



2020-2021
Annual Meeting

June 23, 2021

Annual Meeting

Friends of the Library Agenda

June 23, 2021, via Zoom

Business Meeting

1. Greetings from Chair – *Martha Shoemaker, Co-Chair*
2. Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes of June 6, 2019 – *Suzanne McAuliffe, Secretary*
3. Board of Trustees' Report – *Kirsten Sicuranza, Board President*
4. Library Director's Report and Special Tour – *Katie Huffman*
5. *Membership Report – Beth Cote*
5. Treasurer's Report – *Steven Ross*
6. Phoebe's BookCellar – *Claudia Condon and Joan Overfield – Co-Chairs*
7. Hospitality Committee – *Suzy Bolduc*
8. The Garden Gang – *Eleanor Hufford*
9. Nominating Committee with vote on slate – *Jen Harvill*
10. Friends' questions, comments, suggestions, and ideas

Adjournment

Opening Remarks from Chair

Welcome to the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Library. I know that we all wish we could be together in the community room listening to a guest speaker and sharing a cup of coffee, but for now Zoom is the safest meeting place for all of us.

As you might recall, we cancelled the meeting last year due to the pandemic. Although you may not have heard from the Friends directly in some time, you will hear today that our volunteers have still been busy helping our beloved library in a variety of ways.

During the past year, I have attended the Board of Trustees meetings via Zoom, keeping up to date on the renovations of the library, the placement of the pavers and the ongoing efforts for financial donations. Suzy and I attended a workshop in Mystic, presented by the Connecticut Library Consortium on telling our library's story. We left with new ideas, but they too were placed on hold during the pandemic.

Our wonderful volunteers in the BookCellar have continued to participate throughout the renovation, the pandemic and the reopening. I cannot thank Joan and Claudia enough for their dedication to the BookCellar. As many of you remember, the BookCellar had moved across the street to their new space and then back to their renovated space last March. The last book was placed on the shelf just prior to the state shutdown. Our volunteers and faithful friends continued to gather donations and make their plans for a safe opening during this time. Eleanor has been working with the Board members planning the renovated outside spaces of the library. She and her volunteers have overseen the moving of special trees, the planning of new garden spaces and continued to mulch and providing "curb appeal" even during the renovation.

The Executive Board of the Friends have met a few times over the past year and recently began making plans for the year ahead. As this pandemic has taught us, we must continue to move forward. During the last month, we have had discussions with Katie Huffman on how the Friends can provide the most support for the library. During the year ahead we plan to work with Katie H. to review/revise the By-Laws once again to meet the needs of the library moving forward. It is our hope and desire to increase the number of Friends who volunteer at the library. Please remember volunteering can be once a week, a month or quarterly date on your calendar. Every hour you can spare will make a difference at the library. We will be presenting you with new ideas as we reinvent ourselves over the next few months.

Minutes from June 2019

Suzanne McAuliffe, Secretary

Annual Meeting - Thursday, June 6th, 2019 10 A.M. in the Community Room

In attendance: Council Members Leslie Massa, Steven Ross, Mary Seidner, Cheryl Poirer, Martha Shoemaker, Anne Roy, Suzy Bolduc, Julie O'Brien, Eleanor Hufford. Also in attendance, BookCellar Co-Chair, Claudia Condon, staff representative, Katie Balocca, Board of Trustees representative Kirsten Sicuranza; and members of the Friends of the OL-PGN Library.

Guest Speaker: Julie O'Brien introduced the guest speaker, Robert Kim Bingham. Mr. Bingham spoke about his book, Courageous Dissent, an account of his father Harry's remarkable work as a Foreign Service Agent during WWII. Harry Bingham defied his government to save lives.

Approval of 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes : Secretary Suzanne McAuliffe called for a motion to approve and all were in favor, minutes were accepted.

Board of Trustee's Report (attached): Kirsten Sicuranza, Board President congratulated Katie Huffman on her recent life events and thanked the library staff for their excellent job filling such large shoes in her absence. The Board's focus this past year has been on the Renewal Project and Kirsten highlighted the progress that has been made.

Chair Report (attached): Leslie summarized today's meeting as a "recap of last year's progress and accomplishments and a look to our next year. As Co-chairs of the Friends of the Library, Martha Shoemaker and I honor your commitment, dedication and energy to your chosen volunteer work. We are pleased today to share with you a meeting packed full of insight into all the other areas of work and opportunity as a Friend."

Library Director's Report (attached): Katie Huffman submitted her annual report, but Katie Balocca presented in her absence. Katie B. spoke about the powerful woman Phoebe Griffin Noyes was, who inspired the new logo. The library staff is gearing up for the busy summer season when the population triples.

Treasurer's Report (attached): Steven Ross confirmed the Friends \$22,000 commitment for the 2019-20. There is a bank balance of \$17,000 and he feels the budget will be adapting to many unknowns due to the renewal project.

BookCellar Report (attached): Claudia Condon presented highlighting good sales from Jigsaw puzzles and the rolling rack. They have secured a space on Lyme Street to continue sales during the renovation. They plan to close on Labor day and reopen in January.

