is excited the FOCL-Forum has returned and is honored to be part of the FOCL Board.



Friends of Connecticut Libraries is dedicated to helping Connecticut residents realize their full potential. Lives are enriched through a lifelong relationship with ideas, art, literature, information and technology.

Through FOCL's efforts, Friends groups will help support their libraries, thereby enhancing the cultural, educational and career opportunities available to Connecticut residents.

Friends of Libraries groups will become a real force to be reckoned with.

Nominate Your Friends Group for a State Award

Did your Friends group do something new this year? Did you realize a major goal? Do you know of someone who makes things happen or provided extraordinary support to your Friends organization?

Then you are invited to participate in the 2024 Friends of Connecticut Library Awards.

This is an opportunity to recognize talented people in the organization or an entire Friends group and nominate them for one of the Friends of Connecticut Libraries Awards.

The FOCL awards will be presented at the annual meeting Saturday, June 15, at the Avon Free Public Library. Those chosen by the awards committee will receive the recognition in the company of people who understand and personify dedicated library service.

There are three categories of

awards available to small, medium and large libraries. The Friends Group Award is focused on the total effort of the Friends Group. To qualify, the group has either accomplished major goals in support of the library and the community, provided new and/or innovative programs or raised significant money or awareness by attracting the community to the library.

The FOCL Individual Achievement Award is given to one or two individuals in a FOCL group who have made significant contributions to the Friends group, such as a lifetime achievement, exceptional library service, substantial increase in book sale or fundraising profits, or a great idea that has been implemented.

Finally, the FOCL Focused Project Award is usually orchestrated by a small group or committees.

Some examples of types of projects that would be considered include a successful membership drive, a great idea implemented, an outstanding use of media or efforts that raised significant money or awareness by attracting the community to the library.

The application will be mailed to all library directors and Friends groups.

We are requesting that the summary (no more than 1,000 words) be submitted electronically in a word processing format.

The summary should be e-mailed to: foclwards@gmail.com. Any questions, please contact the FOCL Award Chair Pam Monahan at 203-525-5674.

Links to the application materials will be on the FOCL website in early March and also on the Facebook page.

Three Join FOCL Board as Three Others Retire

Over the past 1½ years, three members of the Friends of Connecticut Library Board have retired from the board.

We will always be grateful for the years of service and the wealth of knowledge they have contributed – and still contribute.

A sincere thank you to Frank Ridley of the Meriden Public Library Friends, Carl Nawrocki of the Salem Free Public Library Friends, and most recently, Barbara Leonard of the Avon Free Public Library Friends.

We have three new board members added to the FOCL Board. Joe Genua joins the board from the James Blackstone Memorial Library Friends in Branford, Bart Drennen hails from the Salem Free Public Library Friends, and Lisa Berman comes

to the board from the Avon Free Public Library Friends.

The three new members bring a wealth of technology expertise. They have been instrumental in reviewing financial practices with recommendations, and for the recent reboot of the FOCL Forum.

Rounding out the FOCL Board is President Pam Monahan (Prospect), Vice President Debbie Misiaszek (Berlin-Peck), secretary Laura Riley (Simsbury) and treasurer Peggy Brissette (Mystic & Noank).

Other members include: membership chair Linda Grayson (Woodbury), Richard Lowenstein (Westport), and Dawn LaValle (State of Connecticut).

Friends Around the State

We encourage all Newsletters editors to put us on their mailing lists so we can have a rich exchange of information to pass on to fellow Friends organizations. If you'd like to see your news here please put Friends of Connecticut Libraries, Middletown Library Service Center, 786 South Main St., Middletown, CT 06457 on your newsletter mailing list, or send by email to ruschaum1@gmail.com. Note: We only include events run, sponsored, or funded by Friends Groups. To make our job easier, in your newsletters, please

Andover Friends of the Library



held their third annual fundraiser, Basketpalooza! in December. People had a chance to win one of 39 baskets in a raffle, filled with everything from books to beer to Barbie and beyond.



Friends of the Avon Free Public Library sponsor a winter concert series Sundays at Three. Upcoming scheduled concerts include the Scoil Rince Luimni Irish Dance Academy on March 10 and Mariachi Mexico Antigua on March 24.

Friends of the Beacon Falls Public Library



provided treats for a meet Santa party at the library in December.

Friends of the Bethlehem Library held a literary coffeehouse. Participants were able to

read something short that they had written.

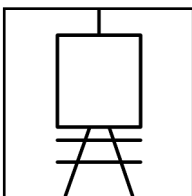
Friends of the Bristol Public Library



run a café in their book store during library hours. They report that French vanilla coffee is the most popular type of coffee lately.

