



Friends Board of Directors

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YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

“Book Bites” Project a Success: FRRL Volunteers Distribute Almost 2000 Free Books to Local Kids



Book Bites by the Numbers:

2 local business contributors (Scrawl Books and Jersey Mike’s Subs); 4 local schools; 5 months from the first book order to handing out the last book; 8 school visits; 26 volunteers; 27 degrees on our coldest school visit; 30 different book awards, including the Coretta Scott King Award, ALA Best Fiction for Young Adults, and the Caldecott Medal; 40 mph wind speed our windiest day; 47%. Average % of Free and Reduced Lunch in the schools; 50 authors; 60+ cases of books; ~1900 books distributed; ~2000 paper bags.

From the first bag to the last, FRRL volunteers were greeted with smiles, “thank-you”s, and more than a few “wows” as they distributed around 1900 brand new free books to young readers at four locations.

Over the course of eight FRRL visits at four schools, volunteers handed books in paper bags to students coming to pick up meals and school supplies. Books were distributed at Dogwood, Forest Edge, and Hunters Woods Elementary, and at South Lakes High School. They ranged in reading level from early reader/Kindergarten to Young Adult. Many families with students in multiple grades were grateful to receive a handful of books to take home to all of their young readers.

Special thanks to all of the volunteers who made this possible!

Beth D.	Lorna M.	Rob M.
Brian J.	Lyn B.	Robert C.
Chris S.	Mary Jo P.	Rocco M.
Eileen E.	Maureen R.	Shirley P.
John F.	Mollie W.	Sophie K.
Karen F.	Penny C.	Terrill E.
Karin R.	Rhiannon S.	Tom R.
Katie R.	Rik K.	Val L.
	Rob E.	

New volunteers are always welcome!

Can We Quote You on That?

“You guys rock!! My 4th grader finished the book today and she’s so excited that she doesn’t need to return it :)” – A Forest Edge parent

“This book is awesome!”, “Wow!”, and “Can I have another book for my little brother at home?” - Students

“Thank you so much for everything you did to make this happen. I appreciate all the time and effort the Reston Library Friends put into this project.” – Dogwood Elementary Librarian

“... the book distribution this morning was amazing.... Thanks so much for sharing these books with our students.” –Hunters Woods Elementary Librarian

“I’m glad so many volunteers had a chance to see those happy kids!” – FRRL Volunteer

“Thank you for the opportunity to serve....I enjoyed meeting the other volunteers and interacting with the parents and kids. I don’t do enough of that.” – First-time FRRL volunteer!

“It was a great project and well run. I’m definitely interested in helping with any future projects.” –First-time FRRL Volunteer!

“It was, obviously, an amazing thing for the kids in the community, but it was also a huge boost for the volunteers. It was so nice for all of us to be able to actually do something for the community in a safe way after so many months of isolation!” – FRRL Volunteer



The project drew some local press attention via articles on the Reston Now and Reston Connection websites, and in the Reston Connection print edition in early February. Bookseller Scrawl Books was also featured on Fox 5 (local news), and they generously included a mention of the Friends and our project in their interview with reporter Kevin McCarthy. This was the first project of its kind for the Friends, using a large block of funding on a “direct-to-end users” effort. We will continue to support literacy programming, equipment, and materials at Reston Regional Library and in our community.

LIBRARY NEWS

Meet Our New Branch Manager

In late December, Reston Regional welcomed our new branch manager, Mike Siriwardena. Mike comes to us after spending 15 years in library and information services at Florida State University. The campus had 7 libraries serving 40,000 undergraduates, 15,000 graduates, and about 4,000 faculty and staff. The main library saw over a million visitors a year. At FSU, Mike was in charge of 4 libraries, 2 remote storage facilities, and the 3.5 million-piece General Collection. He managed over 100 employees.

“I was able to really become a jack of all trades over the years at FSU. I was able to work with teams that moved massive amounts of the collection around, redefined the customer service standards used at the service desk, and placed a priority on staff development for all employees from our part-time employees to our faculty librarians. During all this my driving force was a focus on serving our community and creating experiences that target the needs of the community, very similar to what we do here at Reston Regional Library.”

When this position came up, Mike really loved the idea of working in Reston. *“I love how busy the branch is on a regular basis. The staff are also so amazing to work with! They are constantly looking for new ways to help the community. ... while doing my research I learned all about this amazing and unique community, (and) I completely fell in love with its charm and history!”*

Soon after Mike arrived, the library shut down express services and returned to “curbside pickup only.” From January to mid-March, one of his most challenging tasks was joining the system-wide effort to plan and prepare to get back to express services. *“My biggest thing is to work hard to get our community back into the library. We all miss having our community members in the library and working closely with everyone. That has been a challenge because we do have to balance our desire to be with the community, but in a way that is safe for both our staff and our community members! We have been working very hard to set up the library to allow for safe distancing and use.”* Mike said this included *“making sure all our cleaning and sanitization procedures focus on making the library as safe as possible.”* (Read more about the Express Services below).

