

November
2023

Bookends

Newsletter of the Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library



Friends of the Library **LIKE-NEW HOLIDAY SALE**

*Annual sale of like-new books and
gifts along with a variety of gently-used holiday
items and decorations in the
Ames and Activity rooms.*



BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS



History, Boating, Biography, Fiction,
Memoirs, Childrens, Cookbooks,
and many more!

Monday, Nov. 27 - Saturday, Dec. 2
Library Hours Monday - Friday
Closes at 2:00pm on Saturday



Volunteers needed to staff the Book Sale.
Please sign up at the Front Desk. Thank you!





Words from our Co-Presidents



Hello there! I am Kathy Busse the new President with Co-President Patricia Menno-Coveney of the Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library. We look forward to learning and listening to all members of the Friends and the wider library community to understand how best to serve the Library. But first, we want to express our appreciation to retired Presidents Sally Salancy and before her, Peggy Brissette. Between the two of them, they have gallantly led the Friends for a combined total of 25 years! Remarkable! Thank you, Sally and Peggy.

In early September the popular *Craft Exchange* took place. The Friends arranged the space at the Library and the community provided the items to share. No money was exchanged; instead lots of yarn and sewing material and crafty items ended up going to good homes for DIY projects.

Recently, our kiddies had great fun at *All Things Pumpkin*. This event took place early in October and included a magic show with cookies and cider (generously provided by Clyde's Cider Mill) afterwards, all made possible with funds provided by the Friends. It was well attended with an appreciative audience of giggling children. In addition, the Friends held a Halloween Basket raffle that took place at the end of October. All children were invited to participate. The baskets included books and treats. The children are

forming lasting memories of their visits to our Library.

Mark your calendars for the *Like-New Book Sale* in time for holiday giving the week after Thanksgiving Day. Treasures galore! And mark your calendar for the BIG one - *The Library Fair* in June!

We have a busy year ahead. The Friends of the Library plays a vital role in building community while helping to support the Library's



annual programs including purchasing passes to local venues such as the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center which patrons can use for free!

So many wonderful volunteers have helped in these successful activities and we



welcome your participation. This is YOUR Library! Come and volunteer even for just a few hours or as a member of our Board. The next meeting is Monday,

November 13 at 1:00 in the Ames Room. Meet new Friends of the Library and ENJOY!!





Open Book

Our new, energetic Director of Development is an artist and arts administrator and previously had a career as a commercial photographer. Ellen Warfield, who joined us in June, graduated from RISD where coincidentally she had her first job as a librarian in their work-study program. Later, while working for Sotheby's Auction House in NYC, she became disenchanted with the world of outrageous monetary exchange and wanted to be involved in a career which saw money used more meaningfully.



While working full-time and caring for her young son, she attended graduate school at night. After completing her M.A. degree in Arts Administration, she decided it was time to leave the city for her son's sake. Fortunately for us, she was in touch with a close college friend who had moved back from California to be with her parents in Stonington during the Pandemic. She encouraged Ellen to move to Mystic where they could both raise their children together.

Cont. p.8

Making Up My Bed

I am folding the blanket of light
into squares
I awakened to find spread
across my bed.
What delicate material light is woven of,
smoother than silk, softer than air.
And yet the strength of it.
I tried tearing it.
Light doesn't shred,
though shadow makes it appear to.
Folding light takes practice.
It kept slipping from my grasp.
And, then, once folded,
how to keep it so.
It contains a property almost liquid.
I could wash my hands in the light.
The trick, I found,
was to place light on a shelf of shadow.
Ah, but lifting it, and carrying it to the shelf?
Light was like lifting egg yolk with my
fingers

by Philip Kuepper
Resident Poet & Librarian



The Freedom to Read—Yes, EVEN Books You Don't Like

by Ery Caswell,
Adult Services & Programming
Librarian

Banned Books Week passed recently, and what an important moment to recognize the American Library Association (ALA) Bill of Rights and the freedom to read. It's been a rough two years of book bans and challenges for school and public libraries.

The ALA found that half the book challenges it tracked between January and August of 2023 happened in public libraries, a 16 percent increase from 2022, targeting a total of 1,900 individual titles—the highest the ALA has ever recorded.

These challenges come alongside intimidation tactics in an effort to remove “inappropriate” books from shelves. Book challengers and supporters have harassed library staff, advocated to close or cut funding to libraries, and in some cases even called in bomb threats to libraries across the country.

Given this climate, advocacy for library staff and services has never been more crucial.

The Library Bill of Rights was first drafted in

1938 in response to the “suppression of free speech and censorship affecting the rights of minorities and individuals.” It unequivocally espouses librarians’ ethical commitments to free access of ideologically diverse materials and against their censorship.

Libraries respect parents’ rights to monitor which media their children consume. It’s why we require their signatures when kids sign up for library cards.

