

Annual Report of the Friends of the Library - 2016-2017

With another year coming to a close, the Friends Board had some changes in personnel. We started the year short one Director position, but as the year ended, we have 3 new people on board. We said goodbye to 2 long time Board members, Brigitte Dugre and Mary Omartian and welcome to Andrea Gray, Annette King and Jody O'Brien.

Our continuing book sale in the Friends' Corner of the Cafe has been a terrific passive fundraiser, and with the continuous donations by our library patrons, this space is filled with lots of good reads! Thanks go to Friends' volunteers Ann Bacchiocchi and Nancy Otto for keeping these cases full. We are most appreciative.

And when June rolls around, patrons can find the Friends' paperback sale located on a wire book truck in this corner.

In October, during National Friends of Libraries Week, the Children's Department staff helped out at their programs by promoting membership to the Friends. Also, colorful "Thank You" signs were found throughout the library, designating items that were purchased by the Friends. It was a good awareness campaign, showing our commitment to improving the library and where the Friends' finances could help out.

We have found that our seasonal fundraisers are very well received by the library patrons. This year, we had raffles for Halloween, Holiday and Valentine's Day. We also sold 70 Page-A-Day calendars as a mini-fundraiser.

In February, we held our annual Chocolate Sampling event, a membership perk - free to Friends' members. The Friends' Board supplied all kinds of great chocolate treats and the members and their families came. We had 55 folks visit this year and most of the chocolate treats were consumed! Happy Valentine's Day!

This March, we held our second annual Mobile Mini-Golf event. Over 160 people participated and everyone enjoyed playing on our course - 10 holes of miniature golf, each having its own theme. It was a "hole" lot of fun. This year, we charged an entrance fee of \$3 each or \$10 per family. And to go along with the event, a raffle was set up 2 weeks in advance. 14 great prizes were offered. This event gave the treasury over \$1500! Great job. Thanks go to Treasurer Darcy Kane for chairing this event.

As this season comes to a close, the Friends are preparing to complete its biggest fundraiser of the year - Spring Baskets & Beyond. So many baskets, it's hard to choose! Let's hope it is as successful as in year's past.

The Friends once again were able to help out the library with the following:

- Finances for the Children's Summer Reading program
- Support for an Adult and Teen Summer Reading program
- Purchase of a smaller podium for the Community Room

We continue to give financial support for the events scheduled by our Adult Services Librarian, Lyndsay Johnson. She has provided a variety of programs at which the public has been delighted. Lots of positive comments. Adult programming has kept the library in the public's eye.

We have added to the membership perks by purchasing a museum pass to the Vintage Radio and Communications Museum in CT. Also, Wistariahurst in Holyoke has sent passes to their museum as well. And on a positive note, the Springfield Museum pass has changed its status from discounted to free for 4 visitors each time you use it. That's terrific!

The Friends are once again promoting our brick fundraiser - the "Pathway to Literacy" walkway at the north entrance of the library. Bricks can be purchased "in memory of", "in celebration of", "in honor of". Brochures are available at the Circulation Desk. Any questions can be directed to Toni Raczkowski, Friends' Director.

I am very grateful for the commitment of our Friends' Officers and Directors. With their time, talents, and enthusiastic support, they help keep our Friends' group heading toward a successful future season.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Palmer
Friends' President