

Marble Columns



Newsletter of the Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library

Friends Holiday Gift Basket Sale December 7th - 10th

This is the time for gift giving to everyone on your list. And shopping at the Friends Holiday Gift Basket Sale is the perfect way to get this done. Beginning Thursday December 7th at noon through Sunday December 10th at 3 pm, we will have for sale many beautifully decorated baskets for kids, pets, teenagers, adults, teachers, neighbors, wine lovers, and friends. All very reasonably priced and ready for giving. And while you are shopping, take a chance at one of our great raffle items ranging from Legacy Theater tickets, a Work-At-Home package, a 24" LED TV, a Brother VX1435 Sewing Machine, and two Lotto packages. Get your shopping list crossed off and relieve your stress while supporting the library!



Library Book Cart is now open!

Our mini-sale book cart is located in the library on the main floor across from the reference desk. The cart is currently stocked with fiction for adults including a nice 2023 selection. We've recently changed it over to



include holiday books for adults and children. Please stop by and browse to see what you can find.

2023 Fall Book Sale - a New Record!

We set the bar higher for our book sale this past September as it was simply our best. We had terrific weather, a great book selection, and great turnout. With almost 4,000 sales transactions in our 4-day event, we smashed through our previous record in gross sales – over \$72,000. This reflects our volunteers' work and commitment throughout the year planning, culling, and sorting books, as well as setting new processes during the weekend event itself. This really paid dividends to help our mission to support library enrichment programs and activities for our community.

This year, our team of volunteers put a lot of thought into streamlining and enhancing our processes. Many im-

provements are hidden behind the scenes - how we sort, store, track and manage the incoming donated books - while others are visible to the sale itself - new dealer entry and checkout.

We seriously debated and made a deliberate decision not to raise book prices despite all the inflationary prices everyone has been experiencing. We felt it was important to promote literacy and keep the prices of our books within reach of more people in our community. This was done despite our rising operational costs.

To reduce our budget pressures, we reached out to business sponsors and made a personal outreach to the community to help defray these

costs – our 'Raise the Tent' campaign was well received by local businesses who care deeply about our community - We thank you for your generosity and support!

Please take a few moments to read through the names of our volunteers, business sponsors and other private supporters in the enclosed insert. If you know them, please thank them for all their hard work and support.

Our team have already begun to hunker down again for next year - not only sorting and culling, but to work through our processes to see how we can further improve your shopping experience – from offering more interesting topics of books, to further im-

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Upcoming Friends Sponsored Programs at Blackstone

Check out our upcoming Friends sponsored programs and activities open to everyone in our community. This is just a sampling of how the Friends support the enrichment of our library and our community. These are all funded by your annual membership, donations, and support of our book sales and holiday gift basket sales.

Thank you for helping us support our library and community. Please check out comments and feedback from program attendees:

"Beautiful setting, wonderful sound, comfortable chairs and an engaging presenter"

"So glad I belong to Friends and can support this fine programming for all to enjoy."

"Absolutely loved this performance - I hope the JBML finds more musical programs for that lovely space!"

Adults:

- Branford High School Music Makers Winter Concert - Sunday, December 10 at 2pm
- Paths to Autistic Empowerment - Monday, December 11 at 6:30pm
- From Foster Care to a Family Home: An Adoption Story - Wednesday, December 13 at 6:30pm
- Intro to Pilates - Saturdays, January 20 – February 24 at 12pm
- Swords and More with Laurel City Fencing - Sunday, January 21 at 1:30pm
- Pizza in New Haven: History Explored (John Loeb Lecture Series) - Sunday, February 11 at 2pm
- 50 States of Mind - Thursday, February 15 at 6pm
- Amore: Classical and Contemporary Songs of Love - Saturday, February 17 at 2pm
- Best Seller Book Club - January 27 and February 24 at 3:30pm

All Ages:

- Movie - Asteroid City (PG-13) - Saturday, January 27 at 2pm
- Movie - A Haunting in Venice (PG-13) - Saturday, February 24 at 2pm

Kids:

- Science Saturdays - Saturday, December 2, January 6, and February 3 at 10am
- Hot Cocoa Crafternoon - Wednesday, December 13 at 2pm
- Kids Step by Step Painting - Monday, January 22 at 4pm
- Valentine's Slime - Wednesday, February 7 at 4pm
- Homeschool Meetup - Mondays, December 11, January 8, and February 12 at 2pm
- Winter Family Take-N-Makes - Wednesdays, December 27, January 31, February 28 at 9am
- Snacks and a Film: The Little Mermaid - Thursday, December 28 at 2pm

