

Christmas Arrives at Books on Main

In search of something to get you into the holiday mood? The front windows of Friends Books on Main, 206 East Main Street, Rock Hill, are proof indeed that Christmas has arrived.

Every year in advance of Rock Hill's renowned Christmasville festival (Dec. 5-8, 2024) Friends volunteers create displays in the store's front windows that represent the season. But the real Christmas begins inside!

Seasonal items for sale include children's books and puzzles with Christmas themes, seasonal CDs, Beatrix Potter collectibles, bookmarks and more.

This year there is special emphasis on locally made greeting cards, including one featuring the Books on Main storefront from an original painting by Friends Board member Jim Beamguard.

Friends Books on Main will be open for extended hours on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM, and on Sunday, Dec. 8, from 12:30 PM until 5:00 PM. On Thursday and Friday, Dec. 5-6, the store will be open its regular hours, 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM.



(Above) Holiday items now being sold at Books on Main, the Friends bookstore in Rock Hill. You can find something for everyone on your list in one easy stop!



(Left) Original painting by Friends Board member Jim Beamguard of the Books on Main storefront. Greeting cards of this are available at the store.

(Below) Front window at Books on Main decorated for the holidays. Notice the kitten under the tree!



Julia Peterkin Biographer to Address Annual Meeting

The biographer of Julia Peterkin, who was the only South Carolinian to win the Pulitzer Prize for Literature, will be keynote speaker for the annual meeting of the Friends of York County Library, Sunday, Jan. 26.

"We are particularly proud to feature Susan Millar Williams as the Friends kick off our 50th anniversary year," said Diane Ingersoll, president of the non-profit organization.

Williams, retired creative writing and American literature teacher at Trident Technical College, wrote *A Devil and a Good Woman, Too: The Lives of Julia Peterkin*. She also co-authored *Upheaval in Charleston: Earthquake and Murder on the Eve of Jim Crow*. Both books were published by the University of Georgia.

"Peterkin, was a remarkably talented, enigmatic Southern woman whose spellbinding fiction about rural African Americans drew on her own emotional traumas and family scandals," Williams stated. "A white plantation mistress who vowed to 'write what is, even if it is unpleasant,' Julia Peterkin produced five books that revolutionized American literature, including the Pulitzer-Prize winning novel *Scarlett Sister Mary*." Peterkin is credited as the first fiction writer, of either race, to portray the Black working class realistically instead of as caricatures. *Scarlett Sister Mary* sold more than one million copies after it was published in 1928 and became the basis for a Broadway play starring Ethel Barrymore in the title role.

Following Williams' presentation, the Friends will hold a short meeting, including election of new board members and announcement of the 2025 executive committee.

A highlight of the annual meeting will be presentation of two prestigious awards: the *Joanne McMaster Volunteer of the Year* and the *Faithful Friend Volunteer of the Year*.

The Friends of YCL, founded in 1975, is a 501(c) (3) organization whose purpose is to provide financial assistance and otherwise support the mission of York County Library. The Annual Meeting will be held in the Rock Hill Main Library, 138 E. Black, St., beginning at 2:00 PM. The meeting is open to the public, but advance registrations are recommended at: yorkcountyfriendsofthelibrary@gamil.com. Refreshments will follow the meeting.



Susan Millar Williams



2024 Looking Like Banner Year

Fiscally, 2024 promises to be a banner year for the Friends of YCL. “With two months remaining, income from our various revenue streams stood at 79% of our budgeted annual target of \$144, 533,” said President Diane Ingersoll. Revenue from Friends Books on Main, our retail store at 218 E. Main St., Rock Hill, had exceeded its target by about \$9,000 by the end of October!

Also doing exceptionally well were online sales. “Our revenue from sales on eBay and Amazon, collectively, was at 87% of budget,” Diane said.

Other bright spots include: Memberships (92% of budget), Coffee houses (\$1,158 over budget) and Donations (100% or \$3,000).

“Donations are impossible to predict,” Diane said. “This year we were flabbergasted when one man made a contribution of \$1,000 because he enjoyed so much the annual Genealogy and Family History Expo we sponsor.”

Friends Treasurer Chad Lynch reported that through October, expenses were in line with budget.

To date in 2024, The Friends have provided York County Library \$34,000 to help fund the following programs:

- Back to School
- Winter and Summer Reading programs
- Bucks for Books
- Patchwork Festival
- Genealogy/Local History Conference

Margaritaville Comes to Books on Main

Friends Books on Main briefly took on a Mexican flavor when it was chosen as one of several local sites for taping of a Chili’s commercial. It is slated to run on the Hallmark Channel, among other channels.