Hospitality Committee Report (attached): Cheryl Poirer presented and noted the group supported 4 events this year, BookCellar's Holiday Sale in December, Volunteer Recognition Tea, Luanne Rice Author Event and the Friends Annual Meeting. She thanked all who contributed their time this past year.

Garden Report (attached): Eleanor Hufford presented and talked about the removal of the circle and how plants were offered to the dedicated volunteers for relocation to their gardens. They look forward to the opportunity the renovation provides to re envision the gardens.

Membership Committee (attached): Suzanne McAuliffe presented in Beth Cotes' absence. The committee had a productive year scrubbing the friends list via an email blast sent to over 300 members. There is still work to be done as we explore the possibility of a new digital form.

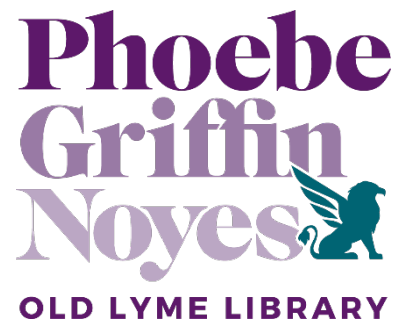
Nominating Committee Report (attached): Mary Seidner asked for a vote to approve the membership slate. The following changes and renewals were voted in:

Martha Shoemaker	Chair
Suzy Bolduc	Vice Chair
Beth Cote	Member at Large
Claudia Condon	BookCellar Co-Chair
Joan Overfield	BookCellar Co-Chair

Mary also thanked her dear friend Leslie Massa for her service and dedication to the Friends Council and the Old Lyme community.

Recognition : Katie Balocca recognized and thanked departing council members Anne Roy and Cheryl Poirer.

Board of Trustees Report



Kirsten Sicuranza, President

Our Board and committees embraced Zoom meetings as the new normal.

- Since last report to the Friends, we welcomed 4 new Board members as Michaelle Pearson and David Stanland's terms ended:
 - Wen He, Barbara Hack, Wil Bradford and Blair McBeth
- This year we will be losing Patrick Gingras and Joe Cipparone, but gaining 3 new members in September:
 - Eddie Vautrain, Tara Ward and Heather Richardson
- Our officer slate was just elected in at our June meeting:
 - Jane Cable, Secretary; Tom Britt, Treasurer; Ken Biega, Vice President, and Kirsten Sicuranza, President
- Renovation almost complete, just trailing odds and ends at this point. We had hoped to be completely done last year at this time, but we all know COVID had other plans. We were fortunate that work continued despite many delays and \$150K+ in change orders, yet we are still within the \$3.05M budget.
- Last year's fundraising remained on track despite the pandemic, and we received a \$91K PPP loan/grant that further softened the edges of the budget and uncertainty. We canceled a fundraising gala that we had planned for this November, but hope to get back to the drawing board on that soon! We've already exceeded this year's (FY2021) fundraising goal.
- The Board formed a new Equality, Inclusivity and Justice committee last summer that subsequently crafted and published a statement against racism on behalf of the Library. This year we've worked hard to identify next steps, which at this point are looking like a series of anti-racism workshops with an outside facilitator or consultant.
- The Garden Committee brought so many goals to fruition with the beautiful, functional walkways of engraved pavers that were installed last summer. Donors commemorated their support for the library in a timeless way, and the Committee's redesign brought new found accessibility to our outdoor spaces—and therefore more visitors to our beautiful library. Their next deliverable is the native pollinator garden, which will bring insects, birds and enlightenment.
- The Long Range Planning Committee is working on a “plan for the Plan” to ultimately define the next set of 5-year goals for the Library and how to get there
- The Personnel Committee recognized our wonderful staff for their outstanding commitment and jobs well done during 2020.
- The Public Relations Committee continued their support of the Library's communications and signage.

Library Director's Report

Katie Huffman

A huge thanks to the Friends for providing significant financial support despite the pandemic and renovation. Funds were used to purchase essential Library materials including Adult Fiction books, all Young Adult books, a variety of online resources and ebooks, and newspapers. These resources were all put to great use, even when the Library doors were closed. Thank you!!



For those of you who missed the tour, here's a link to the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and tour from earlier this spring:

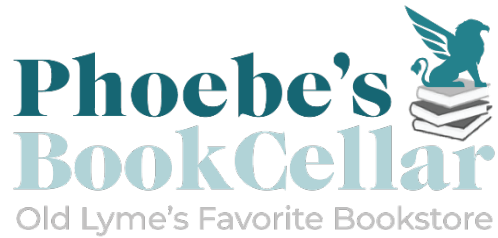
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yAj9pL0X_E

Membership Committee

Beth Cote

Our membership has continued to grow during the pandemic and our total number of Friends members now stands at 252. The annual meeting invitation was sent on June 9th with an impressive 49% open rate (118 open) and only 6 member contacts bounced back. We will try to contact these members to get their new email contact information.

