

**FRIENDS OF SCHENECTADY COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY
49TH ANNIVERSARY
2014 ANNUAL REPORT**



FRIENDS MAKE GREAT LIBRARIES

President's Report

As usual, 2014 was a busy year for the Friends. As you can tell from the treasurer's report we have been very successful at raising funds for the library. Our book sales, the Whitney Book Corner and the on-line sales have really kept things humming. Many thanks to all the volunteers who make those efforts work. The Friends have provided funds for almost all library programming needs and have continued to provide for the popular Museum Pass Program, the free computer training classes as well as our own noon programs and special events of which we are a part.

Early in the year, the online sales program was made an official standing committee of the Friends and its current coordinator, Shawn Schultz was appointed to the Friends Board, filling a midterm vacancy. The Board also approved the allocation of funds for the renovation of the 46 year old kitchen off the McChesney Room. As of this writing, March 13, 2015, that renovation has been completed. It was agreed to add the Great Decisions program to sponsorship by the Friends. The Great books program is already under the wing of the Friends.

The Friends Annual Dinner Meeting was held on Tuesday, April 15 and we were glad to welcome newly elected board members Madelyn Thorne, Pat Rush, Sandy Marshall and Bob Symons. During the year, member William Ward resigned from the board. The Friends wish him well and are assured that he will continue to support the Friends whenever possible. The library welcomed librarian Leah LaFera to the reference department and Doug Bixler to the graphics and communications position. These are replacements for recently retired Paula Carosella and Sandy Andersen. Over the past 10 years, the library has lost 6 librarian positions as well as a number of clerks and aides who have not been replaced. This has put quite a burden on the remaining staff.

As 2014 drew to a close, plans were moving rapidly to celebrate the Friends 50th Anniversary in 2016. Rita Moore will head up the planning and will be informing the membership of all that will take place.

Once again, it is an honor for me to be able to serve as president of such a vibrant and committed group as the Friends. You are the most active and supportive of all of the Friends groups in New York State. I am proud to be a part of that.

John Karl



Membership

Your membership committee established the following goals for 2014:

- Review and update all membership documents
- Increase membership by 10%
- Develop and implement plans to increase member involvement
- Propose mission and vision statements based on the founding purposes of the FOL

In terms of meeting these goals:

- All membership documents were reviewed and changes made to better streamline the process
- Due to a number of factors, our overall membership declined from 998 to 927. New memberships declined by 20% but memberships at the Supporting and Patron levels increased.
- Developed mission and vision statements adopted by the FOL Board and featured on our website -



The Mission of the Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library is to assist and support our library system in fulfilling its role as an essential institution dedicated to meeting the literacy, technology, and cultural needs of all members of our community.

The Vision of the Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library is a modern, sustainable library system accessible to all.

As we look to the future, our organization will be celebrating its 50th anniversary from January - December, 2016. Your Membership Committee will be actively involved in planning a wide range of events to highlight the accomplishments of the Friends, to encourage participation by current and new members, and to work cooperatively with the library staff to bring you outstanding programs throughout the year.

Rita Moore



Monday Noon Programs

The Friends are continuing to present interesting and informative programs on each Monday when the Library is open, from September through May. These presentations are held in the McChesney Room of the Central Library, from 12:00 to 1:00 PM. The format varies through the program year, consisting of four different series: *Books Sandwiched In* book reviews (18 in all); *Special Features* (4); *Table Talks* (4) and *Science Lectures* (4).

Special Features are coordinated by Gioia Ottaviano, Table Talks by John Karl, and the Science series by Walter Grattidge. The Books Sandwiched In reviews are coordinated by three teams consisting of Jo Ann Adams and Richard Holt (Fall 2014); Patricia Rush and John Karl (Winter 2014-15) ; Gene Rowland and George Wise (Spring 2015).

Overall coordination of the Monday Noon Series is the responsibility of Gene Rowland, who wishes to say a large “Thank You” to all of the volunteers who make this series possible, including the many speakers who give graciously of their time to present the programs.

Special recognition is due this year to the following team members: Walter Grattidge, who has organized the Science lectures for many years and has asked to bow out at the end of this season. He will be replaced by George Wise, who has agreed to take over for the 2015-2016 season. Gioia Ottaviano, who has run the Special Features for many years, has also asked to be replaced. Patricia Rush has graciously stepped in to help with these programs this March and April, in addition to her other duties.

