

Newsletter

Winter 2024

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						Eileen Evon	

YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

Friends of Reston Regional Will Give \$100,000 To The Collection To Buy More Books For Kids!

In response to a request from the Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL), the Friends will donate \$100,000 to purchase new books for the Children’s collection.

Anyone who’s ever taken a child to the library, or who remembers the library from their own childhood, knows the excitement of a whole section of books *just for kids!* Books on shelves, books in baskets, special displays with colorful covers, familiar faces, and exciting new pictures – all of them waiting for the next reader. Children’s books (and this includes books for middle schoolers) get taken home and read not once, not twice, but many times before they are returned to the library. The books ride in cars, get stuffed into backpacks, and shared by sticky hands. Parents and caregivers know they’ve got a reader on their hands when they hear “*Read it again!*” or “*Just one more chapter!*”

Librarians report some of the most popular books need constant refreshment. The \$100,000 gift from the Friends will be used this year to purchase more copies of books FCPL already carries, as well as new books to expand and improve the variety and depth of books available to young readers. Books will include children’s non-fiction books, picture books, Early Readers, and children’s fiction books – such as much loved and well-worn series books like *The Princess in Black* and graphic narratives like *Dog Man*.

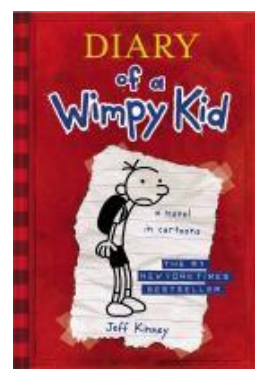
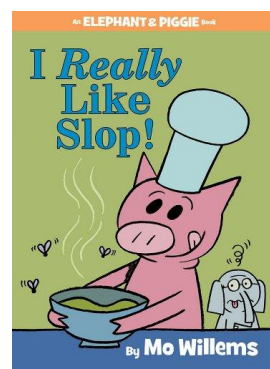
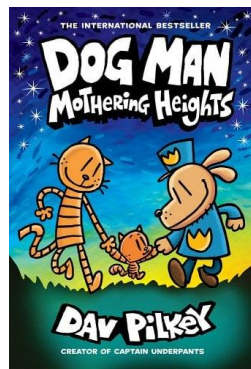
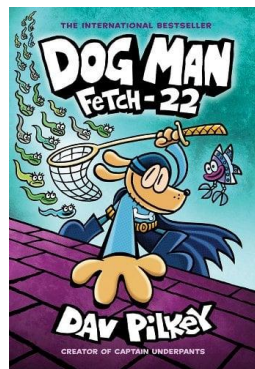
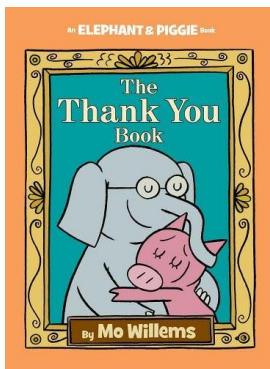
Building On Recent Success. We know these funds can be used effectively by our FCPL system. Our last grant made it possible for FCPL to add more circulation, address holds queues, and provide the Collection Services Department (CSD) staff flexibility for targeted spending. Our 2022 gift of \$200,000 resulted in 2,124 unique titles and 10,373 units purchased. In fact, FCPL directly credits the Friends’ 2022 gift with over 135,000 checkouts that might otherwise not have happened at all. At only ~\$1.48 a checkout, our funds were clearly put to good (and efficient) use for the benefit of FCPL patrons countywide (including, of course, our local communities in Reston and Herndon).

FRRL History of Collection Support

- \$100,000 for first FCPL eBook initiative
- \$25,000 for Children’s Series books
- \$200,000 to expand eBook collection
- \$100,000 for Children’s print books

Putting Books in Kids’ Hands. In an increasingly digital world, educators and literacy experts strongly encourage the use of physical books as an important part of cultivating a lifelong love of reading. With this new contribution to the collection, the pages of a well-loved book, the magic of storytelling, and worlds of new knowledge will now be more accessible to families across our county.

Thanks to you. This year’s \$100,000 gift would not be possible without our patrons and local supporters, who share our passion for literacy and community building. If you shopped one of our sales, dropped a few dollars in our donation jar (or added a few to your membership), donated your books to the Friends, or gave your time as a volunteer, you made this gift possible!



