

FOCL POINT

SAVE THE DATE!

Friends of Connecticut Libraries Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony
Saturday, June 11, 2022, 9:15 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Avon Public Library, Community Room,
Speaker — Marc Longenecker,
assistant professor of the practice in film studies, Wesleyan University
More details to follow in mailing

Your FOCL Membership Goes Further Than You Think

FOCL keeps in contact with other library stakeholders in the state and in the nation.

FOCL accomplishes our mission of communication and education for our membership by keeping abreast of library and Friends activities.

FOCL has liaisons with state organizations and has membership in a national organization.

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Library With A View

Friends of the Farmington Library started and have maintained a garden with a patio next to the library. In 2019, the Farmington Garden Club recognized the garden as a place of beauty.



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After Past 2 Years, Doesn't Your Group Deserve An Award?

Did your library group try something new this year or in 2020 or 2021?

Did you realize a major goal?

Do you know of people who made things happen or provided extraordinary support to your Friends organization?

You are invited then to participate in the 2022 FOCL 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. Due to the pandemic, this awards period covers 2020, 2021 and 2022.

FOCL awards will be presented at the annual meeting Saturday, June 11, at the Avon Public Library. Those chosen by the awards committee will receive 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 group. To qualify, the group has either accomplished major goals in support of the library and the community, provided new and/or innova-



Friends of the Case Memorial Library in Orange received an award for a project they did to celebrate their library's 25th anniversary in 2018. Accepting the award, above, are Lucia Bloom, Laurel Brown and library director Kathy Giotas.

tive 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. Examples of projects types that would be considered include a success-

ful membership drive, a great idea implemented, an outstanding use of media or raised significant money or awareness by attracting the community to the library.

The application form that was mailed to all library directors and Friends groups should be completed. We ask 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.

If there are any questions, please contact the FOCL Awards Chair Pam Monahan at 203-525-5674. Copies of the application materials are on the FOCL website — www.foclib.org — and listed on the FOCL Forum and Facebook.



Town of Fairfield Honors Library Friends

Fairfield celebrated the 16th Annual National Friends of Libraries Week by recognizing and honoring its own local Friends Organization. First Selectwoman, Brenda Kupchick, proclaimed “Oct. 17 through Oct. 23, 2021 is Friends of the Fairfield Public Library Week.” Selectwoman Nancy Lefkowitz said, “I am proud to be a friend of the Fairfield Public Library as we collectively honor this weeklong celebration of the organization that supports our beloved libraries.” Shown from left are, David Gray, chair of the library board of trustees; Danielle Sharp, director of development for the Friends of the Fairfield Public Library; First Selectwoman Kupchick; Jan Fisher, acting town librarian; and Selectman Tom Flynn.

What Your Membership Does, continued

(Continued from page 1)

FOCL maintains in-person liaison with the following:

- Connecticut Library Association: A statewide organization representing librarians and library staff.
- Associations of Connecticut Library Boards: A statewide organization representing library boards.
- FOCL is also in close contact with the State Library and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

We have membership in United for Libraries, a national organization representing libraries, librarians, boards and trustees and Friends groups.

In addition to giving our Friends groups a voice in other organizations, we keep current on hot topics that appear on the agenda at our conferences and meetings.

To use a quotation often proclaimed by successful organizations:

“Communications works for those who work at it.” -- John Powell, composer.

**FOCL
Handbook
Updated**

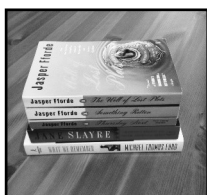
**The FOCL Handbook has been updated and revised.
It will be available on the FOCL website April 1.**

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 friendsctlibraries@gmail.com. Note: We only include events run, sponsored, or funded by Friends Groups. To make our job easier, in your newsletters, please include that information when describing events.

Friends of the Andover Library severely restricted in-person programming and fundraising for the library due to Covid and pandemic guidelines. So their annual membership drive is now an annual appeal to make up for lost revenue.

Friends of the Berlin-Peck Memorial Library



opened their ongoing book sales on Wednesdays 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Masks must be worn

at all times, and the Friends will monitor the number of people in the room at one time. They are also accepting donations while the sale is open.

