Supporting the Library with funding, programming, and technology
friendsofbrookslibraryvt.org • www.facebook.com/FOBML • friendsofbrookslibraryvt@gmail.com • 802-254-5290

# Friends News of Brooks Memorial Library

224 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont

## Life in the Time of Corona

**WITH ALL DUE APOLOGIES** to Gabriel Garcia Marquez, this just seemed like an appropriate title for a library newsletter.

Things have moved both fast and slow lately. Obviously things seem to be slow at the library, but it has been anything but behind the scenes.

Early on, before the library closed for good, the staff was still offering front door pick up service. Then returns became untenable because of the need to wipe down and sequester books and limited space to hold them, it became too risky.

The decision to close for good was reluctantly accepted by the staff, but with the governor's executive order for Stay Home, Stay Safe and the clarification that library materials are not considered essential (as hard as that is to believe!), the decision was taken out of Starr's hands.

Everyone is still working from home on projects and preparing as best they can for reopening. Staff has had their library extensions forwarded to their homes so they can still answer calls. Starr has been dealing with personnel and Town issues, and working on seating the new Trustees.

The Children's Librarians are assisting with resources for homeschooling. They are also getting ready for the Summer Reading Program and preparing pieces for online components in case they are needed.

Jeanne Walsh is still fielding reference questions and working on a database of agencies and organizations that can help connect individuals with resources they may need to access.

Courtney has helped to set up a site for people to get library cards online and is posting lots of links and websites on the library and the Friends Facebook pages as well as the library website. She and Jeanne are also ordering new downloadable audio books.

Matt was instrumental in helping all the Town departments set up their systems to work from home. He is also working with Starr, Jeanne and Chloe on the new library website.

Some of the library clerks have been using this time to work on projects, learn new languages and study databases to better help patrons when the library reopens. Professional development is such a wonderful opportunity and paramount to all these activities.

Starr also shifted a large chunk of the budget toward ebooks, downloadable audio and Kanopy knowing that online media would be heavily accessed during this time. This addition to the Friends allocation for Kanopy allowed for extra viewings per month.

The library also sent laptops to Groundworks and Turning Point.

If you need to access wi-fi, and are having difficulty at home, you can park in front of the library and connect to the library website.

*Continued on page 2*

## Recent Friends Expenditures

**THESE** are a few of the recent programs and services funded by the Friends:

- Telescope **$300**
- Concert and Book launch **$300**
- Meg Mott Constitutional Lectures **$700**
- Words Project public workshop on audio storytelling **$1,000**
- Eight reconditioned laptops **$3,336**
- RB Digital — doubled from **$1,500** to **$3,000**
- Foundation Center **$2,500**
- Holly Jolly Gingerbread Craft Fair **$200**
- Renewal of Mango Language Programs **$1,070**

Total of these programs is **$12,406**

## MLK Day of Service

**PEG LOPATA,** a longtime volunteer recently requested donations of gently used children's books for Many Helping Hands 365 10th Annual Cambridge Day of Service to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This program distributes books for citywide reading and literacy programs.

We donated a handful of books from our ongoing sale to this worthwhile project.

Many Helping Hands 365

## New Board Member

**THE FRIENDS** are pleased to welcome Cindy Hutcheson as the newest member of the board.

Cindy has lived in Brattleboro for the past 30 years and is employed at the Brattleboro Co-op as a buyer in the Wellness Department.

Among her varied interests are photography, knitting, gardening, dabbling in watercolors and traveling.

Cindy also volunteers at Hospice and the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. We are fortunate that she has chosen to volunteer with the Friends as well. ■

*Life in the Time of Corona — Continued from page 1*

If you haven't done so already, please check out the library website for current news and information.

The Friends are still holding monthly meetings, albeit with voice conferencing, but we are trying to plan for the future.

Obviously, our spring fundraisers, both the Dessert night and the Book Sale, had to be cancelled. We are looking to the future for possible rescheduling.

When the library reopens, we will be volunteering with the staff in any way we can to help get things up and running smoothly.

If you have been enjoying both Kanopy and Acorn during this time, services which the Friends primarily fund, and have not yet become a Friend, please consider joining if you are able. Like everyone else, our budget is likely to take a hit this year, and funding of some of the programs we support now may have to be curtailed. It has become so apparent during this time that digital media is not simply a luxury, but a lifeline for any number of reasons.

