

News of the **Friends** of Schenectady County Public Library

September/October 2025 | Volume LXI No. 1



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Friends Award Scholarships to High School Seniors

The mission of the Friends of Schenectady County Public Library Scholarship Fund is to provide funds for Schenectady County high school students to attend an accredited two-year or four-year college or university.

This initiative started with the 2023-24 academic school year and was made possible by a bequest from Alice Reed. Student candidates must demonstrate strong academic commitment and effort, a commitment to service or volunteerism, leadership, a passion for reading, and have an interest in a library or teaching career.

A \$1,000 scholarship was awarded to one senior from each of the eight high schools in Schenectady County. Each recipient was chosen by their high school based upon the above criteria.

This year's scholarship recipients are:

- Brooke Grenier, Duanesburg High School
- Matthew Twardy, Mekeel Christian Academy High School
- Keira Haig, Mohonasen High School
- Cora Wareh, Niskayuna High School
- Natalia Brunson, Notre-Dame Bishop Gibbons High School
- Isabel Rumbaugh, Schalmont High School
- Makayla Rahimee, Schenectady High School
- Nicole Fernandez, Scotia-Glenville High School



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Greetings Friends Members,

I'm excited to share an update on our recent membership growth and the incredible energy building within the Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library.

With expanded member benefits, including 25 percent off purchases at both of our bookstores, our outreach efforts have paid off. We've made memberships available for purchase directly in our stores and have hosted membership tables

at the Schenectady Greenmarket on Sundays.

This year's results so far:

- 250 new members in 2025, 220 of them since the middle of May! For comparison — we added 95 new members in 2023 and 125 in 2024 for the entire year.
- Nearly 90 members have rejoined. WELCOME BACK!
- Membership has grown from just over 360 active Friends in the Spring to over 700 and growing every week.

This momentum is thanks to all of you, our dedicated members and volunteers.

The Friends Fall Book Sale is set for September 27 and 28 (details below). In the coming weeks, keep an eye out for volunteer sign-up information. We always count on your help to make this one of our premier events of the year.

If you're interested in volunteering for other opportunities, feel free to reach out to me at scplfriendspres@gmail.com.

With gratitude,
Diane Wilkinson

A poster for the Fall Book Sale. It features a background of autumn leaves in shades of orange, red, and yellow. The text is centered and reads:

Fall
Book Sale

Saturday, September 27, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Sunday, September 28, 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Central Library

All books \$1.00 or less
Bag Sale on Sunday (bag provided by cashier) — Fill a bag for only \$4.00!

Interested in Volunteering? Sign up on our website!

DAY TRIP OCTOBER 9: HOWE CAVERNS & ERIE CANAL CRUISE

Join The Friends as we venture under the ground and on the water for our fall day trip.

Howe Caverns

We will start by visiting one of the most popular natural wonders in New York State, Howe Caverns.

Discovered in 1842, Howe Caverns is the largest accessible cave in the Northeast. We will have a guided tour that will take us through amazing rock formations, limestone corridors, and cavernous galleries, stopping at the Lake of Venus and River Styx, where we will have an underground boat ride, then we will see the romantic bridal altar and walk through the winding way.

Whether you were last there in 4th grade or last year, Howe Caverns is always worth another visit!

Howe Caverns has a total 139 steps throughout the 90 minute tour. All have hand railings and walkways are paved with no trip hazards. About half of the steps can be bypassed if you choose not to visit certain sections. Walking sticks and canes are allowed, but walkers and wheelchairs are not. The temperature in the cave is 52 degrees. Food, beverages and bags are not allowed (there will be a place to store bags).

After the tour, we will have a pizza lunch at the Howe Caverns Cafe (two slices of cheese pizza, cookie and beverage).

Erie Canal Cruise

After lunch, we will continue our day with a drive to Herkimer, where we will enjoy an afternoon cruise on the Erie Canal. Celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Erie Canal as we enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Mohawk Valley. We will learn about the history of the Erie Canal and go through Lock 18 as we enjoy a leisurely cruise with Erie Canal Cruises.

Cost and Registration

Cost is \$95 for SCPL Friends members and \$105 for non-members. Cost includes transportation, admissions, lunch, gratuities, and a fun day with the Friends! We will leave the Schenectady Home Depot parking lot at 9:00 a.m. and will return at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Please register as soon as possible — due to limitations for both venues, space is limited to 40 participants. Find more information and the registration form in the Travel section at <https://friendsofscpl.org>.