Friends of the Bethany Library provided funds that cover the cost of charging electric vehicles at the library charging station for all of 2022. The EV charging station installation was made possible by a grant from the Connecticut Clean Cities Coalition and is



a part of the library's strategic plan focus on sustainability in community services. The library association thanked the Friends

“for their support of the library board's vision and far-reaching efforts to help provide clean energy access for the Bethany community.”

Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library



Branford are now on Facebook. They also mailed out copies of their latest newsletter –

Marble Columns – in early March.

Friends of the Bristol Public Library

held their annual Winter Used Book Sale for five days in early March. The sale included more than 6,000 items. This sale is the group's main fundraiser.

Friends of the Burnham Library



in Bridgewater reminded the public that they supply 100% of the money the library needs for digital items such as audiobooks and streaming services, programs, museum passes and magazines.

Friends of the Cheshire Library's recent fall book sale raised \$16,468, just slightly below their 2019 record sale. They had accumulated books for a

spring 2020 sale that was cancelled and resumed accepting donations in July 2021. A storage company donated warehouse space for the filled boxes, then delivered them on the day of set-up. During the three-day preparation,



75 volunteers unboxed and organized approximately 19,000

books and 6,000 digital media. Members of the High School's Interact Club and the MechaRams Robotics Club helped Friends prepare for the sale. During the sale, 118 time slots were staffed by Friends. Another 14 volunteers completed the clean-up.

Friends of the Fairfield Public Library



are hosting a psychological thriller night April 7 with four authors – Greer Hendricks, Wendy Walker

and sisters Lynne Constantine and Valerie Constantine, writing under the pen name Liv Constantine.

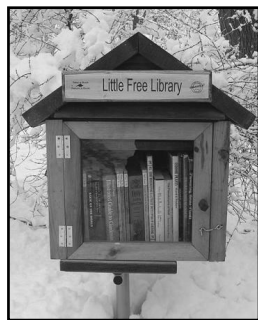
Friends of the Welles-Turner Memorial Library in Glastonbury recently adopted the Little Free Library at River-

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Friends, Continued

(Continued from page 4)

front Park in Glastonbury. It was



originally established by the Girl Scouts. The Friends gave it a face-lift and re-stocked it with books

for the community.

The Friends also marked the death of Lillian Levin, who throughout her years of support for the library including reviving the Friends group, helped raise more than \$1 million for the library.

Friends of the Bill Memorial Library, Mystic & Noank Library and Groton Public Library

have banded together for the 14th annual Edible Book Festival on Sunday, April 3, at 1:30 p.m.



Since 2007,

local book lovers have created books made of edible materials for this free, family-friendly event. Come early to view the creations followed by a raffle and a grab and go tasting. The public is invited to create edible art for the event inspired by a favorite book, a pun on a famous title, or in the shape of a book (or scroll, or tablet, etc).



Friends of the Lyme Public Library have a spot on the library's website where they list all the programs they are sponsoring. These range from a children's program in how to make fairy houses to a talk by a college professor on how to bridge the partisan gap to improve our politics.

Friends of the Guilford Library use the in-library bulletin board not only to publicize library events and activities sponsored by the Friends and information about Friends. They also display select vintage items and ephemera that are for sale to support the library.

Friends of the Harwinton Public Library



recently donated a starter library — a bookcase, fiction and non-fiction books, and puzzles — to the Harwinton Star, a shelter for

teenage girls. While residents are welcome to use the library, it's always nice to have some reading on hand.

Friends of the Scranton Public Library



in Madison list just what they need potential Friends to do: March in the 4th of July parade, bring a dish to their picnic,

stuff envelopes for mailings and, of course, help with book sales.

Friends of the Richmond Memorial Library in Marlborough are raising funds for a few small projects including the addition of new sensory bins that will be available for check out, new yard games and nature exploration.

Friends of the Meriden Public Library



have had to temporarily close their bookstore, which is a separate room at the library, due to the renovation and expansion of the library.

Friends of the Russell Library in Middletown have reopened their ongoing book sales with a new name — the Book Nook. It can be found on the 2nd floor.

Friends of the Milford Library



held a successful book sale in early December. And their jewelry sale in

(Continued on page 6)



Cheryl Cappiali helps with a book sale at the Milford Library.

Friends, Continued

(Continued from page 5)

November was so popular it sold out early.

Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library scheduled an indoor library yard sale for March.



Then on March 27 their library cart drill team was scheduled to perform in the Mystic Irish Parade. After very little practice their team has won an award in the parade three times

Friends of the New Britain Public Library



plan a gently used jewelry sale April 30, just in time for Mother's Day.

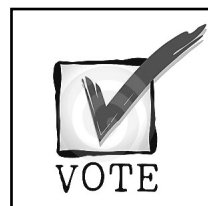
Friends of the New Fairfield Free Public Library are hosting a bag book sale March 25-28.

Friends of the Hilton C. Buley Library at Southern Connecticut State University who contribute



\$35 or more can use library resources and research and information services but also have borrowing privileges. Friends will also receive advance notice to special events such as lectures, author talks, programs, the annual book sale and receptions.

Friends of the Oxford Public Library asked the public to vote for them to receive nonprofit



funding through the Ion Bank Foundation Community Awards Program. For every vote, the bank awards \$25.

Friends of the Ridgefield Library have found a way to help nonprofits and themselves. After book sales they offer books to more than 200 nonprofit agencies, distributing about



15,000 books. They also offer books to "pop-up" needs, including a local girl's collection for Bridgeport schools and a request from St. Mary's School to stock classrooms in the primary grades.

Friends of the Salem Free



Public Library offered free Leprechaun Trap Craft Kits to the public, just in time for St. Patrick's Day.

Friends of the Southbury Public Library sponsored an Irish dance performance and instruction, spring story time and women's history program aimed at young children.

Friends of the Watertown Library were scheduled to present a talk on climbing Mount Kiliman-



jaro by Police Chief Josh Berneggary and Lt. Tim Gavallas in

March. The two climbed in support of the Special Olympics.

Friends of the Westport

Library celebrated the first anniversary in January of their book shop, which opened in the middle of the pandemic. The shop also



provides employment for adults with disabilities. The Westport Book Shop and the Westport Li-

brary Book Sales are operated by Westport Book Sale Ventures Inc., a nonprofit with the dual mission to support the library and provide employment for adults with disabilities.

FOCL Board Welcomes New Member From Branford

At the March meeting, the board of directors unanimously voted to welcome new board member Joe Genua.

Genua lives in Branford with his wife, Barbara. He is a very active member of the Friends of James Blackstone Memorial Library in Branford.

Among his many responsibilities with the Friends, Genua has been chairperson for the Friends book sales since 2019 and continues to fill this role.

In addition, working with his wife who is also an active Friends board member, he successfully launched an online presence on Amazon in 2017 to sell books to raise more revenue for the Friends. This was most fortunate,



New FOCL board member Joe Genua

as it was the Friends' main source of revenue during the more difficult days of COVID19.

Genua has been retired for more than six years from a successful career at AT&T. He

worked within the information technology group as a lead principal technical architect.

Genua has a strong IT background and a master's degree in business administration with an emphasis in finance. He uses these skills giving back to his local community — for the library and other local non-profits in Branford.

He enjoys spending time with his wife and son. His interests include home projects, travel and going to their "home away from home" in Rhode Island.

Genua's reading interests are non-fiction with an emphasis on finance, business and history. He is looking forward to being an active and contributing member of the FOCL board.

A Fond Farewell To Library Friend

Members of the FOCL board were saddened to learn of the death of Lillian Levin in January.

Lillian was passionate about libraries whether it was her local library's Friends group, serving as a FOCL board member and president, as well as on state advisory boards for libraries, or nationally on FOLUSA, running

the Books for Babies program. FOCL added a special award in 2010, the Lillian Levin Meritorious Service award, in her honor.

Not only was Lillian passionate about volunteering for libraries, she cheerfully shared her experiences and knowledge with those around her as a wonderful mentor. She will be missed

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

APRIL 3-9, 2022

CONNECT WITH YOUR LIBRARY



MOLLY SHANNON
National Library Week Honorary Chair



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

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

Newsletter edited
and designed by
Marjorie Ruschau

Friends of the Connecticut Libraries Board

Board of Directors

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Treasurer: Peggy Brissette, Mystic & Noank

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Web Master

Ashley Volkens, Milford

Board Members

Joe Genua, Branford

Linda Grayson, Woodbury

State Library

Dawn LaValle

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.