Friends of the Chester Library have partnered with Terri Lynn Fundraising. Part of the profits from treats sold through that website <https://friends--chesterlibr.terrilynn.com/> goes to the Friends.

Friends of Cragin Memorial Library



in Colchester sponsored a mini-art contest in February. They supplied the tiny canvases, which people of all ages were encouraged to decorate at home and return to participate in the art show.

Durham Public Association of Library Supporters will hold a MiniGolf Adventure March 2 and 3.

Friends of the Rathbun Library



in East Haddam held a Half Pint Hamlet last fall, inviting people of all ages to create fairy-size houses. Houses created by a local artist were also on display.

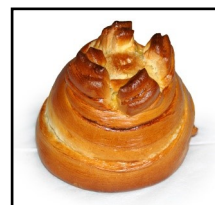
Friends of the Hall Memorial Library

in Ellington bought a poster printer and a large format cold laminator available for public use at the library. Patrons can either create a design on a special computer or bring artwork in on a flash drive.



Friends of The David M. Hunt Library

in Falls Village held their annual winter fundraiser, A Midwinter's Night in the Village, at the library in February. The main feature was the li-



brary's 16-ft long bread board piled high with a variety of home-

(Continued on page 5)

Clark Library Renames Children's Room After Friends Member

The Clark Memorial Library in Bethany renamed their newly renovated children's room in honor of longtime **Friends of the Bethany Library** member Nancy J. Disbrow.

The library called Disbrow "one of our most dedicated longtime supporters." Disbrow is a lifelong Bethany resident and a second-generation librarian.

Her mother served as head librarian for Clark Memorial Library in the 1950s and 60s, and Nancy often rode the bus to the library after school, rather than to her home. She has fond memories of reading near the upstairs fireplace in the original library structure.

Disbrow worked professionally as a public and school librarian in New Haven, and then joined the faculty of Southern Connecticut State University and spent many years training new librarians.



Nancy Disbrow

She retired in 2013 as an Associate professor emeritus.

Disbrow's connections to Clark Memorial Library continued throughout her adult life; she served for many years as a BLA board member, and continues to be an active member and officer of the Friends of the Library.

She is a founding member of the 1937 Legacy Society, with a substantial contribution to its endowment.

Most recently, Disbrow donated her collection of professional children's literature books to the Library, and been instrumental in fundraising for the Children's Room renovation.

Friends, continued

(Continued from page 4)

made baked goods ranging from sweet dessert loaves and hearty savory breads to hors d'oeuvres and chocolate treats. Local personalities performed poems and songs focused on love with a dose of laughter thrown in for good measure.

Friends of the Bill Memorial Library



in Groton have sponsored a summer reading program for children and teens for 20

years. It provides them with two books to keep and an age-appropriate reading list to keep them reading.

Circle of Friends of the Groton Public Library sponsored a visit by Magic by Derek for Take Your Child to the Library Day.

Friends of the Hamden Public Library



sponsored a program for teens and children over age 7 to make electric Valentine's Day cards.

Friends of the Killingly Public Library helped sponsor a work-



shop on flower arranging.

Friends of the Lyme Public



Library are sponsoring a 2-part workshop on how to take beautiful photos with your phone.

Friends of the Richmond Memorial Library in Marlborough have teamed with Munson's Chocolates for a sweet fundraiser.

(Continued on page 6)

Friends, continued

(Continued from page 5)

It's all conducted through an



online form with orders picked up in the library. Friends plan to buy Tonie boxes

and figurines – a toy that sings or tells a story when placed atop the box – for checkout at the library.

Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library



in Monroe sponsored Take Your Child to the Library Day. Special events included live music, a scavenger hunt and crafts.

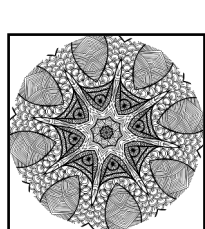
Friends of the Raymond Library



in Montville are scheduled to sponsor a talk on Connecticut and the Underground Railroad in March, highlighting

stops in the state.

Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library



have teamed with the Circle of Friends of the Groton Library to co-host monthly art workshops hosted by the Mystic Museum of Art,

sponsored by the Circle.

Friends of the New Fairfield Public Library



sponsor a Grab & Go Craft Kit Program.

Every Saturday, children can pick up a kit in the children's library

while supplies last.

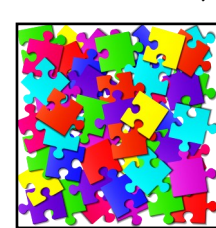
Friends of the Lucy Robbins Welles Library



in Newington sponsored a painting night for teens. All supplies were provided as teens learned

how to paint their own masterpiece.

