

Window Displays Big Draw for Books on Main

Ever wonder where all those eye-stopping window displays at Friends Books on Main come from? A little inspiration from Pinterest, years of home-school crafts and a lot of help from the Leads, shift managers at the Friends Books on Main store in downtown Rock Hill.

Lora Matthews, the acknowledged concept person and chief designer, says she has been helping create window displays since Friends Books On Main opened in 2015. Windows are changed-out seasonally and for special occasions such as Christmas, Valentine's Day and Back to School.

Lora peruses Pinterest, a website that allows sharing of images on the Internet and is popular with artists and craftspeople. Libraries and bookstores are also rich sources of ideas. She taught both of her children (now adults) at home, so she has plenty of crafts experience.

She keeps material costs down by buying materials at Dollar Store, borrowing items from fellow volunteers and even raiding her own closets. Some items, such as a donated school desk, are repeatedly recycled. More often than not books play a big part in her design scheme. Duh! It's what we do, she says.

Connie Newland, another longtime volunteer, says customers frequently comment on the displays. One woman told her that Friends Books on Main was her favorite store window in all downtown.

The display team's efforts consistently rank high in Rock Hill's Christmasville window display competition. In 2018 they won first place and took third last year.



Lora creating a wonderful window display!



Halloween display at Friends Books on Main!

Libraries Adjust to Pandemic

... JASON L. HYATT, YCL DIRECTOR

WELCOME BACK TO YCL!

The global pandemic has impacted our lives in ways we never could have expected, including the way your library operates. Over the past eight months, York County Library has implemented numerous changes to our services and offerings for our patrons. A few of those changes are described below. While the library experience may look and feel a little different right now, we remain committed to being Your Community Link. Our patrons told us how much they missed being able to visit the library, and we were excited to open our doors again. All York County Library locations reopened to patrons for in-person browsing, checkout, and limited computer use on October 15.

Curbside or inside, it's your choice

Curbside pickup began several months ago and has quickly become a valued service among YCL patrons. In addition to offering an option for patrons who may prefer not to enter a public facility right now, curbside service also benefits those community members who may have mobility issues but still wish to borrow books and materials. We are pleased to continue offering curbside pickup even as our locations have reopened.



Curbside pickup is popular with YCL patrons.

Social distancing is the new norm

The library is following social distancing guidelines in several ways. We have limited occupancy based on the size of each location. Seating areas and collaborative work spaces are currently unavailable, as are interactive areas and hands-on play items for children. Patrons are encouraged to keep their browsing visits to 15 minutes to help minimize any potential wait to enter the library. At our service desks, you'll find clear acrylic sneeze guards that provide a protective barrier between patrons and staff during transactions.

Programs, Programs, Programs

Library programs have traditionally been designed to bring people into our facilities and encourage them to explore our materials and resources. The pandemic pointed us in a new direction for our programs as we began offering them online. A full range of library programs, from story times to crafts to yoga, is available through the YCL YouTube channel. Staff across

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A Board Members Surprise!

Who are those masked women?

On her last day as manager of the Clover Branch of the York County Library on October 2, Terry “T” Cobb was surprised by masked visitors! On behalf of the Friends of YCL, Board members Debora Hutchins, DeeAnna Brooks and Terry Plumb — all wearing face masks — showed up before the library opened to present T with a dozen roses and a card thanking her for her long support of the Friends. T was named Clover branch manager in 2006 after serving as the assistant librarian in charge of children’s services since 1999.

In her successful nomination of Terry Cobb as the Librarian of the Year award from the Friends of SC Library, Debora wrote that T inspired her to join the Friends many years before. “One of her suggestions to improve book sales was to set up a shelf for books for sale that patrons would see when coming or leaving the library,” Debora wrote. “She suggested balloons as a way to draw attention to the books, and they really worked.”

Debora nailed it when she wrote: “Terry Cobb is a very special person and a tremendous asset to the library.”



Debora Hutchins, Terry ‘T’ Cobb and DeeAnna Brooks, masked of course!

Like YCL, the Friends Adapt to Effects of Pandemic

The last time I organized my thoughts for this column, the Friends of YCL were pretty much shut down. All the branches and Friends Books on Main, had been closed because of the pandemic lockdown, which meant sales of donated books came to a virtual halt.

We were selling a few books online, thanks to volunteers Jack Hutchins and Diane Ingersoll, but even coffee shop sales, which comprise less than 1% of sales during normal times, were hobbled by limited customer accessibility.

I am delighted to report that the picture is brighter now. All branches reopened October 15 with limited hours, and Friends Books on Main has been back in operation for weeks, despite temporarily reclosing in response to a spike in positive COVID-19 tests. Also, now that the libraries are open again, they are accepting donation of books, which is the Friends’ lifeblood.

Through October, unfortunately, our receipts were about half of year-to-date revenues in 2019 or approximately 44% of budgeted revenue for 2020, with two months to go.

