

FOCL POINT

FOCL Members Come Together At CCSU

About 75 people from 30 Friends groups were welcomed to the Annual Friends of Connecticut Libraries Fall Conference on Nov. 16 at Central Connecticut State University

by Renata Vickrey, of the school's Elihu Burrett Library.

Her library has an active Friends group, Vickrey said. The library's collections in Polish and Italian draw

interest from outside the university community.

"Once you get invested [in a library] it's hard to walk away," said Carl Nawrocki, of the Salem Library Friends

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Friends Survey Shows Why It's Good To Be Pals With Town

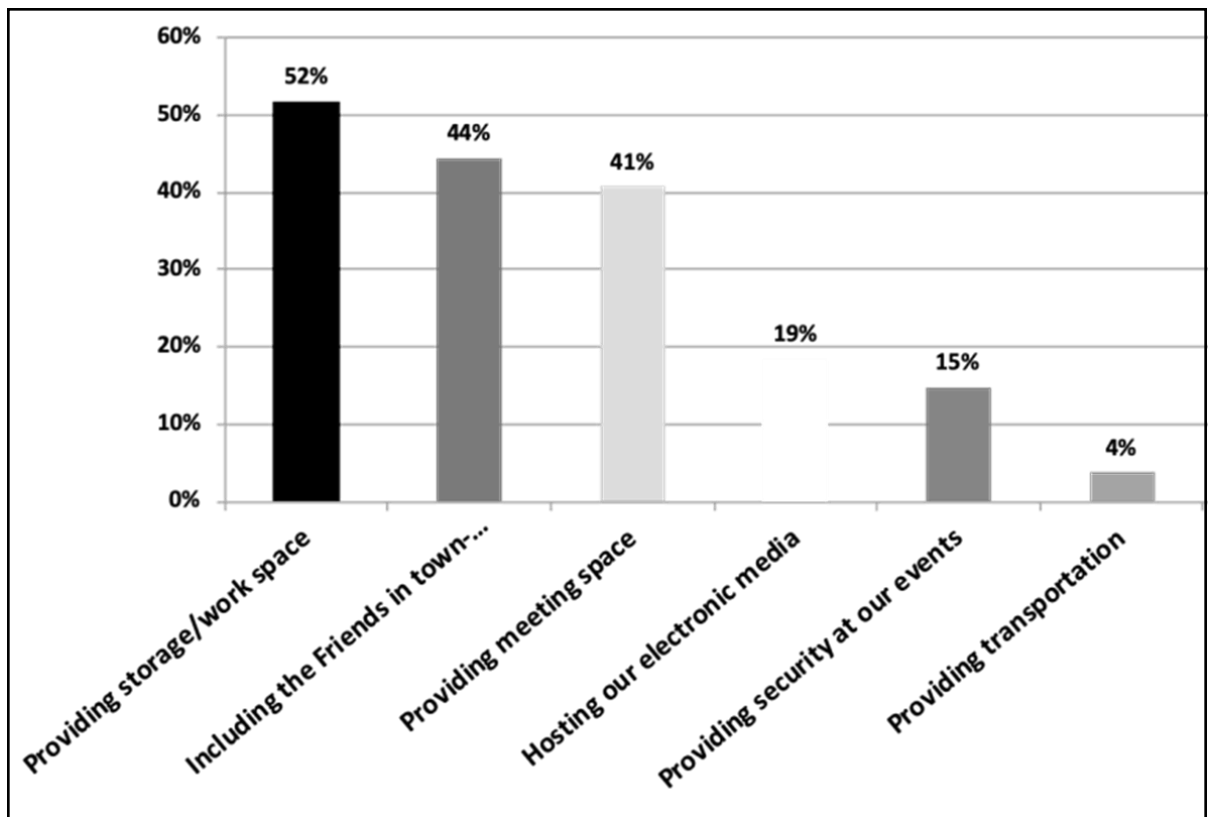
Friends groups that have good relationships with their local governments, community groups and businesses may find it makes everything easier.

