

Marble Columns



Newsletter of the Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library

OUR 'RAISE THE TENT' BUSINESS SPONSORS (to date)

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2023 Fall Book Sale Sept. 14th!!

Fall will soon be in the air and that means the Friends book sale is around the corner. This wonderful event begins Thursday September 14th from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. with a special preview for our current Friends members (hint: check your mailing label to see if you are a current member) followed by general sale hours listed below:

Thursday, September 14 at 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Friday, September 15 at 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 16 at 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 17 at noon – 3:00 p.m.

Due to rising prices to host this event, Friends have been hard at work to find alternate ways to raise funds to offset these costs through our "Raise the Tent" campaign. Sponsors both business and individuals have responded and are generously supporting our event. Our goal is to keep the book

sale prices unchanged. We are passionate about literacy and books and want to make this a fun experience of exploring and finding interesting and exciting books available to everyone.



Friends have put in extra work to improve the organization of the different categories of books at the book sale, so that shoppers can easily find what they are looking for by only having to look in one place to find that special title. We have also added new categories such as Pop Culture and all fiction/mysteries hardcover and softcover are now integrated and alphabetized by the last name of the author. Biographies and mass market

paperback have also been reorganized for ease of finding.

"The Friends volunteers love what they do to help make this event possible for Branford and our community" said Joe Genua, book sale coordinator.

Our Friends volunteers work all year long to prepare for the book sale and to make it better than the year before. All monies raised from our book sales after expenses are given to the Blackstone Library. In the recently completed fiscal year, Friends gave \$70,000 to Blackstone library.

Help us by becoming a Friends member (memberships good for 1 year) providing early access into the book sale on Thursday evening.

Check out www.blackstonelibrary/friends for more information on Friends, the book sale and being a member.

Membership Reminder!

Even though June 30 has come and gone, there is still time to renew!

Check your mailing label—if it has your name and "2024-06-30", then you are current and can attend the Members Only Preview at the Fall Sale from 5 to 7 pm on Thursday, September 14th.

If not, please drop a check in the mail, drop it off at the Library, or complete your renewal online at blackstonelibrary.org/friends (scroll to the bottom of page).

This is also the perfect opportunity to tell your friends and family about this special bonus so they can become a member of the Friends and join you at the Fall Sale Preview.

See you all Under the Tent!

Upcoming Friends Sponsored Programs at Blackstone

Adults:

- Intro to Pilates - Saturdays, September 9 – October 7 at 9:30am.
- Silk n' Sounds Chorus - Sunday, September 10 at 2pm.
- Doox of Yale - Sunday, October 22 at 2pm.
- Oktoberfest Talk - Sunday, October 29 at 2pm.
- Ubuntu Storytellers - Sunday November 19 at 1:30pm.

*Great programs for
every member of the
family!*

All Ages:

- Movie - Hocus Pocus - Wednesday, October 25 @ 2pm.

Kids:

- Annual Halloween Parade - Tuesday, October 31 @ 10am – 11am
- Super Science Saturdays for Grades K-4 - Saturday, October 7 @ 11-12 pm
- Meet Me @ The Mini Maker Table for Grades 2-8. 1st Wednesday of the month @ 4-5 pm
- Hands-on Fun - September 6, October 4, November 1
- Paint Night for ages 7 and up - Wednesday, October 18 @ 4pm to 5pm
- FALL Family Take-N-Makes - Once a month on Last Wednesdays | September 27, October 25, November 29 @ 9am to 8pm.
- Drop-in Crafts for ages 3 and up - Monday, November 6 @ 4pm-5pm.

Teens:

- Make your Own Stress Ball - Thursday, September 14 @ 3:00-5:00pm.
- Kitchen Creations: Candy Sushi - Wednesday, September 20 @ 3:30-4:30pm
- Wizard-themed Science Rocks! with the Stamford Nature Center - Thursday, October 12 @ 3:30 to 4:30pm.
- Halloween Makeup Workshop - Saturday, October 21 @ 2 to 4pm.
- Billions of Board Games! Thursday, November 9 @ 3:30 to 4:30pm
- Fall Cider and Cookie Decorating Party - Wednesday, November 15 @ 3:30 to 4:30pm

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.

Friends Annual Meeting Held on June 20th

In the auditorium of the Blackstone Library on June 20th, the Friends Board and Friends members gathered to celebrate the conclusion of another very successful year of raising funds for the Blackstone Library. Following a short business meeting, a very interesting and informative presentation on the history of James and Timothy Blackstone was presented by Jane Bouley, Town Historian. The highlight of the gathering was the presentation of a \$70,000 check to the Blackstone Library, representing the total amount of money gifted to the Library from July 2022 thru June 2023. The money is used for enrichment programs, events, and materials for the library.



