

January 17, 2024

Dear Friend of the Library:

This is the time of year that we ask for your annual member dues. Enclosed you will find a form listing various levels membership. Please take a moment to renew your membership to help the Friends of the Library continue its important work.

2023 marked the 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Friends of Washington Library. Since our inception more than \$175,000 has been donated to advance the services of our wonderful Washington Public Library.

In 2023 our lobby sales of donated books raised approximately \$6,000. We donated 432 books, 61 DVDs, 24 CDs and 5 audio books to the library. Friends of the Library volunteers also serviced Little Libraries located in the All Abilities Park, Phoenix Park and the Train Station.

Total sales from the 2023 Annual Book Sales were \$6,000. In addition to the money raised, the Book Sale furthered the Friend's mission of providing affordable access to books for the entire community. Watch for announcement of the 2024 Book Sale at a later date.

Friends of the Library provided funding for many events and library purchases. The 2023 highlights include:

- Sponsoring for the 2023 Family Reading Night, where up to 800 people celebrated books and learning.
- Sponsoring the Summer Reading Kickoff, attended by over 300 people in the library parking lot.
- Purchasing Large Print books for the little libraries at Retirement Homes. Each month two new Large Print books are delivered to these little libraries.
- Purchasing the Winter Reading Program and Summer Reading Program gift certificates for finishers.

In 2024, the Friends of the Library have already committed to sponsoring three important events:

- The library's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. The first Celebration event is the Jumpin' Jubilee on Leap Day, February 29<sup>th</sup>. This family event will take place from 4pm-6pm.
- The 2024 Family Reading Night on March 1, 2024.
- The 2024 Missouri Book Festival, which will take place on the second weekend of September. Once again, this festival will take place at the library. In 2022, this Festival drew over 3,000 people to downtown Washington.

Friends of the Library Author Series provides quality programming by local and regional authors including:

- Joan E. Strassmann, *Slow Birding*



The Library's annual summer reading kickoff was once again a smashing success thanks to the Friends of the Library.

- Ed Wheatley, *St. Louis Sports Memories*
- LuAnn Meyer Lueke, *The Life and Times at Meyer's Grove*
- Vicki & Jim Erwin, *A History Lover's Guide to St. Louis*
- March Magic – Tween/Teen Fantasy Authors in Discussion
- Gary Kremen, *This Land of Promise A Bicentennial History of St. Louis*
- Donna Villani, *The Capture of Art*

The 2024 officers of the Friends of Library are Mary Emke, President; Diane Lick, Vice President; Traci Siebert, Treasurer; and Margaret Seiter, Secretary.

The Executive Committee appreciates all support and donations members provide throughout the year. Each contribution of time, talent, and treasure helps strengthen our Library and aids the talented staff. We welcome and invite you to attend our monthly meetings at the library at 4:00 pm the first Wednesday each month.

Sincerely,

Mary Emke

2022, 2023, 2024 President



Chris Stuckenschneider interviews David Von Drehle at a Friends-sponsored author event. "The Book of Charlie" was a national bestseller when he visited the library.



Friends purchases from previous years continue to make a big impact at Washington Public Library. The Big Blue Blocks and Dinosaur Bones are favorites with the children.



