

# Marble Columns

Newsletter of the Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library

## Raise the Tent Business Sponsors

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What's the Issue?  
Comics

## Ready for some books?

From Classics to New Favorites, Great Stories & More on Sale at  
Our Fall Book Sale September 19-22

The Friends Fall Book Sale is a long-standing Branford community tradition, supported by our dedicated team of volunteers, that raises invaluable support for our Library's many adult and children's enrichment programs. Each year, the public donates tens of thousands of used books, DVDs & CDs for sale to our community.

Mark your calendars to take advantage of your Friends membership to shop early! It's not too late to become a member, check your mailing label to see if you are a current member.

Book lovers, buyers, sellers and readers everywhere can find great deals, expand your book collections, and support Friends by shopping at our book sale. Our volunteers are always improving how we organize our categories, manage our tables, and expedite check-out to improve the shopping experience. You can expect an incredible array of books for everyone of all ages— from tots to teens, adults, and booksellers alike. You will find an assortment of books in fiction, nonfiction, academic, poetry, sheet music, and if you can't find what you're looking

for, there will be one of our volunteers to help you find it.

Friends mission is to promote literacy by making available affordable books for everyone. Most of our prices range from 50 cents to \$3.00 with a few higher priced items and on Sundays, shoppers can "fill-a-bag" of books for \$10! See enclosed map for book categories and tent layout.

Check out [www.blackstonelibrary.org/friends](http://www.blackstonelibrary.org/friends) for more information on Friends, the book sale and membership.

## \$1 Million Dollar Milestone Announced at Annual Meeting

During the recent Friends Annual meeting, we had the pleasure of announcing an extra year-end gift of over \$23,000 to the library. This special donation is on top of our ongoing support culminating in a generous total of \$72,000 contributed to the James Blackstone Memorial Library for this year. These funds support programs, equipment, and activities for our library community.

Barbara Barrett, President of Friends, made a short presentation at our annual meeting on Friends gifting to the library. The Friends gifting steadily grew over the years. However, between 2018-2024, Friends Total

gifts significantly grew by 86% for a total of \$421,260 during that seven year period.

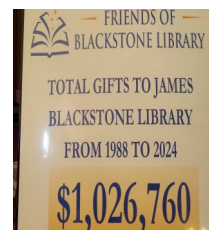
After tallying total gifts to the library since its inception in 1988, the Friends total gift to the Blackstone Library for enrichment activities and programs now **EXCEEDS ONE MILLION DOLLARS!**

This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our volunteers, the generosity of our members and donors, the backing of our sponsors, and the collaborative efforts of the Friends board, library trustees, and staff.

Thank you!!



Katy Nicol, Library Director (left) and Barbara Barrett, Friends President (right)



# Upcoming Friends Sponsored Programs at Blackstone

## **ADULTS:**

- Beyond ChatGPT: New Developments in Generative AI - Wednesday, September 11 @ 6:30-7:30 pm
- Intro to Pilates - Saturdays, September 28 - October 26 @ 11 am-12pm
- Joe Franke of the Warren Legacy Foundation for Paranormal Research Wednesday, October 2 @ 6-7 pm
- Nature Inspired Art Class - Leaf-Printed Cards - Monday, October 7 @ 5-7pm
- Edgar Allan Poe - Monday, October 21 @ 6-7 pm
- Spooky Trivia Night- Thursday, October 24 @ 6-7:30pm
- Yale's Whim 'n Rhythm A Cappella Group—Sunday, November 17 @ 2-3pm
- Best Sellers Book Club  
September 28: By Any Other Name by Jodi Picoult  
October 26: The Life Impossible by Matt Haig  
November 30: The Blue Hour by Paul Hawkins
- Saturday Cinema - Saturdays, 2 -4 pm;  
September 28: Fall Guy (2024, PG-13);  
October 26: Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire (2024, PG-13);  
November 30: The Boys in the Boat (2023, PG-13)



## **KIDS:**

- Sand Art for ages 3 and up, Wednesday, September 4 @ 3:45 to 4:45 pm
- Annual Halloween Parade, Wednesday, October 30 @ 10 am-10:45 am
- Science Saturdays with Cool-ology for Grades K-4, Saturday, October 5 and Saturday, November 4 @ 10-11 am
- Homeschool Meetup, Once a month on Mondays, September 9, October 7, November 11 @ 2 pm to 3 pm
- FALL Family Take-N-Makes, Once a month on last Wednesdays, September 25, October 30, November 27 @ 9 am to 8 pm
- Beads. Bracelets and Keychains for grades 3-6, Monday, November 4 @ 3:45 to 4:45 pm



## **TEENS:**

- Snacks and a Film: The Nightmare Before Christmas (1993) for all ages - Wednesday, October 30 @ 2 pm
- Kitchen Creations: Halloween Dirt Cups - Thursday, October 31 @ 3:30 - 4:30 pm
- Personalized Book Box for grades 5-12, Register by 11/11 to pick up a box the week of 11/18/24

***Check the Library website for a detailed description and the most up-to-date information at [www.blackstonelibrary.org](http://www.blackstonelibrary.org). Some programs require pre-registration.***

# Friends—Volunteer Spotlight

*Each issue a special volunteer is recognized for their contribution to Friends.*



Nora Cash started volunteering for Friends of JBML several years ago. A Branford resident for almost 40 years, Nora is a CT native, originally from New Haven. Retired from management positions at Nationwide Insurance (where she met husband Bill), and SNET, she most recently has filled important roles of caregiver to her Mom and loving Aunt to her niece and nephew and their families.

