



Friends of the
Brandywine
Hundred Library

News

We support, encourage and promote quality library services

September/October 2009

What are we taking for granted?

Dear Friends,

How about the beautiful gardens, in the front and back of our library? How about the books and other materials inside? Few of us recall what was at the back when the library opened — basically plain concrete and grass. Then the Green Acres Garden Club (now known as the Brandywine Garden Club) approached the Friends to see if we would sponsor their upgrading of the rear garden — adjoining the children’s amphitheater. We asked for a plan. It looked good and the price was right — about \$250 for materials. Their interest and talents created a whole new vision, including several special birdhouses, handmade fable characters, and bushes and flowers, making that area part of the library. If you haven’t been out back, take a look. The gardeners continue, asking for maybe \$100 annually for fresh plantings. They also created the two large pots of plants on the terrace.

Some time later the Friends asked the county for permission to improve the front garden. We asked Henry Pautler, a professional landscaper, to give us

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FAQ: Is the fall New Castle County Activities Guide “sold out”? I don’t see it in the usual locations at the library.

The summer edition was the last available in hard copy. To save money, the county now provides the guide online only. You can access it via the library web site in PDF format or by going to www.nccdecs.org and subscribing to the information via a newsletter. (Alert to new residents: this news-chocked guide contains information about programs at all libraries in the county and activities at many other organizations, too. It’s a must read!)

Friends ‘Love Library,’ approve \$10,000 gift

The Friends board of directors voted at their September meeting to make a \$10,000 donation to the county’s “Love Your Library” fund-raising campaign.

By making the contribution at this time, the Friends are helping the county to pool all gifts received during the campaign to secure better prices through bulk orders.

The \$10,000 donation will enable the county to purchase more than 600 items of library materials for the library’s collection. In approving the donation, the Friends board stipulated that the funds be used to supplement county funds already allocated for additions to the Brandywine Hundred Library’s collection.

“Love Your Library” is a program designed to raise support for libraries through charitable contributions from businesses and individuals. Through its donation, the Friends are showing the business community that there is strong community support for county libraries. Tax-deductible contributions for the program are being made to New Castle County Pride Inc., a nonprofit organization.

On Oct. 17, the county will conclude the “Love Your Library” program with a day of special activities at all county libraries.

22 teens saluted for volunteer service

The thank-you party planned for the library’s 22 teen summer volunteers began not with exuberant chattering but rather with near-deafening silence.

This was not surprising. After all, what teens are likely to volunteer at a library? Bookworms, of course.

Upon entering the party room, the teens zoomed to tables laden with new “youth” books collected for free from book shows by hostess Jeanne Benzal, BHL’s youth librarian. Each teen could select five to keep.

What is the sound of eager, young, inquiring minds quickly assessing books for their own pleasure? You guessed it: silence. Not even the page-rustling was audible.

This summer, like last summer, the BHL staff enjoyed a bumper crop of teen volunteers. This year, 22 teens kept their commitment of helping for two hours or more per week, excluding excused time off for vacations and the like.

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Dear Friends (continued)

his ideas and a proposal. We authorized spending \$3,000 and he made it happen. Henry has continued to replant each year, with occasional volunteer help. Once the county dropped a load of mulch in front and Friends came in on a Saturday to wheelbarrow it into position where Henry saw that a good job was done.

But there is a little secret that makes me bring all of this forward. You see, there's apparently no herbicide that kills all the weeds that grow in our gardens. So, the little secret is that over the years my wife, Roberta, and I have been pulling weeds early on Saturday and Sunday mornings. But those weeds are relentless. Recently, we played hooky for two weeks and they grew so quickly that Lois Underhill, the garden person at St. Paul's Methodist Church next door, couldn't stand it any longer and searched out who was responsible for weeding the front garden. We chatted a bit, and now she has agreed to help, but not on our early weekend hours.