Teens:

- Teen Kitchen Creation: Penguin Cookies - Wednesday, January 17 at 3:30pm
- Billions of Board Games - Thursday, January 25 at 3:30pm
- Anti-Valentine's Day Party - Thursday, February 8 at 3:30pm
- Snacks and a Film: The Little Mermaid - Thursday, December 28 at 2pm
- Personalized Book Box—Register by Wednesday, December 13

Check the Library website for a detailed description and the most up-to-date information at blackstonelibrary.org. Some programs require pre-registration others are drop-in events.

"Lovely way to spend a Sunday afternoon."

"So many programs to choose from! A great library and a cornerstone of the community"

Friends—Volunteer Spotlight

Each issue a special volunteer is recognized for their contribution to Friends.

Pam Roy

When third generation Branford resident Pam Roy retired in 2012 after 32 years as librarian at Branford High School, she was surprised and flattered to be asked by the Friends to become a member of their Board. She went on to serve as a Board Member and Vice President for many years until quite recently.

Pam's willingness to help where needed has involved her in many other aspects of the Friends' operations. Using her experience as a librarian, she helped by sorting children's books, and became a regular volunteer at the annual Fall Book Sale. Pam also helped organize the first annual Basket Sale, and later was



one of the first volunteers to pack and ship online orders when the Friends started selling books online. She has organized the Friends records, and most recently is the Friends' Program Liaison with the Library. Pam enjoys feeling part of something and she appreciates the many friends she has made while being a Friend's volunteer.

One of her favorite fundraiser memories is from 2015 when

she was Chair of the Friends Downton Abbey Tea event. "The last season of Downton Abbey was coming up. In preparation we collected fancy teacups and plates from thrift shops and attics and everywhere. We bought lace curtains at thrift shops to put over the plain white tablecloths. The volunteer servers dressed as if they were Downton Abbey servants. My sister and I made about 250 scones, by hand, with butter! We baked them the morning of the tea and then made the sandwiches. We made watercress and cucumber sandwiches, and cheese and ham. All very small with the crusts cut off. Huge vats of water were heated for tea. It took a lot of planning and lots of work, but it was great fun!"

Thank you, Pam for all you have done and continue to do for the Friends!

Doox of Yale

Doox of Yale, is an all-gender tenor/bass acapella group from Yale University founded in 1952.

Across our seventy year history, they have sung across the world—from Drew Barrymore's birthday party in New York City to Kylemore Abbey in Ireland, from the Steinway Club of Puerto Rico to the White House.

Below is Doox of Yale performing recently at the Blackstone Library auditorium. The concert was well received and attended with standing room only.

This performance was sponsored by Friends.

Book Sale (continued)

proving our checkout processes. We are up for the challenge and can't wait to implement new ideas.

Our date is already set for next year on the Branford Green – from Thursday, September 19th, 2024, through Sunday, September 22nd, 2024. See you then!

Are you a Friends member?

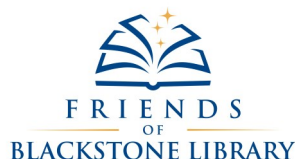
Help us continue our mission to enrich our community with programs, events, and other enrichment activities. Stop by the library desk for a membership form, or go online at blackstonelibrary.org/friends and scroll to the bottom of page.



Pictured (center), is Alan Daniels, a long time library patron and Friends Member performing an impromptu concert for young children at our Fall Book sale.



Pictured are some of our volunteers who work year round to bring the Fall Book Sale fundraiser to the Branford Town Green.



