



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library

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Harry Potter Day at Central Library



Spring Picnic at Central Park



Friends trip to WWII sites in England and France, October 2024



# President's Report

## 2024: A year of remarkable achievements for the Friends of the Library



Charlene Roman

2024 was a year of remarkable achievement.

In January, we partnered with two interns from the Master's program at UAlbany, providing them with a dozen books for a library and reading area at Bridges of Schenectady and contributing to a coat drive that collected over 50 coats for Bridges.

Our winter book sale generated record sales, with a large number of books sold, and the spring and fall sales were equally successful.

February marked the 5th anniversary of A Second Look Bookstore at Via Port Rotterdam, a milestone we celebrated with our loyal customers.

Recognizing the need to support young readers, a couple of Junior Friends organized a book drive at Niskayuna High School, collecting 130 young adult books for our stores.

To address literacy challenges in elementary schools, we launched the Peer Partnership Support Program, which provided individualized assistance to students.

Our day trips to Hildene, the Old Bennington Museum, and the Adirondacks offered enriching cultural experiences to participants. Additionally, we sponsored a memorable trip to WWII sites in England and France.

Our Outreach committee expanded its efforts by revitalizing libraries and comfort carts in five rehab and nursing homes, providing access to reading materials and comfort items. We have donated books to the Street Soldiers Schenectady.

In our commitment to supporting local students, a scholarship program was initiated for graduating seniors from county high schools.

2024 has been a year of meaningful impact, and we look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.

— Charlene Roman



# Book Stores

## Whitney Book Corner and A Second Look

We sold 27,018 books and DVDs, totalling \$83,551 in sales between the two stores. The volunteers worked extremely hard to staff the stores, organize the books, and serve our loyal customers. Curated displays and Staff Picks from our volunteers are popular features with customers.

Teachers, nurses, veterans and first responders were given a 25 percent discount on their purchases to recognize their services to the community.

At Whitney Book Corner, we continue to partner with Oakroom Artists to display a revolving set of art for sale and to participate in Schenectady's monthly Art Night event. This initiative has brought in new customers and generated interest in Whitney Book Corner for both art and books.

— Charlene Roman





Whitney Book Corner and A Second Look brought in more than \$80,000 in 2024





Book sales continue to be the Friends' most highly anticipated event, with the community often purchasing books by the bagful. Many patrons donate the change from their purchases or make a separate donation.





# Book Sales

## Three Successful Events in 2024

Did you know that it takes almost 475 volunteers to put on our book sales? This number includes members of the Friends, and many, many members of the community.

We are very grateful for the continued support. Thanks also to our community for their continued generous donations of books, DVDs, and audio books, as well as the library's contribution of their discarded books, which enabled us to have another great year with three very successful book sales.

This year was just a little better than last year as far as proceeds: income was \$43,814.00, up from the 2023 total of \$42,551.52, continuing our support of the Friends' mission "to meet our community's information, education, cultural, and recreation needs by providing free and open access to a comprehensive range of material, services, and programs".

We had another very good year!

— Lisa Esperti



# Membership

## Membership Updates and Improvements

In 2024, we successfully moved all membership terms to a full calendar year, January through December.

The Friends also participated in the Schenectady Green Market one Sunday in August, with a half-off membership promotion. Even though the weather was rainy, there was great foot traffic and conversations, and we signed up six new members!

### 2024 Membership Roll-up:

Description	Total Number
New Memberships	103
New Junior Memberships	34
Renewals	286

### Electronic Memberships, Renewals, Gifts Stats:

Description	Total Number
New Memberships	55
New Junior Memberships	34
Renewals	147
Auto-Renewal sign-ups	45
Donations	20

Moving through 2025, new membership benefits, drives, and events are in the planning stages.

— Jessica McDonald and Norrine Thompson





# Junior Friends Program

## Program for Students Ages 11 to 18

The Junior Friends continued to grow in 2024! We expanded our age range from 13 to 18 years old to 11 to 18 to allow tweens and middle school students to begin their volunteering journey. With over 30 active members, we are working to expand our outreach and support of the Friends' mission.

