Friends Win FOCL Group Award

In June, people who love libraries gathered on the campus of Middlesex Community College in Middletown to honor Friends groups around our state. Our own Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library won the prestigious Group Award for municipalities greater than 25,000.

The Friends of the Library always strive to make the public aware of the resources that the library offers for a lifetime of learning and to show the public that the library is a warm, welcoming part of Branford life.

While the 2014 book sale is the largest fundraiser, netting $40,000, it is designed to reach beyond dollars. The large tent on the village green, creates a holiday atmosphere and main street provides a steady stream of traffic from shoppers and diners.

Fundraising allows the Friends to help make the library a resource for learning, culture and entertainment. The Friends have contributed to the new Maker Lab, helped digitize scrapbooks in our local history collection, sponsored the 1000 books before Kindergarten program, held a successful Downton Abbey Fundraiser, and operated the Italian Ice booth at the Branford Festival. It was truly an honor to accept the award on behalf of all of our members, who do so much to contribute to our group’s success. Thank you!!

Helen Wong

Annual Meeting

The Friends Annual Meeting took place on June 2. As a celebration of the achievements of the group during 2014/2015, the event included a presentation of book awards to Betsy Klarman and Joan Ahern for their outstanding contributions, and the presentation of a year-end gift of $10,000 in honor of Betsy Klarman, Friends immediate past president. New board members were elected, and the Branford High School Music Makers rounded out the evening with a beautiful performance.

Special thanks to the committee who planned the annual meeting: Callista Stoddard, Helen Wong, Polly Fitz and LouAnn Carocari.
Are you Ready for the Book Sale?

The annual Book Sale will be here before we know it. This is the Friends largest fundraiser each year, netting over $40,000 that is used to fund library programs and materials.

As always, Preview Night is Thursday, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. (September 24). If your dues are paid up by September 17, you are welcome in the “Members Only” line in front of the tent. If you haven’t paid your dues, you can pay the Non-Member admission price ($15). Save yourself the hassle by renewing your membership today!

Sale dates are as follows:

Friday, 9/25: 9am—12 mid Saturday, 9/26: 9am—12 mid Sunday, 9/27: 12noon—5pm

On Sunday, a full bag of books is only $10.

Volunteers Needed

The Book Sale is our biggest fundraiser, and as everyone who has ever participated knows, working at the sale is probably the most fun you can (legally) have on the Green. You’ll see old friends, make new friends, and of course take home as many books as you can carry.

How You Can Help

A. Set-Up on Wednesday, September 23. Matt Hally and his crew will oversee putting up the tent, then books will need to be unpacked and arranged on the tables. With more than 70,000 volumes, the more volunteers we have, the better!

B. Working the Sale Days. We need people to staff the checkout tables in 3-hour shifts. If you’re math-phobic, we also need ‘floaters’ in the tent to help folks find what they’re looking for and tidy up the tables after over-enthusiastic rummaging. We also need friendly people to staff the food tables of the Blackstone Café.

C. Breakdown & Clean Up. The sale ends at 5pm Sunday, but the work doesn’t. After closing, Matt Hally needs helpers to consolidate the leftover books and cover them for the night. On Monday, the books have to be crated up for transfer.

Please sign up online by 9/17 at www.signupgenius.com. Click on “Find a Sign Up” and type jbmlfriends@gmail.com.

For those who miss the cutoff date for online sign-up, or just don’t want to use the online option, contact Helen Wong at: jbmlfriends@gmail.com.

Did you donate some items for the January Downton Abbey Tea that didn’t get returned? Please contact Karen Jensen, library director, at 203-488-1441, ext. 312. There are still many items that haven’t been claimed!
Fall Program Highlights 2015

VNA Blood Pressure Clinic
9/3, 10/1, 11/5 @ 12 N—1 PM
Free, walk-in clinic in the Lucy Hammer Room. For details, contact VNA Community Healthcare at 203.458.4200 or ConnecticutHomecare.org.

Affordable Care Act Answers
9/3, 10/1, 11/5 @ 9—11 AM
With Steve Cudgma of Squeri Insurance Agency.

Writer’s Workshop*
9/12, 19, 26 @ 10—11:30 AM
Sarah Bradley will help you learn to write economically, create dynamic characters, and tell compelling stories.

Weathering & Conservation of Monuments 9/8 @ 7 PM
With Dr. Stefan Simon of Yale’s Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage. Sponsored by the Stony Creek Museum.

