

Summer 2026
Volume 49 Issue 2

Marble Columns



Newsletter of the Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library

Don't forget to

RSVP

Friends Annual Meeting
by June 10th
send email to
friends@blackstonelibrary.org

Women of '76 A Theatrical Tribute to Lesser Known Women of the American Revolution

Step into the drama, courage, and untold stories of the American Revolution on Tuesday, June 16 at the Blackstone Library auditorium. Following the Friends of the Library business meeting at 5:00p.m., members are invited to experience a truly unforgettable theatrical event.

We are proud to welcome Rita Parisi of Waterfall Productions for her acclaimed solo performance, *Women Of '76*—a vivid and moving journey into the lives of the remarkable women who witnessed, chronicled, and in some cases helped shape the American Revolution.



In celebration of America's upcoming 250th anniversary, this powerful production brings audiences face-to-face with voices too often left out of history.

Through dynamic storytelling and richly detailed costuming, Parisi transforms into unforgettable figures: Baroness Frederika von Riedesel, Prudence Wright, Nancy Hart, Mary Katharine Goddard and Mary Gould Almy. Their stories—patriot and loyalist, American and European—reveal a deeper, more human portrait of a nation in upheaval.

An accomplished actress and playwright with over 20 years of touring experience, Parisi is known for bringing history to life with passion and authenticity. Since 2005, she has brought history to life for audiences throughout New England and beyond. A proud member of SAG-AFTRA, her work has been seen on film and stage, including features at the Boston International Film Festival and the Cannes Film Festival.

This event is only open to current, paid members of the Friends of the Library. Members are encouraged to check their expiration date on the mailing label of the *Marble Columns* newsletter. To attend, please RSVP by June 10th by sending an email to friends@blackstonelibrary.org.

Friend Memberships are Due for Renewal!

Look at the upper right corner of your mailing label on this copy of *Marble Columns*. If it reads "EXP 2026-06-30" your membership renewal is due on July 1, 2026. (If it reads "EXP 2027-06-30" your membership is **not** due for renewal.) Enclosed is a renewal form and mailing envelope or you can renew online at <https://blackstonelibrary.org/support-the-library/friends>. Have friends who love our Library? Pass along our link above for them to join. Membership starts for as little as \$10 for Seniors. Thank you for your support!

FRIENDS ANNUAL
FALL BOOK SALE

SAVE THE
DATE

Sept 17 - 20
2026

LOCATION
TO BE ANNOUNCED



Looking for
Donations of
Children's Books



Drop donations behind the Blackstone
Library or at 30 Harrison Ave in the
Friends collection bin.

Thank you!!



Upcoming Friends Sponsored Programs at Blackstone

ADULTS:

- **Saturday Cinema: Saturdays 2:00pm – 4:00pm**
June 27: *Song Sung Blue* (2025, PG-13, 132 mins.)
July 25: *Wuthering Heights* (2026, R, 136 mins.)
August 29: *Reminders of Him* (2025, PG-13, 114 mins.)
- **Third Thursday Movie Matinee: Thursdays 10:00am – 12:00pm**
June 18: *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951, 92 mins.)
July 16: *The Searchers* (1956, 119 mins.)
August 20: *Funny Face* (1957, 103 mins.)
- **Best Sellers Book Club**
June 27: *The Calamity Club* by Katheryn Stockett
July 25: *Land* by Maggie O'Farrel
August 29: *This Changes Everything* by Lisa Scottoline
- **Ilana Zaks Violin Performance** -Thursday, June 11 @ 6:30pm -7:30pm (*Registration required*)
- ***Blackstone Library Summer Reading Kickoff*** - Saturday, June 13 @ 1:00pm - 3:00pm
 Fun for all ages - live music, crafts, face painting, lawn games and free ice cream! (*Registration not required*)
- **Shakey: A Neil Young Tribute Show** - Saturday, July 18 @ 2:00pm - 4:00pm (*Registration required*)
- **"...plays well on the violin" - Enslaved Musicians in Colonial Connecticut**
 Thursday, August 27 @ 6:00pm - 7:00pm (*Registration required*)

Wonderful community events!