In 2024, we supported bookstore operations, Beat the Snow concerts, book sales, community outreach, and summer library events. The Junior Friends got creative and designed an escape room for Harry Potter Day in October. We also got in the holiday spirit, inviting kids to make a holiday themed craft at the Whitney Book Corner, and hosting a free wrapping paper event at the library in December.

We look forward to continuing to expand our membership and impact in 2025!

— Maria Norelli



# Community Outreach

## Supporting local organizations in need

The Friends Community Outreach Committee continued to expand and grow its outreach efforts while fostering support for many organizations and schools that was established in 2023.

Continuing this year, eight scholarships in the amount of \$1000 each were given to college-bound graduating high school seniors in Schenectady County. This opportunity is well underway for 2025, and students' names will be announced in the coming months.

Additionally, continuing support for various organizations in need of books included Ellis Medicine Comfort Cart, Heritage Home for Women, Baptist Health Nursing and Rehab, Sunnyview Hospital, and Street Soldiers Schenectady, among others.

New this year, the committee forged a number of new partnerships. A few examples include: Martin Luther King Elementary School's Unique Boutique where students earn positive behavior "dollars" to shop for clothing (in collaboration with City Mission) and they receive a free book or two of their choice with each visit; The School at Northeast where a professional development library for teachers, around the topic of social justice, is being set up; and the Schenectady County Jail is supported with a variety of books, including religion, self-help, language, home improvement, and fiction.

When delivering books to our partners, The Friends are always received with enthusiasm and excitement. We will continue to reach out to schools, organizations, and non-profits that serve people in need.

— Diane Wilkinson

# WINTER



**Bring a Coat, Get a Book!**

Friends of SCPL is collecting coats in support of Bridges of Schenectady, a transitional housing program for alcoholism and drug dependency. Donate a new or gently used coat & get a free book!

# COAT DRIVE





# Beat the Snow Winter Concert Series

## Sundays in the McChesney Room

The Beat the Snow Concert Series was again a successful endeavor. Our audiences have been loyal and enthusiastic. Even our reference librarian mentioned that he knows if there is a concert because the number of people entering the library is much increased.

The series was well supported by many long-time participants such as Musicians of Maalwyck, Donald Hyman, Mark Tommasone, Bien Baez, Rosanne Hargrave, and Michael Clement, and several young talented performers organized by the Young Musicians Forum. Musicats Duo, Act Two, Michael Benedict Jazz Vibes, and barber shop singers, The Forgettable Four, also returned. WE THANK ALL THE MUSICIANS!

Thank you to our Junior Friends for attending and assisting during the concert series.

— Janice Walz



# Online Sales

## Strong Sales Performance Continues on Amazon and eBay

Our great team continued its diligent work through 2024, and we maintain our top seller ratings. Combined sales from Amazon and eBay totaled \$39,769.

Selling books on eBay, begun in 2023, has been a great success, and Judy Stevens and Fred Marx added CDs to the eBay inventory, again with success.

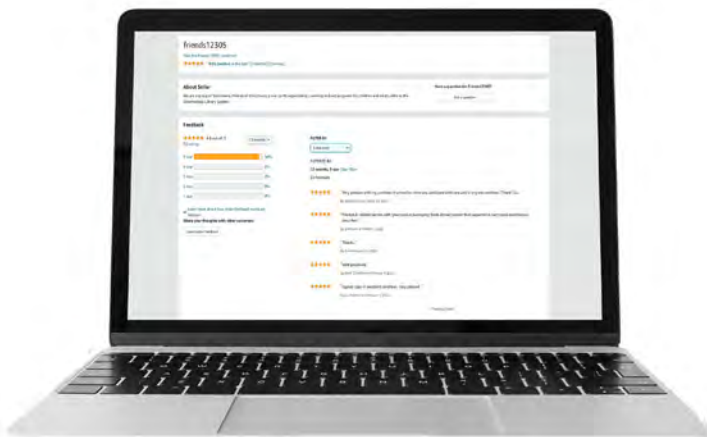
We welcomed three members to the team in early 2024: Dave Bradley as a poster; Joan Elliott as Monday assistant/researcher; and Nancy Steubner as Friday shipper.