The Granby Friends actually had businesses sponsor part of their book sale. They would even donate things to sell.

The Mystic and Noank Library found that joining the chamber of commerce gave it access to the chamber's mailing list.

The Meriden Friends found that advertising on the chamber's website increased book sale income by 30%.

"To get support from the business community, you have to be part of that community," said Carl Nawrocki, who conducted



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To Recruit, Keep Members, You Have To Know Them

When recruiting people to join your Friends group, it's important not to just get them in the door but to find out why they have agreed to volunteer.

That could be for several reasons, said Anne Green, who helps nonprofits as a consultant for the nonprofit Connecticut Community Foundation. Some want professional contacts; others want something to do in their retirement years. Still others want to achieve something or make a lasting impact on their community.



Anne Green

One Friend said she joined initially to meet people and make friends.

"I just moved to a new community three years ago and now I'm president of the Friends," she said.

Green advised Friends groups to start small, one on one. Ask someone if they can come for an hour or two, not if they can help with fundraising.

"If you ask for one hour maybe next time they'll volunteer for three," Green said.

Personal contact works much better than signs, said Peggy Brissette of the Mystic and Noank Friends and the FOCL board.

A Berlin Friend said she was on the treadmill at a fitness center when the woman on the next treadmill recruited her. She had never heard of the Friends but



Community consultant Anne Green told Friends groups that if they want to recruit new members they must first understand the reasons why people volunteer so they can put them in the right roles. "If they want to meet new people, don't put them in a back room sorting books," she said.

says being a member gives her tremendous satisfaction.

Carl Nawrocki, of the Friends board, said he has what he likes to call his "canine elevator speech." While walking his dog he meets other dog walkers and will ask their help with book sorting. That often leads to membership in the Friends.

At the Lyme Public Library, Friends greet people arriving for programs they've sponsored and ask if they'd like to join, said Deb Giaconia.

Green said you need to find out people's reason for joining so you'll know what kind of volunteer work will fit them best.

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Members, continued

(Continued from page 2)

"If they want to meet new people, don't put them in a back room sorting books," she said.

Lots of organizations want volunteers so you need to get them to choose you.

Ask about their interests and see if you have some task they might like.

Peg Busse of the Ellington Friends, said it's important to use the word "volunteer" rather than "member." She said her group wants active volunteers, not people who simply join but don't do anything.

"That's a good point," Green said. "You don't just want people to write a check."

And if new members succeed in small tasks, you might see if they can succeed in larger ones and maybe even join your board.

One challenge in getting younger members is what time of day meetings are held, said Mary Etter, director of the South Windsor Library. Daytime won't work for people with young children.

The Portland Friends has been looking to attract younger people who can help with technology, said Maureen Muir. They can do that whenever works for them.

Nawrocki agreed, adding that technology is a way to cut down on the number of meetings.

Del Shilkret of the Granby Friends urged groups to use high school students, who often need to complete a number of volunteer hours to graduate. His library has them help with sorting do-

nated books. Some may return after they graduate and get involved.

Some volunteers are looking for just a project while others are there for the long term. It all comes back to why they volunteered in the first place and whether they feel appreciated.

Green said there are four stages for volunteers:

1. New and need directing
2. No longer new but are still learning
3. Reliable and no longer need supervision
4. Veteran volunteers who can coach others

Check in with your volunteers to see if they have questions or need a different sort of task. Always make sure they know they are appreciated, Green said.

Library For Blind and Physically Handicapped Called State's Best Free Asset

Many don't know of the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

"It's the best unadvertised free thing in Connecticut," said Carl Nawrocki, a FOCL board member.

Peggy Brissette, FOCL treasurer, said she helped someone in a retirement center apply. He got a package about the size of a cell phone that had seven books. He put it in the machine, which is strong so no one has to worry about breaking it. He plans to sign up for magazines next.

"He says it's changed his life," Brissette said.

This service has lots to offer any adult or child who can't read print because of a visual or physical disability. This could be because you can't hold a book or process the words. Materials include books and materials in Braille or on a recording along with the playback equipment.

