



Friends of the Fletcher Free Library

Annual Report FY'23

July 2022 – June 2023

Friends of the Fletcher Free Library

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The purpose of The Friends of the Fletcher Free Library is to support the Fletcher Free Library (FFL) through advocacy, financial support, and fundraising with the goal of promoting the Library as a literacy and multicultural center for the community.

The Friends raise money through the generosity of community donors and donations to the Annual Appeal, and through sales of donated books and branded merchandise at occasional sales, sales from the Stall (shelves of books across from the Main Desk), and from online sales. On occasion, the Friends also raise money through annual fundraisers. The Friends are recipients of most restricted and unrestricted grant monies received, some of which are passed through the City of Burlington. Gale Batsimm, Development Manager for the Library and the best friend a Friend could have, provides tremendous support for the FFL and the FFFL. She is truly a BFFFL! Her commitment and hard work make all we do possible.

FY'23

Phil Morin and Grace Ortelere will be leaving the board at the end of their term. Both have had extraordinary influence on the Friends and have been leaders in the transformation of the organization. When Covid lockdown prohibited in-person book sales, Grace created a web presence for the Friends which allowed us to raise money through an online 'bookstore'. This project evolved into our current [website](#). Phil's leadership in organization and communication created a strong media presence and gave the Friends tools to reach more folks across the community. He also led the planning group for the Library's sesquicentennial event. We are very grateful for Phil and Grace's spirit, their spirit of innovation, and their willingness to commit precious time to the Friends and the Library.

Hilary Silver left the Board this past year but continues to provide huge support to the book donation management end of the Friends' fundraising workflow. She surely holds the historic record for number of donated books touched! We are very thankful for Hilary's long tenure on the Board and all that she does for the Friends.

Most of all we want to thank Hilary, Grace, and Phil for their caring so much about the Fletcher Free Library. With Friends like them, we can accomplish anything!!!!

And we are filled with gratitude for how much the Burlington community cares for the Library. The community shows this with its kind words and its enormous generosity, donating financially and giving books to the Friends to sell. This is the fuel that lets our knowledgeable, thoughtful, sensitive staff of the Fletcher Free Library help, teach, and support the community, and provide the programs and services that enliven and enrich us all. It is a big piece of what makes Burlington such a vibrant place to be.

150th Anniversary

On July 14, 1873, Mrs. Mary Fletcher and her daughter Miss Mary Fletcher donated \$20,000- to the City of Burlington to establish a library, half to start the collection, and half as an investment for future needs. At the time, this was the largest private donation in Burlington's history (and, an editorial at the time noted, the most useful and beneficial). The key word is 'donation'. The Fletchers made a substantial donation to establish the library and build their community.

The Library was originally housed in the Old Court House on Church Street. The Carnegie building, the older part of our current library, one of only four Carnegie libraries in Vermont, opened in 1904 as a permanent home for the collection.

Five months earlier, the editorial board of the Burlington Democrat had exhorted the city's wealthier residents, including the Fletchers, to recognize this incredible naming opportunity, referring to a public library as

the most enduring monument that can be erected to perpetuate their memory – a monument which shall favorably impress all future generations – a monument which, while it carries their name down the stream of time, shall ever be distributing blessings with open hands.

Libraries like the Fletcher Free are often established and are generally operated as public/private partnerships. Cities contribute and ordinary residents contribute to make a public library the cornerstone of the community. The Fletchers conditioned their donation on a commitment from the City to contribute to the creation of the library. Three decades later, Andrew Carnegie, who financed the original Fletcher Free Library building, did as well.

Carnegie was a philanthropist who funded the construction of thousands of libraries. He had a big vision and used his money to further it. The Fletchers' largesse was far more intimate, far more connected to the community. Their interest was to cultivate their garden, to make the city they loved a better place. Their local level generosity is the kind that makes a community flourish.

The Friends of the Fletcher Free Library exists to continue the work the Fletchers started. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who donates to the Friends. Their largesse is the life's blood of our city. The heart and soul of Burlington depend on its public library. As they always have, donors with generous hearts and leaders with vision must work together to sustain this precious institution.

A Public Awareness committee formed to plan an event to recognize this milestone for the Fletcher Free Library. The event, planned for 15 July 2023, will include literary costumes, a parade down Church Street, craft activities, magicians, music, balloons, bubbles, and of course cake and ice cream!