- In the Bookceller, we have 55 Friends on our lists, with 40 actively participating
- The Garden Group currently has 6 friends on our lists with 3 actively participating
- Our Hospitality Friends, due to Covid has been inactive for the past year and are looking forward to participating in engagements soon.



After operating at 44 Lyme Street for 6 months the BookCellar moved back to its newly renovated space in March 2020 but did not reopen until November 2020 due to the global pandemic. Prior to reopening, a small group of volunteers worked to organize the sales space and the back office. We reopened with Covid safety protocols in place.

New paint, lighting and floor as well as new shelving and reorganized space have all contributed to a huge improvement and many complements from customers and volunteers.

Since reopening, donations and sales have been brisk. Sales during the 7 months from November to May total \$11,360. and include close to 2700 books and more than 600 DVD's and CD's. Almost all of that has been from the Cellar due to the fact that the Library lobby has not been open to foot traffic.

During this period, we lost some volunteers, but most have enthusiastically returned. We have been operating with reduced hours but plan to expand hours as our volunteers become fully vaccinated. In addition, we have recruited 5 new volunteers

Joan Overfield and Claudia Condon Co-Chairs

Other notable accomplishments:

- Populated the dedicated space in the Library lobby with books for sale.
- Offered paperback books for sale on the honor system outside the Library front door.
- Held two outdoor pop up sales in November tied to LYSB Unplugged Weekend and Small Business Saturday.
- Celebrated Phoebe's birthday with free books/DVD's outside the Library front door with "donations welcome."
- Donated bundles of overstock children's books to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen for distribution to 108 needy children.
- Offered a coupon to all Lyme/Old Lyme teachers for a free paperback, DVD or CD as thank you for all they did to keep the schools open and safe during the pandemic.
- Continued to participate in discussions with Friends of CT Libraries regarding book sales during the pandemic.
- Future plans:
- Effective June 1 our hours are Wednesdays 10-4 and Saturdays 9-1.
- On Saturday June 26 from 9-1 we will hold a Summer Stock Up Sale with select books for sale outside on the Library patio as well as a half price sale downstairs in the BookCellar. Live music on the patio will be provided by Music Now Foundation.

Hospitality Committee

Suzy Bolduc

Due to Covid, 2020-2021 was a *very* quiet year for Hospitality.

I am optimistic about future events, and look forward to providing patrons, friends and family members with merriment and good fare.

Two Upcoming Events I'd like to share:

1. The Book Cellar 1/2 Off Sale on **Saturday, June 26th** from 9am-1pm Everything (except map prints) **downstairs** will be half-priced! Meanwhile, a selection of full-priced books, puzzles and a special \$1 Overstock table will be available **outside**. While you shop, enjoy live music and help yourself to lemonade and cookies on the patio. Hope to see you there!
2. Luanne Rice event coming in October 22nd

The Garden Friends

Eleanor Hufford

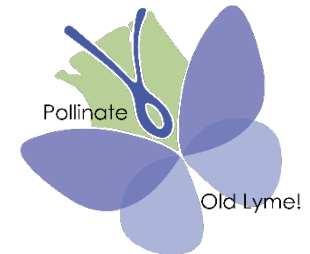
A lot has happened since our last meeting!

The new garden area was created during renovations. It was planted for the winter with rye grass to enrich the soil. We then cleared the weeds with the help of the garden committee & a couple of garden friends. A Meadow has been planted with partridge pea, buckwheat, & rye. The goal was to create a meadow that will be visually pleasing while work continues. A True North path is to be installed, the bid was recently approved by the garden committee & the Board of Trustees.

The next phase of the garden is creating the native plant garden beds and wheelchair accessible paths. Our plan is to fill the beds with naive ephemerals, grasses, ground covers & forbs. We will need volunteers to help plant the bed as well as ongoing maintenance of the gardens. Right now I have 6 garden friends that have expressed interest in continuing to volunteer.

The patio pots are going to be maintained seasonally by Duck River Garden Club. They will always contain native pollinators.

It's a goal of the garden friends as well as the garden committee at the library to work with Pollinate Old Lyme as well as Duck River Garden Club to bring information to the public on native gardening through various means like educational programs & signage with plant information.



Nominating Committee

Jennifer Harvill

Following the report, a vote will be taken for the slate of candidates.

Friends of the Library Proposed Slate of Officers

Chair - Martha Shoemaker

Vice-Chair - Beth Cote

Secretary - Suzanne McAuliffe

Treasurer - Steve Ross

(Deposit coordinators - Claudia Condon & Martha Shoemaker)

Hospitality - Suzy Bolduc

Garden - Eleanor Hufford

BookCellar - Joan Overfield and Claudia Condon

Membership/Nominating Committee - Jennifer Harvill

Phoebe's Friends

- **MISSION:**

The Friends' mission is to strengthen the partnership between the Library and our community through support, volunteerism, and advocacy.

- **VISION:**

The Friends' vision is that our community recognizes the Library as a treasured resource and is committed to its success.