What does this have to do with what we're taking for granted? Weeds are plants growing where you don't want them. Books can be weeds inside the library if they are not where we need them to be. We need your help to keep order inside the library. A book out of place is of no use to anyone. I'm asking volunteers to step forward and help us keep the books where they belong in the library. You can help the staff of our busy and popular library be even more efficient as they serve us all.

So choose your maintenance challenge — books or plants. Call me at 475-3571. I will personally train you. Neither is glamorous or complicated — just grunt work, but we need both jobs done. There is no pay. Your schedule is what you make it — come when you can. Bring your own tools for outside.

Jim Conrad, President, FBHL Board of Directors

The Friends board needs you

The Friends Board of Directors is seeking candidates to serve on the board. Elections will be held at the annual meeting in December.

While generalists are welcome, we also seek people skilled in any of the following: computer, Web operation, fund-raising, membership drives. Candidates need not have English degrees or library background, but must want to help our library via our non-profit, volunteer organization. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. except during the summer. For more information, contact Jim Conrad at 475-3571.

22 teens saluted (continued)

In total, the teens volunteered 493 hours, performing a variety of clerical duties between June 1 and Aug. 31. During this time of the county's ongoing hiring freeze, shrinking paid staff, and the professional staff taking vacations, the teens' help was especially valuable.

There's another aspect of the teens' success that demands applause. No teenager arrives versed in library policies and procedures. In fact, many of them have never held any job, volunteer or professional. But they all quickly learned what to do, and how to do it properly.

Although Benzel oversees this program, many other professional staffers contributed to helping the teens achieve high standards "on the job."

The Friends provided a thank-you for each teen, a \$15 gift card to a book store. A private donation covered the costs of the pizza, soda and cake for the party.

The teens honored at the party were: Isha Berry, Monideepa Chatterjee, Sarah Diffley, Zack Li, Lisa Lim, Stephanie Luck, Brian Madonna, Praneeja Matta, Vamsi Matta, Alice Miao, Chris Micale, Bobby Mutyala, Deng Ni, Yvonne Ni, Patrick Reilly, Prashanth Sai Sankar, Crystal Specht, Joyce Sun, Bronwyn Thomas, Aisha Viswanathan, Sarah Wang and Allison Wing.

Book club picks new selections

The Brandywine Hundred Library Book Club, sponsored by the Friends, announces selections for the rest of its 2009 meetings. The group meets the third Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the library. Newcomers are welcome.

The new selections are: *American Rust* by Philipp Meyer, Oct. 21; *In Defense of Food* by Michael Pollan, Nov. 18, which is part of New Castle County's "Let's Talk about..." series on the politics of food; and *Playing for Pizza* by John Grisham, Dec. 12. *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafon, originally scheduled for Nov. 18, will be rescheduled for 2010.

Keeping in touch

We'd like to remind all our Friends that FBHL, since our recent change of web site hosts, has a new email address. You may now write to us at contact@friendsbhl.org

To keep up with us between editions of our newsletter, check for regular updates on our web site, www.friendsbhl.org

As part of our ongoing effort to communicate better with our members, we will occasionally distribute an email blast, as we did earlier this month to announce the change in library hours. To make sure you receive these messages, go to the web site, click on the "contact" link on the left, fill in your name and email address, and click on "Join our announcement list." You can also follow this procedure to unsubscribe, but we hope you don't do that.



New BHL hours

Monday: 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.
 Tuesday: 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.
 Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.
 Thursday: Closed
 Friday: 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.
 Saturday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 Sunday: 1-5 p.m.

Library manager's report

By Diana Brown,
 Community Services Manager, Brandywine Hundred Library

The Brandywine Hundred Library experienced another busy summer with Summer Reading Club completion rates at an all time high. The completion rate was raised to 65.9 percent from 63.6 percent last year, with 1,264 children reading 23,348 hours. **Many thanks to the Friends of the Brandywine Hundred Library for their valuable support of this program.** It has been shown to make a positive difference.

It is also a pleasure to report that for the fiscal year ending June 30, patron visits were up 3 percent to 490,136 and circulation increased 4 percent to 1,443,995. The library continues to add new patrons, with an addition of 3,809 cardholders for a total of 39,633 registered patrons.

