



Friends *of the* **SARATOGA SPRINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY**

ANNUAL REPORT **JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025**

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Friends of the Saratoga Springs Public Library is to bolster the public library's programs, personnel, and facilities by providing financial resources and volunteer assistance.

BOOK SHOP IMPACT SNAPSHOT

74

Volunteers

8,000+

Volunteer Hours

\$133K

Book Shop Sales

22,000

Books Sold

A Note from the Director

Ike Pulver, Library Director



On a recent library walk-around, I had a conversation with a preschooler and his grown-up, who were headed down the stairs to the Children's Room, that went something like this:

Child: "Are you a library worker?"

Ike: "I am!"

Child: "What's your job?"

Ike: "I have the coolest job in the world. I get to be the Director of the Library!"

Child: "What do you do?"

Ike: "Let me see... I try to make sure all the other library workers are happy, and that we have great books and movies and music and things for people to use, and that there are story times and other programs that people will like..."

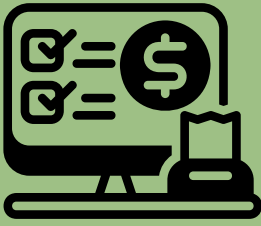
Grown-up: (to child) "Isn't he doing a good job?" (to me) You're doing a good job..."

Child: "I'm here for the movie! Are you going to be there?"

Alas, a movie wasn't on my agenda that morning, which was reserved for catching up on e-mails and examining spreadsheets. That child's curiosity and excitement and the kind words of acknowledgement and appreciation from his grown-up were all the motivation necessary to attack those tasks with gusto, though.

I am incredibly grateful to be surrounded with colleagues who approach their work with the same kind of enthusiasm, openness, and empathy I experienced in this brief exchange, and for the support from our community, including our Friends, that allows us to continue to do work that is impactful. Many of our recent initiatives have earned local, regional, and national acclaim, including our "Neurodiversity Club," for young people, our "Read to Recovery" collection of free books and resources on addiction and grief recovery, and our "Memory Care Creative Writing Groups" for older adults. Similarly, we continue to be a national leader on library sustainability issues.

As we prepare to mark several milestones, including the fifth annual Saratoga Book Festival, the 30-year anniversary of the opening of the present library facility, and the 75th anniversary of the Library's charter, we are excited to continue to look forward with our newly-adopted strategic plan. The new plan of service reaffirms our mission to deliver engaging resources to educate, entertain, and empower our community; our vision of a community that is resilient and collaborative; and the values that guide our work, including protecting intellectual freedom, demonstrating a love of learning, and cultivating meaningful relationships in all we do. Foremost among those relationships is our partnership with the Friends of the Saratoga Springs Public Library, whose support is indispensable. Thank you.



Implemented new POS system to streamline volunteer operations and improve sales tracking



Hosted the 4th Annual Saratoga Book Festival which saw roughly 2,000 attendees, and raised over \$45,000



Utilize a new donor database system for streamlined workflow



Hired a new Coffee Shop Manager and transitioned the shop to the Coffee Nook during the elevator renovations



Community Partnerships:

- Saratoga History Museum (Saratoga calendar fundraiser)
- Nourish Designs (custom t-shirt fundraiser)
- Franklin Community Center (food drive)
- Pitney Meadows Farm (Drum Circle event)