Both the library staff and the Friends are looking forward to the day when we can once again meet at the library, but until then, stay safe. ■

# 2019 Holiday Book Sale

**THE BOOK SALE** has once again proved to be one of our more successful fundraisers. As of this newsletter, we have raised $2,770.

These sales would not be possible without the generous donations we receive, as well as all the hard work by our volunteers. Many thanks also to Courtney Carey, Circulation Manager and Volunteer Coordinator who takes care of advance planning and volunteer recruitment for the sale.

We wish to thank the following people for their help with the sales: Carmen Berelson, Mary Carnahan, Luann Dodge, Jan Dreschler, Karen Duggan, Sue Dyer, Peter Falion, Bob Glennon, Mary Heninger, Pat Ireton, Susan Jacobowitz, Betsy Judson, Joyce Marcel, Prudence, McKinney, Elaine Murray, Bob Oeser, Rebecca Ohm, Edward O'Regan, Marshall Patton, Erika Phillips, Vicki Shepard, Jane Southworth, Robert Stack, Annie Stauffer, Elizabeth Tannenbaum, Kathryn Turnas and Betsy Wagenknecht.

We all know that in the end the benefit to the library community far outweighs the disruption, but special thanks go to the library staff that had to put up with it a little bit longer than usual.

Thank you one and all and our apologies if we missed anyone. ■

# 2019 Holiday Raffle Baskets

**WE WERE VERY FORTUNATE** to have had twelve lovely baskets for the raffle. These baskets were all donated by members of the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library. We would like to also thank the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center for their generous donation of membership for a year, and Jerry Carbone for his donation of time with a professional genealogist. This fundraiser added $365 to the Friends coffers.

The baskets that seemed to be the most popular were the Dog, Cat, Tea and Cheese Baskets. Food seems to be quite popular, and we will keep this in mind when thinking about baskets for this year!

Congratulations to the following winners:

**Knitting Basket:** Micah Rendquist
**Mythology Tales:** Becky Graber
**Art Basket:** Clay Smith
**Italian Basket:** Mary Allan
**Assorted Children's Books:** Pat O'Connor
**Genealogy Basket:** Steph Greene
**Chocolate Basket:** Aida Avaic
**Cheese Basket:** Elizabeth Fox
**Cat Basket:** Alice Charkes
**Tea Basket:** Diane Leary
**Spice Basket:** Micah and Elias Rendquist
**Dog Basket:** Judy McGee

Our thanks to everyone who supported this fundraiser. ■

## 2020 Census

**WINDHAM COUNTY** is lagging behind in its response to the 2020 Census.

The results from the Census will be used in allocating funds for our communities. It is vitally important to respond as this information will help among other things, our hospitals, Medicaid, school lunch programs, fire departments and libraries.

Census data is used for funding libraries including grants for states under the Library Services and Technology Act.

The paper Census forms were late this year, but please watch for them and respond if you haven't already filled out an online form.

Your participation really does matter. ■

United States Census 2020

## Seeking Board Members

**THE FRIENDS** are currently seeking individuals who might be interested in joining the Board of Directors for the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library.

If you think you might be interested in advocating for and supporting library programs, as well as raising funds for these purposes, please contact Joyce Marcel at: friendsofbrookslibraryvt@gmail.com. ■

## Just Desserts

**THE FRIENDS** were hoping to celebrate National Library Week (April 19 to 25) with a dessert fundraiser and "friendraiser" on Saturday, April 25 from 7PM to 9PM at the Brooks Memorial Library. But due to restrictions on crowd gatherings, and uncertainty when those restrictions would be lifted, we decided to cancel.

We are hoping to offer some other time to gather together with our Friends and celebrate the library. We are certain that with all the baking everyone is doing in quarantine, we will have added lots of delicious treats to our repertoires! We hope we are able to share them before too long. ■

# Newsletter Update

**AS WITH ANY ORGANIZATION,** we are always looking at where we spend our money during the year. As we get closer to setting the budget for next year we are looking at the Newsletter.