Our shippers (Andrea, Cheryl, Jenn, Val, Nancy, Jenna, Judy) sent out over 2200 orders, despite losing some time to library technology updates, and a December holiday vacation for Amazon shippers.

Fortunately, we continued to receive quality donations from the community and the library to add to our inventory. The team (Dave, Dick, Donna, Sandy) scanned over 50,000 items, and researched (Arthur, Joan, Judy, Lois) dozens of carts of books. We added to and managed (Dave, Peter, Shawn, Val) an Amazon active inventory of about 3100 items. Judy Stevens managed our active eBay inventory of about 1300 items, with CDs, book sets and groups, and a few DVDs in the mix.

Some items and sets became more difficult to list on Amazon; we are glad to have eBay as an alternative market.

— Valerie Catlin and Shawn Schultz





# Newsletter & Online Presence

## Promoting the Friends and Bookstores

### Websites

Traffic continues to increase for both the Friends website and Whitney Book Corner/A Second Look website. While book sale information remains the most-visited page on the Friends website, visits to the Trips, Beat the Snow, and Volunteer Opportunities pages showed double-digit increases, indicating interest in Friends events and activities.

The Whitney Book Corner/A Second Look website performs well in local search for "bookstore near me," bringing in new customers.

### Newsletter

Available both in print and on the Friends website, the newsletter continues to be an important medium for communicating events and updates. We distribute 500 copies of each issue through mailings to members, library branches, and both bookstores.

### Email Marketing

We continue to send email announcements about newsletter availability and book store promotions. Additionally, Whitney Book Corner Beat the Snow concerts are included in the Downtown Schenectady Improvement weekly email, sent to thousands of residents.

### Social Media

Posting books that are currently available on Facebook has been very effective for both bookstores. Current releases and children's books are popular posts, and many patrons have enjoyed "blind date with a book," where store volunteers choose and wrap books of a theme and sell the mystery bundle for a set price.

As the Friends of the Library continues to grow, we look forward to sharing the organization's successes.

— Sharon Zalewski



Sale ad promoted on social media



Children's books promoted on social media

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# Financial Reports

## Friends Balance Sheet Comparison

Total checking and savings accounts, and certificates of deposit were \$838,569 as of December 31, 2024, up about \$298,000 (+55%) from December 2023. Alice Reed left an extremely generous bequest of \$315,000 to the Friends that accounts for this overall increase.

Over \$650,000 of total assets were invested in certificates of deposit (CDs) as of the end of the year. We moved monies into CDs during the year to increase interest earnings.

Right of Future Use at \$53,400 is the value of existing leases for the two bookstores, and is both an asset and a liability that declines over time. The decline in 2024 was -\$21,600.

Total equity as of December 31, 2024 was \$868,972 and was about \$301,000 (+53%) higher than a year ago.

Net income in 2024 was \$301,032 compared to \$44,446 in 2023.

## Friends Profit & Loss Comparison

Total regular income was \$554,170 as of December 31, 2024, and was roughly \$319,000 higher than the December 2023 level. As indicated above, the Alice Reed bequest is responsible for the overall increase, and is shown in the Gifts/Memorial Contributions line. Recurring revenues were fairly level last year.

Total expenses were \$256,804 and were about \$62,000 above the 2023 level. The Friends purchased scanner equipment for the Library in 2024 at a cost of \$42,725 (Program Support-Copier Upgrade). The Museum Pass Program was restored in 2024, with expenses of \$11,758, and we had a new Scholarship Program with expenses of \$7,150.

When other income of \$3,667 (MetroPlex Rent Subsidy) is added, total net income through for 2024 was \$301,032.

## The Finance Team

The 2024 numbers are not audited at this time, while the 2023 numbers match our audited statements.

