Friends of the Reston Regional Library Newsletter

Spring 2026

Friends Board of Directors				
Brian Jacoby, President	Eileen Evon, Vice President	Robert Evon, Treasurer	Mollie Weinert, Secretary	
Karen France, At Large	Dennis Hays, At Large	Rik Karlsson, At Large	Karin Richardson, At Large	Tom Skirbunt, At Large
Book Sale Chairs	Karen France, Charly Karlsson, Valerie Little, Chris Sylvester	**PR & Community Outreach Chair**	Eileen Evon	

CELEBRATING FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

FRIENDS CHOICE AWARDS HONOR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

The Fairfax County Public Library Board of Trustees and community members gathered at Chantilly Regional Library in early October to celebrate the library's Friends groups and recognize members nominated by their peers for their outstanding service. For Branch Manager, Hall Baldwin, this was her first time attending the Friends Choice Awards since coming to Reston Regional. "It was my absolute pleasure to attend. I am continually in awe of your work and dedication to Reston Regional Library, the library system, and our community! I am so glad to be here and work with you all."

Friends Choice Awardees★ are joined by RRL Branch Manager and Reston Friends team leaders to celebrate the special night.

Top row: **Tom R.** ★ (Sorting Team, Sale Volunteer, Logistics Guru); Ruth J. (Sorting Team); Rik K. (Board member); Val L. (Kids Team Chair); Linda K. (Big Sale co-Chair); **Lynda O.**★ (Digital Media Sorter); **Arja S.** ★ (Sale Team); Sally A. (Sale Team); and Karen G. (Kids Team co-Chair)

Bottom row: Hall Baldwin (RRL Branch Manager), Charly K. (Chair of Sorters and Book Sales), **Marge S.** ★ (Sorting Team and Sales); **Moira D.** ★ (Kids Team) Not pictured: **Ariel W.** ★ (Sorting Team).

FCPL Celebrates National Friends of Libraries Week in Thank You Story, Aired on Channel 16

Also in October, during National Friends of Libraries Week, Fairfax County Public Library aired a video dedicated to Friends groups and featuring representatives from the Friends of George Mason, Kingstowne, and Reston Regional. FCPL Director Eric Carzon thanked and commended all of the Friends of the Library groups in Fairfax County, *"for all the work they do throughout the year, to support our operations and enhance library services."*

Watch the FCPL video on Ch 16: www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0tz_ZhN-7k

RESTON REGIONAL LIBRARY STAFF HOSTS *FRIENDSGIVING* FOR FRIENDS VOLUNTEERS

In November, RRL staff and Friends of the Library volunteers came together at the RA Lake House in Browns Chapel Park for lunch, games, and a mutual admiration-fest. After some icebreaker games, a lot of tasty food, and multiple heartfelt speeches, it was unanimously agreed that libraries are the best and RRL staff and the Friends are all the luckiest people.

IT'S BOOK SALE TIME!

You know it. You love it. You want it. Grab your canvas bags and your To Be Read list and head to Reston Regional Library.

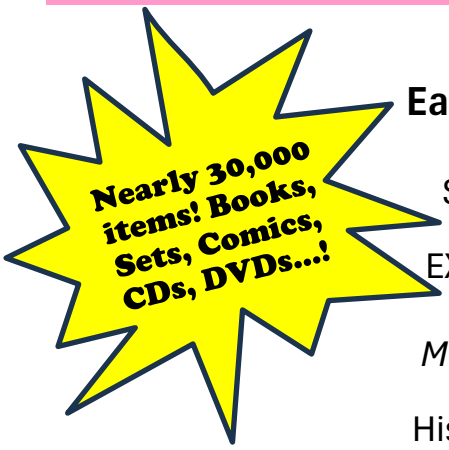
There are no kids' books at this sale but honestly just about everything else. Gently used books at amazing prices, and all to help our library, and expand and improve access and resources for everyone in our community. Not bad, huh?