Pictured (left to right) Katy McNicol, Director of the Blackstone Library and Barbara Barrett, President of Friends. (Photo credit: Diane Puchalski)

Friends—Volunteer Spotlight

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

Susan Rowan

When talking with Friends volunteer Susan Rowan it quickly becomes apparent that she is passionate about children learning to read and enjoying books. This should come as no surprise after having spent 40 years as a 2nd grade teacher at Brushy Plains School (now known as Murphy.)

As a teacher, Susan became well acquainted with children's literature, a skill she now puts to very good use as a member of the Children's Book Sorting Team. Soon after she retired in 2007, she was approached by a friend to become involved in sorting books with the Friends. Seeing this as a good way to give back to the community, she agreed, and 16 years later she is still sorting.

The sorting of the children's books is very much a team effort. On Tuesdays and Thursday afternoons the team – Susan, Theresa Hofmeister, Barbara Johnson, Donna



Mazzoca, Pat Mooney, and Evy Moulton – gather at the Volunteer Center to sort their way through the many hundreds of books that are donated weekly. After eliminating those in poor condition, they clean, price, and pack the books ready to be stored for the Fall Sale. Good duplicates do not go to waste as they are passed on to local day-care centers and used as giveaways at the Branford

Festival and the Scarecrow Festival.

Susan's other passion is travel and with her husband, Paul, she has travelled extensively both within the US and abroad. Among her favorite places to visit are the Scandinavian countries and Tunisia, but her dedication to sorting children's books for the Friends is a priority that always comes first.

In her own words - "the greatest gift we can give our children is the ability to be a fluent reader"

Thank you, Susan and the Children's Book Sorting Team, for your time and dedication to giving the children in our community the opportunity to enjoy all of those wonderful books!

Friends Spring Sale

This past May – just before Mother's Day – the Friends held a Spring Sale at our warehouse on School Ground Road. It was another opportunity for the Friends to offer summer reading material, showcase our volunteer workspace, as well as to raise funds to support enrichment programs for the Blackstone Library. Our volunteers met over 300 patrons who visited us at our warehouse featuring adult fiction and childrens books at our bargain prices of \$3 and under. We raised over \$3,700 during our 12-hour sale that weekend!

Thank you for your support for the friends and our library.

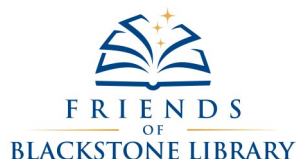
Why do you like the Friends Fall Book Sale?

Bill Albinger Attorney, Branford -The Book Fair for me is an annual right of fall. Since my children were young we always enjoyed spending time perusing all the various sections. I would navigate to sports & non-fiction, my wife would imake her way to the British mysteries while my kids would pursue more eclectic tastes.

Isabel Albinger Healthcare Consultant, Boston -I have always been an avid reader & loved going to the Blackstone Library as a child. Every fall I would go to the Book Fair, at 9 or 10 I discovered a series at the fair titled Nancy Drew. I used my allowance to buy the books and still have them to this day.

Lisa Bachiachi Teacher, East Haven -The Blackstone Book Fair is amazing. There's such variety & it's like an event. You go into town, get a coffee, get a little something to eat then walk slowly through & check all the categories. You can always find something you like & you know you are going to get a good price. If you wait till the end you can fill a bag. That's awesome. I go back a couple of times. I wish I was a member of Friends because you get the early bird shopping.

Halina Brunson 5th Grader Branford—I look forward to the Bookfair every year and I've been doing it since I was very little and I love seeing all the books on my bookshelf. It's full of library books from there and I just feel like the Branford Community is lucky to have a great library that sells books every year.



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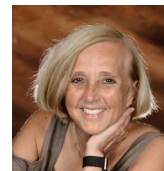
From the President

What about this summer weather? After a slow start to summer in June (I thought the flowers and plants would never grow) since July it has really been summer!! Beautiful sunny days, hot, and humid at times with crazy strong storms. This may be a new normal with climate change.

But hot weather doesn't stop the Friends volunteers continuing to prepare for our big Fall Tent Sale on the Branford Green starting September 14-17th. Please check-out the enclosed map of the tent layout this year, and look for your favorite or new category

on the opposite side of the map. There will be many great books, puzzles, audio books, DVDs, CDs, vinyl records for children and adults awaiting under the Tent.

In the last Marble Columns I mentioned the 'Raise the Tent' campaign to help offset the large expense of hosting the sale. Numerous business and individuals responded and have donated generously. The businesses are listed on the front page of this newsletter—please consider supporting them if an opportunity arises. Friends is so thankful for



every donation received.

Everything Friends is able to accomplish each year is because we have a wonderful, dedicated and hard working team of volunteers.

Thank you for all you do year around to make a difference to our library and to our community.

See you at the sale,
Barbara

Barbara Barrett, President
friends@blackstonelibrary.org