Public Awareness Committee

Phil Morin
Jessica Nordhaus
Cate MacLachlan
Kathleen Laramee
Dawn Moskowitz
Sarah Muyskens
Martie Majoros
Amy Mellencamp
Jonathan Chapple-Sokol
Gale Batsimm
Becca Thompson
Mary Danko

Board of Directors

Position	FY'23
President	Jonathan Chapple-Sokol
Vice President	Amanda Hannaford
Treasurer	Mary Clare Novak
Secretary	Robin Twery
Director	Sara Bourne
Director	Tina Lesem
Director	Carol Livingston
Director	Martie Majoros
Director	Grace Ortelere
Director	Phil Morin
Director	Mark Twery

80 Friends volunteers devoted over 2500 person-hours to supporting the Fletcher Free Library. We were fortunate to have substantial help from City Market member workers; They were a big part of making all our booksales so successful. We are thankful for those who worked hundreds of hours and those who contributed just a few.

We recognize Robin and Mark Twery for organizing so many consistently successful book sales, Martie Majoros and Carol Livingston for their work on the Stall, Grace Ortelere, Tina Lesem, Sara Bourne and Giao Dang for their maintaining our online presence, and Phil Morin and all his Communications team for keeping the community informed.

Financial Support for the Library

The Friends' Board annually allocates resources to the FFL for investment at the discretion of the Library Director. This procedure facilitates the FFL's ability to plan and prioritize programming, professional development, and special project investment more effectively. The Library Director proposes an amount to the Friends' Board based on anticipated programming and departmental needs for the coming fiscal year. The level of funding allocated each year is based on the availability of funds as stated in the Friends' end of year financial statements and Treasurer's report. For FY'23, the Board allocated \$53,000 to support programs and services for youth, teens, and adults; professional development support for staff; and an innovation project, a new opportunity for staff to propose initiatives which improve the library experience for users and/or staff. Included in the Allocation was \$15,000 as a set-aside to ensure continuity of the Early Literacy Outreach Program (ELOP). The Friends also issued \$20,000 to the City of Burlington as agreed in our Memorandum of Understanding.

FY2023 Allocation Request

	Amount Requested
Donation to City Revenue Line	\$ 20,000.00
Programming - Adult	\$ 14,000.00
Programming - Youth	\$ 9,000.00
Programming - Teen	\$ 5,500.00
Professional Development	\$ 3,500.00
Innovation Grants	\$ 5,000.00
Museum Pass Program	\$ 500.00
Shredding Contract/\$42.50 month	\$ 500.00
Awareness Fund	\$5,000.00
ELOP Coordinator	\$ 15,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 78,000.00

Funding was also committed to advance the Capital Fund, to provide money for necessary expenses, many of which are needed to help start the Capital Campaign. Some of the expenses include, but are not limited to: printing (mailings, brochures, signs, renderings, etc.), mailing/postage, consulting (includes trainings for Capital Campaign Committee), advertising/social media, video production, and events/receptions.

Capital Fund	\$ 25,000.00	Fund to support work on Capital Campaign for library renovation
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Financial Support for the Library

FY'23 Highlights

NEW NORTH END BRANCH LIBRARY continued for its second year, growing to serve the community. *Stories with Geoff* and *LEGO Time* programs added youth programming at the satellite library. A colorful book drop, awning, and window decals added to the branch's permanence and prominence.

YOUTH SERVICES *2022 Summer Challenge Program* (SCP) visited parks and nutrition sites throughout the City all summer long with an amazing group of six summer interns provided by grants through the Burlington School Department and a Vermont Afterschool grant through Burlington Parks Rec and Waterfront. In addition to hands-on activities, SCP distributed free books provided by donations to the Friends of FFL. The Children's Literacy Foundation (CLiF) gave books to youth to build their home libraries and offered a virtual program. Live youth library programs included summer favorites such as Very Merry Theater and Modern Times Theater, exciting new programs like Dinoman and the Whalemobile, and weekly offerings including Stories with Megan and Sing A-Long with Linda Bassick.

THE EARLY LITERACY OUTREACH PROGRAM (ELOP) position received its final funding to support a part-time staff position for the year. After four years, the youth outreach coordinator position became a city position. ELOP will continue to receive funding from grants and the Friends for ELOP materials to support home-based childcare centers. Thanks to Northfield Savings Bank and the Friends of FFL for ELOP support.

