

The Friends of the Cedar Falls Library Annual Report 2020-2021

The Friends of the Library is an organization of volunteers who work to support the library and its many missions. Members are community residents who pay dues to help the library purchase needed supplies, programming and events. Board members and others also contribute their time to help the library staff offer numerous events each year.

The purposes of the Friends of the Library are:

1. To stimulate the use of the library's resources and services.
2. To focus public attention on the library.
3. To maintain an association of persons interested in libraries.
4. To help fund materials and programs for the library.
5. To provide volunteer services to support the mission of the library.
6. To promote literacy.

The President's Report

Mission Statement: The Friends of the Cedar Falls Public Library cultivate a love of learning and celebrate the joy of reading by supporting public library services for the community.

As I look over the past year, in preparation to write this report, I realize that it was an unusual year for all of us, including our civic institutions. Personal activities, attitudes, and expectations were modified as a result of the COVID pandemic. Use of our wonderful library and its resources changed dramatically almost immediately.

Many changes were required to ensure the safety of both the public and the library staff. The library building was closed for many months in the last year while the staff continued to provide most library services in the form of curbside pick up, take home projects for youth and adults, and book discussions and story times held via Zoom. The library staff continues to impress me with their planning and resilience when faced with this changing pandemic.

The Friends have also continued to assist the library with multiple projects. We have funded many activities this year as you'll see in this report. Volunteers from the Board assisted library staff by pulling books from the shelves for curbside pick up. The Friends provided the sponsored book discussion groups with the Zoom ability to meet virtually. The annual Cedar Valley Reads author visit became the author Zoom meeting so that youth could interact with the author even in these restrictive times.

And, I offer a huge thank you to the board members who serve the library that we all love. Two women who have dedicated many years to the Friends' Board deserve a special thank you: Sue Doody and Maelou Baxter. Both women have served many years on the Board as members, officers and advisors. Thank you for your service!

Board of Trustees Liaison Report

What a year we all have had. Like the library, the Friends had to adjust to a variety of limitations on services offered. The Friends' meetings were held virtually as were many of the programs offered by the library. We thank Kelly Stern for her creative solutions to these challenges. Now is a great time to become a Friend of the Cedar Falls Library. Join us as we look forward to 2021.

A Tribute to Marilyn Nesvik

GRATITUDE is the word that best expresses the feelings of Friends' members toward long-time volunteer and manager of the Book Nook, Marilyn Nesvik. The Friends' board regretfully accepted Marilyn's resignation as manager of the Book Nook due to health issues in 2020. Marilyn's many years of dedicated service are deeply appreciated, and much of the success of the Nook is due to her hard work and dedication. Customers of the Nook remark that Marilyn was really more than a "worker": she was a friend who could help with book selections and suggestions as she took a personal interest in shoppers at the Nook.

Marilyn is, of course, an avid reader and the book "One Little Lie" by Colleen Coble was donated to the Library in honor of her many years of service with the Friends of the Library.

Thank you, Marilyn!



The purpose of the Friends is to support the library.

We did that in many ways during the past year.

Financial Support

The Book Nook met the challenges of the past fiscal year due to Covid. We adapted by purchasing and installing a plexiglass screen for the check-out counter, increasing signage in the Nook and enhancing cleaning efforts. We were sad to see our long-term Book Nook Manager, Marilyn Nesvik, retire, but are happy to welcome new managers: Alice Meyer, Linda Meier and Diane Thiessen. We thank our dedicated volunteers – over 45 in number! They, along with our customers, are the “heart and soul” of the success of the Book Nook.