American History Book Club*
2nd Thursdays @ 6—7 PM

10/8: 1775: A Good Year for Revolution by Kevin Philips

Indian Cooking: Madhu Gupta*
9/15 @ 6:30—8:30 PM
Learn about Indian cooking techniques and regional differences in spicing, flavors.

Board Game Gathering*
9/24, 10/29, 11/19 @ 6—8 PM
New games each month, starting with classics.

Biblio Bards of CT
9/22 @ 5:45—8 PM
We’ll read Julius Caesar out loud, round-robin style. Bring your copy if you have one. No registration required; all abilities welcome!

History of Fires in Branford 9/23 @ 7 PM
With retired police officer and volunteer firefighter Dorrance Johnson. Sponsored by Branford Historical Society.

Saturday Cinema
9/26, 10/31, 11/28 @ 1—3 PM
Hot new releases with refreshments provided.

Bestseller Book Club*
9/26, 10/31, 11/28 @ 3—4 PM
September’s title is Circling the Sun by Paula McClain. In October, we will read Pretty Girls by Karin Slaughter and November’s title is Alice Alice by Gregory Maguire. Books are available at the library.

Brian Gillie’s Roots of Rock ‘n Roll 9/27 @ 2—3 PM
Singing, dancing, history, piano playing, original sound bites, radio commercials, and impersonations. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Learning Labs Open House 9/29 @ 5:30—7:30 PM
With our summer Learning Lab participants—all welcome.

Understanding Long Term Care Medicare, Medicaid, ACA 9/30 @ 6—7 PM
With Aldo Pantano, of the CT Partnership for Long Term Care.

Living with Dementia 10/8, 11/12 @ 11 AM 10/13, 11/17 @ 6 PM
With Maria Tomasetti, South Central Region Director of the Alzheimer’s Association, CT. Call 203-230-1777, x 14.

Healing with Prose & Poetry* 10/10, 17, 24, 31 @ 10 AM
Amy Barry will engage participants in writing exercises followed by group discussion.

Lisa Reisman Book Talk* 10/14 @ 2—4 PM
A NYC attorney leaves the law, buys a red convertible, hits the road, then wakes up in a hospital room with a brain tumor. Ten years later, she will compete in a grueling triathlon. Books available for signing and purchase.

Occult in the Civil War* 10/19 @ 7—8 PM
Presented by Matthew Bartlett, a graduate of American Military University.

Eerie Connecticut* 10/28 @ 6:30—8 PM
Presented by Rob Nelson.

Writing Your Family History* 11/7, 14, 21 @ 10—11:30 am
With Sarah Bradley.

Rave On! 11/8 @ 2—3:15 PM
Live music by legends of early rock and roll. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Charge or Retreat at Gettysburg—You Decide!* 11/10 @ 6:30—7:30 PM
Over three days, General Robert E. Lee attacked the Union Line during the Battle of Gettysburg. Learn more about those who commanded the Union forces and decide for yourself: order Pickett to advance, or, heed the advice of Longstreet. Presented by COL (Dr.) Richard Young, Connecticut Army National Guard.

Register for programs with an * through our website, or at 203.488.1441 ext. 318.

* Painters of Seascapes
Sunday, October 18
2:00-3:00 pm

Educator Fred Biamonte presents the lives and paintings of Fitz Henry Lane, Frederic Edwin Church, William Trost Richards, Winslow Homer, and Robert Henri who painted the East Coast of the United States from the middle of the 19th century through the beginning of the 20th century.

These programs are just a sample of what we have planned. For more programs, see our website at www.blackstonelibrary.org.
Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library
758 Main Street
Branford, CT 06405

Italian Ice Anyone?

Friday night was by far the busiest at the Italian Ice booth this year. And even though it rained on Saturday, the event was successful in earning almost $2,000 for the Friends. Even more important, it was a great opportunity for Friends, new and old, to come out in support of our organization, and to show everyone who stopped by how friendly we are!

A huge thanks to everyone who volunteered their time this year:

Mary Hally and Andy McKirdy, President of the Blackstone Library Board of Trustees, competed to see who could make the most perfect scoop!

LouAnn Carocari, Charlotte D’Aniello, Micki Fazzino, Polly Fitz, Peter Fusco, Mark Hally, Matt Hally, Mary Hally, Karen Jensen, Molly Klarman, Julie Lindburg, Andy McKirdy, Bridget Moody, Donna Jean Oddie, Leslie Orsini, Donna Roy, Gerry Roy, Pam Roy, Al Russell, John Smith, Hudson Wolfe, Helen Wong

See you again in 2016!