All materials are mailed to and from those enrolled in the service by postage-free mail.

To apply for this service, contact the Library for the Blind or Physically handicapped by:

- Mail — 198 West St., Rocky Hill 06067
- Fax — 860 721-2056
- Telephone — 800 842-4516 or 860 721-2020
- Online — <http://www.ctstatelibrary.org>
- Email — csl.lbph@ct.gov

The form has to be signed by a certifying official, which could be a doctor, library director, home health care aide or others.

For the person she knows who had it, "It just improved his quality of life," said Winnie Clay of the Meriden Friends. "It is life-changing!"

The library is open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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 James Blackstone Memorial Library



in Branford set a new record for its September book sale — \$62,000! This was despite a wet start on opening night with dozens of volunteers racing to cover books at the edge of the sales tent.

Friends also provided a fellowship that enabled Rachel Wells to work through June and July 2019, digitizing all photographs in the library's files.

Local author Tony Renzoni, who has written the book *Connecticut Softball Legend Joan Joyce* is scheduled to speak at the library April 19 at 3 p.m. Joyce, who joined the Stratford Raybestos Brakettes at age 13 and starred on the professional Connecticut Falcons team in the 1970s, has been making some appearances with him.

Friends of the New Britain Public Library

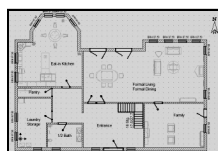


are seeking new members and help with book sales.

Friends of the Simsbury Public Library hosted Simsbury author Juliet Grames, who talked of her novel *The Seven or Eight Deaths of Stella Fortuna*. She told

of her family's immigrant experience from the hills of Calabria to the World War II immigrant neighborhoods of Hartford, including her grandmother and aunt's life journey. Grames also told of her own trip back to Calabria to research her family history.

Friends also paid some of the architectural fees that enabled the library to open The Tariffville



Room, providing new program space. It is equipped with assisted listening capability and can live-stream programs of SCTV. Also, Friends provided money to install video recording equipment in the room. The equipment was first used Oct. 29 to record and live-stream the town's parks and open space master plan information meeting.

Friends offer a "Books-to-Your Door" service for homebound patrons. Eligible people must live in town and be homebound long-term or temporarily due to illness, disability or advanced age. Those wanting the service call the library Thursdays, 10-11 a.m., and are connected with a volunteer.

Friends took an October bus trip to Yale University, visiting the Yale Center for British Art and the Yale University Art Gallery.

Friends of the Watertown Library



are working with the library to have a home for their Book Nook downstairs at the Oakville Branch of the library.

Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library had a very successful fall. They had an Art Silent Auction in October and a Like New Book Sale after Thanksgiving. Friend raisers included a free Craft Exchange in September



where people could donate unwanted craft supplies that were then taken home by families, crafters for charity causes, or others looking to try a new craft.

Families young and old participated in All Things Pumpkin in October, which included a magic show, raffle bags, refreshments and pumpkin-related activities, all free.

Friends are preparing to march as the library cart drill team in the

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Friends, continued

(Continued from page 4)

Mystic Irish Parade, scheduled for March 22.

Friends of the Voluntown Library provided money for four new computers and software updates on existing computers for patron use.



Friends of the Avon Library held their 10th Author Luncheon featuring Andre Dubus III, New York Times bestselling author of *House of Sand and Fog* and *Gone So Long*.



Friends of the Bethel Public Library held a Beads, Baubles & Books sale on Jan. 18. They sold such items as Jewelry; rom-com DVDs; romantic music; books on crafts beauty and flowers; romance paperbooks, and other items that say "pamper yourself" and "Valentine's Day is coming."



Friends of the Bethlehem Public Library paid for renovating library staff offices with new desks and better use of space. The Friends also paid for refinishing the old oak chairs in the children's room. This was another step in preserving the high-quality furnish-

ings purchased in the past. Work was done by Connecticut Correctional Enterprises, a penal rehab program, at far less cost than replacing the classic library chairs.