The 5 most checked-out Kids books at FCPL in 2023Books for Children and Young Adults are especially heavily used and need frequent replacement and updating. (FCPL January 2024)

"Beezus didn't know what she would do without her library card. She couldn't get along without library books. She just couldn't, that was all."
Beezus and Ramona, by Beverly Cleary

FRRL in the Community

First-Ever Reston Winterfest

The following is excerpted from an interview with one of our student volunteers, Rhiannon Stevens from South Lakes High School.

RS: What was the Reston Regional Library's role in Winterfest?

FRRL: We created decorations for and decorated a Christmas tree to be donated to a local family. The theme of our tree was **Reading Takes You Everywhere**. We decorated it with handmade ornaments, depicting beautiful book covers from all around the world on all sorts of topics. Anywhere you want to go, anything you want to be, anything you want to learn about, reading can take you there. Our garland was made out of beautiful hand cut snowflakes made from old discarded, book pages. We're biased, of course, but we think it was a pretty cool looking tree. In fact, we found out after the festival that our tree won 1st Place for Most Original Design!

We also had an information booth in the Vendor Village, alongside other businesses, local organizations, food trucks, etc. The booth was designed to provide information to the public about Reston Regional, what we do as the Friends of the Library, and how people can get involved. All told, we had 12 volunteers work on Winterfest, creating the decorations, decorating the tree, setting up and taking down the booth, and staffing the booth. Everyone rose to the occasion to make our tree and our booth the best and the brightest!



RS: How high was the turnout? Would you call Winterfest successful? What were people's responses to your booth?

FRRL: We heard from the Reston Association that nearly 5000 people came through during the course of the three day festival!



We didn't get all 5000 at our booth, but we would definitely say our booth was successful. This is the first time FRRL has done a multi-night outdoor event; it entailed a variety of familiar and new logistics to keep it all together. It was the first time we've ever set up a booth and maintained it and staffed it, outdoors, after dark, for three days. We really had to step up our lighting game! Thanks to many strings of donated colored lights, were very bright and festive, which was a great attraction to people walking by.

Response to our booth was amazing! We had such a great time. We talked with hundreds of visitors, from parents with newborns in their arms to retirees, and from people who have used and loved the public library for a long time to people who were new even to the concept of a public library.

Our volunteers were able to talk with them about all the library has to offer. We gave directions on how to get to Reston Regional; explained all the options for checking out printed materials, as well as eBooks, eAudio books, and digital magazines; and handed out schedules and information about all the free programs for kids and adults.



Many visitors picked up one or two of our new "Libraries Are For Everyone" t-shirts. They are a fun way to actively show support for libraries and help us our message a little further. They also make great gifts for librarians, teachers, and book lovers of all ages!

We loved sharing our story — why we volunteer, why libraries and literacy are so important to us, and how we turn donated materials into book sales, which are our main source of fundraising. We handed out bookmarks showing our complete sale schedule for 2024, and answered peoples questions about volunteering or donating books.

RS: What do you hope for this event in the future?

FRRL: We'd love to see more local businesses, and especially more local nonprofit volunteer groups like ours show up at Winterfest!

It's a great chance to literally light up the dark winter nights with the wonderful light decorations but also a chance to light up people's lives with a little extra help. Many holidays focus on being a light and extending goodwill towards others. Reston has so many opportunities for volunteering and helping our neighbors. It could be a chance for people to come find information in a fun festive way.



LIBRARY NEWS – Don't Let Our Collection Be Left Behind!

Did you know the Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) system is the largest in Virginia? It serves over a million people, at 23 branches! In 2019, FCPL was #17 **in the country** for circulation. Our residents clearly love to use the Library.

But did you also know our library system is ranked **88 out of 92** statewide for holdings-per-capita*?

While we know there are some allowances to be made when comparing the wide variety of systems in the state, even accounting for those differences FCPL is still well below the standards for what a library system in VA has to offer its patrons. Meanwhile, similar systems elsewhere in the country – number of branches, population served – are also ahead of us in the number of items available for their patrons. If you've ever tried to check out a book and found it unavailable in our system, or waited forever on a hold list, you know how frustrating and even discouraging it can be. It's bad enough waiting for the latest best-selling novel. But this is also happening to our kids, and to people in our community who rely on FCPL for critical resources for research, employment, or to help their family with an issue. Given our County's comparative wealth, education, and capacity, our FCPL system should be one of the best in the state and in the country.