I would like to thank Shirley DeBono, Jessica McDonald, Anne McCoy, and Kelly Walker for their excellent work and dedication to the Friends. Special thanks are also due John Halstead, CPA, who has audited our financial statements and provided guidance over many years.

— Charles Richardson, Treasurer

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## Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library

### Balance Sheet Prev Year Comparison

As of December 31, 2024

	Dec 31, 24	Dec 31, 23	\$ Change	% Change
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Checking/Savings & Certificates of Deposit				
Total Checking/Savings	185,050	238,265	-53,215	-22.3%
Total Certificates of Deposit	653,519	302,075	351,444	116.3%
Total Checking/Savings & CDs	838,569	540,340	298,229	55.2%
Other Current Assets				
Security Deposit WBC	2,000	2,000	0	0.0%
Total Other Current Assets	2,000	2,000	0	0.0%
Total Current Assets	840,569	542,340	298,229	55.0%
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Accumulated Depreciation	-3,438	-2,292	-1,146	-50.0%
Leasehold Improvement	44,700	44,700	0	0.0%
Total Fixed Assets	41,262	42,408	-1,146	-2.7%
<b>Other Assets</b>				
Bulk Postage Permit Account	402	125	276	220.8%
Postage Due Acct	513	213	300	141.1%
Right of Use Asset	53,400	75,000	-21,600	-28.8%
Total Other Assets	54,314	75,338	-21,024	-27.9%
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>936,145</b>	<b>660,087</b>	<b>276,058</b>	<b>41.8%</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>				
<b>Liabilities</b>				
<b>Current Liabilities</b>				
Other Current Liabilities				
Deferred Rent Grant	9,667	13,333	-3,667	-27.5%
Gift Cards	3,519	3,073	445	14.5%
Right of Use Liability	53,400	75,000	-21,600	-28.8%
Sales Tax Payable NYS	589	598	-9	-1.5%
Total Other Current Liabilities	67,174	92,004	-24,830	-27.0%
Total Current Liabilities	67,174	92,004	-24,830	-27.0%
Total Liabilities	67,174	92,004	-24,830	-27.0%
<b>Equity</b>				
Funds Book Sales	-40	-40	0	0.0%
Gilbert Endowmnt Fnd Restrict	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
Love-Jatulis Charitable Gift	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
Music Fund	11,290	11,290	0	0.0%
Niskayuna Landscape Fund	496	634	-138	-21.7%
Woodlawn Fund	1,305	1,305	0	0.0%
3900 - Retained Earnings	552,889	508,444	44,446	8.7%
Net Income	301,032	44,446	256,587	577.3%
Total Equity	868,972	568,077	300,894	53.0%
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>936,145</b>	<b>660,082</b>	<b>276,063</b>	<b>41.8%</b>