Friends of the Acton Library



in Old Saybrook sponsored their second annual jigsaw puzzle competition. Teams of four competed with the same 500-piece puzzle.

(Individuals who entered were paired with others to create a team.) The first team to finish won a gift card to a local business.

They are also scheduled to sponsor in March a Connecticut Women in Sciences program, presented by the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame. It is set to explore tenacious female pioneers who persevered even though denied access to the education and professions

they aspired to because of their gender and/or race.

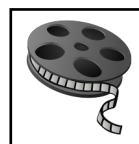
Friends of the Plainville Public Library



are sponsoring a talk called "Rosie the Riveter: Connecticut's Working Women in World War II." The talk is to be presented by

the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History.

Friends of the Portland Library



buys DVDs for the library, used in the monthly Movies in the Afternoon program. They also

provide the snacks!



Friends of the Ridgefield Public Library sponsored the concert Deeper Than Skin with Greg Greenway and Reggie Harris. The concert explored the bridge the two Virginians built through 30 years of friendship,

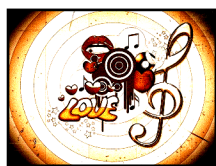
(Continued on page 7)

Friends, continued

(Continued from page 6)

shared goals, and a passion to build community.

Friends of the Rocky Hill Library



sponsored a Valentine's edition of their adult music bingo. Players listened to a short music clip of

love songs or break-up songs and had to match it to special bingo cards.

Friends of the Salem Free Public Library



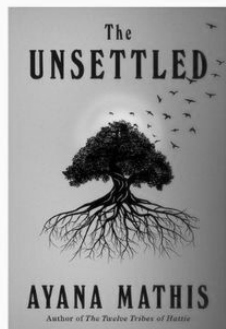
will sponsor a program in March on bald eagles, featuring Ginny Apple, a master wildlife conservationist with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Friends of the Southbury Public Library



are starting a new Junior Friends group for grades 6-12. They will help Friends with various projects, including organizing and preparing items in the book sale.

SOUTHINGTON READS 2024



REGISTRATION
BEGINS FEBRUARY 14TH
AT 9:30 A.M. IN-PERSON
& ONLINE

AYANA MATHIS

Wednesday, March 13th at 7:00 p.m.
The Aqua Turf Club, Plantsville

Co-Sponsors: The Friends of the Library, The Aqua Turf Club, The Joe and Kay Calvanese Foundation, and Residence Inn by Marriott



Friends of the Southington Public Library are cosponsoring a talk by Ayana Mathis, author of "The Twelve Tribes of Hattie" and "The Unsettled" on March 13.

Friends of the Stafford Library allowed each child who attended Take Your Child to the Library Day to choose a book to keep.

Friends of the Kent Memorial Library



in Suffield sponsored a Lunar New Year festival in February that included Chinese dumplings, Chinese paper cutting and a craft.

Friends of the Thomaston Public Library



are sponsoring a 3-part series on gardening once a month for 3 months with a master gardener to teach and answer questions.

Friends of the Tolland Public Library are sponsoring a craft workshop to make beaded bracelets. Calling all Taylor Swift fans!

(Continued on page 8)



Friends of Connecticut Libraries
 Middletown Library Service Center
 786 South Main St.
 Middletown, CT 06457

NON-PROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 PERMIT #379
 MIDDLETOWN, CT

We're on the web!
www.foclib.org
 And on Facebook!

Newsletter edited
 and designed by
 Marjorie Ruschau

Friends, continued

(Continued from page 7)

Friends of the Westbrook Public Library



sponsored Pizza and Puzzles for families

and teens, offering free pizza and a chance to work on puzzles.

Friends of the Weston Public Library sponsor a weekly discussion group, both online and in person, to talk about articles in current issues of *The New Yorker*, which is offered through the library.

Friends of the Westport Public Library use their book sales not only to raise money for the library but to providing meaningful competitive employment and volunteer opportunities for adults with disabilities. Their goal is teaching transferable job skills and aiding in the development of workplace social skills. They want to help employees acquire the skills necessary to seek employment throughout the community, and for the community to be ever more accepting, inclusive and respectful of people with differing abilities.



ties for adults with disabilities. Their goal is teaching transferable job skills and aiding in the development of workplace social skills. They want to help employees acquire the skills necessary to seek employment throughout the community, and for the community to be ever more accepting, inclusive and respectful of people with differing abilities.



Friends of the Woodbridge Public Library used a memorial gift from the estate of long-time library supporter Jeannette Kordiak to refresh furniture and buy new items for the Woodbridge Room, a section of the original library.

Friends of the Woodbury Public Library sponsor children's and teens' February reading programs, complete with prizes.