According to FCPL's Trustees and library professionals, the collection budget should be twice as big as it is. "Policy G," spells out County objectives, and commitments for the Fairfax County Public Library system:

Policy G Regarding Selection of Materials. The library shall develop a collection that informs, engages, and inspires the diverse community it serves. Selectors choose materials for varying education levels, reading ability, age level interests, differing social/religious customs, and languages. The collection offers users a variety of formats, viewpoints, and subjects, which are available on open library shelves and/or through the library's website. Funding for collection development should not fall below 20% of the total library annual budget.

Although the Library Trustees have petitioned the Supervisors for a permanent budget increase of \$3 million (to meet Policy G goals), this has not yet happened. Even a recent one time 'increase' of the budget in 2023 was really a moving of funds from one area to another, not the addition of new funding. Our collection budget has been flat for over a decade -- which is worse than flat, because as we all know, purchasing power has gone down significantly in recent years. As a result, FCPL administration, librarians, and staff are being asked to do *more and more with less and less*.

As you saw on **Page 1**, the Friends are glad to be able to contribute our hard-earned funds from time to time in support of new library materials. Including our \$100K gift this year, the Friends have given \$300,000 in the past 3 years and almost half a million total to date *just for the collection*. But there is absolutely no way any Friends group, (or even all of the Friends groups) could come close to bridging the gap in the FCPL total collection budget. FCPL itself is very grateful for the contributions Friends groups have given to support new materials; but they know we are not the answer and *they don't want us to be*. The County can't (and shouldn't!) rely on small nonprofit Friends groups to finance the FCPL's core mission.

This year, FCPL is repeating their appeal for a permanent budget increase. Per an October 2023 memo from FCPL Director Jessica Hudson to County CFO Christina Jackson:

*The Board continues to strongly support fully funding the collection development budget for the library; per Board Policy G on the Selection of Materials, 20% of the library's budget should go towards materials. FCPL will continue to transfer all surplus personnel services and operating expenses to library materials. For the past decade or more, the approved library materials budget is only at 10% of total expenditures. Additional regularly allocated dollars would move the library's budget allocations closer to Library Board policy, **decrease wait times for constituents and ensure that residents have access to educational and recreational materials.***

Currently, there are two specific funding requests being put before the Board of Supervisors: a short-term, one-time increase to update some of the most dated non-fiction materials, and a long-term, permanent increase to meet the commitment of Plan G.

The short term increase is for additional funding in 2024-25 to update, expand, and improve FCPL's nonfiction collection of about 575,000 items. The average nonfiction item in our library system is about **10 years old****. We don't have enough non-fiction books, and approximately 40% -- or 235,000 items! -- of the ones we have are older than they should be. Think about how much the world has changed in the past five years alone...All of the new knowledge we have about economics, health and medicine, computers, history, and the world around us. How can we expect our libraries to inform and inspire our citizenry, and to help our County compete economically, while relying upon out-of-date materials?

A draft County budget is expected to be posted soon. If you think the Fairfax County Public Library's holdings should be **fully funded** in order to provide its citizens with a collection appropriate to our great County, please consider contacting your Supervisor, Library Trustee, or elected VA officials to express your thoughts.

Ask them to approve and fund the one-time increases the Trustees are asking for in the 2024-2025 budget, and ask them to support a permanent increase to the library's collections budget to ensure Fairfax County's 1.14 million citizens have a library we can all be proud of, and get us closer to **#1 in the state** instead of #88.

* Statistical Data for Virginia Public Libraries: Holdings Per Capita FY2017 **FCPL report on collection age December 2023

"Reading is important, because if you can read, you can learn anything about everything and everything about anything." —Tomie dePaola

got books?

Speak Up for Your Library

Contact your Library Trustees, Supervisors, Delegates, and Senators. Think the County budget doesn't matter to your state reps? Remember that *Fairfax County is the most populous jurisdiction in Virginia, and represents around 13% of the state's total population.* **Find your branch in the table below, then contact your elected officials before the County budget is finalized in May.** Tell them you want them to bring this *essential service* up to date, and to approve full, ongoing funding of the Fairfax County Public Library collection.