Friends renewed the library's membership to the DVD circuit, enabling the library to sharing, with other libraries, rotating collections of expensive materials in popular demand.



Friends of the Burlington Library held not only a cookie sale in December as a fundraiser, with cookies made by members and packaged for sale in the library, but also a casserole sale in November. Members were asked to make a variety of dishes: stew, chili, pasta-based



dishes, vegetarian meals, vegetable-based dishes, ratatouilles, curried dishes, ragout, shepherd's pie, soups and chowders, quiches, gluten free, etc.

Friends of the Fairfield Public Library teamed up with the Junior Women's Club of Fairfield to sponsor a Holiday Trivia Night in December. Adults could test their holiday trivia knowledge and also enjoy live music and drinks. They also teamed with the club for a Visit to Santa's House at the Historic Burr Homestead. This included story time with Mrs. Claus.



Friends of the Welles-Turner Memorial Library in Glastonbury have created theme weeks for their ongoing book sales, for example at the start of 2020: cookbooks, young adult/ Valentine's Day and children's.



Friends of the Slater Library in the Jewett City section of Griswold sponsored a bus trip to New York City in November that included the Radio City Rockettes Christmas Show.



Friends of the Guilford Public Library offers town residents with library cards museum passes to five New York City museums: The Frick Collection, the Guggenheim, the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum



Complex, the Museum of the City of New York and the New York Historical Society Museum and Library.

Friends of the Lyme Public Library sponsored "Beyond the Bicep: the Real Story of Rosie the Riveter" with historian Amanda Goodheart Parks in January.



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Survey, continued

(Continued from page 1)

the survey. It found 37% of Friends groups were members of their local chamber.

In a survey answered by 36 Friends groups of all sizes, Friends were associated with the Scouts, businesses, churches, sports teams or leagues and chambers of commerce.

Having a relationship with the local municipality has given Friends groups:

- storage, work space and/or meeting space
- security for events
- host site for media
- transportation

Friends groups that participate in community events

"To get support from the business community, you have to be part of that community."

