

### Dwindling Book Inventory Posing Challenge

For reasons no one fully understands, the volume of books donated to the York County Library has dropped in recent months.

Friends President Susan Lyle said that it was normal for donations of used books to drop during the summer, but that the trend has continued through September and early October.

"We aren't sure why this is happening," Susan said, "but some customers have noticed that there are fewer novels for sale at Friends Books on Main."

The dwindling supply of donated books was a major topic of the 2023 Friends Volunteer Workshop, held on October 11. (*See article on the right.*)

Although many people think that the Friends sell books discarded from the Library, almost all the books sold at Friends Books on Main or at the five branch libraries have been donated to the Library by patrons.

The Library gets first choice on donated books, but most are sold by the Friends, with proceeds going to support YCL programs such as the summer and winter reading programs, Patchwork Tales Storytelling Festival and the YCL Genealogy and Family History Expo.

A few weeks ago, the Board of Directors decided to temporarily halt visits from a book consigner that for years has periodically picked up surplus books and sold them on commission. Board member Connie Newland said that the consignment firm has been asked to wait until January for their next visit. In the meantime, it is hoped, inventory may have built back up.

Among other strategies suggested during the workshop to cope with the supply shortage were:

- Using social media and "News From the Friends" newsletter to encourage book donations,
- Creation of a new bookmark promoting donations,
- Asking YCL to encourage donations with signs and bins at all branches,
- Providing information about book donations to retirement communities, estate-sales firms, civic clubs, etc.

New bookmark created by the Friends to help in promoting book donations.



Donated books at the Main Library. The number of books donated by patrons has dropped considerably in recent months.

### Volunteer Workshop Held at Rock Hill Library

About 20 volunteers attended the annual Volunteer Workshop October 11 in the Moore Room of the Rock Hill Main Library.

Topics ranged from boosting the supply of donated books (*see related article on the left*) to ways for boosting sales at branch libraries.

DeeAnna Brooks, board member and former president, organized and conducted the event. She began the event a few years ago to address problems that arise during the year and to update volunteers on policy or procedure changes.

With so many volunteers working either at Friends Books on Main or at the Main Library, misunderstandings sometimes arise. For example, the question arose as to the best name for the space where volunteers process books at the Main Library. While members typically refer to the room as the "Sorting Room," library staffers are more likely to call it the "Friends Room." After discussion, it was decided that the latter name should prevail.

Other topics covered during the Volunteer Workshop included:

- Ways to enhance book sales at YCL branches,
- Tips for handling damaged or soiled books,
- Pricing of fiction and nonfiction,
- Possible locations for another "coffee shop" sales site,
- Online sale of gift certificates.

Volunteer Workshop participants listen intently to tips on topics ranging from boosting the supply of donated books to ways for boosting book sales at branch libraries.



## YCL's Assistant Director Loves Libraries and Music

Martin House, York County Library's new Assistant Director, joined the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library system while still working on his Master of Library Science degree at UNC Greensboro. By 2008 he was manager of the Reference Department of the Sugar Creek Branch.

Of all the library-related jobs he has held, including a stint as media specialist in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District, being a reference librarian was his favorite. "I've always loved solving puzzles," Martin said, "and that's what reference librarians do."

Martin said he was laid off during the recession of 2010. Fortunately, he landed a job as assistant director of public services at Central Piedmont Community College, where he would spend the next 13 years until his retirement.

In March of this year, with 29 years in the North Carolina state system, Martin retired at age 53. He decided to revive his public library career by applying for his current position. Since joining YCL, he has been learning the nuts and bolts of library administration and getting out to the branch libraries to meet staff.

His background with the CMS Library isn't the only thing he has in common with his boss. Both he and YCL Director Julie Ward spent a large portion of their youth in Europe. Julie was a daughter of an American business executive; Martin's dad was in the U.S. Air Force. In fact, Martin was born in Giessen, Germany, and didn't live in this country permanently until he was about to enter college.

Martin graduated from Wingate University in 1994 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in music, concentrating in voice (he sings tenor). He says he wasn't interested in trying to make a living on the stage or in "church music." Instead, he followed the advice of Wingate's library director, who suggested he pursue an advanced degree in library science. Later he would earn a Ph.D. in Education from Northeastern University.

His love of music paid off in another significant way. He met his spouse, Erinn Frechette, on the set of "*The Magic Flute*." He sang in the chorus of Opera Carolina; she played piccolo "in the pit."

Today, Errin, who holds both a master's degree and a doctorate from the University of Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, is a full-time piccolo player with the Charlotte Symphony.

They were married in 2006 and are parents of Alex, 13, who plays drums.



YCL Assistant Director Martin House

## Friends On Track to Meet or Exceed 2023 Budget

By Chad Lynch

At the end of the 3rd Quarter of 2023, I'm happy to say, the Friends of York County Library continue to have a good year. As of September 30, we had achieved 77% of the 2023 revenue goal, with three months to go.