That said, what another family deems “appropriate” for their kids as acceptable media is no one else’s business.

What’s the simple way to handle a book you don’t agree with or find offensive?

Easy! Put it back on the shelf and walk away.





Words from our Director, Christine Bradley



Tis the season! No, not THAT season, it's budget season, which begins in November and seems to go on all winter long. I thought this issue of *Bookends* would be a good one in which to describe budget season at the Mystic & Noank Library, (which is like no other budget I have ever known in my 50 years in the library business)!

Our current (FY 2023-24) annual operating budget is funded from three sources—municipal funding, an annual draw from our endowment, and annual fundraising.

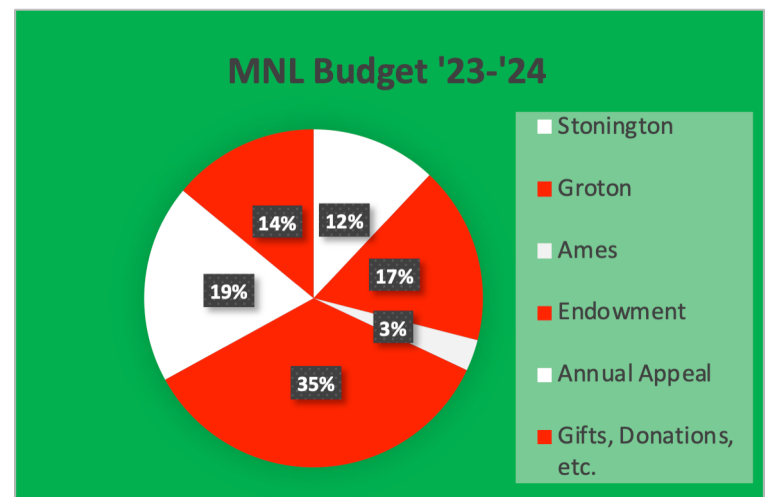
Municipal funding comes from two sources, the town of Groton and the town of Stonington. In both cases, MNL is considered an outside agency (in the same bucket with ambulance and fire companies, and some other non-profits). **In FY 2023-24, we received 12% of our operating budget from Stonington, and 17% from Groton.**

Our endowment includes a general endowment, which is unrestricted, and designated funds which can only be used for stated purposes. We use 5% of the endowment funds each year to support the operating budget. **In FY 2023-24, the release from investments provided 35% of our operating budget.** (Another 3% may be

released from the Ames trust which is limited to only projects for the maintenance and improvement of the original 1893 building.)

Annual fundraising includes the annual appeal, donations, revenue from special events, grants, and gifts. **Annual fundraising accounts for 33% of our annual operating budget in FY 2023-24.** 19% of that 33% has to come from the annual appeal.

When the call comes, or even before, please answer the appeal and be generous! Your Library depends on it.





Library Cats

Part 3

Serendipity

What a wonderful word, the perfect word to describe how Emily, a beautiful gray tabby with seawater green eyes, found her way into the Library.

On a dark, rainy night in October, 1989, Susan noticed a small kitten in the car lights while loading her car. Another woman also saw the kitten and stopped to help. They caught the bedraggled kitten and she spent the night at Susan's house; the other woman promised to get her to a rescue facility the next day. Susan's friend, Ann, stopped by in the morning and suggested calling Library Director Joanna Case to see if she might be interested in a new library cat. And the small, two month old kitten lived in the Library for the next 16 years!

Named Emily after four others (Dickinson, Post, Brontë, and Emily Allyn as the kitty liked to sleep on the big Oxford dictionary donated by Mrs. Allyn's family), Emily was shy at first but grew more confident. Soon she was busy



exploring most of the Library, sleeping in the card catalog drawers and any other interesting space she could find, though she did grow too large for the drawers. She enjoyed meeting new people of all ages but was not a fan of other cats, something that was discovered when a patron brought their cat in to meet Emily.

Emily's birthday was celebrated in October with children in Halloween costumes, cat cakes, and games. This event morphed into the All Things Pumpkin, an event still celebrated in October, now featuring a magician.

Emily became a Library icon. Her fame is well documented.

To be continued...

by
Peggy Brissette
Friend of the Library



Cont. from p.3

So she did! Although moving primarily for her son, now ten, she is relishing discovering all the delights of living - and dining - here. You might even spot her socializing after work at The Shipwright's Daughter during Happy Hour!

Ellen is bursting with innovative ideas for supporting and enjoying our beloved Library. Make sure you are on the Library's email list and check the website calendar regularly to stay on top of exciting new activities as they unfold (like podcasts and galas!). A huge and appreciative "Welcome" to Ellen!

by Dana Semeraro
Friend of the Library

Due to the high cost of print,
please consider receiving the
newsletter via email by
contacting
friends@mysticnoanklibrary.org
Thank you!



Mystic & Noank Library
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Mystic, CT 06355

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