Want to shop on Members Day? If you're not sure when you last paid membership dues, email us to check your status. Outreach@RestonLibraryFriends.com

Want to skip the crowds? We restock every single day, so we promise there will be good stuff on Thursday too! (And Friday, Saturday, and Sunday!)

We reserve the right to limit quantities. Scanners and other price checking devices not permitted in some sections, including CDs, DVDs, and Charly's Corner.

Thursday, April 23	Friday, April 24	Saturday, April 25	Sunday, April 26
Open Sale All Sections 10am to 5pm	Open Sale All Sections 10am to 5pm	Open Sale All Sections 10am to 5pm	Open Sale All Sections 10am to 3pm



Wednesday, April 22
Early Preview and Members Day

Lobby Preview – all may shop.
Science, Text, Religion, Comics, Graphic Novels,
EXTRA LARGE SCI-FI COLLECTION
10am to 5pm

Members Only Sale, Meeting Rooms.
1pm to 5pm
History, General Fiction, Art, Cooking, and Charly's Corner

FCPL Director Eric Carzon joins in celebrating our loyal booksale shoppers by leading in the line on Members Day in September 2025.

Don't Miss Our Other 2026 Book Sales!

AUGUST 20-23
Back-to-School Sales for Kids & Young Adults

SEPTEMBER 23-27
Big Fall Book Sale

OCTOBER 22-25
PUZZLES & GAMES SALE

DECEMBER 3-6
Holiday Sale

LIBRARY NEWS – RESTON REGIONAL LIBRARY

Great Decisions: Big Ideas and Lively Conversation at Reston Regional Library

For many years, FRRL has proudly sponsored one of the Library's most popular programs: Great Decisions. Launched in 1954, Great Decisions is now America's largest grassroots discussion program on world affairs. At the Reston Library, the program took on new life in 2016, when Michael Carpenter, a retired Foreign Service officer, stepped into the role of discussion leader. At the time, the group consisted of roughly 15 to 25 participants, with Mike leading each session. That all changed in November 2018, when Mike took a chance and invited the first guest speaker, a Johns Hopkins professor who had written the very article the group was discussing that month. From that moment on, there was no turning back.

Since then, Great Decisions at Reston has featured a steady stream of guest experts drawn from academia, government, diplomacy, and leading think tanks. Word spread quickly, and today the program routinely draws 60 to 70 attendees (and sometimes as many as 140!), eager for thoughtful discussion and firsthand insights into global affairs (as well as Mike's now-famous selection of topic-specific cookies during the breaks).

Memorable speakers over the years have included General James Clapper, former Director of National Intelligence, the Political Counselor from the Embassy of Mexico, Dr. Jonathan Chanis (who has appeared three times), Ambassador Richard Kauzlarich, Ambassador Anne Patterson, and many others.

Behind the scenes, the program's success rests heavily on the dedication and professionalism of the Reston Regional Library staff. Adrienne Leo, like her predecessors, has provided indispensable support, ensuring that each session runs smoothly and on schedule.

Great Decisions exemplifies what a public library can be at its best: a place where ideas are exchanged, curiosity is rewarded, and community members come together to better understand the world beyond their doorstep. If you've never attended a session, consider joining in -- you may find yourself hooked by the conversation, inspired by the speakers, and eager for the next great decision.

GREAT DECISIONS TALKS IN 2026

May 15 - U.S. Engagement of Africa September 11 - U.S.-China Relations October 16 - Multilateral Institutions in a Challenging World Order November 20th - Ruptured Alliances and the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation

RRL Staff Member Adrienne Leo receives Staff Excellence Award!

Each year, FCPL asks patrons to nominate staff members for an award based on their excellence in supporting the library. This year, Reston Regional librarian Adrienne Leo received an award. The patron who nominated her wrote,

"Adrienne is responsible for the Great Decisions series of meetings at the Reston Library. This is a monthly meeting that is always well attended, often to a full audience. Adrienne coordinates the meetings, arranges for distinguished speakers on the month's topic. The meetings are informative, well attended and with full participation. Adrienne is acknowledged by the attendees' applause at every meeting, and we are very grateful for her hard work and efforts on our behalf. I cannot imagine a librarian who is more qualified for this award!"

