

Friends of the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library

2024 Annual Report

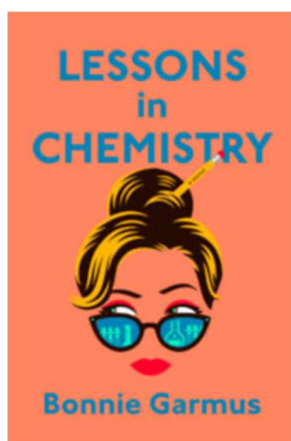


In 2024, The Friends of the Clifton-Park Halfmoon Public Library continued to fulfill our mission to act as a bridge between the library and community by working to increase public awareness of the library and raise funds to support library activities.

Key 2024 Initiatives

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

Two Towns One Book - Community Read



The year kicked off with our twelfth annual Towns One Book community read, with programming focused on *Lessons in Chemistry* during the first half of the year. Our kickoff event featured Abby Shea demonstrating how to make the Block Party Blackberry Pie with samples for the audience. The Brownie Bake Off offered samples of five different brownies baked from recipes of community leaders and participant voting to choose the tastiest recipe. A special luncheon was prepared and served in the Casola Dining Room of SUNY SCCC by students in the Department of Hotel, Culinary Art and Tourism. Author Ruth Reichl spoke at the library about her career in the culinary field and storyteller Kate Dudding did a presentation on chef Julia Child. Kids Read, Too engaged the Saratoga Children's Museum for the program "Kitchen Chemistry" in which children explore chemistry using ingredients and materials found in the kitchen. Free take home kits to make salt dough were offered to children during February and April vacation weeks.

The latter half of the year focused on book selection for the 2025 community read. Each year community members are invited to participate in the process of nomination and selection through voting. Their choice from five finalists for 2025 was *West with Giraffes*

Get Out the Vote

In advance of the library budget vote each fall, the Friends group helps garner support for the vote by placing lawn signs in our tax district and sending reminder emails to the Friends of the library email distribution list. The 2024 library budget vote passed by a margin of 634 to 86.



Used Book Sales



In 2024, Used Book Sales continued to generate strong interest both in our community and beyond, raising well over \$21,000 across the three sales. Much of our success is due to our contingent of volunteers who once again stepped up to make the sales great events for the Friends and our customers. To further improve the book sales, Venmo was added as a payment option, providing an electronic payment choice for those not carrying cash or checks. In addition, the very popular “Bag Day” on the last day of the sale was changed to “Dime Day”, which proved to be just as popular.

Other Fundraisers

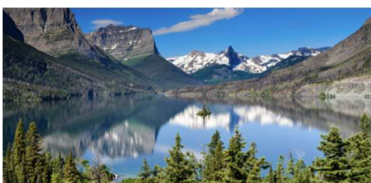
Our second **Crafters Supplies Give & Take** once again brought in mountains of donated supplies. Community members shopped and made free-will donations they felt were appropriate for the supplies they chose to take home, resulting in over \$5,500 in support of library programming.



The popular **Plant Swap and Sale** (renamed **Plant Give and Take** beginning in 2025) almost didn't happen in 2024 when work on the new entry door seemed likely to compromise the space but was revived as a “mini-sale” with a free-will donation-based system similar to our Crafters Supplies Give & Take. Although the turnaround time was short, community members once again shared their bare-root plants to spread the beauty of gardens throughout our communities, bringing long-time gardeners as well as “garden newbies” to the library,

Travel

The FOL travelers continued to explore the world in 2024.



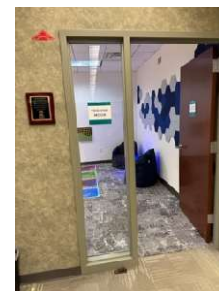
January saw a fantastic winter break to Costa Rica where there were opportunities to zip line and hike above the rainforest on hanging bridges as well as relax on the beautiful beaches. Late August featured a trip to the Canadian Rockies and Glacier National Park in Montana. Participants saw rugged mountain peaks, sparkling glacial lakes and one of the world's international peace parks: Watertown-Glacier. The

travel year ended with a bus trip to New York City to view the exhibit of Belle DaCosta Greene, the personal librarian, at the Morgan Library and a tour of the New York Public Library main building on Fifth Avenue. There was also some shopping and viewing of holiday lights and decorations, including the famous Rockefeller Center tree.

It is wonderful to be able to travel the world again, and to do so with Friends!

Library Support

As a result of support from our community for our fundraisers and membership donations in 2024, the Friends were able to provide over \$58,000 to our library for materials and programs (see the financial statement at the end of this report for a summary of all areas of library support). Included was over \$8,000 toward development of the very popular **Sensory Room** which provides a comfortable space to work, read, or relax for community members who find larger or more active spaces hard to tolerate.