Questions?

Email us at scplfriendstrips@gmail.com if you have any questions. We hope to travel with you soon!

— Gail & Sue

OCTOBER 2026: TRIP TO KENYA

Could this be our *wildest* adventure yet?

Come to our interest meeting Tuesday, September 9, at 2:00 p.m. at the Niskayuna Library and learn more about our African Safari trip with Collette Tours, October 18-31, 2026! This tour travels to wildlife reserves in Kenya.

Check our website and watch your email for more information!



Membership News

NEW MEMBERS & RENEWALS

Benefactor — \$200+

- Peter Delocis
- Ken Larsen

Patron — \$50+

- Shannon & David Bebb
- Wonja & Jeff Brucker
- Maggie D'Aversa
- Gay & Alden (Joe) Doolittle
- Julia Eddy & Dan Mayer
- Lynne & Mike Felczak
- Randy Fine
- Sunday Frost
- Linda Garbellano
- Karen & James Gonda
- Ralph Heisler
- Teresa Kennedy
- Mary Liz & Bill Leitch

- Colin McNamara
- Paul Matarazzo
- Russell Swanker
- Brian Wolosky

Supporting — \$35+

- Ruth Clayman
- Jamie Gearon
- Alanna Hoffmann
- Deborah & Paul O'Brien

In Memory of Peter Garvilla

- Donna Pace

In Memory of Pearl & Roland Lichtenstein

- Walter Lichtenstein

Other Gifts

- Kay & B. Donald Ackerman
- Patricia & Ken Bosen
- Robert Pezzano
- Mark Reilly
- Kegan Smith
- Katherine Stevens & Drew Pearson

DONATIONS & GIFTS

Recurring Monthly Donation

- Anthony Carota III
- Kimberly & Samuel Gonzalez
- Hannah Kapadia
- Katy Peace

IN MEMORIAM: ANNE O'BRIEN

We were saddened to learn about the recent passing of Anne O'Brien, a longtime Friends member who volunteered as a sorter and at Whitney Book Corner and book sales. Many remember Anne as a caring and kind spirit who brightened every room she entered.

ADVENTURES & FUN IN BOOK SORTING

We have no shortage of books, which we appreciate. And we get a lot of great books, which we REALLY appreciate! Here is a look at some of the crazy book titles that we have seen lately:

- Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife — John Nagl
- Guys are Waffles, Girls are Spaghetti — Chad Eastham
- The Second Book of General Ignorance, Everything you Think you Know is (still) Wrong — John Lloyd & John Mitchinson
- From Here to Maternity: Pregnant for 100 years — Ann Oakley
- Shameless: How I Ditched the Diet, Got Naked, Found True Pleasure, and Somehow Got Home in Time to Cook Dinner — Pamela Madsen
- Why do Bluebirds Hate Me? — Mike O'Connor
- Life's Too Short to Fold your Underwear — Patricia Lorenz

And Charlene's favorite??? A Year of Dishcloths by Maggie Weldon

— The Tuesday Book Sorters



WHAT'S NEW AT WHITNEY BOOK CORNER & A SECOND LOOK

Exciting things are happening at both bookstores!

Whitney Book Corner is a stop on Art Night Schenectady. On the third Friday of each month between 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm, art lovers tour the different venues throughout downtown to see the latest exhibits. Our artwork is from the Oakroom Artists. Displays are changed out every two months; usually the artist will stop by and give a short talk about their work. Earlier in the day, Crystal will set up a craft or activity for the kids.

Lily, a Junior Friend, has been working with Liz and Marianne to do some very creative window displays.

Take “A Second Look” at the store: the displays and windows are fabulous, created by our volunteers Laurie, Tina, and Sonya. The display shown at right was made by Sonya to make it easier to show our paperback picture books.

Both stores have been having more frequent sales and, thanks to Robin and Mary posting on Facebook, it has increased foot traffic in both stores. We appreciate all of the contributions from our volunteers to make the stores fun and unique!

— Charlene Roman



SPRING BOOK SALE RAISES MORE THAN \$15,000

Despite the cool and rainy weather — again! — for the Spring Book Sale, we had an excellent turnout. We made \$14,593.41 and received \$762 in donations. Apparently less-than-pleasant weather will not keep book lovers away from our sale!