Gene Rowland

Hospitality



The 48th annual meeting and dinner was held on April 15, 2014, at Schenectady County Community College. Prior to the dinner there was a wine and cheese reception, followed by a jazz combo entertaining us with music by SCCC students of the Music Department. The dinner was attended by 114 people. The outstanding dinner was prepared and served by staff and students in the SCCC Culinary Arts Department. Long time volunteers of the Whitney Book Corner were honored. Michael Della Rocco, III, retired Chief of the Schenectady Fire Department was the main speaker, whose topic was “Being Prepared”.

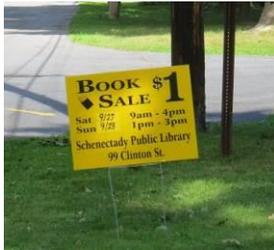
Dottie Potochnik, 2014 Dinner Chairperson

Publicity/Newsletter

We continue to promote Friends activities and membership opportunities in many ways: social media, paid advertising, email blasts and the newsletter. We have enlisted the eight library branches to help advertise our many programs. The Friends Facebook page, first launched in 2013, has really taken off, with nearly 300 “likes”. We installed bulletin boards in the Central Library vestibule that enable us to highlight the activities of the Friends and the Whitney Book Corner.

We are continuing to explore new ways to promote the Whitney, working towards the goal of having the store become a household word in Schenectady!

The new format of the Friends newsletter has successfully allowed us to feature more photos and membership news. The online version, which is found on the Friends website, www.friendsofscpl.org, is in full color; we encourage our members to view it.



Bright yellow yard signs, advertising the semi-annual book sales, dot the sidewalks in early fall and spring, a sure sign that a wonderful book sale is in the offing.

Cori Lombardo and Christine Witkowski

Online Book Sales

2014 was a year of significant changes for Online Books. Shawn M Schultz was offered the position of director in March of 2014. Many policy changes were implemented that have resulted in increased sales and a steady improvement of our seller rating by Amazon .

Our perfect order percentage (POP) is as follows:

Order defect rate 0% - target less than 1%

Late Shipment Rate (delivered on time) 100% - target 97%

Buyer seller contact time 100% - target 90%

Negative feedback 0% - target 1%

On Line Books has surpassed all performance targets required by Amazon and now has a 100% seller rating (out of 100) . A higher customer rating means more sales. Sales now average more than \$3,000 a month.

The purchase of a scanner has increased the efficiency with which On Line is able to designate which books should be sold on Amazon. We have added two dedicated scanners to our team , Sandra Willis and Karen Ferris- Fearnside.



On Line books has a team of posters, shippers and researchers who have worked diligently toward our goals. Thank you , Charlene Roman, Janie Hayner, Julie Shepelavy, Jocelyn Pranis ,Mary Trivilino, Miranda Rand, and Robin and Fred Eddy.

Last summer, the library generously offered a larger office for On Line books which we desperately needed. With the new shelving, Online Books has doubled its storage capacity. Our old computer was refurbished by

GE Elfun Society, so now two volunteers can work the same shift.

Shawn Marie Schultz

Whitney Book Corner

Since the bookstore opened in 2002, our gross sales totaled approximately \$540,500. Our best sales months are between May and October. We continue to maintain a strong customer base served by our 100+ volunteers.

We continue to offer:

- Monthly book sales
- DVDs, CDs, audio tapes
- Free coupons for different events that are linked to library programs and literary trips
- "Return The Favor" discount program for Veterans that provides 50% off all items
- Community outreach – We donate books to schools; gift cards for Union College fundraisers
- "Merchant Mash Up" – We pair with a local restaurant to promote WBC
- "Summer Street Fair" – local businesses offer activities to the public

Discontinued:

- Gift Cards because of confusion in the bookkeeping
- Collecting and selling phonograph records

New Offerings

- First Thursday of each month, all books sell for ½ price
- Book shelveers on Monday & Wednesday
- "Whitney Treasures" - books identified as more valuable that sell for \$10.
- Donations of garden books to the Schenectady Rose Garden for their fundraiser auction
- Donations of self-help materials to the Ellis Medicine Psychiatric Unit
- Gift coupons to recognize Union College hockey team for winning the National Championship
- "Dickens Christmas" to coincide with



- Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation's activities included readings, collections of Dickens works, & refreshments
- The WBC received a facelift. The building, with the help of Metroplex, had the exterior power washed & painted.
 - Charlene Roman will be taking over as the new manager of the WBC as of January 2015.