The commercial, which will air during the Christmas holidays, will promote National Margarita Day, Feb. 22, which is described as a time to “pay homage to our favorite celebratory cocktail. The margarita — triple sec, tequila, and lime juice — was created in 1938 in Mexico and is widely considered the official drink of having fun.”

A film crew met at the bookstore at 7:30 AM, Oct. 31. to shoot the front of the store as well as other venues in downtown Rock Hill.

According to Wikipedia, there are several conflicting myths as to when and by whom the tequila-based cocktail was created, but there is little doubt that its notoriety was given a major boost by the late Jimmy Buffett’s best-known song.

The front of Friends Books on Main for the October taping of a Chili’s commercial. Look for it during the upcoming holidays on the Hallmark Channel as well as other channels!

Nominations Sought for Board, Volunteer of Year Awards

Nominations are open for vacancies on the Friends of the Library Board as well as two Volunteer of the Year Awards, Friends President Diane Ingersoll has announced.

Four slots on the 12-member Board of Directors will be filled at the Annual Meeting Jan. 6, Diane said. Members are elected to a three-year term and may serve two consecutive terms (6 years) before having to rotate off for at least one year.

Volunteer of the Year awards are:

The Joanne McMaster Volunteer of Year award is given to an individual who has shown outstanding dedication, which may include. exceptional service to a specific library department or branch; significant time and effort to friend-raising or fund-raising; or superior leadership.

The Faithful Friend Award, established in 2022, recognizes volunteers who have shown similar dedication with the additional requirement of longevity.

Nomination statements for both awards may be found at the following link: press.yclibraryfriends.org/volunteer/.

Completed nominations for either of the Volunteer of the Year awards as well as nominations for Board membership should be mailed to: Friends of the York County Library, PO Box 10032; Rock Hill, SC 29730; or emailed to yorkcountyyfriendsofthelibrary@gmail.com. Deadline for submission is Dec. 6, 2024.

Famed Journalist Credited Rock Hill Library

In his obituary Nov. 7, *The New York Times* described former Washington Post columnist and two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Jim Hoagland as a “Distinguished Journalist on World Affairs.” To



Jim Hoagland

many in his hometown of Rock Hill, however, he is remembered as Jimmy Hoagland, the gangly boy who lived with his grandparents on a farm along the Catawba River, a Rock Hill High graduate and USC alumnus, who never forgot his roots.

The Times article stated that Hoagland had been a “precocious student ... who found solace in the Rock Hill public library.” “It was an essential first passport to a world of ideas and outside experiences for a boy from the country,” Hoagland said in a talk at Winthrop University in 1984.

“Though Mr. Hoagland never moved back to the South, he retained a guarded fondness for it and often returned to visit, occasions that sometimes resulted in profiles by local newspapers,” *The Times* reported. “One question he was constantly asked was how he connected his down-home past to his globe-trotting present. The key, he said, was the sense of curiosity he had found as a child and that had never left him.”



Friends-Funded Events Succeed Smashingly!

Two of the York County Library's biggest events funded by the Friends of YCL were rated as smashing successes.

On Sept. 21, *Patchwork Tales*, the popular storytelling festival, returned for its 23rd year, this time at a new location, the White Home, the museum and wedding venue that is headquarters for Historic Rock Hill.

More than 450 children and adults attended Patchwork Tales this year, according to Ginger Sawyer, Manager of Children's Services. Indoor events included crafts, balloon-twisting, and face painting for the young attendees while the older crowd was treated to quilting demonstrations, presentations on the history of Rock Hill and an art display of works by area youth. Earlier in the week, storytellers and musicians entertained 1,500 elementary and middle school students in local schools.

"Award-winning storytellers and musicians Josh Goforth and Michael Reno Harrell teamed up to blend their similar backgrounds and Southern Appalachian roots for an unforgettable grand finale while audiences enjoyed gourmet hotdogs and burgers from Surefire Mobile," Ginger added.

The Friends volunteers sold t-shirts, recruited new members and welcomed attendees as they arrived. "We are so thankful for the support of our Friends," Ginger said. "Not only are they helping us celebrate the art of storytelling, they are also providing our community with an opportunity to come together and share an inspirational and memorable experience."

The Patchwork Tales was followed on Nov. 12 by the third annual *Genealogy and Family History Expo* at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel at Kingsley in Fort Mill. The Expo featured 13 presentations by professional genealogists and historians, vendors, door prizes and a complimentary lunch.

Lisa Louise Cooke, host of the Genealogy Gems podcast, was keynote speaker for the Genealogy and Family History Expo, which was attended by approximately 225 people, according to John Skardon, Genealogy Reference Librarian and founder of the event.

