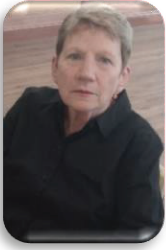


FRIENDS OF THE HUDSON LIBRARY



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS 2024

Woo-Hah!!!!

By Dr. Lynn L. Remly, President

That pretty much summarizes the Friends' year 2023, a remarkable stretch that saw hours of hard work and dedication topped off by chance and good luck to make the best year ever. As December drew to a close, the Friends were able to donate \$37,000 to the library, \$2000 over our 2022 total. We are really starting the new year on a high note.

Here's what happened. Once again, our 30 committed volunteers logged a staggering number of hours, sorting and shelving books, working the book store sales, listing and selling books online. Together, they gave 3,465 hours of their time to earn money for the library.

In fact, the Friends have been conducting in-store book sales for a half-century, increasing our numbers all the time. Our in-store sales last year netted almost \$30,000, as regular shoppers and visitors found that perfect read on the shelves.

Since 2018, a parallel success story came with our online sales, after one of our volunteers proposed selling books on Amazon. After 5 years of learning and listing, our Amazon site alone has brought in over \$28,000 total, including \$7000 just last year. Our two Amazon sales ladies have earned a five-star rating with Amazon.

Incidentally, books snapped up online could never have been sold in the store, because of price, age, or over-specialization. Our priciest sale last year was a collection of daily newspaper comics that rang up at \$300. Our strangest sale was probably a complete guide to streaking (!). Overall, Amazon has widened and deepened our range of buyers, all as a result of volunteers' initiative and plain hard work.

Likewise, a couple of volunteers suspected that some books not suitable for the sale room or for Amazon might still be saleable on other sites, and they came in after hours to list books that might only bring in a dollar or so on different websites but collectively added up to over a hundred dollars a month. This kind of go-getting is typical of those who work with the Friends: they seize an opportunity and run with it, all to the benefit of our bottom line.

And our efforts drew attention. Hudson Mayor Jeffrey Anzevino issued a proclamation last fall declaring October 21-27 "Friends of the Library Week," in recognition of the group's commitment to raising money for HHLS. Mayor Anzevino noted that the library is "a cornerstone of the community" and that the Friends' volunteer efforts promote civic engagement and the betterment of the community. We couldn't have said it better ourselves.

As we plowed along through the year, we felt that we had pretty much crawled out of the shadow of COVID. We were doing well by December, and our holiday book sale was successful enough to let us think we could match our 2022 donation.

Then luck stepped in to give us a huge boost: The Christkindlmarkt held downtown brought dozens of visitors into the library who were unfamiliar with the sale but soon got into the swing of it and really rang the cash registers. Cashing a check from a buyer from Peoria, IL, made the sale a memorable one for me.

But Lady Luck was only dusting off her magic wand. Just before Christmas, I was stunned when two young men came to the book sale and bought almost \$1000 worth of books in an hour. Seems the family had just moved into a new house, and the vacant shelves in their new library caused Mom to dispatch her two sons to remedy the lack. We were glad to oblige.

Actually, that was the third time in December that people came in to purchase quantities of books to fill empty shelves or decorate a room. A future initiative might be to create a Board position for interior decorating services. Who knows where that might lead? Just kidding.

Overall, we enjoyed the best year ever. We can't wait for 2024. **Woo-hah!!!**