Friends **Books on Main** hit more than \$56,000 in sales, nearly \$10,000 higher than for the same period last year.

Another \$11,000 was raised through other outlets maintained by volunteers, including lobby sales at the five branch libraries; on-line sales through eBay and Amazon; and sales at two Rock Hill coffee shops, Amelie's and Knowledge Perk.

Expenses continue to creep upward, largely because of the increase in monthly rent for Friends Books on Main, 206 E. Main Street in Rock Hill.

To date in 2023, we have given \$74,612.50 to the York County Library, including \$14,000 that we recently paid to fund several YCL programs: Back to School, Summer Reading and Genealogy and Family History Expo.

Other highlights of Q3:

- After a hiatus of several months because of health issues, our consignment partner made its first payment of the year — a little over \$3,000. (We expect one more check this year. Consignment sales are being put on hold until January because of low inventory. See related article, page 1)
- The weekend of our semi-annual Paperback Bag Sale, August 3-5, brought in more than \$2,700, which included sales of 84 bags at \$10 a bag.
- We began accepting membership payments through PayPal.

*(Chad is a member of the Friends of YCL Board of Directors and currently serves as treasurer.)*

## Do you need to declutter your bookshelves? The Friends of the York County Library can help!

We sell your unwanted books to benefit your local libraries. We accept paperback and hardcover books for adults, teens and children, as well as CDs, DVDs, audiobooks on CD and puzzles at all York County Library locations. Materials are sold at **Friends Books on Main**, located at 206 East Main Street in Rock Hill and at all York County Libraries to raise funds for library programs.

**Donate Books Here!**

For the Main Library, please drop donated books in the Donation Box to the left of the front door.

For all other branches, please drop your donated books at the Circulation Desk.

For a list of the YCL's 5 branch libraries including addresses and hours, please see page 4.



## Members Bless Church with 'Book Box'

For several years, Bethany ARP Church near Clover has served the less fortunate with an outdoors Blessing Box, providing free food for the hungry. Another box, this one for feeding the mind, recently was added next to it. The "book box" was a gift of Friends Board member DeeAnna Brooks and her husband, Mike Kropp.

Blessing Boxes, also known as Little Free Pantries, originated in 2016 in Fayetteville, Arizona, when a woman set up a box outside her home to provide non-perishable food, toiletries and other items for the needy. She modeled her concept after Little Free Libraries, which trace their roots to 2008 when Todd Boll, a Minnesota man, erected the first to honor his late mother, a teacher.

DeeAnna said she had long wanted to build a book box but that their home "on a narrow, curvy, pot-holed filled county road" wasn't a suitable site.

"A few years ago, Bethany ARP Church installed a Blessings Box, and we started putting items in it every week or so," she said. "Since the church is across the street from Bethany Elementary School (my alma mater), Mike and I talked about putting a book box there."

Once they received permission from the church, the challenge became obtaining a box. They were going to build one but scrapped the idea after Mike broke his hand and was facing months of physical therapy.

The solution was found in an old newspaper vending box DeeAnna had been given before *The Herald* building closed on West Main Street in Rock Hill. Mike had been using the box for storing hand tools.

They found online examples of how to convert the newspaper vending box into a box for books but ultimately followed their own plan.

"We removed the inner springs and, using some extra bamboo flooring pieces we had, put in a base and small shelf," DeeAnna said. "Next came several coats of paint and vinyl stickers, including a large 'Bethany Book Box' sign on the side that can be seen from the elementary school."

DeeAnna says she adds books once a week, a mix of fiction and non-fiction hardbacks and paperbacks, as well as children's books, which go the fastest. Other book lovers contribute, too.



It all started with an old newspaper vending box . . .



which ended up as a book box!

The finished Bethany Book Box! On the right is the old newspaper vending box originally used for the sale of newspapers. Now converted to a "Book Box," it is joined by the Blessing Box, on the left, installed by the Bethany ARP Church.



## Paperback Bag Sale a Hit at Friends Books on Main

The semi-annual Paperback Bag Sale at Friends Books on Main, Aug. 3-5, netted more than \$2,700. More than 400 customers visited the store over the three days.

Rules state that for only \$10 a customer may buy all the mass-market paperback books they can fit in a standard grocery bag. Bags typically hold 35-40 paperbacks.

Bag sales alone accounted for \$840 of the total revenue that weekend. Eighty-four bags were purchased, as well as other books, puzzles, CDs and DVDs.

Regular customers are familiar with the paperback bag sale and look forward to the opportunity to load up on favorite authors.

Another reason for the success of this year's sale may have been that an unusual number of visitors were downtown. Many were visiting that weekend because of either the American Cornhole League World Championship at the Rock Hill Sports and Events Center, a few blocks away on White Street, or for a youth fast-pitch softball tournament. Volunteers at Books on Main say that downtown stores routinely benefit from foot traffic generated by activities at the city's several sports venues.

On some weekends, 10,000 or more people may be in town to attend events held at Cherry Park, Manchester Meadows soccer park, biking facilities at Riverwalk, Winthrop University Miracle Park or the Rock Hill Tennis Center.