Gail Karl

Music Committee



During the past year, the Music Committee was involved in organizing and presenting two types of musical presentations. The major effort was involved in an eleven week "Beat the Snow" program of concerts every Sunday afternoon during the months of January through March. These were arranged by Chris Patrick, the widow of Ron Patrick who started and arranged the earlier four series. On one Sunday, the Friends held a Winter Book Sale, so there was no concert that particular Sunday. The weather for the most part was kind to us and we had good attendance for the majority of our concerts. The Committee faced a crisis in the Summer when Chris Patrick indicated that she would be moving her home to Maine and could no longer be responsible for organizing the 20 15 series. Luckily Ms. Janice Walz stepped forward and I am happy to say, with help from Chris and through her own contacts, was able to organize a continuing series for 2015.

Again the Music Committee was also able to arrange and present an April Concert in cooperation with the Music Department of the Schenectady County Community College. A very enjoyable concert was presented by the students, coached by faculty members of the Department. These yearly public concerts provide a wonderful opportunity for the general public to hear and appreciate the wonderful talents of our local youth. I personally appreciate the wonderful cooperation I have had with Mark Evans, of the Music Faculty in arranging for these Concerts.

As the annual report for last year mentioned, the Music Committee is extremely short handed and we would welcome Friends who would join the committee and ensure that these types of musical programs, particularly, those which allow our local talented youth to present interesting concerts, can continue as part of the Library's offerings.

Walter Grattidge

Book Sales

During 2014 we held two large book sales, in the Spring and Fall, and one smaller mid-winter sale. This year we have combined the fiction and non-fiction sales held in January into a much larger combined sale held in the McChesney Room. We have also created a new workflow for the weekly sorting of donated books, which results in scanning most of the non-fiction books to select books that can be sold online at a higher profit (see Online Sales).

All of this is possible only with a lot of effort by volunteers who work at the sales themselves and also by those who work throughout the year, getting ready for the sales.

Each book sale is organized and monitored by members of the Book Sale Committee with help from experienced volunteers. Before each book sale, Robin Eddy uses her database of volunteers to ask for help in the new sale. Response from the community has been very positive, and we are able to fill more than 350 job-slots for each of the major sales. Many of the volunteers are members of the Friends of SCPL, but we have also gotten volunteers from community-based groups such as Union College Student Activities, local high schools, The Center for Community Justice, and a large “energetic” group from GE Energy Learning Center in Niskayuna.

Throughout the entire year, members of the Friends work behind the scenes every week to organize the used books donated by the community. Bob Symons does the primary sorting of each donated book with help from Alice Reed. Joan Molloy and Pat Stearns sort the fiction books by author with the help of Joanne Griffin, Bev Glover, Claudia Rolfe and Donna Nappi. The non-fiction books are sorted into categories by Susie Leon, Robin Eddy, Sally Weinstein, Ann Hicks and Linda Ward. Sylvia Curley organizes the children’s books by reading ability with the help of Dottie Potochnik and Donna Fairlee while Fred Marx and Judy Dillenbeck sort all the paperbacks. Ellie Rowland sorts Christmas books and bibles and provides experienced help where needed. Bern Allanson handles music and Nancy Virkler organizes DVDs and is the treasurer/coordinator for our sales. Rich Leon finds storage space for our huge inventory of books with help from George Hilt, while Keith Rolfe and Roger Grasier deliver selected books to the Whitney Book Corner.



As a result of this huge community effort, our revenue for the year was \$37,367. We also sold books left over from the spring and fall sales to a wholesaler for additional revenue of \$5,074. Our sale-related expenses were \$2,466. This resulted in net income of \$39,975 for the year.

Finally, we want to thank the hundreds of unnamed people who volunteered during the book sales, as well as the community members who donate their used books generously and the customers who shop at our sales.