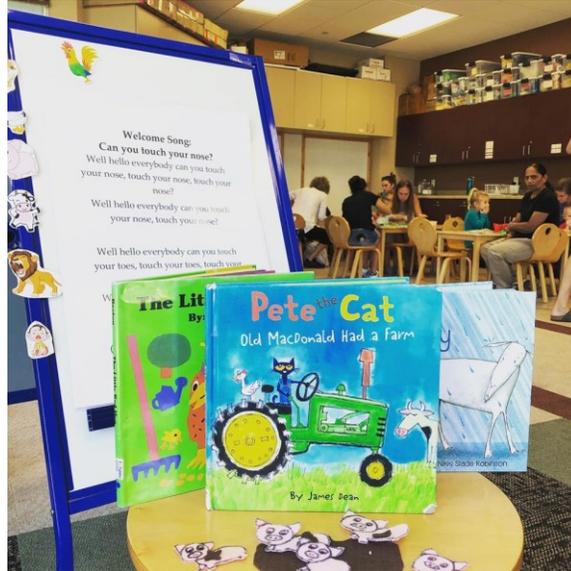


Staff Support

To show our appreciation to the dedicated staff, the social committee provided food treats. In addition, this year offered a unique opportunity for support. Due to the popularity of curbside pickup, numerous staff hours were spent pulling books from the collection to fill patrons' requests. Friends assisted with this effort by working in the library locating and collecting books.

Literacy

The Friends continued to support literacy in the community by purchasing Mevo cameras for use during Zoom story times and book clubs. In addition, books were provided for the adult book clubs held over Zoom. The Friends also funded the *Book Page* publication for library patrons as well as books to distribute to each student during the Cedar Falls Schools' kindergarten round-up.



Activities and Events

Despite the limitations imposed by the pandemic, the library offered an amazing number of activity options to the community. Below is a partial list of the activities sponsored by the Friends during the 2020-2021 year:

- Virtual Storytimes
- Digital Scary Story Workshop
- Virtual Hocus Pocus Trivia
- Virtual Book Clubs for Kids
- Visual Art Step by Step
- Digital Create and Show
- Holiday Crafts
- Celebrating the Season: Different Winter Holidays - Virtual Program
- Teen Sharpie Art
- Writers of the Cedar Valley
- Virtual Teen Hangout
- Virtual Word Wizards: Fantasy Writing
- Virtual Fairy Tales by Jester Puppets
- Virtual Magic Show with Mikayla Oz
- Morning and Evening Friends Book Discussions including the purchase of new cameras
- Visiting the Beyond: A Virtual Paranormal Presentation
- Hoover and the CRB Webinar
- Brainfuse database
- Co-Lab Sessions
- Grab-N-Go Kits

- Movie Nights



Library Recognition

Once again, the Cedar Falls Public Library was awarded Tier 3 state accreditation, the highest level a public library can receive. Director Kelly Stern noted that the Friends provide some of the funding that allows the library to meet four of the required standards including outreach services and provision of programming for children, young adults, and adults at no charge.

The Friends worked with local media to publish several articles and create television shows that helped the community understand the work the library does. The articles in the *Waterloo Courier* featured the work of the Friends' volunteers and the remarkable efforts the library staff made to serve the public during the pandemic. The shows on Channel 15 featured Director Stern explaining how the library was able to offer patrons multiple services even while closed. In February, Director Stern was interviewed on Channel 15 announcing the re-opening of the library for browsing and the Book Nook for sales and donations.

"Achieving accreditation requires a significant, ongoing local commitment to high quality library services."



Membership

The biggest change in membership is the ability to track Friends' memberships on a rolling year basis. Lapsed members now receive a reminder in October and in March just prior to the annual meeting. Fiscal year membership is down from 2019/2020 to 2020/2021. We believe Covid had a significant impact on the renewals. Once people get used to the new renewal process, and realize they can pay online, numbers should rise. Getting back to an in-person annual meeting should increase affinity to the group, also helping membership numbers. It's well-documented that rolling memberships, along with timely reminders and the ability to pay online, increases donations. The committee will continue to evaluate the process, its impact on membership, ways to increase number of members, and the average donation. Individuals may now become members by donating online.

Membership numbers—fiscal year is April through March:

Fiscal year 2020-2021: 144 members (131 renewed and 13 new. Feb/mid-March 2021 only), \$8014.32. Average donation of \$55.65 per person.

The Friends now try to handle as much business with members and prospective members as possible by email. That increases contact points, adds convenience for members, and saves money on printing and postage.