Connie Newland, longtime volunteer of the Friends, said that one participant was so impressed with and appreciative of the conference that he made a \$1,000 donation to the Friends! "I think he may have been the same gentleman who said to me that he just couldn't believe that an event of this scope and quality could possibly be offered for free," Connie said.

Donna Andrews, YCL Reference Services Manager, said, "It was an amazing event and John gets major kudos for putting it all together, but thank you all for funding the program. Without the funding, John couldn't work his magic."

(Joy Price, Ginger Sawyer and Connie Newland contributed to this article.)



Award-winning story tellers and musicians Josh Goforth and Michael Reno were very popular at Patchwork Tales.



Diane Ingersoll and Connie Newland working at the Friends table at Patchwork Tales.



Participants at the Genealogy and Family History Expo.

Library Support Group Formed



An independent group, *Support York County Libraries*, recently was formed to advocate for the York County Library and to inform citizens about ongoing developments with the YCL Board of Trustees.

At last report, 438 people subscribed to the *Support York County Libraries* members-only Facebook group. According to that page, Support YCL's purpose is "to support the York County Library. We aim to provide a more thorough understanding of how YCL libraries operate and the challenges they face serving our community. The goal is to maintain and grow the library services at a rate that matches York County's population growth."

Although some of those subscribers also are members of the Friends of YCL, the two groups are separate. Friends Board member Malissa Church, a Rock Hill lawyer, said that the Friends' status as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization precludes it from making involvement in political matters its primary mission. Our tax-exempt status could be jeopardized if we did so. "The Friends of the York County Library's mission is to support the county library system, and we remain dedicated to this purpose," Malissa said.

The governing body of the York County Library system has been in the news of late following resignations by two board members amid disagreement over how the library should handle books singled out by critics as being inappropriate for children.

Riverwalk Little Free Library to Rise Again

A heroic attempt to rescue books in a Little Free Library at Riverwalk from rising floodwaters generated by Hurricane Helene ended poorly in October. Never fear, this story will conclude on a high note!

Unknown Good Samaritans managed to save books before the box was submerged in flood waters, carrying the books to the top of the nearby amphitheater. Unfortunately, the books were soon soaked by the rain and had to be trashed.

The river rose to 36–65 feet, flooding lower portions of Riverwalk. The nearby Pump House restaurant was flooded with 9 feet of water. The free-book box, a popular feature along the river trail for years, was washed away, leaving only a hole in the ground.

For several years, Friends’ volunteers have restocked Little Free Library boxes at local public parks, using unsaleable books from the Friends stocks or books that have been declared surplus. Many people don’t realize it, but libraries continually have to cull books in order to make room for new books. Unfortunately, there is virtually no market for used library books.

“There are several ‘orphan’ Little Free Libraries in York County,” said Terry Plumb, who heads the resupply effort for the Friends. “By ‘orphan,’ I mean boxes abandoned by the original sponsors. We service boxes in public parks, including Cherry Park and Manchester Meadows. In doing so, we keep a lot of used books out of the landfill — and serve readers of all ages to boot.”

Although the Little Free Library motto is “Take One, Leave One,” often there are more takers than leavers, Terry said. Also, if regular checks are not made on the boxes, they become cluttered with damaged or soiled books, sales brochures, old magazines and even leaves. Boxes in public parks particularly need attention. “Kids scatter the contents or toss in leaves and other trash,” Terry said, “so if someone is not cleaning and straightening regularly, the boxes become a mess and people stop using them.”

The Little Free Library movement was founded in Hudson, Wisc., in 2009, by Todd Bol, who wanted to pay tribute to the memory of his mother, a former school teacher, by erecting a box filled with free books. Public reaction was so positive that the following year Bol and a friend launched the Little Free Library movement. To date, there are more than 150,000 registered Little Free Libraries, including in all 50 states and more than 120 countries.

The Good News? A donor has come forward to pay for a new Little Free Library at Riverwalk. Stay Tuned!



Rescued books at the nearby amphitheater



The Little Free Library box at Riverwalk submerged in the rising flood waters.

YCL INFORMATION Hours and Book Donations

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 names to include in membership. (Adults must live at same address and are limited to 2/\$25 membership and 4/\$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

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 on the right)

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.yclibraryfriends.org or call 803-272-8303.

News From the Friends Fall 2024

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

Editor: Terry Plumb
Lay Out and Design: Cindy Schafer
Proofing: Judy Gritzmacher
Photographer / Writer / Proofing: Jim Beamguard
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