The next "super" event in Rock Hill will be the UCI BMX World Championships, May 12-18, 2024.

## Genealogy and Family History Expo Funded by Friends

More than 200 genealogy and history buffs attended York County Library's second annual Genealogy and Family History Expo on Saturday, October 14, at the Courtyard Marriott at Kingsley in Fort Mill.

The Friends of YCL contributed \$10,000 for the day-long event, and several Friends volunteers assisted YCL staff, mainly by staffing the check-in table.

YCL reference librarian and genealogist John Skardon once again organized the event, and his touch was much in evidence, said Board member Terry Plumb, who introduced presenters at some break-out sessions.

"I've attended a lot of workshops and conventions," said Terry, "but I don't know any that have been better organized or run more smoothly. John brings in top experts in their fields and provides workshop attendees with a detailed syllabus of every session, so that you can get the gist of every presentation, including links to reference materials, whether you're able to attend a session or not."

Sunny Jane Morton, contributing editor at Family Tree Magazine and instructor at the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh, was the keynote speaker. She and seven other experts in genealogy gave presentations, ranging from basic research to discovering female ancestors to the effects of slavery laws on researching family history.

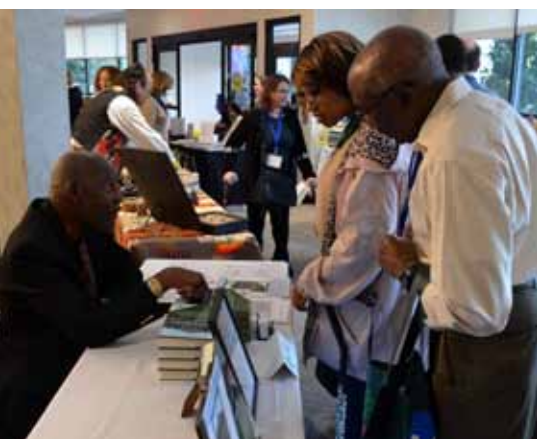
The free event included a buffet lunch, door prizes and opportunities to visit with more than 20 vendors, including publishers, historical societies and other services related to genealogy research.



Friends Volunteers were busy at the check-in table.



Many genealogy and history buffs were in the attentive audience at the Genealogy and Family History Expo.



The vendor tables, which included publishers, historical societies and other services related to genealogy research, were very popular

## News From the Friends Fall 2023

*News From the Friends* is a publication of the Friends of the York County Library, Rock Hill, SC

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## YCL INFORMATION

Unless otherwise stated, please drop donated books at Circulation Desk.

### YORK COUNTY MAIN LIBRARY

138 East Black St., Rock Hill (803-981-5858)

Monday–Thursday: 9 AM–7 PM; Friday–Saturday: 9 AM–6 PM

Drop donated books in Donation Box to the left of the front door

### CLOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

107 Knox Street (803-222-3474)

Monday–Thursday: 9 AM–7 PM;  
Friday: 9 AM–6 PM; Saturday: 9 AM–2 PM

### FORT MILL PUBLIC LIBRARY

1818 Second Baxter Crossing (803-547-4114)

Monday–Thursday: 9 AM–7 PM; Friday–Saturday: 9 AM–6 PM

### LAKE WYLIE PUBLIC LIBRARY

185 Blucher Circle (803-831-7774)

Monday–Thursday: 9 AM–7 PM; Friday–Saturday: 9 AM–6 PM

### YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

21 East Liberty Street (803-684-3751)

Monday–Thursday: 9 AM–7 PM;  
Friday: 9 AM–6 PM; Saturday: 9 AM–2 PM

York County Libraries In-Person and Curbside Pick-Up at all of the Branches (Closed Sundays)

Monday–Friday: 10 AM–6 PM; Saturday: 10 AM–2 PM

## FRIENDS OF THE YORK COUNTY LIBRARY ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Please print clearly. Your information will not be shared.)

Membership: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Choose a membership level: ☐ Friend (Individual): \$15 ☐ Family Friend: \$25 ☐ Good Friend: \$50  
☐ Supportive Friend: \$100 ☐ Best Friend: \$500 ☐ Student Friend: \$10

List the names to include in this membership. (Adults must live at the same address and are limited to 2 per \$25 membership and 4 per \$50 and up)

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check made payable to: Friends of the York County Library

**TO PAY ONLINE, GO TO: [yclibraryfriends.org/membership](http://yclibraryfriends.org/membership)**

I am interested in volunteering my time and talent. My areas of interest are:

☐ Friends Books on Main book store ☐ Library branch book sales  
☐ Sorting donated books and materials ☐ Other. Please contact me so we can talk.

Return completed application and payment to any York County Library Branch (addresses above)

Or Mail To: Friends of the York County Library, PO Box 10032, Rock Hill, SC 29731

For more information or to contact us, please visit [www.yclibrary.org](http://www.yclibrary.org) or call 803-272-8303.