

President's Annual Report 2019-2020

Members of the Friends of the Keene Public Library, Representatives from the Trustees and Library, and fellow Board Members:

In our 37th year of existence as an organization, I am happy to report on another very busy, unusual and successful year for the Friends.

Library Support:

Good investment performance, a successful book sale, and generous membership donations continue to provide the Friends with the means to fulfill our mission of supporting the library collection, programming, and staff in areas not funded by the city budget. Our contribution to the library's collection development was increased modestly this year and was used primarily towards ebooks, emagazines, AV materials, and digital learning and programming resources. We also continue to provide maintenance of the ever popular aquarium in the youth department. Purchases for the library included walkie talkies, additional door counters for the new entrances, and microphones for the auditorium. We provide support for the mobile hot spot, which is used for outreach programming, library PR and occasional advertisements. We continue to monitor museum pass use and currently offer 20 passes for patrons to check out. We continued our yearly commitment to support additions to youth and adult programming including regular youth storytimes, adult craft programs, family dances, movie licenses, and writing and book discussions.

Please see the attached Treasurer's Annual Report prepared by Marilyn Gemmell and the Heberton Funds Annual Report prepared by Paul Ledell for more details.

Community Outreach:

Under the guidance of the Book Sale Committee, the Friends produced one successful fall book sale back at the library in Heberton Hall that grossed just over \$13,000. Beginning in May, we held several successful book-sorting days in our new dedicated Friends space under the Atrium that engaged 25-30 of our members. We also invited our sorters to come and sort during library hours and were pleased to see many answer the call. These activities were necessary, productive and fostered community among our membership and volunteers. We also partnered with Keene State College during their "Freshmen Community Days", employees of the W.S. Badger Company, and several employees from Janos as part of the United Way Day of Caring project. We are blessed with such a great slate of volunteers who help transport books from the lobby to the friends space, sort and price books and help prep for and run the sale itself.

Please see the attached Book Sale Committee Annual Report prepared by Kathleen for more details.

Many of our plans for this spring have been cancelled or changed including our April 2020 book sale. Even before the closure of the library and the state mandate we had decided cancellation was the safest thing to do. We hope that our fall sale can still be a possibility and we have scheduled it for October 16-18, 2020. We were also forced to cancel our volunteer appreciation event that was in the planning stage for May or June of this year, and was to be a joint effort between the library, Friends and Trustees. Finally, the Friends partnered once again with the Swamp Bats Baseball organization in Keene to sponsor the elementary literacy program "Mr. Gemmell's Reading with Ribby" for a 17th year, reaching close to 1,100 children in 15 schools in Keene and surrounding area schools.

Library Expansion and Renovation project:

It was a wonderful accomplishment to celebrate the project's completion at the grand opening with all partners and the community on Sunday June 23rd, 2019. The festivities of this day included a ribbon-cutting ceremony, remarks from project partners, a keynote speaker, building tours, refreshments, and entertainment throughout the newly expanded facility. It was a wonderful day for our City!

We would like to thank Julie Dickson, Campaign Gifts Administrator for her work on the project. Her employment with us ended on February 1, 2020. What little work that remains after her departure will be fulfilled by Marilyn and Jill. Thank you Marilyn.

Membership & Board Contributions:

We received 109 donations from 95 members (some members issued multiple checks). The total was \$10,150, an increase of 8% over the 2018 total of \$9,398. Executive Board members participate in sub and ad hoc committees for finance, membership, book sales, bylaws, and the library renovation project. An informative newsletter is produced quarterly for our membership, and the research & selection of potential museum passes is performed.

The Friends welcome new board member Jan Manwaring into our ranks. It is with respect and a little sadness to note that Pam Knight, long time member of our board, has resigned and moved from the area. Will Collins has also resigned although he remains an active volunteer for us. We will miss them both on this board.

This year completes my term as President. However, I plan to remain on the Board until we find a solution to fill my spot. A global Pandemic has not helped us in that regard.

In appreciation:

The Friends are grateful to the Library Board of Trustees, Former Library Director Nancy Vincent and our new Library Director Marti Fiske, along with library staff, and Campaign Gifts Administrator Julie Dickson for their continued support to our organization. It has been my privilege to serve as President this year. I am extremely

grateful to work with this hard-working, dedicated group of people. I thank you Marilyn Gemmell, Paul Ledell, Pam Knight, Sally Rinehart, David Meader, Mike Chelstowski, Michelle Fuller, Kathleen Chertok Bonneau, Jen English, Will Collins and Jan Manwaring for your time and dedication to this Board and our mission.

I could not end this without a special acknowledgement to Marti Fiske. She joined the library in August. She has faced every challenge with hard work and a smile. As difficult as it is to start a job as big and as important as hers, it was bigger with the opening of the new and improved library spaces. And as difficult as that is, nothing could ever have prepared her for what we are facing today. She has been making things happen at the library with her limited staff and they continue to do amazing and creative things. Thank you Marti, and thank you to your staff.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Cielinski
May 13th, 2020