Your Library Branch	District	Your Library Trustee	Your County Supervisor and District Email	Your Virginia Delegate and House District	Your Virginia Senator and Senate District
Access Services	Braddock	brian.engler@fairfaxcounty.gov	James R. Walkinshaw braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov		
Burke Centre	Braddock	brian.engler@fairfaxcounty.gov	James R. Walkinshaw braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov	Laura Jane Cohen, House 15 DelJCCohen@house.virginia.gov	Jennifer B. Boysko, Senate 33 district33@senate.virginia.gov
Centreville Regional	Sully	elizabeth.walker@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Kathy L Smith sully@fairfaxcounty.gov	Daniel Helmer, House 10 DelDHelmer@house.virginia.gov	Scott Surovell, Senate 36 district36@senate.virginia.gov
Chantilly Regional	Sully	elizabeth.walker@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Kathy L Smith sully@fairfaxcounty.gov	Karrie K Delaney, House 9 DelKDelaney@house.virginia.gov	Scott Surovell, Senate 36 district36@senate.virginia.gov
City of Fairfax Regional	City of Fairfax	Suzanne.Levy@fairfaxcounty.gov	Mayor Catherine Read Catherine.Read@fairfaxva.gov	David Bulova, House 11 DelDBulova@house.virginia.gov	Daniel W. Marsden, Senate 37 district37@senate.virginia.gov
Dolley Madison	Dranesville	sujatha.hampton@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Jimmy Bierman Dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov	Richard C. (Rip) Sullivan, House 6 DelRSullivan@house.virginia.gov	Travis Hackworth , Senate 38 district38@senate.virginia.gov
George Mason Regional	Mason	Frances.Millhouser2@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Andres F. Jimenez mason@fairfaxcounty.gov	Vivian E. Watts, House 14 DelVWatts@house.virginia.gov	Richard Saslaw , Senate 35 district35@senate.virginia.gov
Great Falls	Dranesville	sujatha.hampton@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Jimmy Bierman Dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov	Richard C. (Rip) Sullivan, House 6 DelRSullivan@house.virginia.gov	Travis Hackworth , Senate 38 district38@senate.virginia.gov
Herndon Fortnightly	Dranesville	sujatha.hampton@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Jimmy Bierman Dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov	Irene Shin, House 8 DelIShin@house.virginia.gov	Travis Hackworth, Senate 38 district38@senate.virginia.gov
John Marshall	Franconia	keith.foxx@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Rodney L Lusk Franconia@fairfaxcounty.gov	Mark D. Sickles, House 17 DelMSickles@house.virginia.gov	J. Chapman Peterson, Senate 34 district34@senate.virginia.gov
Kings Park	Braddock	brian.engler@fairfaxcounty.gov	James R. Walkinshaw braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov	Laura Jane Cohen, House 15 DelJCCohen@house.virginia.gov	Richard Saslaw , Senate 35 district35@senate.virginia.gov