Thankfully, we will be able to meet our commitment to York County Library, which this year is \$126,500, including \$50,000 for a Sprinter van to supplement the Bookmobile. (Delivery of the van has been pushed back to April 2021, which isn’t expected to be a problem since many of the nursing homes and retirement centers that the van will serve are currently locked-down.)

Looking forward to next year, our contributions to York County Library will be considerably lower, although if sales pick up like we hope, a midstream correction is entirely possible.

As YCL Director Jason Hyatt states in an accompanying article (page 1), the YCL staff has shown grit and imagination in adapting to the “new normal.” From curbside pickup to original programming on the YCL’s YouTube channel, our library — like libraries everywhere — will never be the same in a post-pandemic world.

Rest assured, as the York County Library continues to find new ways to serve its constituents, the Friends of YCL will be there to support their efforts.

Report to YCL Trustees

Each quarter, the president of the Friends of York County Library issues a report to the York County Library Board of Trustees. The following article covers highlights from the second and third quarters of 2020.

Because all branches have been closed for months, revenue from lobby sales was significantly reduced. Also, Friends Books on Main was closed for much of this period, and coffee shop sales were reduced due to limited customer access.

Online sales (Amazon and eBay) are a bright spot. Collectively, they are running about 25% ahead of last year, although they constitute a small portion of budgeted revenue.

Through September 30, receipts were approximately half of year-to-date revenues in 2019 or approximately 39% of budgeted revenue for 2020, with one quarter to go.

Hopefully, once the branches reopen and if the Friends Books on Main remains open for the duration, we can reduce this funding gap. Because our biggest expense is rent on 206 East Main Street, our flexibility is limited in cutting costs.

Improvements to the Main Library lobby, including new signage, bench, carts and rehabbed book drop, were completed during Q2. The Friends paid \$1,031 for materials and services.

Other major contributions to YCL include:

- \$50,000 for new Sprinter van
 - \$45,000 for Summer Reading Program
 - \$10,000 for supplemental programming
 - \$10,000 for Patchwork Tales Festival
 - \$4,000 for department and branch funding
- An annual training session for volunteers was postponed because of the pandemic.

As of July 1, 2020, membership stood at 248.



Terry Plumb
President, Friends of YCL

News From the Friends Fall 2020

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FRIENDS 2020 BOARD OFFICERS

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This billboard, near the Gold Hill Road exit of I-77 northbound, promoted the 2020 Patchwork Tales storytelling festival. The Friends, whose logo was prominently displayed, contributed \$10,000 to the annual event, which took place from March 9-14, 2020.

Friends Group Ties Book Sales to Coffee . . . JIM BEAMGUARD

A satisfying book and a superior cup of coffee are natural companions, so it is no surprise that the volunteers of the Friends of the Library are finding success selling used books in area coffee shops.

Gently used books donated to the library are now offered for sale at Amelie's French Bakery in downtown Rock Hill, the Virgin Bean Coffee Bar & Creamery in downtown Clover, and the York Coffee Roastery in downtown York. All revenue benefits the York County Public Library.

It is a mutually beneficial partnership. The book sales give the shops a way to contribute to the community while enhancing the cozy, welcoming atmosphere they work hard to maintain. An interesting shelf of books is one more reason for customers to drop by. Along with something good to eat with a latte, tea or espresso, customers can find food for thought, at great prices.

In Amelie's, all books are a flat \$5. Items in Virgin Bean are priced individually.

The Friends welcome a new outlet for books, in addition to their lobby sales, Friends Books on Main retail store, and online sales. All of the revenue collected by the coffee shops goes to the Friends, and of course on to the public library.

The project started several years ago when Amelie's invited Debora Hutchins, a longtime member of the Friends and currently on the Board, to begin stocking a shelf with books she thought coffee customers might like. Debora carefully watched the inventory and gave buyers more of what they wanted.

Items she selected for the Amelie's shelf this year include *Life on the Mississippi* by Mark Twain, a pizza cookbook, a French phrase book, and a how-to photography book.

DeeAnna Brooks, a past president of the Friends, is in charge of the shelf in Virgin Bean. She recently put out a basket of paperback classics that were popular, but says the customers in Clover generally prefer nonfiction. The shop is selling eight to 10 books a month.

Because of the virus, Amelie's at this writing is offering take-out service only. Friends President Terry Plumb says he hopes that when the pandemic ends, the book project can be expanded into other local coffee shops. Now books can be found in Amelie's, 157 East Main Street, Rock Hill; the Virgin Bean, 204 South Main Street, Clover; and York Coffee Roastery, 132 Blackburn Street, York.

Raising extra money (\$1,000 in the 2020 budget) for the library is not the only goal, Terry said. Another objective is to encourage reading. At the shops helping the Friends, you can count on the quality of the coffee; on the Friends bookshelf, you never know what delight you might find.



Debora Hutchins manages the bookshelf at Amelie's.

