

Friends of the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library 2023 Annual Report



The Friends of the Clifton-Park Halfmoon Public Library continued to do important work to benefit both the library and its communities in 2023. Through its mission to act as a bridge between the library and community, the group has continued to increase public awareness of the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library and raise funds to support library activities.

Key 2023 Initiatives

The Friends undertake several key initiatives each year in support of both the library and communities.

Two Towns One Book - Community Read

The year kicked off with our eleventh “Two Towns One Book” community read, with programming focused around *The Lincoln Highway* throughout the first half of the year. Programs included a kickoff with Jerry Peppers (Executive Director of the New York State Lincoln Highway Association), trivia at the library, a library screening of the documentary *One Hundred Years Along the Lincoln Highway*, and a luncheon at the Halfmoon Senior Center featuring a famous recipe from the novel.

The latter half of the year focused on book selection for the 2024 community read, with community members selecting *Lessons in Chemistry* from five finalists in the fall. The nomination and voting process - along with the programming - are a great way to engage the community each year.



Get Out the Vote

In advance of the library budget vote each fall, the Friends group helps to garner support for the vote by placing lawn signs in our two towns and sending reminder emails to the Friends of the Library email distribution list. The library vote passed in September 2023, with 88% of ballots cast in favor of the budget.

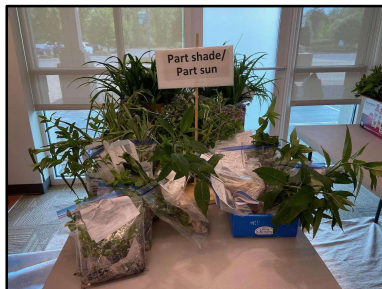
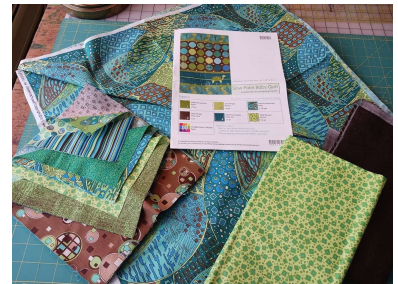


Used Book Sales

The Used Book Sales continued to be strong sources of income for the Friends in 2023, bringing in nearly \$20,000 to the Friends' budget. All three sales were well-attended community events, and generous donations from our community ensured there were lots of books to sell. Remarkable volunteers made sure the sales were well-organized and enjoyable for shoppers.

Other Fundraisers

The Friends added a **Craft Supply Give & Take** (or **Craft Swap**) in spring 2023, which was a big hit with the crafting community. Donated supplies filled all available tables and a good bit of the floor in the program rooms upstairs! Community members shopped and made free-will donations they felt were appropriate for the supplies they chose to take home, resulting in over \$3,000 dollars in support of Library programming.



The popular **Plant Sale** also returned in late spring, with community members sharing their bare-root plants to spread the beauty of gardens throughout our communities! Both long-time gardeners and those new to the art form were invited to participate.

Travel

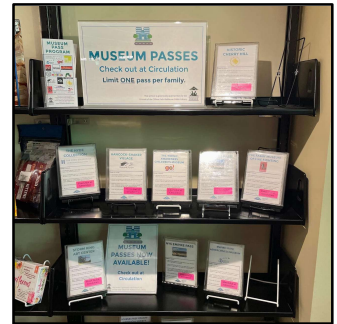
The Friends of the Library organizes worldwide travel for a group of those interested. The main event for 2023 was the post-pandemic return of international tours, with a fantastic visit to Spain and Morocco in March. We traveled with a group of 28 who stepped onto two continents and into two cultures. It was a pleasure to bring our patrons and friends back into the wider world! Much planning also went into a trip to Costa Rica that departed in early January 2024.

Library Support

Museum Passes continue to be a popular offering for the library, with passes circulating more than 600 times in 2023. The three most popular passes were for the Saratoga Children's Museum, Mass MoCA, and The Wild Center.