Your Library Branch	District	Your Library Trustee	Your County Supervisor	Your Virginia Delegate and House District	Your Virginia Senator and Senate District
Kingstowne	Mt. Vernon	Gary.Russell@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Daniel Storck mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov	Kathy KL Tran, House 18 DelKTran@house.virginia.gov	J. Chapman Peterson, Senate 34 district34@senate.virginia.gov
Lorton	Mt. Vernon	Gary.Russell@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Daniel Storck mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov	Rozia A. Henson, House 19 DelRHenson@house.virginia.gov	J. Chapman Peterson, Senate 34 district34@senate.virginia.gov
Martha Washington	Mt. Vernon	Gary.Russell@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Daniel Storck mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov	Paul E. Krizek, House 16 DelPKrizek@house.virginia.gov	J. Chapman Peterson, Senate 34 district34@senate.virginia.gov
Oakton	Providence	Soo.Park@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Dalia Palchik providence@fairfaxcounty.gov	David Bulova, House 11 DelDBulova@house.virginia.gov	Daniel W. Marsden, Senate 37 district37@senate.virginia.gov
Patrick Henry	Hunter Mill	Parker.Brugge@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Walter Alcorn huntermill@fairfaxcounty.gov	Holly M. Seibold, House 12 DelHSeibold@house.virginia.gov	Daniel W. Marsden, Senate 37 district37@senate.virginia.gov
Pohick Regional	Springfield	Phil.Rosenthal@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Pat Herrity springfield@fairfaxcounty.gov	Laura Jane Cohen, House 15 DelLJCohen@house.virginia.gov	Jennifer B. Boysko, Senate 33 district33@senate.virginia.gov
Reston Regional	Hunter Mill	Parker.Brugge@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Walter Alcorn huntermill@fairfaxcounty.gov	Karen Keys-Gamarra, House 7 DelKKeys-Gamarra@house.virginia.gov	Travis Hackworth, Senate 38 district38@senate.virginia.gov
Richard Byrd	Franconia	keith.foxx@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Rodney L Lusk Franconia@fairfaxcounty.gov	Kathy KL Tran, House 18 DelKTran@house.virginia.gov	Richard Saslaw , Senate 35 district35@senate.virginia.gov
Sherwood Regional	Mt. Vernon	Gary.Russell@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Daniel Storck mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov	Paul E. Krizek, House 16 DelPKrizek@house.virginia.gov	J. Chapman Peterson, Senate 34 district34@senate.virginia.gov
Thomas Jefferson	Mason	Frances.Millhouser2@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Andres F. Jimenez mason@fairfaxcounty.gov	Marcus B. Simon, House 13 DelMSimon@house.virginia.gov	Daniel W. Marsden, Senate 37 district37@senate.virginia.gov
Tysons-Pimmit Regional	Dranesville	sujatha.hampton@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Jimmy Bierman Dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov	Marcus B. Simon, House 13 DelMSimon@house.virginia.gov	Daniel W. Marsden, Senate 37 district37@senate.virginia.gov
Woodrow Wilson	Mason	Frances.Millhouser2@fairfaxcounty.gov	Supervisor Andres F. Jimenez mason@fairfaxcounty.gov	Charniele L. Herring, House 4 DelCHerring@house.virginia.gov	George L. Barker, Senate 39 district39@senate.virginia.gov

"I have found the most valuable thing in my wallet is my library card."

- Laura Bush, Librarian and wife of George W. Bush, 43rd President of the United States

Plan Ahead for 2024 Book Sales in Reston

Feb 1-4 Mystery Sale

Apr 11-14 Kids and YA

May 1-5 Big Spring Sale

Aug 15-18 Kids and YA

Sept 25-29 Big Fall Sale

Oct 24-27 Puzzles & Games

Dec 5-8 Holiday Sale

Thank you For Your Donations! – Beyond “Paying Your Dues”

The Friends Board of Directors appreciates the loyal support of our community. The Board extends special thanks to all those who contributed financially since our last newsletter, especially those who went above and beyond the minimum “dues” amounts since our last newsletter. Your support means so much!

Adkins	Filippini*	Konnert	Ludden	Morrow	Rodgers	Shure
Akan	Holtry	Lanphere	Lund	Nathanson	Savage	Sullivan
Arvapalli	Jeevarathinam	Lawalt	Masters	O'Dwyer	Schamest	Sylvester
Donald	Jones	Lay	McCrackin	Pascal	Scoville	Williams
Evon*	Keating	Leonard	Merrill and Liles	Psarakis		*FRRL Board Member

REMEMBER: [Pay Early Online](#) before the Big Spring Sale! Friends Members get exclusive access to the “MAIN ROOM” on Members Day. **Not sure if you're up to date?** Email RestonFriendsPR@gmail.com and avoid the rush!

PLEASE APPLY OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE

Click [here](#) to go to directly our donations page!

To renew or apply online, please use the 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 is \$15 per person (\$5 for Seniors 65 and over).

When you donate at least these amounts, you are automatically entered into our rolls.



/RestonLibraryFriends

Follow us on social media!



@LoveBooksReston

Email addresses are used to provide notice of upcoming sales and FRRL events. We do not share our mailing list with other organizations and we do not receive any contact information from the Fairfax County Public Library or its internal mailing lists.



Friends of the Reston Regional Library, Inc. is an all-volunteer, registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Proceeds from our sales go to funding library and literacy materials, programs, and equipment in our community. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

www.RestonLibraryFriends.com