



January 2024

Happy New Year!

Thanks to the many hours of hard work of our volunteers and the generosity of our members, 2023 was a most successful year.

The Friends' signature event, the Great American Book Sale raised a record \$77,379 after expenses in June 2023.

The small book sales set a record with proceeds before expenses of \$5,794 for the February sale, \$4,887 for the May sale, and \$5,912 in October for a total of \$16,593.

Other funds are raised through the Bayfront Bookshelf, online sales through Abe Books, memberships and Erie Gives. The Friends also receive donations from community members, individuals interested in supporting libraries and as memorials. The Erie Community College, Erie Community Foundation and Erie Insurance provided generous sponsorships of the Great American Book Sale.

- Bayfront Bookshelf net sales totaled \$20,716
- The second full year of Abe Books online sales came to \$3,569 after expenses
- Memberships donations for the year were \$4,175 in total
- Erie Gives provided \$16,164
- Other donations contributed \$21,183
- Income from Blasco Workshops came to \$1,965
- Sponsorships amounted in total to \$5,500

Successful fundraising allowed the board to recently approve the library's budget request of \$76,730 for 2024. The budget includes funding for Youth and Adult Services, Outreach, and Staff Development.

The mission of the Friends of the Library is to support and advocate for our public library. All funds raised are for the benefit of the library.

2024 Book Sales

The Great American Book Sale will return to the Flo Fabrizio Ice Rink in 2024. Sale dates are Sunday, June 16 through Friday, June 21, 2024.

The 2024 small sales are scheduled for the following dates:

February *Book Lover Sale*: Thursday, Feb. 15 through Saturday, Feb. 17

May Sale: Thursday, May 9 through Saturday, May 11

October Sale: Thursday, Oct. 17 through Saturday, Oct. 19

As usual, postcard reminders will be sent in the weeks before a sale.

New board members

Edith Ortiz joined the board in February 2023. Edith has taken on several responsibilities within the organization. She is currently chairing the Diversity Committee and is a member of both the Marketing

Committee and the Leadership Development Committee. In addition to her board duties, Edith handles postal mailings and contributes her time to the Bayfront Bookshelf on Saturdays.

Edith's passion for reading is evident in her involvement with the Bayfront Bookshelf. Growing up in Southern California, her passion for reading was ignited by her local library, a discovery that has shaped her commitment to fostering a love for books and reading in others. She joined the Friends of the Library with the goal of sharing the joy of reading with the community.

Edith made a significant move to Erie, PA, in June 2022, relocating from Las Vegas, NV, to her husband's hometown. Her active involvement in various committees and her commitment to community engagement highlight her desire to make a positive impact.

Emma Oxford is the new Board Secretary. Emma moved to Erie in 2021. She works from home full-time and found the Friends of the Library when she was looking for more ways to get involved with the Erie community. In her free time, in addition to being a frequent visitor to both the Blasco and Millcreek branch libraries, Emma is an avid crossword solver and constructor and has had crosswords published in the Wall Street Journal and the LA Times, among other places.

Organizer Needed

Ever wondered how all the books arrive at the book sales for people to select and purchase? There is an important story behind this activity which begins with boxes and ends in books.

One important and essential aspect of the Friends of the Library's operation is the transportation of packed boxes of books to storage and to and from book sales. Who organizes this and what are we calling it? LOGISTICS!

Our current head of logistics is nearly at his use-by date and would like to work with an individual who may be interested in taking over the various activities involved in the moving process. They would work together during the upcoming year so that there would be a seamless transition.

The person in charge doesn't need the strength to lift boxes but does need to lead a team of individuals who are capable of handling relatively heavy boxes of materials.

If you are interested, please contact us at: info@erielibraryfriends.org.

Volunteer at a Book Sale

The Friends are always in need of new volunteers to work at the Great American Book Sale and the smaller sales. Volunteers are needed to set up and take down the sales; accept cash, credit card and debit payments; and, monitor the sales area and straighten books. Shifts are 2 to 3 hours in length.

Work at the sales is primarily scheduled through SignUp Genius, a user friendly online software tool for volunteer management and event planning, although we will call to schedule upon request.

If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information, write to info@erielibraryfriends.org.

Welcome to 2024 at the Blasco Library Bayfront Bookshelf

The Bayfront Bookshelf is open from 11 am to 3 pm every day that the Blasco Library is open, except Sunday when the hours are 1 pm to 3 pm. We currently have 22 volunteers. Most are trained cashiers waiting to assist you when you visit. We are all Friends of the Library members.

The money we raise by selling donated books, media and puzzles goes to fund a wide variety of Erie County Library programs and events at all locations, including the Bookmobile. There is a list of sponsored programs and activities on our front window as well as on our website erielibraryfriends.org.