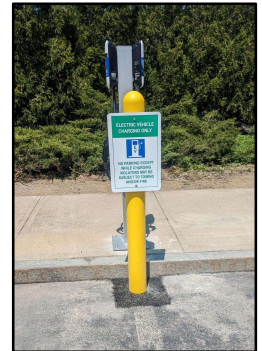


The Friends also made several donations to support the **Children's Library**. The library completed a renovation of the Children's Room, with funding from the Friends providing enhancements to the Children's Library Reading Area. In addition, a donation from the Friends enabled the library to purchase Wonderbooks and LaunchPads to augment their electronic offerings for our youngest patrons.



The Friends contribute to many initiatives and services that support the library's future through infrastructure and development. In 2023, Friends' funding provided for the installation of **EV Charging Stations** to further support the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library goal of being a "green" library.

Friends' volunteers also support initiatives with their time, twice a year assembling **Books for Babies** packages for parents of newborns, and visiting homebound community members through the library's **Outreach Program** throughout the year.



The Friends of the Library - General Updates

Membership reached strong levels in 2023, after a dip during the pandemic. This parallels an increase in foot traffic to the library as life continues to return to normal!

The Friends continued its *Book Friendly* newsletter throughout 2023, sharing stories via email every other month. Our members love staying up to date on the Friends' activities, with a tremendous open rate on those emails. In addition, we periodically email our members to share upcoming events or opportunities.



We increased our presence on both Facebook and Instagram in 2023, using the social media channels to share more photos of our events, and generating interest in events ahead of time. This past October was also the first time we celebrated National Friends of Libraries Week, during which we educated the public through email and social media about the impacts we make to our library and communities.

During the year, we undertook a review of the Friends' bylaws, many of which have been impacted by changes in technology, and made revisions as needed. A special vote to amend our bylaws was held in May, with a ballot being sent via email to all. The key changes our members voted on and approved were streamlining of the organization's governance and clarifications to the language of the document.

We also saw a leadership change, as three of our co-presidents stepped down at the end of the year: Kathy Browne, Michele Gorab, and Rhona Koretzky. These leaders have contributed more than 20 years of volunteer leadership to the Friends of the Library, and we are grateful to have them continue as board members.

Lanna Langlois and Trish MacEnroe were unanimously elected to serve as co-presidents with continuing president, Wilma Jozwiak. In addition, we added three new board members throughout 2023 who bring a wealth of professional and volunteer experience - Ellen Burns, Allison Holland, and Lisa Totaro.

A Look Ahead

The Friends of the Library will continue to bring together the library and community in 2024, which holds lots of promise as our membership continues to grow. Throughout each year, we listen to suggestions from our members, event participants, and community, incorporating much of the viable feedback - as well as looking for new ways to serve our community members.

As a result of member suggestions and planning in 2023, we changed the last day of the Used Book Sale from "Bag Day" to "Dime Day" (all books ten cents). This allows shoppers to use their own bags and cuts down on the number of bags going to landfills and transfer stations.

We also added Venmo as a payment option for Used Book Sales and other events, as well as for in-person membership signups. The Craft Supply Give & Take will also return - by popular demand - this April!

Overall, the Friends of the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library is poised for another year of success as we move forward, taking years of successful programming and events, and combining them with a fresh eye to support the continuing needs of our communities.

Revenues and Expenses for Fiscal Year 2023

CATEGORY	REVENUES	EXPENSES	NET
Donation	1,495.01	----	1,495.01
GOTV	----	1,566.24	(1,566.24)
Hospitality	----	----	----
Library Support	----	38,753.79	(38,753.79)
Membership	12,915.19	73.66	12,841.53
Miscellaneous	----	25,000.00*	(25,000.00*)
Museum Pass	----	2,834.00	(2,834.00)
Organization	----	1,430.04	(1,430.04)
Other Fundraising	4,226.00	----	4,226.00
Outreach	----	419.72	(419.72)
Pavers	1,100.00	400.00	700.00
Publicity	----	263.50	(263.50)
Scholarship	----	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
Technology	----	1,229.83	(1,229.83)
Travel	10,784.10	505.00	10,279.10
TTOB	3,511.00	7,617.48	(4,106.48)
Used Book Sale	18,807.35	838.08	17,969.27
Totals	52,838.65	58,087.56*	(5,248.91*)

At the end of 2023, the FOL had 62,949.24 in its checking account, 42,319.93 in a Trustco Bank CD account, and 16,964.13 in a Broadview Federal Credit Union CD account.