Friends of Bigelow Library Annual Report

June, 2024

Dear Friends,

As our fiscal year comes to an end, it's a good time to reflect on what we have accomplished in the past twelve months. We've had a busy and productive year, holding the annual book sale and mini golf event, engaging a number of volunteers, garnering support among local businesses, and improving the organization's infrastructure. We ended the year with a comfortable budget and a stronger organization.

We thank all those who helped to make that happen through membership, volunteering, and participation in programs and events. We are also grateful to all the local businesses who supported the Friends through sponsorships and donations of goods and services. It is heartening to see so much community investment in the library.

We look forward to collaborating with you in making FY'25 another successful one. See you at the library!

Sincerely, on behalf of the Friends Board,

Phyllis Staffier, President

Hadley Roberts, Vice President

Rebecca Griffith-Silverman, Treasurer

Polly Fuhrmeister, Secretary

Kathy Kopitsky, Officer-At-Large

Angela Silvester, Officer-At-Large

The Year in Review

Our work this year has had considerable impact for both the library and the broader Clinton community. Our growing Friends organization has:

- Increased library awareness and support
  This is especially important in light of the pending construction grant.
- Provided additional programs through our fund-raising
  The Summer Reading Program, crafts, music events, and more were funded by the Friends.
- Strengthened our relationships with the local business community

Community outreach and engagement

The Friends consider community engagement to be our most important role. These compelling numbers show our success:

- **15** volunteers made the book sale, mini golf, gardening, and craft workshops happen
- **23** businesses sponsored mini golf or made in-kind donations
- **45** new library patrons received info about the Friends
- **178** participants enjoyed the mini golf event that led them throughout the library

Membership

Membership is critical to the success of the Friends organization and one of our biggest sources of funding. Members receive Friends updates and announcements and are invited to a members-only preview of the Friends' annual book sale.

We are grateful to all those who have become new or renewing members this past year, and we encourage others to join us in supporting the library. To that end, we have recently added two new annual membership levels:

- Senior $15
- Individual $25
- NEW! Household $35 – *Includes all residents at the same address*
- Patron $50
- Benefactor $100
- NEW! Student Free *in exchange for volunteer hours – For ages 14-21*

Publicity

The Friends have been active on the Web as well as in print. This year, we:

- Updated the Friends brochure and member form (printable and online formats)
- Revived Friends Facebook page
- Added Friends page to library website
- Submitted articles to *The Item*

Events and programs

The Friends organized and ran programs as well as funding others throughout the year.

July-Aug'23 Summer Reading Program **FUNDED**

July **FUNDED**

- Drum to the Beat Drumming Circle
- Professor Bugman's Arthropod Petting Zoo
- Playful Engineers
- Silk Scarf Dyeing
- AbriKidabra Magic Show

August Fields musical duo **FUNDED**

September Annual Olde Home Days book sale

Andrew Carnegie & the Carnegie Libraries presentation **FUNDED**

October Beer & Volunteer booth *to recruit members and volunteers*

Meet the Board event, *another opportunity to recruit members and volunteers*

Haunted History of New England **FUNDED**

December Gingerbread House Decorating **FUNDED**

April Mini golf, *attracted many visitors to the library and involved local businesses*

Daniel Gay Cacophony **FUNDED**

May Library Gardeners, *a new initiative to revitalize the library gardens*

Robin Williams impersonator, Roger Kabler **FUNDED**

June'24 Canvas bag painting

Special thanks to the volunteers who made these programs happen, and to the following businesses and organizations who supported the Bigelow Library this year:

- Anytime Fitness
- Avidia Bank
- Berlin Country Club
- The Black Sheep Tavern
- Clinton Offset Printers, Inc.
- Clinton PTA
- Clinton Savings Bank
- Clintons Bar & Grille
- Coffeelands
- Colonial Candies
- DiMeco's – Mass Auto Mowers
- EAW Roofing and Construction, Inc.
- Health Equity Partnership of North Central Mass (CHNA9)
- The Icon Museum and Study Center
- Lighthouse Marble & Granite
- Main Street Automotive
- McHugh Family Disposal
- New England Insurance Group
- Philbin & O'Neil, LLC
- Regonini-Zoll Memorials
- Revival Gifts
- Sunrise Boutique
- Whitney Brothers Oil Corp.

Infrastructure

Continuity is especially challenging for an all-volunteer organization. To ensure stability and to facilitate leadership transitions, the Friends' Board:

- Updated the by-laws
- Digitized key documents
  Important documents are now online on our Google drive, which is regularly backed up.
- Built a reference library
  Resources for event planning, tax filing, and other activities are organized to facilitate future work.

Finances

Fundraising is a key way the Friends help support the library. Through the book sale, mini golf event, and membership donations, we ended this fiscal year with a balance of over $12,000. Here are the highlights:

- Increased Friends balance by $4200 this fiscal year
- Donated $5000 to the library for additional programming
- Filed current and past federal and state tax filings

FY'24 budget summary

Beginning balance 7/1/23	**$8377**
Membership	$1576
Donations	$1207
Book sale net profit	$725
Mini Golf net profit	$1589
Program expense from FY'23	($450)
Office Expenses	($439)
Ending balance 6/20/24	**$12,585**
Donation to library 6/20/24	($5000)

** An additional $5000 is earmarked for the capital campaign, should the library construction grant be approved and the town vote to move forward.*