Rich & Susie Leon, Bob Symons, Fred & Robin Eddy

Nominating Committee

The following are candidates for one year terms:

President: John Karl
1st Vice President: Fred Eddy
2nd Vice President: Eleanor (Ellie) Rowland
Secretary: Madelyn Thorne
Treasurer: Nancy Virkler

Tricia Margas is a candidate to begin her 2nd three year term.

The following will be leaving the board and we thank them for their service: Mary Beth Barbagelata, Eugene Rowland, Patricia Rotunda, Richard Leon and Virginia Thompson.

Candidates for the Friends Board

Esther M. Swanker has spent a great deal of her adult life in and around libraries, first as a school librarian in Burnt Hills. Following her retirement from state government she has served as president of the Board of Trustees of the Schenectady County Public Library, and a member of MVLS Board and the Foundation for MVLS Libraries.

Valerie Catlin worked for the Mohawk Valley Library System for over 35 years and recently retired. She has worked for the Friends book sales for many years, and was Friends newsletter editor at one time; she served several previous terms on the Friends Board of Directors, and was president for two terms.

Chris Makofski has lived in the Schenectady area for most of her life. Retired now, she enjoys traveling, cooking, and volunteering at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen, the Zion Lutheran Church, the Central Park Rose Garden, Birthday Buddies, and at the Whitney Book Corner as a regular and a sub.

Donna Fairlee is a native to Schenectady. She worked for the Schenectady County Public Library, the NYS Dept. of Motor Vehicles and retired from the Schenectady City School District. For over 10 years Donna was organist at Stanford United Methodist Church and Trinity Methodist Church. Donna and Bill both enjoy working the Friends book sales and she has volunteered at the Whitney Book Corner.

Youth Services

The Youth Services Department enjoyed a host of professional programming, thanks to the Friends of the Library. The Friends funded 92 programs throughout the year, with the majority of the funding going toward popular school vacation and summer programs for our children and families. We also used the generous funds for reading incentives, for our family reading month promotion, for prizes for kids, teens and families who participated in our reading program and for new small motor manipulatives for the play areas serving our youngest patrons. Staff also participated in professional development through attendance at conferences, workshops and training sessions. The Friends deserve a huge thank you for giving our youngest patrons and families so many opportunities to experience excellent educational and recreational programming that sets our library apart from all others. The staff feels supported and appreciated by the Friends of the Library and we truly value the good work you do.

Serena Butch

In Memoriam



Our organization lost a dedicated Friend and true advocate for the library in 2014. Leah Leonard worked tirelessly to support the library not only as a coordinator for the book sales and book sorting, but, in her quiet way, urged anyone she met to join in that support. The Friends will truly miss her.

Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2014

	<u>Dec 31, 14</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking Accounts	71,142.28
Money Market Accounts	337,588.78
Total Checking/Savings	<u>408,731.06</u>
Other Current Assets	
Postage Due Acct	45.39
Total Other Current Assets	<u>45.39</u>
Total Current Assets	408,776.45
Other Assets	
AAA - Travel Card Online Sales	1,071.24
AAA Travel Card - Friends Noon	161.57
AAA Travel for Staff Expenses	192.90
Bulk Postage Permit Account	190.92
Total Other Assets	<u>1,616.63</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>410,393.08</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Sales Tax Payable NYS	273.39
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>273.39</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>273.39</u>
Total Liabilities	273.39
Equity	
Allen Wood Fund	2,342.93
Book Sales Fund	154,549.49
Gilbert Endowmnt Fnd Restrict	1,000.00
Great Decisions	-20.59
Music Fund	11,289.54
Niskayuna Landscape Fund	846.46
Operating Funds	36,623.62
Whitney Book Corner	169,017.51
Woodlawn Fund	990.66
Net Income	33,480.07
Total Equity	<u>410,119.69</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>410,393.08</u>

Whitney Book Corner
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2014

	<u>Dec 31, 14</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Whitney Cash	169,290.90
Total Checking/Savings	<u>169,290.90</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>169,290.90</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>169,290.90</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Sales Tax Payable	273.39
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>273.39</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>273.39</u>
Total Liabilities	273.39
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	26,670.63
Whitney Book Corner YE Prior Ye	103,070.60
Net Income	39,276.28
Total Equity	<u>169,017.51</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>169,290.90</u>