Annual Report

July 1, 2021 ~ June 30, 2022

Friends & Foundation of the Rochester Public Library
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It is a privilege to work on behalf of the Library's ongoing mission of community service, and to be able to provide critical funding and programming support for RPL and libraries in surrounding counties.

We participated in many exciting projects for FY2021-22, and we thank everyone who helped support FFRPL with their time, expertise, and donations.

Donna Borgus, Executive Director, FFRPL
donna.borgus@libraryweb.org, 585-428-8321

Serving as Board President for FFRPL is one way I help support the Library's mission of providing impactful and innovative programs and services to the community.

Donna P. Benjamin, FY2021-22 FFRPL Board President

Board of Directors FY2021-22
Donna P. Benjamin, President
Justin Stevens, Vice President
David Hou, Treasurer
Dan Ross, Secretary
Richard Hamilton, Past President
Diana Carter, Andrew Iserson, Brian McLaughlin, Sally Millick, Kiah Nyame. Shiva Ramaswamy, Marjorie Shelly, Tiana Stephens, Sheila Strong, Patty Uttaro, William Yust

Staff FY2021-22
Donna Borgus, Executive Director; Reuben Burch, Financial Manager; Rebecca Fuss, Director of Advancement; Holly Hammond, Database Administrator; Susan Chekow Lasignan, Director of Marketing & Program Development; Elisabeth Periboom-Klampenhouwer, Book Pricing and Sales Specialist; Christine Weidman, Volunteer and Book Sales Coordinator

FFRPL IS THE 501(C)(3) CHARITY THAT RAISES FUNDS, PRESENTS PROGRAMS, SUPPORTS SPECIAL PROJECTS, HELPS CREATE SPECIALIZED SPACES, AND PURCHASES SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT FOR THE ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY.
FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS: FY2021-22

In addition to revenue from fundraising, grants, bookstore income, endowments and bequests, net investment gains, and program and event revenue, FFRPL stewards and builds a $21.8 million endowment and investment account, which provides continuing support for the Rochester Public Library.

Our endowed fund helps the Rochester Public Library to preserve and share the history of Rochester’s LGBTQIA+ community and ensure that Evelyn Bailey’s Legacy of Pride continues.

FFRPL’s Annual Campaign raised $298,002 (an increase of $22,548 or 8%) compared to the previous Fiscal Year. Longtime LGBTQIA+ activist, educator and historian Evelyn Bailey partnered with FFRPL and Central Library throughout the last year of her life to establish the Evelyn Bailey Endowed Fund. The endowed fund will help provide staff and resources for the Central Library to preserve and share the history of Rochester’s LGBTQIA+ community and ensure that Evelyn Bailey’s Legacy of Pride continues.

FFRPL had its most successful ROC the Day ever, raising approximately $13,500 for supplemental furniture, fixtures and equipment for the Lincoln Branch reconfiguration.

Library Giving Day FFRPL participated in Library Giving Day on April 6 and raised $6,443 for supplemental materials for the Children’s Center Secret Room, through a combination of online giving and the in-person ‘Sneak Peek’ event for donors who help support children’s programming.

Year-round book sales (on-line and on-site) FFRPL continued to manage a team of 22 valuable, engaged volunteers who help run the Book Store at Central Library, assist with our online book sales, and help us maintain the Sustainable Shelves Program (a unique environmentally friendly operation that recycles books unfit for sale and provides merchandise credit to RPL).

Library Director’s birthday fundraiser FFRPL successfully launched our first online personal fundraiser. Thank you to Patty Uttaro for working with FFRPL to create her birthday fundraiser to support the Harold Hacker Fund for the Advancement of Libraries.

The fundraiser far exceeded the original goal of $500, with individual support and a special grant, raising $12,681 in total. FFRPL can now offer personal peer-to-peer fundraisers through email and social media.

