

Friends of West Florida Public Library newsletter

WINTER EDITION | DECEMBER 2023

The Friends Celebrate 50 Years with an Anniversary Gala

On October 20, 2023, about 200 people gathered at Sanders Beach Community Center to recognize our organization and the volunteers who are committed to supporting literacy in our community.

The event was hosted by the gracious Sue Straughn from WEAR Channel 3 News, a noted member of our community who generously gives her time and energy to helping others. Sue strives to make a positive impact on others and volunteers for many organizations across the Pensacola area. She made the night interesting and fun and kept the audience engaged. Live music was provided by the Curt Bol Band, a local favorite. Pensacola native Craig Pittman spoke about his book "Oh, Florida! How America's Weirdest State Influences the Rest of the Country". Fun was

had by all as door prizes were given away, a lucky draw raffle was held for a lots of awesome prizes and six premium prize packages were auctioned off. We took time to look back on our past, celebrate our current successes and look toward the future. Dedicated Friends volunteers were recognized and their service greatly appreciated. Volunteer of the Year Awards were presented to Donna Henderson, Jack Beverly, and Sam Hart. A special achievement award was presented to Linda Williams. You can view all gala pictures on the Friends website.

PAGE

1 50th Anniversary Gala

2 Warehouse Improvements

3 Become a Volunteer

4 ReadyKids! Special Event

Contents

**FRIENDS of
WEST FLORIDA
PUBLIC
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Warehouse Gets New Roof, Book Drop and Paint

A new roof was installed on the warehouse and Eagle Scouts make improvements as part of a special project.

Volunteers work hard every Thursday from 9:00AM-12:00PM at the warehouse to organize, sort and box books by genre. These books are sold at our bookstores and book sales. For many years the warehouse roof leaked in multiple spots and had the potential to ruin thousands of stored books. A new metal roof was installed and should last for the next 40 years. Nicholas Jenus, an Eagle Scout from Troop #103, chose our warehouse for his local project. Nicholas and his team of scouts poured concrete in the driveway to form a barrier to protect water pipes from cracking, power washed the

side of the warehouse and painted the front of the building. They also installed driveway posts, built a book drop that permits 24/7 access to drop donations and installed a new roadside sign on Commerce Street that clearly marks the driveway to the warehouse. The Friends purchased all the material for the improvements and the Eagle Scouts provided the labor. Thank you to Nicholas and all the Scouts who worked so hard to help us improve our warehouse. The warehouse is located at 325 Commerce Street in Warrington if you would like to see the improvements.



Downtown Bookstore Recipient **Donna Henderson**



Tryon Bookstore Recipient **Jack Beverly**



Book Warehouse Recipient **Sam Hart**



Volunteer of the Year Awards

Linda Williams Receives Special Recognition

As part of the Friends' 50th Anniversary Gala, Linda was recognized for her dedicated service to the Friends over the years.

Linda joined the Friends in 2010 and has served as president, vice-president and secretary. She has devoted an incredible number of hours to ensuring the Friends are successful at everything they do, from directing the effort in buying the book warehouse to leading the charge on over 30 book sales. Her tireless efforts and enthusiasm were recognized and her contributions highlighted. Thank you Linda, you are an amazing person!



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Help Support our Community Ways to Volunteer

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Friends with hundreds of volunteers who donate their precious time to support us. We offer many rewarding opportunities for individuals and groups to join us in making a difference.

Help at Book Sales

Set up tables and unpack books before a sale begins, monitor and stock tables during the sale, serve as a cashier or clean up after a sale. Select a shift for the days and hours you would like to help. The ability to lift boxes of books that may weigh more than 20 pounds is helpful, but not required.

Sort Books

Sort books by genre, inventory and organize all donated items that are sold at book sales and in our bookstores. Pack books into boxes and place in storage. Work on Thursdays, anytime between 9:00AM-12:00PM at our warehouse located at 325 Commerce Street.

Help at a Book Store

Greet shoppers, operate a SQUARE point of sales device and stock book shelves. Retail or customer service experience preferred but not required. Must be at least 18 years of age, pass a screening process and commit to a minimum of six months. Shifts available at Downtown or Tryon libraries.

To help at a sale or book sort contact: Linda Williams 850-450-2469

To help at the Downtown book store contact: David Bryant 850-982-6067

To help at the Tryon book store contact: Pam Beverly 850-484-0589

Upcoming Events

WINTER BOOK SALE

Snuggle up with a warm blanket and a good book! It's time to stock up on books, DVDs, Audiobooks, and CDs at the Big Winter Book Sale. Books will be sorted by genre to make it easier to find your favorites!

Friday, Jan 26 | 3:00PM–7:00PM

\$5 Admission | Members Free

Saturday, Jan 27 | 9:00AM–5:00PM

Free Admission | Half Off Day!

Sunday, Jan 28 | 9:00AM–3:00PM

Free Admission | \$7 Bag Sale

BOOKS BY THE BAY FESTIVAL

The Friends will host a booth at the Books by the Bay Festival. This festival is an opportunity to explore many different genres of books, attend panel discussions, participate in workshops and connect with renowned authors.

March 24 | 10:00AM-4:00 PM

Museum Plaza | Downtown

The Friends Partner with ReadyKids! for Book Give Away at January Book Sale

ReadyKids! is a special program that helps at risk 4-year-old children prepare for kindergarten.

Children from Escambia County enrolled in the ReadyKids! program may not have access to books, may have unique family dynamics, or may need a little extra help to start school on the same academic level as their peers. ReadyKids! focuses on mentoring students, engaging families in the education process of their prekindergartners, and supporting educators – all to maximize a child's academic potential through increased school readiness. In 2020, Escambia County had a school readiness rate of 48%, making the mission of ReadyKids! critical in

helping children prepare for school. During the Friends Winter Book Sale, children currently enrolled in ReadyKids! will receive (2) free books. These adorable 4-year-olds will be allowed to browse the entire section of children's books for sale and select their own books to take home. This special event will be held on **Saturday, Jan 27 from 9:00AM–5:00PM** during the Winter Book Sale at the downtown library. Cardoso Law and Donna Henderson have graciously donated funds to sponsor this event. For more information on ReadyKids! go to www.readykidsfl.org.

Friends Donate \$50,000 to the Library and Receive Proclamations from the City and County

Escambia County Commissioners and Pensacola Mayor Reeves and City Council members issued proclamations recognizing the Friends on our 50th anniversary. We presented a \$50,000 check to the library system as our contribution for 2023. The Friends hold three-day book sales and manage sales at three bookstore locations to raise funds throughout the year. A big "Thank You!" to all those who shop with us and all the volunteers who put in thousands of hours every year to make it all possible! Pictured from left to right: Kathy McCartan, Linda Williams, Ann Kelly and Kim Stefansson.