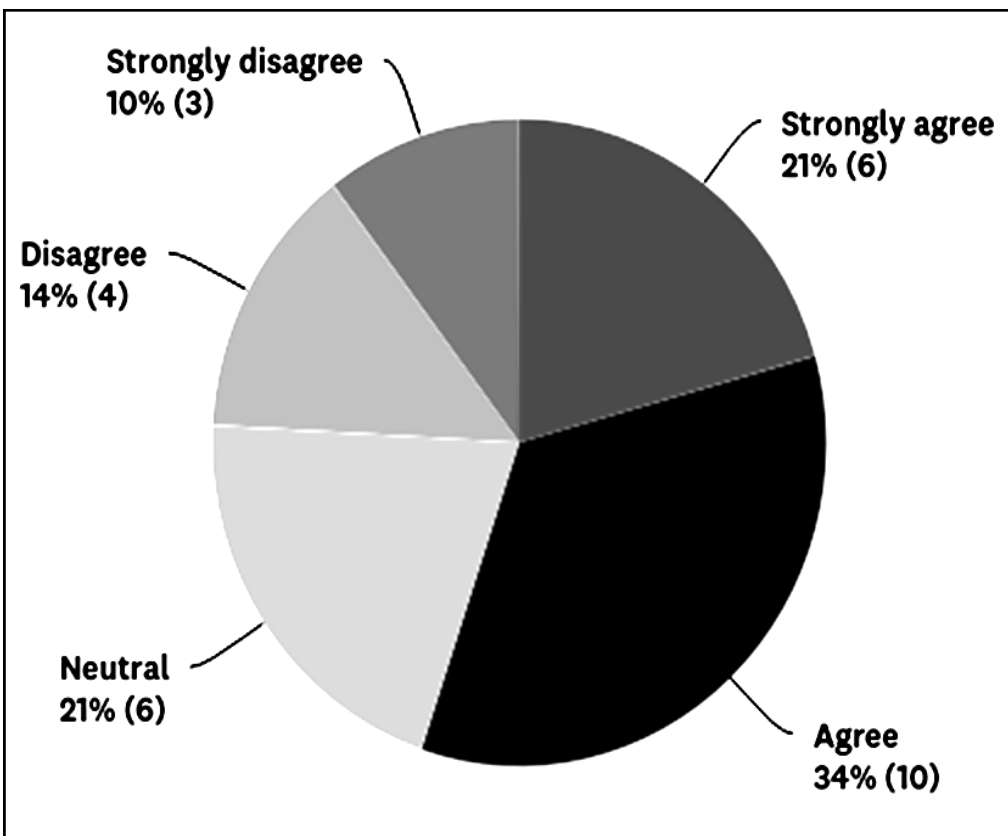
— **Carl Nawrocki**

FOCL board member and
Friends of Salem Library

have gained public awareness, members and volunteers.

Friends from the Essex, Bill Memorial (Groton) and Avon libraries told how their community relationship helped them.

When the Essex Friends held a mini golf fundraiser in their library



they had many businesses wanting to sponsor holes, said Suzy Baird. It netted them \$12,000 and gave them a lot of good publicity.

The Friends at Groton Memorial worked with teens to create "Haunted Library."

The 8 participants the first year grew to 40 the second year.

The kids planned it, learned how to organize and budget and trained younger kids.

"The saddest thing was when they had to give it up because they were no longer teens," said Christy McElroy of the Friends.

But as they aged out of the teen program they're ready to join as adults.

Before Avon ran a fundraising campaign to expand the library Friends gave presentations at the Lions and Italian clubs and many

other places about the library. That made it easier when it was time to ask for money, said Ginny Vocelli

Vocelli, former library director.

The library went from 12,000 square feet to 40,000 square feet.

"It all starts with good community relations," Vocelli said.

"It all starts with good community relations."

— **Ginny Vocelli**

Friends of Avon Library

CCSU, continued

(Continued from page 1)

and the FOCL board. He was also an organizer and moderator of the conference.

State Librarian Kendall Wiggin, who is retiring soon, was presented with a special FOCL thank-you for his years of service — 10 pounds of chocolate.

"Libraries are going to face troubles ahead," Wiggin said. "State support of libraries is not where it should be. ... For every tax dollar, 1 cent goes to support libraries," one of the lowest in the nation.

"We now say we do less with less," he said.

In other news, 13 Friends groups participated in the Connecticut River Book Auction in October. Figures were not available for how



Carl Nawrocki, longtime FOCL board member, prepares to give outgoing Connecticut State Librarian Ken Wiggin 10 pounds of chocolate.

much was raised in total but the Farmington Friends said they made about \$500.

Some groups said they didn't get enough of an explanation from the

auction house about what sold and would want more information before participating in the one planned for October 2020.

Time to Honor Your Members With FOCL Awards for Individual, Group or Project



Deb and Tom Morck, of the Cheshire Public Library, both received awards in 2019.

It's time to think about submitting an award to the Friends of the Connecticut Library.

The submission deadline is April 20. You all do such great things to advance your libraries and your Friends groups. Your group deserves to be recognized!

Award information can be found on the FOCL website at foclib.org. It will also be mailed to all chapters by early February.

Awards will be presented at the **annual meeting Saturday, June 13 at Middlesex Community College in Middletown.**

You and your group deserve it!



What Should You Keep? What Should You Shred?

Every Friends group is stuck with the dilemma about what documents need saving and what can be shredded.

No one wants to get in trouble with the Internal Revenue Service.

Bart Drennen was stuck with that dilemma when he became treasurer of the Salem Library Friends in January 2019 and faced almost 30 years of documents.