The Bookshelf continues to feature a wide variety of used books for adults, teens and children of all ages. We also feature a selection of excellent condition hardback and paperback fiction and nonfiction current Bestsellers.

We have a permanent local history section that expands during the summer to include sailing and more on Great Lakes history.

We have a large selection now of music CD's and DVD's and some audio books at low prices.

We feature an ever changing selection of Collectible Books. If you want to know what we are offering before your visit, please call us during store hours at 814-451-6942. You can also check on our website erielibraryfriends.org. We are also on Facebook.

We continue to sell the rarest and most valuable items at abebooks.com under our name, Bayfront Bookshelf. You have the option to pick up items you have purchased on ABE at the store.

We have a variety of items on sale every month and these are posted on our signs, on Facebook and on erielibraryfriends.org.

Thanks for your years of support for our organization, all our sales and for shopping at the Bayfront Bookshelf. We hope to see you soon.

How to Donate Books and Other Materials

The Friends of the Library accepts donations of gently used books, books on CD, music CDs, DVDs and puzzles. Best selling items are new fiction, especially suspense and mystery; children's books; local history; books on CD and DVD's. We do not accept encyclopedias; Reader's Digest condensed books; textbooks; magazines, pamphlets; outdated technical books (5 years or older) such as law, medicine, computers, health; multiple copies of the same title; yellowed paperbacks; books that are damaged (ripped, mildewed, underline, have an odor); and VHS or cassette tapes.

Jigsaw puzzle donations need to be taped closed. Attach a sticker indicating if the puzzle is complete or if pieces are missing. We sell puzzles with up to three missing pieces at our sales for a dollar. We cannot accept puzzles with more than three missing pieces.

The Bayfront Bookshelf serves as a drop off point for SMALL donations of used books, media and puzzles when we are open. If the store is closed, donations can be taken to the Blasco Library circulation desk. Do not leave items in the foyer when the store is closed as this presents a fire hazard.

The Erie County Library branches also accept small donations when open and as space permits. Please call ahead. If you have a large amount to donate, please call us during store hours at 814-451-6942 or write to us at info@erielibraryfriends.org. If you provide your contact information, we will call you to make an appointment for a drop off.

There will be Drive Thru Book Donation Drives in April and September 2024. Specific dates are not yet set. Check erielibraryfriends.org and Facebook in the months prior to the drives for further information.

Library Programs and Events Sponsored by the Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Library was among the sponsors of two noteworthy events last fall. In October, the **Small Business Symposium** offered classes and a grant workshop for small business owners in the creative sector. And in November, **Erie Makes**, an Idea Lab event, brought together maker enthusiasts of all ages and interests. The event offered activities and classes at multiple locations from Acrylic Pours to Design Your Own Podcast! to Tiny Tin Shadow Boxes (a teen event). Make-and-take kits were available.

In 2023, funding from the Friends of the Library supported many of the 268 programs for children, 68 for teens and 459 for adults offered at the Blasco Library. This is in addition to sponsorship of many of the 1214 programs offered at the branch libraries. Programs supported by the Friends include computer classes and Idea Lab classes, which use materials or facilitator fees paid by the Friends of the Library.

The following are just a few of the wide variety of programs offered by the Library and sponsored by the Friends of the Library. For further information on these and other programs, go to <https://events.erielibrary.org>.

Join Heather in the Idea Lab to learn how to make a simple set of beach glass earrings using a Dremel tool and jewelry pliers. At the Lincoln Community Center, learn to crochet in February and to knit in March with instruction provided by staff member Sarah McCall. Both classes include a kit with basic materials. Iroquois Branch offerings include another in the hands-on Fermentation Friday series, Sourdough Culture, with Jessica Stefano in mid-January.

Balancing Dragon Yoga for Adults is scheduled on Saturday mornings from January through April at Lincoln with a class for tweens and teens in late January. Based on Hatha and Vinyasa style yoga, Balancing Dragon Yoga offers a gentle and accessible approach to yoga taught by Kimber Gavio.

The JR. Explorers! STEM classes for age 3-6 offer child-led, experiential learning through guided free-play. First in the series of four at Blasco Library is The Floor is Lava on January 27. Also at Blasco, younger children and families will enjoy Pajama Storytimes. The monthly evening story times begin in January and conclude on April 17 with the Stuffed Animal Party.

Membership

At this writing the Friends have 489 members. There have been 106 membership renewals and 5 new memberships since the start of the membership drive in October.

Membership brochures are available at all library branches and on our website, erielibraryfriends.org. Encourage your friends and family to become Friends of the Library members.