THE BURLINGTON STORYWALK® kicked off its third year, thanks to sponsorship from Appletree Bay Physical Therapy, Baystate Financial, Burlington Electric Department, Burlington Telecom, NBT Bank, Phoenix Books, and Pingala Café. The storybooks at this popular family destination continue to change with each season with the help of volunteer BTV StoryWalk® stewards.

PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMMING brought the exhibit *Telling a People's Story: African American Children's Illustrated Literature* to Burlington from Miami University of Ohio in April 2023. Two illustrators featured in the exhibit, Ekua Holmes and James Ransome, provided live programs. They each presented a day program for students and an evening community program. Thanks to REIB, Vermont Humanities, CLiF, and Hotel Vermont for their support of this exhibit and series. Book Discussion Groups including *Food for Talk: a Cookbook Book Club* continued meeting regularly during the year. ELL classes continued online. During April's National Poetry Month, the Library provided free, stamped poetry postcards. The environmental series *The Future is in Our Hands*, sponsored by Mascoma, launched in the spring of 2023.

TWO LITERARY FESTIVALS launched at FFL in Fall of 2022 with support from the Friends. The First Green Mountain Book Festival was held in September with headline author Ruth Ozeki. The weekend festival included author talks, panel discussions, and readings. In November the Non-Fiction Comics Festival brought illustrators and authors of non-fiction graphic books to FFL.

TEEN DEPARTMENT piloted new weekly programming such as Pizzas and Paperbacks. The Teen Space also held events like Dungeons and Dragons and a Heartstopper Party. Guitar classes, SAT Preparation classes, and drumming were also new additions.

THE LIBRARY AWARENESS FUND began in FY23 to plan a community celebration for the Fletcher Free Library's 150th Birthday to be held in July 2023. The volunteer committee spent months

creating a historical exhibit and booking wonderful live acts for the free public event. Special thanks to Hannaford and Ben & Jerry's for their in-kind donations.

MUSEUM PASSES provided for the community through the Friends included local museums as well as further afield Vermont museums such as Fairbanks Museum and the Vermont Institute of Natural Science.

INNOVATION GRANT continues to allow staff to propose creative solutions to supporting staff and patrons at FFL.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT strengthens staff's knowledge and ability to serve community needs. The Friends proudly fund opportunities to enhance the skills of Library Employees.

Summary table of Library programs:

Program Type	Number of Programs	Number of Participants
Adult	177	2540
Teen	98	207
Teen Outreach	8	266
Youth	261	8552
Youth Outreach	375	5982

Financials

Summary Statement

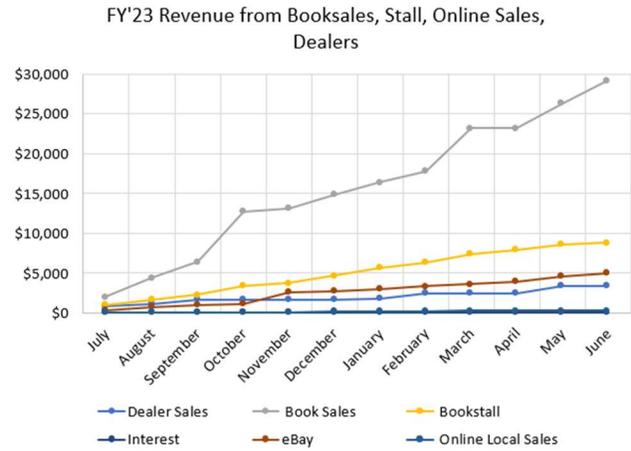
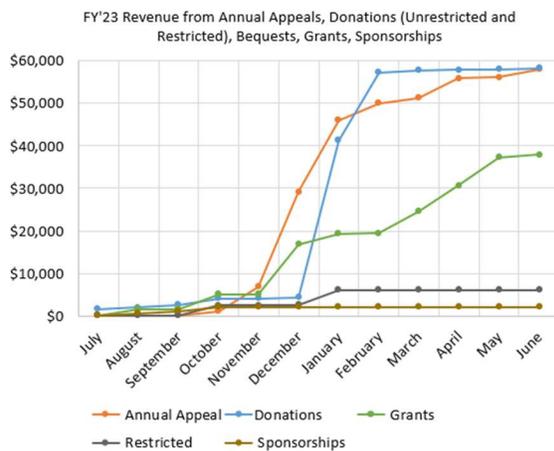
Revenue	FY'23	FY'22	Expense	FY'23	FY'22
Annual Appeal	57,989.65	68,038.16	Program Stipends/Consultants	3,734.52	25,682.50
Contributions Income	64,179.76	32,421.73	Program Supplies	29,784.30	24,584.63
Grants	37,893.54	26,071.35	Allocation to City of Burlington	20,000.00	20,000.00
BookSales	28,773.26	17,332.65	Speaker/Performer fees	43,633.00	14,539.12
OnLine Sales/eBay	5,036.91	9,002.53	Marketing	15,600.61	8,416.30
Bookstall	8,818.63	5,701.49	Equipment	3,877.20	7,187.65
Website Local Sales	262.50	2,194.48	Books	4,743.61	4,938.31
3 rd Party Book Sales	3,406.00	1,781.00	License Fees	2052.39	2,641.79
Fundraising Events	2,100.00	1,450.00	Office Supplies	1,585.71	1,854.91
3 rd Party Sales-Other	0	180.00	Accounting Fees	2641.20	1,648.20
Merchandise Sales	Not tracked	96.00	Insurance	1,505.71	1,427.00
Interest Earned	74.68	64.53	Staff Development/Training	9,843.84	1,091.15
Supply Store	Not tracked	25.00	Program Catering and Staff Recognition	3,908.25	849.37
			Postage	969.55	745.22
			Merchandise	2,276.23	471.28
			Travel	436.66	59.72
			Other		
Total	208,534.93	\$164,358.92		147,928.01	\$116,217.40