Director's Message (cont. from page 1) the system continually plan and present new programs for the virtual audience. While we are unable to have in-person programs, the virtual option has allowed us to continue providing the community with fun and interesting options for engaging with the library. Since last year we have seen a 7,000% increase in our YouTube subscriber levels!

Give us a call

In October, YCL launched its new Dial-A-Story service. With a simple call to 803-620-8585 you have the option of hearing stories for children, teens, and adults as well as poetry, jokes, trivia, history tidbits and more. Content is refreshed each month and includes newly recorded segments especially for YCL patrons.

Find something new to read

Throughout the extended closure we have worked to expand our collection, both physically and virtually. Library selectors continued to order new materials and our technical services staff processed those items to make them available as quickly as possible. Now is a great time to browse the new books section at your local branch, as you will find newly acquired titles across all subject areas and age ranges. If you prefer electronic materials, our Virtual Library is also filled with new content including ebooks, audiobooks, music, comics, movies, and TV shows.

Looking forward

It is impossible to predict what the library experience will be in the months ahead. The library's leadership team is carefully monitoring the pandemic situation as well as new trends in libraries across the region. We are making decisions to keep our staff members safe and our services accessible. The reopening of our branches has gone smoothly and we hope that we will not face another shutdown in the future. Whether we are open online, in-person, or both, our goal will always be to provide access to materials and resources for education, entertainment, and enrichment. We look forward to serving you — safely! —and appreciate your support.

Donated Books Benefit Nonprofits

Although selling used donated books is a major focus for the Friends of YCL, our primary goal is supporting public libraries in their mission of encouraging reading, especially among children. One way of doing that is by providing surplus books to nonprofit groups.

In June, Connie Newland, longtime board member and 2012 Volunteer of the Year, received a letter from Judy Jordan, secretary of the Catawba Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), thanking the Friends for donating 3 boxes of books for another DAR chapter's "Project Patriot."

This past January, Dawn Erbe, a volunteer at King's Mountain State Park, approached us to see if we could help with setting up a Little Free Library (LFL). She was delighted when DeeAnna Brooks, former president, hauled several boxes of books to the state park.

Connie Newland also came to the rescue when the Atrium medical facility in Steele Creek ran short of children's books.

"My daughter had to take her son to the emergency room," she said. "While in the waiting room, she saw that the bookrack for kids' material had only a few books available. She sent me a sad photo and asked if we could help. We provided several bags full of children's books — enough to fill the rack and have some in reserve."

In May, Friends President Terry Plumb was surprised by the local branch of AAUW when they designated him as its "Named Gift honoree" for 2020.

According to AAUW Chapter President Trish Johnson, local branches raise money for grants, scholarships and advocacy fund. For each \$500 raised, the chapter may choose to honor a person or organization that makes a "significant contribution to promoting education and equity."

Terry was honored for encouraging reading by erecting the first LFL box in York County in front of his home in Rock Hill. He also helps fill LFL boxes in city parks and other public venues with books provided by the Friends.

The Little Free Library movement, which began in 2009 in Wisconsin, promotes reading and community building by providing free books. Its motto is "Take One; Leave One." Earlier this year, the number of LFL boxes worldwide surpassed 100,000, according to the organization's website.



The LFL box of Terry Plumb, President of the Friends of the YCL. A gift from his youngest daughter, it has been up since 2014 and is considered to be the first erected in York County. Terry said that it stays pretty busy. On average, he fills it up a couple times a week. However, often it is so jammed with donated books that he has to pull some out and store until there is space.



We would like to thank Detective KEVIN CASEY of the York County Sheriff's Office, who brought by a new book for Carlton Bear at the Lake Wylie Public Library. Carlton's book was stolen recently, but Detective Casey carved him a new one. What a wonderful thing to do!

♥ BECOME A FRIEND! ♥

The Friends of the York County Library is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) volunteer organization formed in 1975 to provide advocacy and financial support for the York County Library.

Annual membership starts at just \$10! As a Friend, you will receive:

- ♥ Advance notice of book sales and special events
- ♥ A 15% discount on purchases at Friends Books on Main
- ♥ Invitation to the annual Volunteer Recognition Event

Through funds raised via book sales, memberships, and other activities, the Friends support a variety of library functions:

- 👉 Summer Learning Challenge, promoting literacy for all ages
- 👉 Bucks for Books campaign, adding new books to library shelves
- 👉 Non-budgeted library special projects

Friends of the York County Library Annual Membership Application

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

Date: _____ Membership: New Renewal

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____ CVC: _____

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 _____

CHOOSE ONE OF THE 2 PAYMENT OPTIONS

- ① Enclosed is my check made payable to: Friends of the York County Library
- ② Charge my credit card: Visa MasterCard Discover

Name as it appears on card (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

The Friends of the York County Library is a 501-C3 organization. Your membership is tax-deductible as allowed by law.

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 (Clover, Fort Mill, Lake Wylie, Rock Hill, or York)

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 yclibrary.org or call 803-272-8303.