Ironically Nora’s sister-in-law is currently a librarian, as was her mother-in-law (facts which may have influenced her interest in the volunteer projects she does with enthusiasm). Those include sorting books on literature, the classics, Shakespearean plays, fables and poetry. She also volunteers as a cashier for the book sales and maintains the plans for the organization’s monthly project meetings.

As a parishioner of St John Bosco parish her other volunteer efforts contribute to the “Midnight Run”-organizing the making and bagging of sandwiches in St. Mary’s church hall for the homeless

at Amistad House once monthly.

Although disappointed by the cancellation of a Mediterranean cruise during Covid-19, Bill and Nora have enjoyed many cruises including a transatlantic sailing and always look forward to joining their extended family for Labor Day week at Misquamicut beach where they enjoy the sun and sea and playing word games (Fascinating fact: Bill was on “Jeopardy” during the Alex Trebek era) and catch up on reading. One of Nora’s favorite trips was a land and cruise tour to Alaska. That included a thrilling helicopter ride to a glacier on which they landed and walked around.

Besides reading her favorite authors, including Ed McBain, Donna Leon, Ian Rankin, Walter Mosley and Louise Penny, Nora also collects signed (and often first edition) books of her favorites and other authors. She does admit to having run out of bookcases in which to store them. Another hobby of hers, Nora also collects amethyst glass.

When asked what her favorite part of volunteering for FBML was, she expressed that she really enjoys being around so many other wonderful people who also love books and our community.

Thank you, Nora!

## Team Wins Friends of CT Library Award

At the Friends of CT Libraries (FOCL) Annual Meeting held on 6/15/24 in Avon, a select group of Friends of James Blackstone Library volunteers were honored with the Focused Project Award by the FOCL. This award recognized their meticulous planning and the seamless transition this past winter to our new warehouse with minimal interrup-

tion in our volunteer operations. This team of volunteers possessed many skills that provided a sound execution plan for the complex and time-sensitive project Friends of James Blackstone Memorial Library can receive as many as 2,000 donated books a week. The path from collecting these donated books then processing, categorizing and determining

marketability to our final signature four day event—our annual Fall tent sale—takes place over the course of a year and has been conducted in two locations. Our new site not only consolidated operations and book storage but provides additional workspace for our volunteers.

Great job!!



Recipients of FOCL Focused Project Award. Left to right: Bob Deschamps, Jane Keenealy, and Jon Bloom. Missing from photo are John Smith and Nancy Reynolds.

### Raise the Tent Individual Sponsors Silver Sponsors

Bonnie and Andy McKirdy  
Marlene and Shepard Stone  
Blackstone Library Trustees

### Bronze Sponsors

Anonymous  
Barbara Barrett & Joseph Genua  
Polly and Alan Fitz

Larry Greenberg  
Amy Rosen (in loving memory of  
Gail & Alan Rosen)

### Business Donors



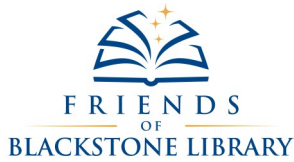
BIG Y— Branford  
Dunkin’  
Stop & Shop—Branford  
Subway  
Cynthia’s Flower Shop

Thank you to all of  
our sponsors, donors  
and supporters!



### 2024 Book Sale

Friends Preview  
Thursday Sept. 19th 5p-7p  
General Public  
Thursday Sept. 19th 7p-9p  
Friday Sept. 20th 9a-7p  
Saturday Sept. 21st 9a-7p  
Sunday Sept. 22nd 12p- 3p



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### Board of Directors 2024—2025

Barbara Barrett, President  
Linda Milici, Vice President  
Jonathan Grande, Treasurer  
Donna Mazzucco, Secretary  
Leslie Becker  
Jon Bloom  
Sandra Brockett  
Bob Deschamps  
Joe Genua  
Jane Kenealy  
Andy McKirdy  
Jill Thomas

Katy McNicol, Library Director

#### Articles contributed by:

Jeanne Hayes  
Nancy Reynolds  
Susan Stackpole

## From the President

I hope you've been finding ways to beat the heat during this scorching summer. As the days shorten and the leaves begin to turn, we're excited to announce that the countdown has officially begun for our 36th Friends Annual Fall Book Sale on the Branford Green.

This year has been a whirlwind of activity. From relocating our warehouse at the start of 2024 to brainstorming fresh ideas for enhancing our sale, we've been busy. And let's not forget the thousands of book donations that have poured in—each one a treasure waiting to find a new home.

As we put the finishing touches on our last-minute plans, I can confidently say that this will be the best book sale yet. Picture rows of well-loved books, eager readers, and the unmistakable buzz of excitement.

Mark your calendars for September 19th at 5pm on the town green. Current paid Friends members, this is your exclusive invitation—you won't want to miss out.

And if you haven't renewed your membership for the 2024-2025 period, don't worry! There's still time to join. You'll be delighted by



what you find at the sale. See you under the tent. Let's celebrate the magic of books together!

*Barbara*

Barbara Barrett, President  
[friends@blackstonelibrary.org](mailto:friends@blackstonelibrary.org)

P.S. Bring your book-loving friends—they'll thank you later!