Bank Account Balance (does not include <\$2000 held in eBay, PayPal, Venmo accounts)

Date	Bank Account Holdings
6/30/2022	228,498.12
7/1/2023	289,402.80

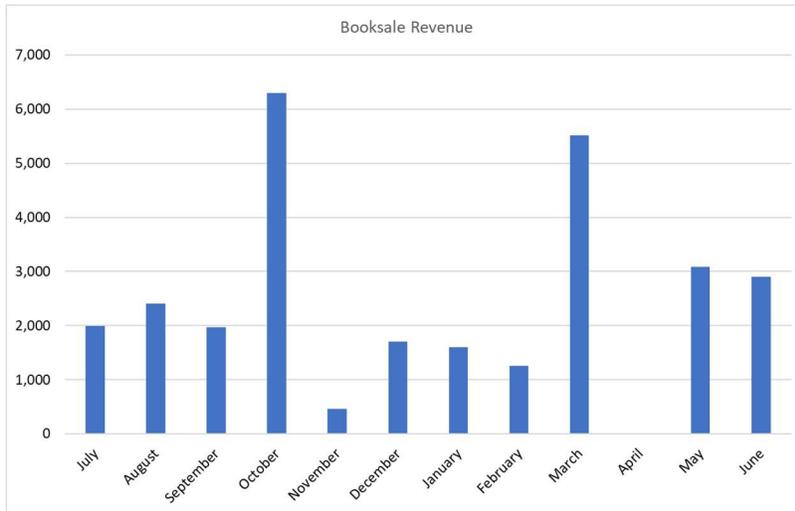
Revenue

Cumulative revenue by source



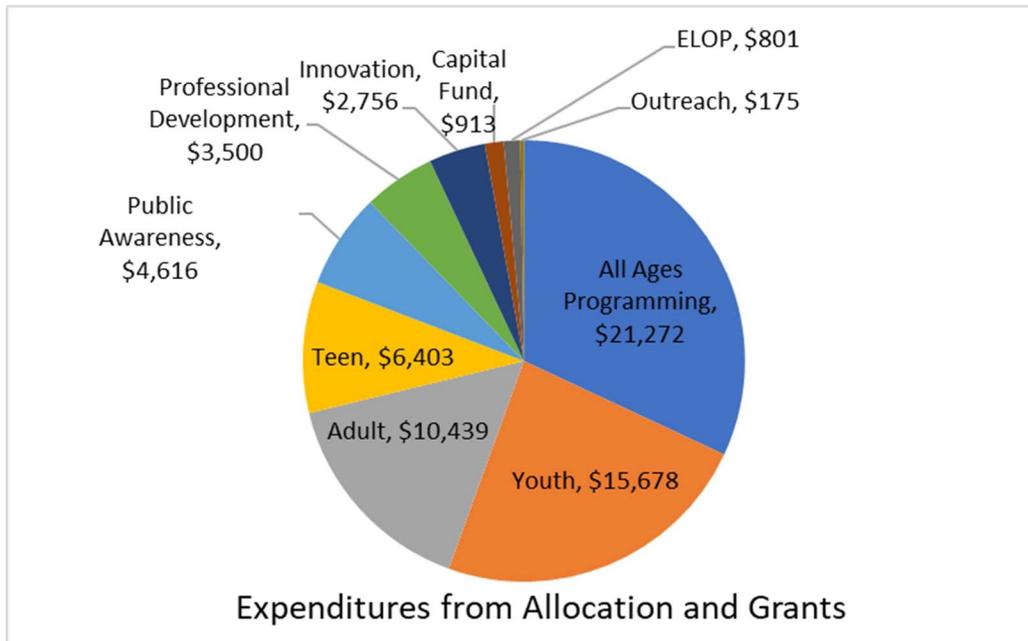
FY'23 again brought an outpouring of kindness from the community in general donations and Annual Appeal contributions. We are overwhelmed by the generosity of donors who wish to remain anonymous, and those who donate *in memoriam*. We were also beneficiaries of a substantial bequest. Beyond donations, Development Manager Gale Batsimm's grant writing yielded just under \$38,000 for use in a variety of Library and outreach programs. More than three fourths of Friends revenue came from donations. We were also beneficiaries of several promotions at local Hannaford Supermarkets.

Many donors showered us with many books, allowing the Friends to continue the tradition of raising money for the FFL through the sale of books. And community turnout for in-person book sales was incredible. We held nine this year, half of them outside and revenue was the largest in recent history. The weather generally cooperated, and when it didn't, book lovers were undeterred by the rain and wind during a couple of the sales. The outdoor sales again proved extremely popular, but every sale brought hundreds of browsers and buyers to the Library. For the first time since the Pandemic, we held a longer indoor Fall sale in the Community Room (sometimes referred to as the 'Big Fall Sale'), which was extremely well attended. Booksale revenue by month/sale is shown in the following chart:



Sales at the Stall continue to recover from the Pandemic era and raised almost \$9000- for the Library. This was a 54% increase over FY'22. Other sources of book sale revenue suffered some from limited human resources but contributed significantly to Friends revenue.

Expenditure

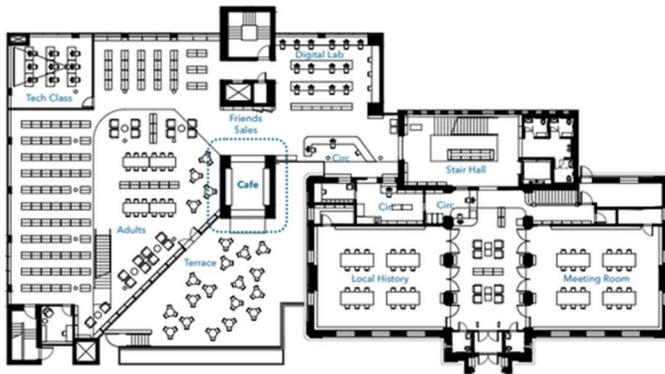


We met our City obligation by sending \$20,000 in June, and the Friends spent \$17,714 of our General Fund assets (12% of expenditures) on operations, including supplies, subscriptions, insurance, accounting fees and fundraising costs.

Capital Campaign Committee

The energies of the Capital Campaign Committee were largely focused on the sesquicentennial event. Cost estimates were updated for the Schematic Design stage. Progress was made on securing Federal, State and local funds for restorative work on the outer envelope of the building, and a company was identified to dig a geothermal test well. We expect work to finalize and finance the renovation project to begin to accelerate in FY'24.

Amy Mellencamp
Jessica Nordhaus
Cate MacLachlan
Kathleen Laramee
Phil Morin
Jonathan Chapple-Sokol
Gale Batsimm
Mary Danko



Schematic Design plan for main floor

Thank You

The Friends are thankful for all the folks who support the Friends and the Fletcher Free Library: Friends volunteers; Library staff; financial and in-kind contributors, individual, corporate and institutional; donors of books; and of course, all the booklovers who come to our sales. Thank you all!