KIDS:

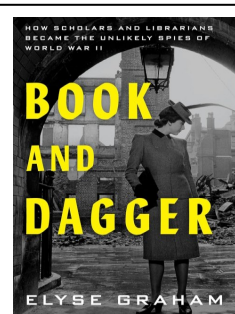
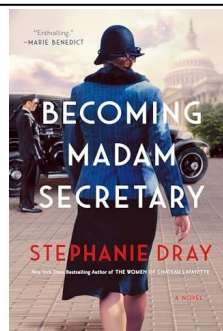
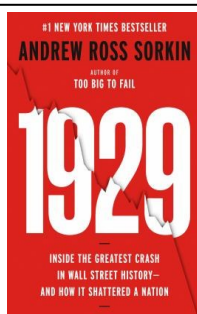
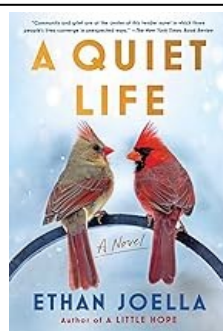
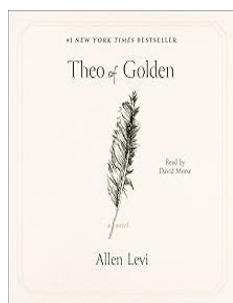
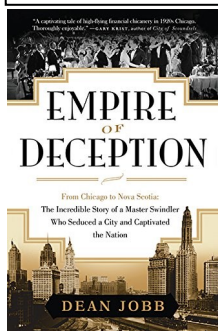
- **Science Saturdays with Cool-ology for Grades K-4** - Saturday, June 6 @10:00am - 11:00am
- **Kid Craft: Beaded Sunglasses!** - Wednesday, June 30 @ 4:00pm - 4:45pm
- **Reading Buddies for Grades K-3** - Thursday, July 21 @ 4:15pm -5:00pm
- **Kids Music Bingo** - Wednesday, August 5 @ 3:00pm - 4:30pm
- ***Blackstone Library Summer Reading Kickoff*** - Saturday, June 13 @ 1:00pm - 3:00pm
 Fun for all ages - live music, crafts, face painting, lawn games and free ice cream! (*Registration not required*)
- **Homeschool Meetup** - Once a month on Mondays | June 8, July 13, August 10 @ 2:00pm - 3:00pm
- **Summer Family Take-N-Makes** - Once a month on Last Wednesdays | June 24, July 29, August 26 @ 9am-8pm
- **Friday Snacks and a Film for All Ages** - Fridays @ 2:00pm | June 26, July 10, July 24, August 7

TEENS:

- **Pizza and Board Games** - Tuesday June 23, July 14, August 11 @ 5:30pm - 6:30pm
- **Teen Take N Makes: DIY Felt Succulents** - Monday June 22 @ 9:00am - 8:00pm
- **The Ultimate Potato Chip Taste Test** - Wednesday, July 1 @ 3:30pm - 4:30pm
- **Teen Marbled Bags** - Monday, July 27 @ 4:00pm - 4:45pm
- **Writing An Opening Hook with Author Catherine Egan** - Saturday, August 1 @ 1:00pm -2:00pm
- **Teen Take N Makes: Campfire Cones** - Monday, August 3 @ 9:00am - 8:00pm

What are Friends Reading?

Remember to check out the Friends Quick Picks for your next great read!



Spring 2026 Book Sale: Thank you for Making It a Hit!

What a day! On Saturday, May 2, the Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library hosted our annual Spring Book Sale at the Friends warehouse in Branford—and you helped make it a huge success. After five frenzied hours of shopping, we raised nearly \$3,800. Readers of every age browsed, discovered, and headed home with great finds from children’s favorites to an eye-catching collection of U.S., World and Civil War history. Shoppers also snapped up adult fiction, puzzles, DVD’s and mass-market paperbacks. Every purchase supports the Blackstone Library, helping fund wonderful programs for all ages plus other enrichment materials and activities. Mark your calendar for our Fall Book Sale (September 17-20; watch for news about our new location) and keep an eye out for our in-library cart book sale and other fun fundraisers. And a heartfelt thank you to our 70+ volunteers. Your time, energy and teamwork power these sales and everything we do. **Can’t wait to see you at the Fall Sale this September!**



New Book Cart Location and Friends Quick Picks



Did you know that Friends offers two ways to indulge your passion for reading? You don’t have to wait for the “big tent” to find bargain books. Friends sponsors an on-going “mini book sale” of both adult and children’s books. Book carts are located in the downstairs entrance foyer opposite the Circulation Desk.