A retired engineer, accounting was not his specialty. He searched many places but found the best answer came from the IRS -- the Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4221pc.pdf>

The important things to keep include:

- articles of incorporation
- tax returns
- insurance policies
- account ledgers and all records of bills and checks
- audit reports from independent audits
- checks
- determination letter (nonprofit) from the IRS, and correspondence relating to it
- financial statements (year-end)
- insurance policies



Carl Nawrocki, of the Salem Friends and FOCL board, introduces Bart Drennen, now the treasurer of the Salem Friends.

•minutes of board meetings and annual meetings of members

How long do you need to keep these? This is what Drennen found:

Permanently

- articles of incorporation
- audit reports, from independent audits
- determination letter from the IRS, and correspondence relating to it
- financial statements (year-end)



What Drennen inherited as new treasurer.

- insurance records
- board meetings and annual meeting minutes
- by-laws and charter

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Shred, continued

(Continued from page 8)

3 years

- bank statements
- internal audits

2 years

- duplicate deposit slips
- general correspondence

You can save actual paper copies or scan them (your librarian may be able to help with this) and save the digital copy on a thumb drive, CD or the cloud.

If keeping paper documents, Drennen recommends storing them in one place rather than divided between several officers. The same is true if you keep them on a thumb drive or CD, he said.

The Salem Friends decided to store scanned documents in the cloud and looked at several companies.

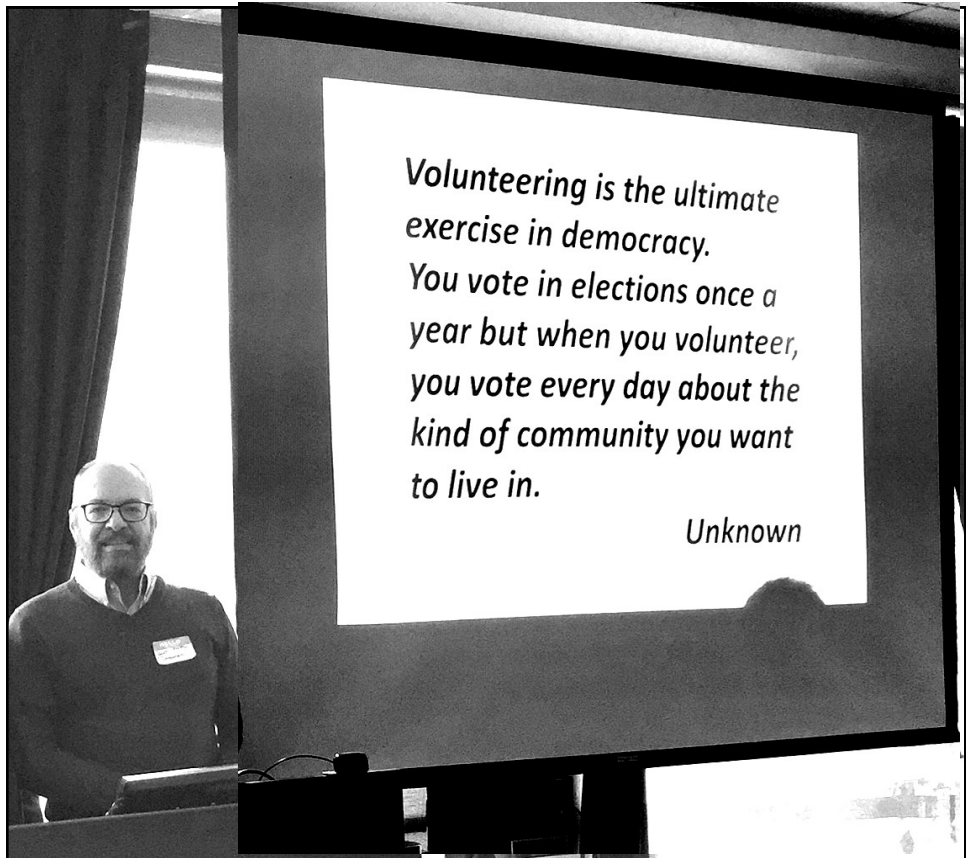
They chose Microsoft for Non-profits, because it was the easiest to use, Drennen said, and supports access to old documents.