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Articles contributed by:

Nancy D'Amico
Joe Genua
Jane Kenealy

From the President

It may be me but 2023 has seemed to fly by. It could be because the Friends Organization has been so busy. I hope you all had the opportunity to come to our Annual Fall Book Sale on the Branford Green in September. Our fall sale made the most money ever and the quality, variety and organization of books and other items for sale was extraordinary. For the first time, sponsors - both businesses and individuals - helped with cost of hosting the tent sale so more of the money raised can go to support enrichment activities, programs and materials at the library. And I hope you didn't miss the Blackstone Witch on the Green during

the Scarecrow event giving out free books to children. If you have been in the library I hope you have checked out the Friends Mini-Book Sale cart on the main floor offering fiction books for adults, children's books and a shelf of books that will vary each month. Currently we are offering holidays books and beginning in January we will be offering a variety of books to get your 2024 off to the right start. So many great things happening! But one last event for the year will be the Friends Holiday Basket Sale starting on December 7th. But there is no rest for the Friends organiza-



tion. By January, we will have moved into a new warehouse with more space for our book sale operations. This will present a fresh start to organize our book sorting and collection as efficiently as possible. Never a dull moment!

Wishing you warm holiday wishes and a 2024 filled with joy, peace & good health.

Barbara

Barbara Barrett, President
friends@blackstonelibrary.org

A BIG THANK YOU to all our volunteers – either who worked behind the scenes throughout the year, and/or actively during our weekend event for a successful 2023 Fall Book Sale on the Branford Green.

AJ Millici	Diane DeBell	Jeff Rowan	Lorraine Flude	Phyllis Kaletsky
Alex Stein	Diane Whelan	Jenn Cahill	Lucia Bloom	Phyllis Stackpole
Ana Biagton	Don Mitchell	Jennifer Giri	Malaine Trecoske	Robieann Pecher
Andrew Turnage	Donna Mazzucco	Jessica Pretak	Marge Schneider	Ronnie Berman
Andy McKirdy	Erin O'Brien	Jill Thomas	Margie Vamvakis	Rosanne Hebert
Ann Davis	Evy Moulton	Jim Boak	Mary Beth DeLucia	Rosellen East
Annie Kluetsch	Fran Libby	Jim Moher	Mary Johnson	Rowena Gatta
Arla Rosmarin	Frank Carrano	Joan Hall	Mary Lou Drago	Sandra Brockett
Armond Joncas	Frank Drago	Joanna McNeill	Maryetta Russell	Sara Normand
Barbara Barrett	Geri Reider	Joe Genua	Maryrose Hoffman	Sheri Calderwood
Barbara Johnson	Gerry Annunziata	John Mooney	Maureen Honan	Shiela Biagtan
Billie Cohen	Grace Elgee	John Smith	Meg Mitchell	Stephanie Carvin
Bob Boudreau	Greg Pretak	John Strell	Meg Normand	Sue Addison
Bob Deschamps	Harvey Heyman	Jon Bloom	Micky Fazzino	Sue Connor
Carmelene Joncas	Helen Murphy	Jonathan Grande	Moira Healey	Sue Rowan
Carol Zaffino	Ines Matheny	Judy Mautte	Nancy D'Amico	Sue Wharfe
Carrie Lakin	Jane Bouley	Katy McNicol	Nancy Orlando	Susan Godshall
Cathy Taft	Jane Kenealy	Kent Smith	Nancy Reynolds	Susan Moher
Cathy Young	January Welks	Kristina Sandoval	Navin Shah	Susan Radoulovitch
Cheryl Kaiden	Jared Torello	Laura Noe	Neil Titcomb	Susan Stackpole
Cheryl Lawlor	Jean Pogwizd	Laurel Griso	Nora Cash	Theresa Hofmeister
Clara Ann McNeil	Jean Tomasso	Leslie Becker	Pam Roy	Tina Strell
Curt Wendler	Jean Williams	Lila Starkie	Pat Mooney	Tony Kenealy
David Schneider	Jeanne Giri	Linda McCarthy	Paula Grimm	
Della Neal	Jeannie Tomasso	Linda Milici	Peg Piergrossi	
Denise Strom	Jeff Barrett	Lisa Heerdtd	Peggy Krause	

Also, we THANK our “raise the tent” individual sponsors and business sponsors who help directly support our Fall Book Sale.

Business:

Big Y
Stop & Shop

Cynthia's Florist
Sweets on Main

Marco's Pizza

Individual:

Anonymous
Polly and Alan Fitz
Katy McNicol
Shepard Stone

Anonymous
Nancy Goldstein
Sally Neale
Tina and John Strell

Rosellen East
Andy & Bonnie McKirdy
Jill Thomas & Kent Smith

...and the many other individual donors who gave an additional donation beyond their annual membership dues ...

Our 'Raise the Tent' Business Sponsors

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