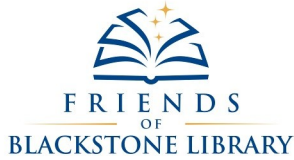
In the Adult Cart you’ll find books of seasonal interest, current releases and selections from favorite authors. Want to encourage a child’s passion for reading? The Children’s Book Cart offers a wide and varied selection of books ranging in age from infants to young adults. All books are reasonably priced and most are under \$3.00 You will also find a selection of puzzles to tempt puzzlers of every skill level.

Don’t have time to peruse the Adult Fiction shelves? Then check out the Friends Quick Picks upon entering the library. The Quick Picks cart offers a curated selection of best sellers, current releases and in-demand titles for loan from the library. Find your favorite book, check it out at the circulation desk and be on your way! Happy reading! (Note: Quick Picks cannot be placed “on hold.”)

The Journey to the Tent - Part 1

How do approximately 60,000 gently used donated books get to the big sale tent in September? By an impressive system of organization, categorization, muscle power and, of course, dedicated volunteers. This column is the first of two articles explaining the process of getting books to the tent. Part II will appear in the next issue. Future issues will also cover what the Friends organization really does behind the scenes.

The book process starts with readers who drop off their donations at two sites in Branford throughout the year, where they are picked up daily by a volunteer team and brought to the warehouse. Very large residential donations are scheduled for free pick-up by the same volunteer team and also delivered to the warehouse where donations are separated into books for children, audio visual items, and fiction. The rest of the donated books (mainly non-fiction) are assessed for being sold online. A very small number of books fall into this category; the large majority are designated as tent sale books. The tent sale books are then further sorted into general categories such as Art, Biographies, History, Fiction, Literature, Children’s, Science, etc. And for greater ease in the tent shopping experience, most categories are further sorted into sub-categories. Some of the sub-categories in History are Ancient History, Civil War, and Military History while the Literature sub-category would include Classics, Plays/Poetry, and Shakespeare among others. Sorted books are stored by sub-category on labeled shelves in the warehouse and placed in color coded labeled bins for storage when shelf capacity has been reached. Stay tuned for Part II in the next issue of *Marble Columns*.



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Content Contributors

Stan Abramowitz
Barbara Barrett
Pat Bourne
Joanne Legler
Jane Kenealy
Susan Stackpole

From the President

I can hardly believe it's almost time for our Annual Meeting, which will take place on **Tuesday, June 16, at 5:00 p.m.** in the **Blackstone Library Auditorium**. Following a brief business meeting, we are delighted to present a special theatrical performance, **Women of '76**. In honor of America's upcoming 250th birthday, this acclaimed program brings to life the untold stories of courage and conviction of **five remarkable women** who witnessed—and helped shaped—the American Revolution. The presentation has received outstanding reviews and promises to be a memorable experience. Attendance at the meeting is open to current paid members. Please be sure to send a RSVP email by **June 10** to friends@blackstonelibrary.org.

We will also review highlights from our **2025-2026 fiscal year**, which concludes on June 30, 2026. This has been a very strong year for the Friends. The Fall 2025 Book Sale, Holiday Basket Sale, Spring Book Sale, and ongoing in-library sales were all highly successful. Combined with our online sales and strong membership revenue, these efforts contributed to an excellent year overall.



One challenge we have been actively addressing over the past six months is securing a location for our **2026 Fall Book Sale**, as the Branford Green will be unavailable due to construction. Identifying a suitable site close to downtown, with adequate parking and accessibility for all shoppers, has been challenging. However, through close collaboration with the town, we are nearing finalization of the location. We will share details as soon as the necessary paperwork is complete.

We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting and thank you, as always, for your continued support of the Friends of the Blackstone Library.

Warm regards,

Barbara

President - Friends of the JBML
friends@blackstonelibrary.org