IMPACT NUMBERS

405

Memberships grew from 349 in 2024

3-Peat

3rd record-breaking year in a row for the book shop

\$25,500

Amount given to the library for programs and staff development

14

Board members, including 2 high school students

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

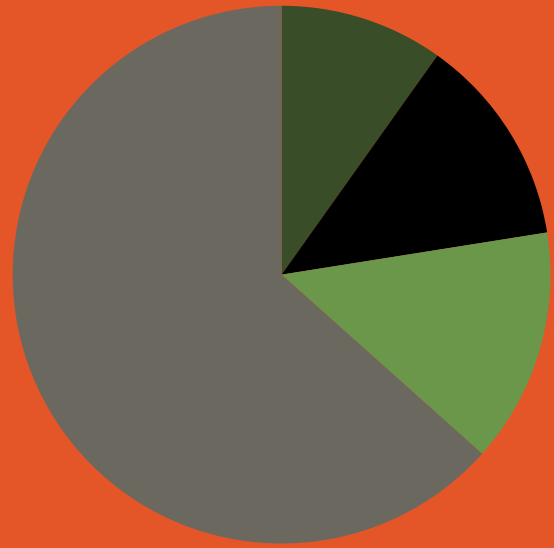
REVENUE = \$260,042

- Retail (Book & Coffee Shops) = \$153,743
- Donations & Special Events (SBF) = \$74,962
- Memberships = \$12,342
- Other = \$18,995



EXPENSES = \$259,633

- Library Support = \$25,548
- Retail (Book & Coffee Shops) = \$32,848
- Saratoga Book Festival = \$36,636
- Other = \$164,601



Thank You

to all of our members, donors & sponsors

LOOKING AHEAD

 **2025
SARATOGA BOOK FESTIVAL**



WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Become a Member • Make a Donation • Volunteer

 friends.sspl.org

Learn about the Saratoga Book Festival

 saratogabookfestival.org

VOLUNTEER AWARDS

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR - Michael LaBelle

Michael LaBelle has been volunteering for two years. He has been impactful in the trial run of the Coffee Shop as well as working his way into Book Shop Desk Shifts. He now has two closing shifts and is a fantastic super-sub who can be relied upon (even on short notice) to fill emergency shift needs. His willingness to help out on so many occasions and his great rapport with shop customers while at the desk has made him a very deserved candidate for Volunteer of the Year!

MARIE MADDEN AWARD - Christine Toole & Alexandra Morgan

The Marie Madden Volunteer Award is presented annually by the Friends of Saratoga Springs Public Library to recognize those who support reading, learning, and a literate society by offering their volunteer services to the public library. This award is given in memory of Marie Madden, a dedicated and tireless library volunteer whose good humor, high spirits, and hard work were an inspiration to library workers, library users, library trustees and all true FRIENDS of the Saratoga Springs Public Library and libraries everywhere.

This year's honorees are Christine Toole and Alexandra Morgan. A second-generation library volunteer, Chris Toole brightens the days of library visitors in her role as a greeter at the Putnam Street door, and of library workers with fresh flowers (and chocolates!) she provides at the Information Desk. Similarly, Alex Morgan is eager to help direct visitors in her role as greeter, and helps to bring order out of chaos while maintaining the community bulletin board in the Henry Street foyer.

Although they have separate regular volunteer shifts at the Library, Chris and Alex can often be found volunteering in tandem at special events such as career and local history fairs, and for other community organizations with which the library partners, particularly the Saratoga Farmers Market. Together or separately, there are no better demonstrators of the traits of "Good humor, high spirits, and hard work" that characterized Marie Madden's contributions to the library.

H. DUNHAM HUNT AWARD - Katie Capelli

The H. Dunham Hunt Award is presented annually by the Friends of Saratoga Springs Public Library to recognize outstanding service to the community through support of the public library. This award is given in memory of Dr. H. Dunham Hunt who throughout his life was a dedicated and tireless supporter of public library service, and who gave endlessly of his time and talent to create and nurture the Saratoga Springs Public Library from its inception in 1945 to his death in 1982.

This year's honoree, for her leadership on multiple initiatives that will have enduring impact on library operations is Katie Capelli.

First elected as a Library Trustee in 2018, and re-elected in 2023, Katie served two terms as Secretary of the Board, two terms as Vice President, and as President from 2022 to 2025. During her tenure, Katie successfully renegotiated interest rates on library investments, led negotiations with the City of Saratoga Springs to amend a long-standing agreement regarding regulations in the Library's parking lot, and took the lead in negotiating the terms and conditions of the sale of a small parcel of library real estate to a neighboring business. Through these efforts, Katie has helped to ensure the long-term fiscal sustainability of library operations, improve access to library resources, and improve library facilities.