Congratulations, Adrienne!

It's Never Too Cold to Read

The January/February Snowcrete didn't keep our library down for long! Special thanks to ***our volunteer, Tom R.***, who came and did hours of additional shoveling to clear the way from the parking lot onto the sidewalks!

LIBRARY NEWS - FCPL System and the Fairfax County Budget

got books?

RECALCULATING….

Did you know, the Library's book budget was 'temporarily' cut years ago…?

Somehow, the County just never got around to reversing that 'temporary' cut.

Between FY2000 and 2022 **our collection budget dropped 54%,** while *other nearby library systems saw a 17.5% increase*.

With our current budget, our collection is too small, too shallow, and in many cases too old to support our county the way it should be supported. Fairfax County describes itself as an attractive place of opportunity with a high quality of life. We tell individuals and families they can move here and find work, culture, entertainment, and education. They can find the best resources to advance themselves and their children. A strong library system is an essential resource that can help people achieve these goals, and the ability to do so benefits everyone – even people who don't use the library! But our library system has fallen far behind our neighboring counties. And it shows.

Our neighbors in Montgomery County have a comparably sized library system. But their collection budget is more than twice ours. Tired of waiting for that eBook? In Montgomery County, their library offers instant availability to 3,000 electronic titles. This service costs $3 million -- our total collection budget!

Our non-fiction collection is dangerously outdated. Medical texts, home healthcare, and technology are all in need of updating and expanding. Our Children's collection, which includes some of the most heavily used books, needs frequent refreshing. FCPL staff works hard to make their budget and their books go as far as possible, but our readers need more.

March 2025 Sample search: books about AI	
Our Collection	**Montgomery County**
845 titles	4,107 titles
26% from 2023 or later	46% from 2023 or later
22 titles dated 2025	208 from 2025

YES, AND….!

This year's budget for the library includes a $1 million restoration of former funding. **This is welcome news and we are grateful to the supervisors and advocates who helped make this happen.** But we still have a long way to go. The library materials *budget for FY27 will be $4.05 million*, which gets us closer to *our goal of $8 - $11 million* per year in library materials for our 1.2 million Fairfax residents, which is more like what comparable library systems spend annually on their residents for current books in sufficient quantities.

We need our Supervisors to commitment to a plan to fully restore the library materials budget and keep it stable going forward. There's no question our Supervisors have many worthy services to support. To make their best decisions, they need to know **what matters most to the people of Fairfax County.** We believe in the library and we think a fully funded collection is necessary to keep this service competitive with today's challenges. Please join us in speaking up – reach out to your supervisors and Library Trustees to communicate our love and concerns for the library.

SPEAK UP -- HOW TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE FY2027 LIBRARY BUDGET

Write or call your Fairfax County Supervisor

Email: **FY27Budget@publicinput.com**

Write or call your Library Trustee and the Board of Trustees

Call 703-890-5898 and enter code 6733

SHOW UP, STAND UP! TOMORROW – Thursday, April 16th!

Suzanne Levy, the Chair of the Library Board of Trustees, will speak at the public FY27 budget hearing on April 16.

Let's show the supervisors a crowd of library supporters! On April 16th, **put on your FRRL "*Libraries Are For Everyone*" t-shirt or another library or book-related favorite, and show up at the Government Center to support the library!**

WE NEED YOU!
Public Budget Hearing
TOMORROW!
Thurs, April 16 - 3:00 PM

12000 Government Center Pkwy
Fairfax, VA 22035

Library Trustee Chair Levy to speak around 3:30pm

LIBRARY NEWS - FCPL and Around the Community

BIN THERE, DONE THAT – To Do the Most Good, Donate Your Books Directly To The Library!