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Cash Basis

## Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library

### Profit & Loss Prev Year Comparison

January through December 2024

	Jan - Dec 24	Jan - Dec 23	\$ Change	% Change
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>				
<b>Income</b>				
BookSale Income				
Total BookSale Income	43,814	43,178	636	1.5%
Contributions				
Total Contributions - Membership	14,366	23,446	-9,080	-38.7%
Contributions - Other	6,983	11,522	-4,540	-39.4%
Total Contributions	21,349	34,968	-13,620	-38.9%
Friends trips	8,175	7,798	377	4.8%
Gifts/Memorial Contributions	319,197	5,438	313,759	5,769.7%
Interest & Dividends	18,655	7,940	10,716	135.0%
MVLS Grant	0	3,150	-3,150	-100.0%
On line sales Amazon	26,180	29,465	-3,285	-11.1%
Online Sales Ebay	13,589	9,910	3,679	37.1%
STARS Grants and Donations	19,660	12,800	6,860	53.6%
Total · 2nd Look Sales	42,353	43,234	-881	-2.0%
Total 301 · Whitney Book Corner Sales	41,198	37,786	3,412	9.0%
Total Income	554,170	235,667	318,503	135.2%
<b>Gross Profit</b>	554,170	235,667	318,503	135.2%
<b>Expense</b>				
Accounting Review	1,375	1,300	75	5.8%
Annual Dinner	2,274	0	2,274	100.0%
Bookkeeping Services	11,550	10,725	825	7.7%
BookSale Expenses	1,191	1,201	-10	-0.8%
Depreciation Expense	1,146	1,146	0	0.0%
Flash Drives & Ear Buds	1,299	1,079	220	20.4%
Friends Programs and Events				
Beat the Snow	2,175	2,200	-25	-1.1%
Harry Potter Event	1,567	0	1,567	100.0%
Friends Programs and Events - Other	49	275	-226	-82.1%
Total Friends Programs and Events	3,791	2,475	1,316	53.2%
Friends Trips Expenses	7,107	7,626	-519	-6.8%
Great Books Program	756	573	183	31.9%
Hospitality	645	475	171	36.0%
Insurance	1,498	1,475	23	1.6%
Membership	1,202	845	357	42.3%
Miscellaneous	0	418	-418	-100.0%
Museum Pass Program	11,758	0	11,758	100.0%
MVLS Expenses	0	1,595	-1,595	-100.0%
Newsletter	4,149	3,127	1,022	32.7%
Online Book Sales Expenses	7,221	7,920	-699	-8.8%
Other	491	656	-164	-25.1%
Piano	390	280	110	39.3%
Postage	684	732	-48	-6.6%
Program Support-Copier Upgrade	42,725	0	42,725	100.0%
Program Support - Org. Health	1,956	0	1,956	100.0%



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# Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library

## Profit & Loss Prev Year Comparison

### January through December 2024

	<u>Jan - Dec 24</u>	<u>Jan - Dec 23</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<b>Programming</b>				
Program Supplies, Adult	7,765	5,575	2,190	39.3%
Program Supplies, Children-YA	24,510	18,077	6,433	35.6%
Program Support - Publicity	8,937	9,866	-928	-9.4%
Program Support Spec Circ Items	7,503	6,927	577	8.3%
Programs, Adults	13,495	15,072	-1,577	-10.5%
Programs, Children-YA	16,735	26,349	-9,614	-36.5%
<b>Total Programming</b>	<u>78,946</u>	<u>81,866</u>	<u>-2,920</u>	<u>-3.6%</u>
<b>Publicity</b>	1,386	4,143	-2,757	-66.5%
<b>Scholarship Program</b>	7,150	0	7,150	100.0%
<b>Staff Development</b>	7,651	7,751	-100	-1.3%
<b>STARS</b>	24,421	21,699	2,722	12.5%
<b>Treasurer's Supplies</b>	511	944	-433	-45.9%
<b>Volunteer Events</b>	908	0	908	100.0%
<b>2nd Look Expenses</b>				
Rent 2nd Look	5,500	6,000	-500	-8.3%
Supplies	159	365	-206	-56.5%
Telephone 2nd Look	838	894	-57	-6.3%
<b>2nd Look Expenses</b>	<u>6,496</u>	<u>7,259</u>	<u>-763</u>	<u>-10.5%</u>
<b>Whitney Book Corner Expenses</b>				
Maintenance	275	175	100	56.8%
Rent WBC	19,800	21,600	-1,800	-8.3%
Supplies WBC	1,525	1,727	-202	-11.7%
Telephone WBC	621	570	51	8.9%
Utilities WBC	3,906	3,841	65	1.7%
<b>Total 501 - Whitney Book Corner Expenses</b>	<u>26,126</u>	<u>27,913</u>	<u>-1,786</u>	<u>-6.4%</u>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>256,804</u>	<u>195,221</u>	<u>61,583</u>	<u>31.5%</u>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	297,366	40,446	256,920	635.2%
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>				
<b>Other Income</b>				
MetroPlex Rent Subsidy WBC	3,667	4,000	-333	-8.3%
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<u>3,667</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>-333</u>	<u>-8.3%</u>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<u>3,667</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>-333</u>	<u>-8.3%</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<u>301,032</u>	<u>44,446</u>	<u>256,587</u>	<u>577.3%</u>



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