Hope for the future: welcoming in, expanding out, spreading the word about programs

When the staff first met Mike, he emphasized his hopes to extend a message of welcome to everyone served by the library. He encouraged staff to look for ways to make sure patrons feel welcome and well-informed on what the branch has to offer, and how to find the information and materials that meet their needs. This includes exploring everything from expanded programming to improving signage in the building. Mike also acknowledges the challenges some patrons may face in getting to and making the most of the branch. Though Reston Regional technically serves a wide geographic area, there are some folks who simply can’t get to the building. Since the onset of the pandemic, Reston Regional staff have worked extensively on virtual programming to expand their reach, with only limited ability to physically go out to other locations. But hopefully there will also come a time when staff can go back out into the community in person and bring the library to patrons. Things like visits to neighborhood community centers, “bookmobile” stops at schools, and other outreach efforts are all up for consideration. Mike said, *“I want to continue to develop a ton of great programs that truly focus on the needs of our community!”*

Library Resumes Express Service; Curbside Services Are Still Available

Per an update from Fairfax County Public Library, library branches resumed [Express Services](#) on March 22. Express services allow you to visit inside the branch building for 30 minutes. Curbside services continue as of this writing.

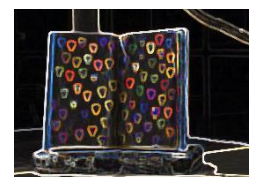
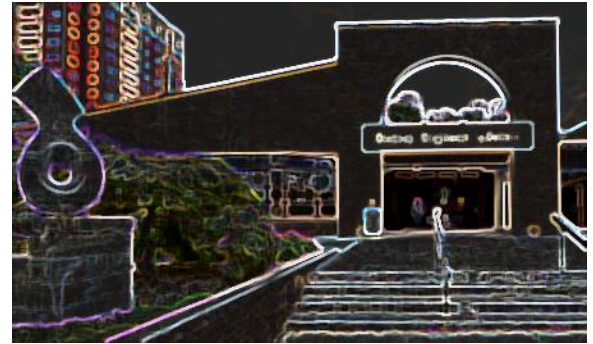
Due to the Commonwealth's COVID-19 guidance, there are still caps on the number of people who can be inside the branch at one time. Contact the library or ask a librarian about attendance limits when you visit the branch. Masks are required for visitors age 5 and up.

Express Services	
Monday–Tuesday 10 a.m.–8 p.m.	Wednesday–Saturday 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Curbside services
Monday–Saturday 10 a.m.– 4 p.m.

Welcome Back, Mona!


Mona Chandan, previously at RRL as Sunday manager, has returned as our new Assistant Branch Manager. Mona has always been such a great asset to our library community and a warm supporter of the Friends. We’re so happy to have her back!



Book Donations Remain Closed; No Book Sales At the Library At This Time

To support the Friends while book sales and donations are closed, see **page 3**. For the most current information about Friends happenings, please keep an eye on our website www.RestonLibraryFriends.com. If you want to receive email updates when we send them, please make sure we have your correct email address. You can contact us at RestonFriendsPR@gmail.com.

Follow FCPL and the Reston Friends on Social Media

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@fairfaxlibrary @LoveBooksReston



Ways To Give To The Friends of Reston Regional Library

- You can DONATE ONLINE any time at our website: www.RestonLibraryFriends.com/donate
- Donate by SHOPPING ON AMAZON. When you shop on Amazon for the things you need anyway, use **Amazon Smile** and designate the Friends of the Reston Regional Library as your charitable recipient. Amazon then donates 0.5% of your total to the Friends!
- Donate through CHARITABLE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS. Take advantage of your investment firm or bank's charitable savings account programs, such as Schwab Charitable or Fidelity Charitable. These accounts let you set aside funds for charitable purposes now, and distribute the funds at a time of your choosing. You can designate FRRL as your chosen recipient any time!
- Find us on NETWORK FOR GOOD and other charitable contribution websites.
- ASK YOUR EMPLOYER. Some businesses offer matching donations when their employees make a cash contribution to our organization. Some employers even offer "free" volunteer hours to encourage their employees to become involved in the community. Ask your employer if such a program exists. If you're a company interested in donating, or would like more information, please contact us at RestonFriendsPR@gmail.com.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL

PLEASE APPLY OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE

www.restonlibraryfriends.com/donate

Given our current limitations, we ask that if you wish to donate, or renew a membership or apply for membership at this time, please do so online.

To renew or apply online, please fill out an online donation form at our website. There is no separate "membership" form or page, so please [click here to go to our general Donations page and then take the following steps](#):

1. Once you're there, **click on the DONATE button**.
2. To enroll (or renew), **click on the amount you want to donate and the payment method you want to use**. Annual Membership Fees are \$5 for Seniors 65 and over, and \$15 for a General Household Membership. When you donate at least these amounts, you are automatically entered into our membership rolls.
3. **On the next page that appears**, there will be a field near the top of the donation page that says "Add a note" or "Write a note" (depending on which payment method you select). In that space, **please indicate the following**:
 - Is this a RENEWAL or NEW MEMBERSHIP?
 - Your mailing address (if you want us to have it)
 - Your email address (if you want us to have it) – we do not share your information with outside organizations!

Membership Donation News

The Friends Board of Directors appreciates the loyal support of its members, donors, and volunteers. See above for instructions on how you can make a donation, apply for membership, or renew your membership online.

The Board extends special thanks to all those who contributed financially in recent months, especially those who went above and beyond the minimum "dues" amounts for your household. Your support means so much!

Cotton	Hammel	Karlsson	Nathanson	Perry	Schneck	
Delos	Hargis	Kenney	Newlon	Plaza	Shaw	Storck
Denu	Harrison	Kousek	Olson	Pollock	Smart	Williams
Dickson	Hauth	Moran	M & J Pascal	Pool	Sorenson	Yi

Email and mailing addresses are used to provide notice of upcoming sales and FRRL events.

FRRL does not share member addresses with anyone outside our organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law for a 501(c)(3).