This is a bad news story…with a happy ending!

Up until very recently, residents across Fairfax County may have noticed a growing number of bright green book "donation" bins appearing at recycling centers, churches, fire stations, and other public locations. These particularly bins were mostly operated by New Legacy Books, an out-of-state, for-profit company. While they are often marketed as a convenient and environmentally friendly way to donate books, Friends of the Library groups across the County believed they posed more risk than reward to our libraries and our communities.

This concern was formally raised on January 14, when representatives from Friends groups countywide attended a meeting of the Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees. Speaking on behalf of all 22 Friends organizations, the delegation outlined why the County's decision to host and promote these bins -- particularly on County property -- had serious and unintended consequences for local libraries.

At the heart of the issue is competition for donated books. Friends of the Library volunteers already process hundreds of thousands of donated items each year -- *more than 200 tons countywide* -- keeping them out of landfills and turning their value directly back into local library services. Proceeds from Friends book sales fund children's and adult programs, materials, technology, staff support, and other enhancements that County budgets alone do not cover. Dollars raised stay here, supporting Fairfax County libraries and residents.

Beware the green bin!

By contrast, **New Legacy and its competitors are private resellers.** Books placed in such bins are "skimmed" for resale, with profits flowing primarily to the company itself. While the companies sometime offer a modest revenue share to their bin "sponsors," there is limited transparency about how profits are calculated, no public accounting, and no sharing at all for books sold through third-party wholesalers (which is where the bulk of their books wind up).

Even more troubling, there is little evidence that these bins meaningfully reduce waste. For-profit resellers typically recycle or discard a large proportion of books tossed in the bins – many of which the Friends could actually sell back to the community instead (and thus preserve the value received for local library programs). For-profit vendors only save the highest-value books, and siphon their value away from our community.

The rapid expansion of these bins heightens the concern. At their height, 24 New Legacy bins were in place across the region, with more locations actively being pursued. Over time, repeated exposure conditions our residents to see green bins -- not libraries -- as the default destination for book donations. Early County communications and media coverage compounded the issue by promoting the bins without clearly identifying libraries and Friends organizations as the preferred donation sites. This created confusion among residents and undermined long-standing, highly effective local systems.

We promised you a happy ending to this particular challenge, and here it is: In March, New Legacy decided they weren't getting enough "donations" to make their investment in Virginia worthwhile, and they retreated north to double down in their home state of New Jersey (where Friends of the Library groups there are already warily eying their continued expansion). But **here in Fairfax County, the public and County officials have validated the work of the Friends, and the value of donating good condition books to your local library!**

It's important to note **none of this diminishes the County's legitimate goal of reducing waste.** Libraries themselves face challenges recycling certain discarded materials, and pilot programs with resellers like ThriftBooks are addressing that specific internal problem. In fact, the Friends have finally been asked to work with the County on this issue, and we can make a significant contribution in this area. But public book donations are a different matter entirely. **The County already has a strong, trusted, community-based partner: the Friends of the Library.**

The Friends' message is straightforward. If our County government, our churches, our civic organizations, and our residents want to reduce waste, support libraries, and strengthen civic engagement, they should all elevate and promote library-based donation programs -- not legitimize a for-profit alternative that diverts resources away from our communities. Working collaboratively with Friends groups would advance environmental goals, while preserving a vital source of local funding and volunteer support.

What can you do? First, **donate good-condition books directly to your local library's Friends group**. Second, **talk with friends, neighbors, and community organizations about why library donations matter--and share articles like this on Nextdoor, Facebook, and other social media.**

Finally, if you see large "book donation" bins appearing on public or private property, respectfully push back. **Ask your pastor, local businesses, civic groups, and fire departments not to sponsor them, but instead to direct sellable book donations to the Friends.** Good books are valuable assets. Let's keep that value working for Fairfax County libraries and the people they serve.