Museum Passes, one of the programs fully supported by the Friends, continue to be a popular offering for the library, with passes circulating more than 770 times in 2024. The four most popular passes were for the Saratoga Children's Museum (104 times), the Empire Pass to New York's parks (67 times), Mass MoCA (64 times), and The Wild Center (62 times).

The Friends of the Library - General Updates

We said goodbye at the end of 2024 to long-time members - Jamie Hanley, Board Secretary, and Michele Gorab, Scholarship Chair and former co-President. We welcomed Jenn Duval as a new Board member in 2024, and Jenn agreed to assume the role of Board Secretary effective in 2025.

We were invited in 2024 to be community collaborators with Raymour & Flanigan's local store. It was a great evening at Raymour & Flanigan with local author **Keith Willis**. Keith read from his award-winning fantasy novel, *Traitor Knight*. We appreciate Raymour & Flanigan inviting us and for their \$500 donation to the Friends of the Library

Membership continued to rise in 2024 nearing pre-pandemic levels and significantly increasing the proportion of members choosing higher membership levels. We continue to look for new ways to introduce the Friends to the community and encourage their participation as members.

In 2024, we began a thorough review of the Friends' **website**. We invested in resources and training to update its look and enhance its functionality. As an example, we refined the events page and added an "add to calendar" feature. We will continue to improve the site in 2025

The Friends continued to produce the **Book Friendly** newsletter throughout 2024. *Book Friendly* was shared through our Constant Contact email service and as a link on our website. *Book Friendly* will become a monthly blog in 2025, focusing on upcoming events and items of interest, and previous issues of the traditional newsletter will continue to be archived on our website.

We were able to increase the impact our use of Facebook and Instagram social media pages and the Constant Contact email marketing service in 2024, using the platforms to inform the community of our programs, sharing promotions of upcoming events and fundraisers, and posting photos taken during

events. Our presence continued to expand with greater interest on both platforms. We will continue to use these platforms to educate about FOL and our impact on our library and community,

Our volunteer base remains robust. Over 200 Friends members support our programs and initiatives with their time, putting in many hours volunteering for our **Get Out the Vote, Two Towns-One Book community read, Used Book Sales, Crafters Supplies Give and Take, Plant Swap and Sale** (renamed **Plant Give and Take** for 2025), **Hospitality**, and **Membership Committee**, as well as assembling **Books for Babies** packages for parents of newborns and visiting homebound community members through the library's **Outreach Program**.

During 2024, we initiated a review of the Friends' Standard Operating Procedures, an important adjunct to our Bylaws that both establishes guidelines for good practice and provides support when leadership changes for the Board or committees. This is a work-in-progress that will continue into 2025.

A Look Ahead

The Friends of the Library will work to bring the library and community together in 2025, as our membership and support of our library continue 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.

The Friends of the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library remains a strong organization with an engaged membership. We will continue to look for new ways to support our library and thus, the continuing needs of our community.

Revenues and Expenses for Fiscal Year 2024

Table 1. FOL Revenues and Expenses for Fiscal Year 2024

CATEGORY	REVENUES	EXPENSES	NET
Donation	2,699.65	----	2,699.65
GOTV	----	1,038.25	(1,038.25)
Hospitality	----	144.30	(144.30)
Library Support	----	58,678.85	(58,678.85)
Membership	12,180.19	92.11	12,088.08
Miscellaneous	70.00	----	70.00
Museum Pass	----	3,069.00	(3,069.00)
Organization	----	1,044.21	(1,044.21)
Other Fundraising	5,912.33	35.32	5,877.01
Outreach	----	----	----
Pavers	1,550.00	550.00	1,000.00
Publicity	----	329.75	(329.75)
Scholarship	----	2,000.00	(2,000.00)
Technology	----	4,797.83	(4,797.83)
Travel	11,265.60	3,277.00	7,988.60
TTOB	4,004.00	4,122.80	(118.80)
Used Book Sale	21,809.83	461.52	21,348.31
Totals	59,655.61	79,840.94	(20,185.33)

At the end of 2024, the FOL had 42,763.91 in its checking account and a total of 61,977.11 in 2 Certificates of Deposit.

Library Support Items for 2024

Item	Amount
Author Events	27,000.00
AV Support	5,000.00
Battle of the Books	1,011.02
Bilingual Children's Book Collection	2,000.00
Books (from 2023 invoiced in 2024)	645.33
Books for Babies	139.93
ELL Support	1,254.41
General Support	4,000.00
Intern Stipend	1,000.00
Promotions/Ads	2,111.00
Double of Round-up from Sunday UBS	961.40
Sensory Room – Facility and Equipment	8,159.83
Tables & Wall Art Hardware (from 2023 invoiced in 2024)	5,395.93
Total	58,678.85