A thorough plan to market memberships to local businesses was developed. It will be implemented when Covid subsides and we feel businesses are more likely to contribute.

An updated brochure has been published, which is available at several locations within the library, including the Book Nook and other strategic places around town. It's being used at various events such as information fairs. It will be included in the mailing for the business membership campaign.

You can see the brochure at:

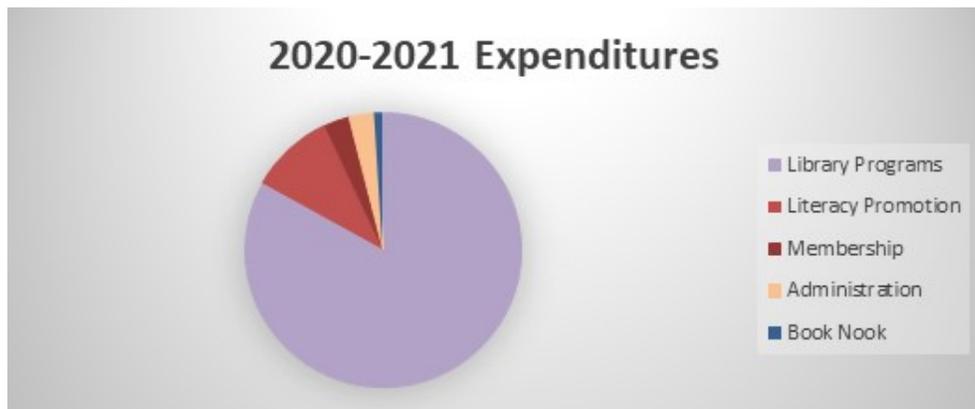
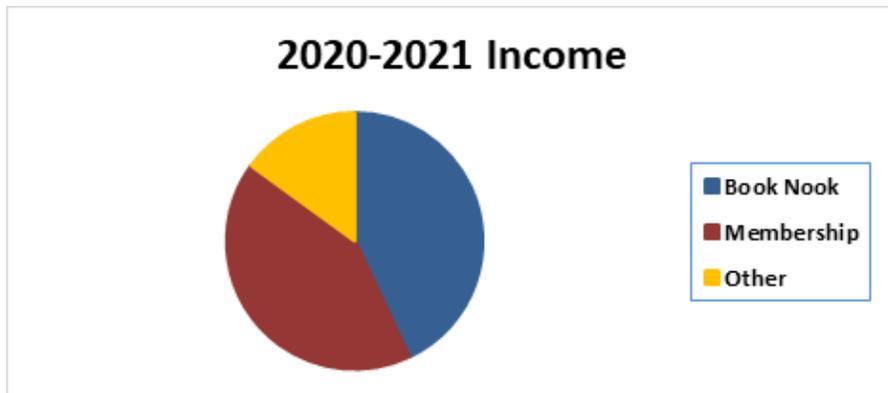
Treasurer's Report for 2020-2021

2020-2021 INCOME

Book Nook	\$8,161.07	43%
Memberships	\$8,014.32	42%
Other	\$2,805.01	15%
Total	\$18,980.40	

2020-2021 EXPENDITURES

Library Programs	\$16,771.83	83%
Literacy Promotion	\$2,074.22	10%
Membership	\$643.24	3%
Administration	\$641.50	3%
Book Nook	\$196.77	1%
Total	\$20,327.56	



Board of Directors 2020-2021

Officers:

President—Kay Thuesen

Vice-President—Steve Palmquist

Secretary—Anne Hoekstra

Treasurer—David Walker

Board Members:

- Maelou Baxter
- Mary Ellen Beckman
- Mary Bozik
- Rhonda Braley
- Carol Brown
- Sue Doody (Past President)
- Vicki Edelnant
- Margaret Empie
- Amy Frohardt-Schafer
- Anne Hoekstra
- Sara Lair
- Nicholas Nenow
- Steve Palmquist
- Cindy Snell (Trustees' Liaison)
- Kelly Stern (Library Director)
- Subhashree Sundharram
- Kay Thuesen
- David Walker