Changes coming with the fall are new hours which include Sunday afternoons. This is in response to requests from our patrons to provide Sunday hours. In order to accomplish this with current budget constraints, Brandywine Hundred will now be closed all day on Thursday. Library closings during the week were done with the goal of providing seven-day service across the county. Neighboring libraries Claymont, Elsmere, and Woodlawn are open Thursdays and will serve Brandywine Hundred library patrons who want to visit a library that day.

We would like to encourage all Friends of the Brandywine Hundred Library to join us for a special fundraising event at the library on Saturday, October 17. **The Love Your Library Day** will feature programming from noon to 4 p.m. with the goal of raising funds for the library's collections and to increase visibility, awareness and support for our library. Our statistics bear out what we observed this year: libraries are places that are valued and used, now more than ever. Thank you all so much for your support.

Contribute to the Friends through United Way

If you love your library and want to give a gift, please remember the Friends of the Brandywine Hundred Library as you contribute to the Fall 2009 United Way Campaign. **Our agency write-in number is 11389.** You can choose to make a flat donation or automatic weekly deductions from your paycheck. The Friends is a worthy organization devoted to the needs of the Brandywine Hundred Library. We are people, who like yourself, absolutely love this library!

Your generous contribution will ensure that the Brandywine Hundred Library is able to meet the needs of you and your families during these challenging economic times. We are a non-profit organization whose primary mission is to work with the library staff and managers to best meet the needs of the patrons using this library. We are committed to ensuring the Brandywine Hundred Library is able to accommodate your needs.

As New Castle County faces budget pressures, the Friends have put more money into the library for programs and features that would otherwise not be funded. Your support makes improvements possible. Remember that by supporting the United Way you can support your Friends of the Brandywine Hundred Library!

Friends host 'Pink Locker Society' programs

The Friends are offering moms and their tween daughters the opportunity to share in a unique two-part program focused on "The Pink Locker Society," a new novel and web site.

"The Pink Locker Society," a project of *KidsHealth.org*, educates girls and gives their parents an easy way to share information on puberty. On September 25 at 6:30 p.m., hear from the book's author, Debra Moffitt, and have the opportunity to purchase or borrow the book. On October 23 at 6:30 p.m., get together to discuss the book, talk about mother-daughter communication, and make a fun craft. The program is recommended for girls from 8 to 12 and moms (or other special adults).

The Friends have purchased 15 copies of the book for the library's collection. For more information about The Pink Locker Society, visit www.PinkLockerSociety.org

25 adults meet summer reading goal

The Adult Summer Reading Club attracted 37 participants. The goal was to read a minimum of eight books of their choice during the summer and provide brief reviews of them. Twenty-five readers achieved the goal, submitting 295 book reviews.

NAME _____		E-MAIL _____	
ADDRESS _____		CITY _____	STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE _____	DATE _____	PLEASE CHECK ONE	<input type="checkbox"/> NEW MEMBER <input type="checkbox"/> RENEWAL

Membership Categories

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 (or more) Benefactor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Good Neighbor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Patron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Sponsor,
Organization, Business | <input type="checkbox"/> \$12 Regular Member | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ (write-in)
Senior Citizen or Student |

Contributions are tax-deductible. Dues are renewable annually. If your company matches funds, please consider the Friends of Brandywine Hundred Library.

Make check payable to Friends of BHL
Mail to: Friends of BHL, 1300 Foulk Road, Wilmington, DE 19803

When Does My Membership Expire?

To find out when your membership expires, look at your mailing label. New members and renewals are welcome at any time.

If you are interested in working with the Friends, please indicate below:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Mailings | <input type="checkbox"/> Shelf Reading | <input type="checkbox"/> Check AV Equipment (for damage) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Membership Drive | <input type="checkbox"/> Artwork/Posters | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter and/or Web site |

Mailing label shows membership expiration date

Return Service Requested

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