Salem ended up getting rid of multiple copies of the same documents.

The Portland Friends got audited, said Maureen Muir of their group, calling it "not pleasant."

But the biggest problem found was they had not updated their bylaws in more than 15 years, which they are now doing.

State Librarian Kendall Wiggin recommended those digitizing documents to come up with uniform names. That way the minutes of board meetings are always called by those exact words.



Bart Drennen said that, as a retired engineer coming into office as the new treasurer of the Salem Friends, he did not know which of the boxes of accumulated records the law required the organization to keep.



Salem meeting minutes, above, and membership data, right, both dating back to 2004.



He also recommended documents be saved as PDFs, which is like a photo of a document, so that they can't be changed.

Friends, continued

(Continued from page 5)

During February they have scheduled a talk by Prudence Allen, briefly the secretary to Coretta Scott King. Allen, a native of Old Lyme, is set to talk about the Civil Rights Movement, including her participation in a Mississippi march.



Friends of the Meriden Public Library continue to raise money for a library renovation. The city approved \$7.8 million for the project rather than

the full \$9.2 million that would have expanded the building.

Friends of the Milford Public Library stepped forward to help last summer with City Perks, a cafe run by students through the town's board of education. While

students were on vacation, Friends took their places. Money raised is donated to the community.

Friends also supported the establishment of a StoryWalk at Eisenhower Park, a project organized by an Eagle Scout candidate. They participated in the ribbon cutting for the walk, which features signs telling the story in the children's book *Mother Bruce* by Ryan T. Higgins.



Pam Pilla, Dale Weiner and Judy Salemm volunteer at the Barnes & Noble book fair.

In September Friends volunteered at a fundraiser book fair at Barnes & Noble.

Friends staffed a table at the Milford Oyster Festival, explaining the library's services and the value it brings to the community.

Friends of the Lucy Robbins Welles Library in Newington held their Winterfest in January with beer, wine and spirits tastings.



In February they are co-sponsoring a Teddy Bear Repair Clinic with the GFWC Newington

Wethersfield Women's Club. All the doctors charge is a food donation to the town human services department or a gently used book.



Friends of the Oxford Library sponsor a monthly true crime and mystery book club.

Board Member Anita Wilson Dies

The FOCL Board is very sad to inform our members of the death of Anita Wilson.

Anita, also of the Friends of the Lucy Welles Robbins Library in Newington, was a very active member of the FOCL Board for many years, serving in many

capacities including as president and treasurer.

When she joined our Board, she certainly was all in, and we will miss her willingness to do whatever needed to be done, always with a smile.

— FOCL Board



Anita Wilson



**Seen at
2019
FOCL Fall
Conference
At CCSU**





Friends of
Connecticut
Libraries

Middletown Library Service
Center
786 South Main St.

NON-PROFIT ORG.
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MIDDLETOWN, CT

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

Newsletter edited
and designed by
Marjorie Ruschau

The Friends of Connecticut Libraries is a statewide support group whose members believe libraries are essential. FOCL exists to promote

library enrichment by helping Friends groups support their libraries through education, advocacy, training and resources.

What are the Core Values of the Friends of the Connecticut Libraries Board

- **Communication:** to share our goals and values with all and welcome their ideas
- **Support:** to provide quality resources and training in a timely manner
- **Leadership:** to advocate for libraries and Friends of Libraries groups, anticipating and understanding their needs and striving to meet them with integrity
- **Teamwork:** to work together with others, reflecting and celebrating our differences and showing a willingness to be flexible
- **Satisfaction:** to thoughtfully accomplish something meaningful and have fun at the same time
- **Equality:** The Friends of Connecticut Libraries (FOCL) prohibits illegal discrimination against or by its members on the basis of an individual's race, color, religious creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by the law. FOCL Board members and their agents who engage in illegal discriminatory conduct shall be warned, disciplined, up to and including removal from the FOCL Board. Any person who becomes aware of such discrimination, whether directed at themselves or not, should report such discrimination to the President or Vice President of the FOCL Board.