



SPRING 2024 | SUPPORTING THE JOHNSON CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY

# FRIENDS NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE  
JOHNSON CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY



## Friends Behind the Scenes

Did you ever wonder what is involved “behind the scenes” before a Friends of the Library Book Sale? The expression “It takes a village” certainly applies as many FOL Volunteers and JCPL staff participate in the multitude of tasks involved in receiving donated books, maintaining the Ongoing Book Sale, and hosting the Semi-Annual Books Sales each October and April.

Dale Schmitt and Elisabeth Dubberley are two FOL Board Member volunteers who work week after week, month after month, year after year “behind the scenes,” to help manage the ever-fluctuating inventory of donated books. JCPL has provided a back room with shelving for Friends of the Library to sort and stage the donated books before they are sold. In the weeks after a semi-annual book sale, the shelves are almost empty, waiting for new book donations. In the weeks just before a book sale, the shelves are overflowing with books, and the floor is stacked almost to the ceiling with boxes of books, such that there is barely room to turn around. The day before each weekend semi-annual sale, a team of strong FOL volunteers gather at JCPL to carry the books into the Jones Meeting Rooms. There the books are carefully displayed by categories on rows of tables, waiting for eager book lovers in search of the perfect read or a great bargain.

## Friends Behind the Scenes Cont.

Each donated book, before it is shelved, boxed, and displayed for sale, is individually reviewed to insure it is in good condition and to determine what category, out of 30+ options, is the best fit. Sounds simple, right? Not always! An example is a recent donation of a Ronald Reagan memoir titled *Dutch*; does it fit best in History? Politics? Biography? Decisions like this one sometimes result in creating a new category such as Historical Biography, to help book sale patrons more easily find the book that suits their interests. The books are shelved, and later boxed, by category, ready to restock the Ongoing Book Sale or to be held for the next Semi-Annual Book Sale.

This examination and review of each book is a labor of love and an expertise Dale and Elisabeth have mastered over the years, 10 + for Dale and even longer for Elisabeth. Their devotion and commitment to this time consuming, primarily solitary (and did I mention dusty?) sorting work derives from their deep love of books and all things literary. Elisabeth says what she loves best about working with the donated used books is the experience of encountering "old friends." She describes recently finding a copy of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* in a stack of donated books and she was immediately transported back to the joy and awakening she experienced when she read this book in her youth. Dale spent his career as an Early American and Revolutionary War History professor, immersed in books, reading, studying, writing, and teaching. He says spending his retirement days sorting the donated books feels familiar and satisfying to him. For both Dale and Elisabeth, the fact that their time and efforts directly benefit Johnson City Public Library is further reason for their commitment to this volunteer work.

When asked what Dale and Elisabeth like to read, they both respond they enjoy all genres of books, fiction, history, nature, science and more. Elisabeth tells of a wise older friend who once asked Elisabeth what she reads and at that time it was mostly fiction. This wise friend commented, "Well, that is lovely, but you wouldn't only eat desert for dinner, would you?" Elisabeth has been reading across non-fiction and fiction categories ever since. Dale and Elisabeth noted that the most popular book categories consistently depleted at book sales are the Children's Books, followed by Fiction.

Dale and Elisabeth encourage Friends of the Library members to explore the wide range of volunteer options. "What one person may find rewarding may not suit someone else." They urge members to try different jobs to see what will be a good fit for their interests and strengths. Elisabeth added, "if you try one activity and it isn't right, try something else!" For Dale and Elisabeth, working behind the scenes, surrounded by books, contributing to the welfare of the community Public Library that they cherish, makes for a well lived day. Thank you, Dale and Elisabeth!

# Valentine's Day Love Your Library Celebration!

There was much to love at the 2nd annual Friends' Love Your Library celebration on Valentines Day! Smiling Friends greeted library patrons with colorful balloons, lots of chocolate and lollypop treats, free Imagination Library books for the children, and Friends' Bookmarks decorated with spring flowers to take home and color. The library's digital display showcased the many ways that the Friends support the library by funding materials, services, programs, and staff recognition. Library patrons of all ages stopped to write on heart shaped notes why they love Johnson City Public Library, filling up a large white board with their "heartfelt" comments.



## Why be a Friend of the Library?

Katie Walser offers her reflections on this question: "I grew up in Johnson City, and after being away for many years for college and work, I moved back 10 years ago. My two children at that time were ages 2 & 3. The library was immediately a way we could plug into the community, listen to story time, read with dogs, and enjoy the amazing children's programming our library offers. My favorite JCPL memory is my



daughter's "graduation" from the Librarians in Training Program! She absolutely loved the program and learned so much! The wonderful people who work at the JCPL bring it to life each day. The programs they provide for everyone in our community are incredible and mostly free of charge to the public. In the whirlwind of life, I didn't even know what the Friend of the Library program was until recent years. Becoming a Friend of the Library is such an easy way to give back to our library and community, I hope everyone will take the few minutes required and join today!"

## Spring Book Sale

**THE BOOK SALE IS ON!** Our Spring Book Sale is happening even though the library will be closed for a flooring renovation. We have a great selection of high-quality used books (and puzzles, CDs DVDs, LPs). All proceeds from the sale go to the support of the library, so shop generously and invite a buddy to become a Friend also! Once again we will host a special Friends Appreciation event in conjunction with the Preview Sale on the evening of April 26, 5:30- 7:00PM. The sale for the public continues on Saturday, April 27, 10:00AM - 3:00 PM, and our Sack Sale will take place on Sunday, April 28, 1:00 - 3:00 PM. We look forward to seeing you soon!

## FOL Officers 2023-24

President: Julia Swanson  
Vice-President: Stacie Fox  
Secretary: Nina Marchioni  
Treasurer: Linda Gallagher

### Connect with the Friends of the Library

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