After the sale, leftover children's and young adult books were distributed to local schools and organizations in need:

- Draper Middle School — Support English and social studies teachers with a WWII collaborative project, and build a classroom library
- Hamilton Elementary School — Early chapter and junior chapter books to help support school-based little libraries and summer reading initiatives
- Mont Pleasant Middle School — Early reader picture books for the Autism class
- Boys and Girls Club of Schenectady — Support readers who need access to books to help expand their reading options
- St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish School — Religious, picture, early readers and young chapter books for all classrooms and the school's library



Thank you for your book donations and supporting our sales. We are grateful to be able to provide books to our community partners as well.

September/October Programs & Events

Register for these programs and more on the Events & Class Registration page at www.scpl.org

AROUND SCHENECTADY: LOCAL EVENTS

September and October do not disappoint for events! Check out these fun events happening in our community:

September Events

Sept 5-7: 49th Annual Greek Festival, St. George's Greek Orthodox Church

Sept 6: Little Italy Street Fest

Sept 7: Correspondence Club of Schenectady, Arthur's Market

Sept 11: Murder at the Speakeasy, Van Dyck Music Club

Sept 13: Meet Your Neighbors! A Community Social Hosted by BANA, The Plaza (betw. Parkwood & Glenwood Blvds)

Sept 27: Schenectady County Wide Flea Market and More! in Via Port Mall

October Events

Oct 4: Schenectady Wing Walk

Oct 12: Fall Fest, Mabee Farm

Oct 14: Taproom Tuesday Line Dancing, Frog Alley Brewing

Oct 17: The Night Market on Jay Street

Oct 19: 2nd Annual Pierogi 5k, Central Park

Oct 25: Schenectady County Wide Flea Market and More! in Via Port Mall

ONLINE BOOK CLUB WITH JEFFERSON FISHER

September 10, 2:00 pm
Online

Join us (and be ready to take notes) for an afternoon virtual conversation with communication expert Jefferson Fisher, as we chat about his book, *The Next Conversation: Argue Less, Talk More*.

Jefferson Fisher, trial lawyer and one of the leading voices on real-world communication, offers a tried and true framework that will show you how to transform your life and your relationships by improving your next conversation.



FREE CONCERT: YOUNG MUSICIANS FORUM

September 14, 2:00 pm
McChesney Room
Central Library

Young Musicians Forum presents clarinetist Kyle Glasgow and pianist Tessa Tianxiang Ni, performing works by Bartók, Bunch, Harberg, Mothersole, and Rabaud.

Kyle Glasgow is also a private teacher, conductor, audio producer, and repair technician. He has performed throughout the United States as well as Belgium, France, Spain, and Austria. Kyle holds degrees in clarinet performance from the University of Maryland (B.M. and M.M.) and is currently pursuing a Professional Studies Diploma at the Mannes School of Music in New York City.

Tessa Tianxiang Ni is a recitalist and winner of several national competitions. Currently she is studying at the nearby Bard Conservatory of Music.



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LIBRARY BINGO

September 16, 5:30 pm
September 23, 5:30 pm
September 30, 5:30 pm
Woodlawn Library

Join us for some fun and win prizes at our library bingo game! Light refreshments will be available. Registration required.



CR"AFTER"WORK: CRAFT CLUB

September 29, 5:15 pm
October 27, 5:15 pm
Rotterdam Library

CrAFTERwork is an "after work" craft club intended to bring together patrons who enjoy trying new forms of art! Each month we will tackle a new craft. All materials will be provided. Whether you are a novice or a dedicated crafter, all are welcome.

September: DIY faux leather journals with personalized pencils

October: Halloween cupcake liner wreaths

Adults 18+, registration required.



BOOKS ON TAP: JAMES

October 21, 7:00 pm
Manhattan Exchange
607 Union St.

Great food, great drink, even better company. Join an awesome group of people in this book club to discuss *James*, by Percival Everett.

James is loosely based on Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, with various scenes re-contextualized or ending with different outcomes. The novels diverge by following Jim, rather than Huck, when the two are separated. Many characters are also reinterpreted. The novel won the 2024 Kirkus Prize, the National Book Award for Fiction, and the 2025 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

Ages 21+. Registration is required.



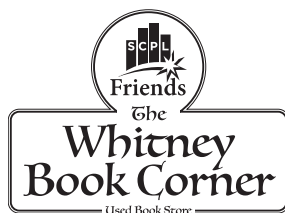


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