LIBRARY NEWS - FCPL and Around the Community

UPCOMING FCPL PROGRAMS

National Library Week: Find Your Joy!
April 19-25, 2026

- This year FCPL is celebrating National Library Week by highlighting the ways County residents can "find joy" with Fairfax County Public Library.
- During NLW, library visitors will be offered special bookmarks and paper flowers to fill out what about their library brings them JOY, and then add the flowers to "gardens" in their library branch.
- More info and ways to celebrate at https://bit.ly/FCPL_LibraryWeek

Fix It Clinic – May 9

- Our popular Fix It Clinic is back again this spring on Saturday, May 9 with fixers skilled in various types of repairs available to help bring items back to life for FREE!
- Types of repairs offered at the clinic will include electrical repair, fabric mending, small appliance repair, jewelry repair and more. Services available will vary by branch. Participants should call the branch of their choice to confirm the services available.
- For more information, please visit https://bit.ly/FCPL_FixItClinic .

America's 250th: A Year-Long Celebration -- Find full listing of events: https://bit.ly/FCPL_America250

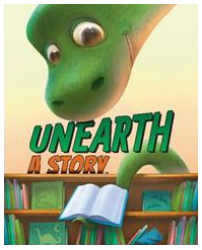
April: From Sea to Shining Sea, Celebrating America's Natural Legacy
Join Fairfax County Public Library in celebrating America's natural legacy, spanning from sea to shining sea - with nature programs, crafts, history presentations, book discussions, and more for children and adults.

May: Immigrant Journeys

Author Event: On Saturday, May 2nd, celebrate the Power of Kindness with Terry Catasús Jennings, a Cuban American award-winning children's book author. Terry will read from her newest book *The Little House of Hope*, which tells an inspiring, semi-autobiographical story of how immigrants can help each other find their footing in a new country. Register: https://bit.ly/May2_PowerOfKindness

June: Voices of Pride and Progress
July: Celebrate Independence
August: Youth and Education in America
September: Democracy in Action
October: The American Spirit: Innovation and Invention
November: Thankful for Our Past
December: Looking Forward

Summer Reading Adventure 2026: UNEARTH A STORY
June 17 – August 19, 2026



• FCPL is offering fun for all ages all summer long — including contests, animal presentations, the Park Authority's Wonder Wagon, Dinoman Dinosaurs, author events and more. See the full calendar of Summer Reading Adventure events online: https://bit.ly/FCPL_SRAEvents .
• Sign up for Summer Reading online using Beanstack or printable paper logs (also available at your local branch). Registration information will be posted closer to June at this address: https://bit.ly/FCPL_SRA .
• Fairfax Library Foundation is hosting the *4th annual Children's Summer Reading Festival on Saturday, June 13 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center*. Designed to encourage young readers to continue their enthusiasm for reading straight into summer vacation, attendees will enjoy games and crafts, bounce houses, snacks, facepainting, food trucks, a photobooth, a D.J., live entertainment, and more.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: Saturday, August 22, 2026
Wrap it all up at the Reston Regional Library End of Summer Reading/Back to School Bash

Thank you For Your Donations! – Beyond "Paying Your Dues"

The Friends Board of Directors appreciates our community's loyal support. Our thanks to those who contributed financially since our last newsletter, **especially those who went above and beyond.** Your support means so much!

Anderson-Butler	Catlett	Kahn	Pascal	Schneck	Skirbunt*
Bain	Eaton	Karlsson*	Phuong Nam	Schryer	Szulc
Ben-Senia	Filippini	Konnert	Psarakis	Schulke	Tilmes
Bruce	Haizlip	Lautz	Reges	Shockey	Troncos
Caporal	Jacoby*	Ose	Savage	Shultz	Williams

* FRRL Board Member

PLEASE APPLY OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE

Click here to go directly to 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.

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.

Can't apply online? Please email FRRLTreasurer@gmail.com or call (703) 829-5467.

/RestonLibraryFriends www.RestonLibraryFriends.com @LoveBooksReston