The newsletter is currently one of the biggest expenditures for the year. Many organizations have stopped sending newsletters by post, and only send them out as emails. We publish the newsletter roughly 4 times a year. We mail about 200 to 225 copies of the newsletter, and have about 2 dozen members that receive it by email only. We are aware that not everyone who is a member has easy access to a computer, so we are looking for input as to the best way to stay in contact with our members, while also saving money on the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter.

We currently pay for Constant Contact which the library uses to send out their weekly calendar. We could use this format and send out more frequent notices of upcoming events and happenings that the Friends sponsor.

If you would fill out this form and when the library reopens drop it off at the Front Desk at the library, or send any comments you may have to: friendsofbrookslibraryvt@gmail.com, we would greatly appreciate it. Thank you. ■

## Newsletter Survey

**Please check your response.**

- ☐ Please continue to send me the newsletter by post.
- ☐ Please email the newsletter to me.
- ☐ Change the format and send the newsletter out as more frequent updates via Constant Contact.
- ☐ Reduce the number of newsletters.

Please let us know what you like or dislike about the current forms of the newsletter.

**Drop this form off at the Front Desk at the library when it reopens, or send any comments you may have to: friendsofbrookslibraryvt@gmail.com**

# Book Sale at Brooks Memorial Library

**THE FRIENDS OF BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY** will not be holding our spring/summer Book Sale.

When the Strolling of the Heifers Parade was cancelled, we felt it prudent to follow their lead.

We are hoping to be able to reschedule the sale for some time later in the year, but have not been able to set a firm date yet. We need to keep in mind the health and well-being of not only the people who shop the sale, but also those who so generously donate their time to preparing for the sale. We will follow the guidance we receive from both governmental and health experts as to the best way forward.

We understand with so much time on our hands and being at home that many of our patrons have been thinning out their own book collections. We will happily begin accepting these after the library has reopened and things have gotten back to some semblance of normal. Please call the library before you bring your donations in, as the staff will initially be very busy just getting the library back up and running. For more information about acceptable donations, check out the donation page on the Friends website (friendsofbrookslibraryvt.org/donate) or contact Courtney Carey at 802-254-5290.

Proceeds from the book sales help the Friends purchase materials, present programs and provide services which help enhance the mission of the Library. ■

# Annual Meeting

**THE FRIENDS BOARD** has scheduled the Annual Meeting for Wednesday, May 20 at 4:30PM.

This meeting will be used to discuss and vote on the Budget for 2020 to 2021, and recap the accomplishments for last year as well as what the way forward might look like for this year.

Due to limits on meetings, we have been holding these by voice conference. If you would be interested in "attending" this meeting, please contact us at friendsofbrookslibraryvt@gmail.com attn: Joyce Marcel. Joyce will contact you with the code needed and procedures to connect with us. ■

# Annual Appeal

**THE ANNUAL APPEAL LETTERS** were sent out in December. Thank you to everyone who has so far contributed to the Annual Appeal. As of this publication, we have received about $12,000. These funds go toward supporting library programs and technology.

With our limited ability to hold fundraisers this year, this appeal will be critically important to our ability to fund various library programs. If you haven't yet responded and feel at this time that you are able to, please consider supporting this fundraiser.

Thank you. ■

# Library Cards

# Celebrating Love Your Library Week

CANDYLAND PHOTOS COURTESY OF RANDY HOLHUT

Holly Jolly Gingerbread Craft Fair

Friends
OF BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

224 Main Street
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Brattleboro, VT
Permit No. 41

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## Supporting the Library with funding, programming, and technology

friendsofbrookslibraryvt.org
www.facebook.com/FOBML
friendsofbrookslibraryvt@gmail.com
802-254-5290

## Become a Member!

Friends
OF BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Any donation greatly appreciated.

❑ New ❑ Renewal

NAME(S) Please print as you wish to appear in acknowledgments

ADDRESS

TOWN STATE ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL(S)

Amount enclosed $ _____

Please make checks payable to:
**Friends of Brooks Memorial Library**

Leave at the Library Front Desk or mail to:
**Treasurer, Friends of Brooks Memorial Library**
224 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301

❑ Yes, please email me the newsletter.

❑ Yes, please send me the newsletter by post.

❑ I wish to be a Friends volunteer, please contact me.

❑ Please contact me about employer/ organization sponsoring a Friends program.

*Friends of Brooks Memorial Library is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.*
*Contributions are deductible for income tax purposes to the fullest extent allowable by law.*