For FY2021-22, FFRPL grants supported innovative programs and staff training for Rochester Regional Library Council Libraries (a multi-type library network serving libraries and library systems throughout Rochester’s five counties).

FFRPL … RAISES FUNDS

FFRPL … PRESENTS PROGRAMS

Fringe Festival 2021 We worked with Central Library’s Local History & Genealogy Division on the presentation and publicity for a free, on-demand video for “Spooky Stories in the (Virtual) Stacks.” We also selected 1 external artist (the Bendonna Band) for 2 free, live, family performances on Saturday, September 18 in the Garden.

We were able to have our Legacy Books Sandwiched In Series return to in-person reviews held in the Kate Gleason Auditorium. The Fall 2021 series of 7 live reviews was well-attended with an average of 50 people in KGA with additional viewers watching the livestream on Facebook and our YouTube videos. New EventBrite advance registrations allowed for social distancing and capture of attendee contact info.

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View the playlist here

September 28: The Night Watchman by Louise Erdrich (reviewed by Virginia Filled)

October 5: Empire of Pain: The Secret History of the Sackler Dynasty by Patrick Radden Keefe (reviewed by Bernard Sussman, MD)

October 12: The Violence Inside Us: A Brief History of an Ongoing American Tragedy by Chris Murphy (reviewed by Mark F. Henderson)


October 26: Where You Are is Not Who You Are by Ursula Burns, former CEO of Xerox (reviewed by Sevin Yetelkin, PhD)

November 2: Get Good with Money by Tiffany Alche (reviewed by Shamilka Fusco)

November 9: The Code Breaker: Jennifer Doudna, Gene Editing, and the Future of the Human Race by Walter Isaacson (reviewed by Mitch O’Connell, PhD)

BSI Spring 2022 Our Spring Books Sandwiched In reviews were very popular, close to capacity (with limits for social distancing), and the reviewers received good feedback from patrons. Our continually increased efforts of connecting book themes and Library resources (particularly those supported by FFRPL) were received very favorably and our messaging was met with appreciation by patrons. View the playlist here

March 29: A Quantum Life: My Unlikely Journey From the Street to the Stars by Mitch Doudna, Gene Editing, and the Future of the Human Race by Walter Isaacson (reviewed by Mitch O’Connell, PhD)

November 9: The Code Breaker: Jennifer Doudna, Gene Editing, and the Future of the Human Race by Walter Isaacson (reviewed by Mitch O’Connell, PhD)

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April 12: A Wild Idea: How the Environmental Movement Tamed the Adirondacks (reviewed by Douglas Jones)

April 19: Secret History of Home Economics: How Trailblazing Women Harnessed the Power of Home and Changed the Way We Live (reviewed by Deborah Hughes)

April 26: Betrayal: The Final Act of the Trump Show (reviewed by Sandy Shapiro)

May 3: Putting It Together: How Stephen Sondheim and I Created ’Sunday in the Park with George’ by James Lapine (reviewed by Mark Cuddy)

May 10: Under A White Sky: The Nature of the Future by Elizabeth Kolbert (reviewed by Jeff Wyatt)

Rochester Reads 2022 (Writers & Books partnership) FFRPL sponsored visiting author and botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer (Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants). We had a full house for our free event on October 20. Approximately 54 people attended in person and an additional 200+ people participated online via livestream. Watch Kimmerer’s presentation here
FFRPL … PRESENTS PROGRAMS (continued)

We hosted online Zoom presentations of (virtual) Tuesday Topics February 2022, which once again showcased Library services/resources. We highlighted the Rochester Public Library's critical role in fostering Children's Literacy (Presenter: Toni Burton, Children's Services Consultant, Monroe County Library System; recipient of the 2021 Jacque Cady Award for Advocacy for Children from Roc the Future), Jobs and the Economy (Presenter: Jennifer Bynes, MLS, MPH, Manager, Business Insights Center and the Carlson Center for Intellectual Property at Central Library), and Equity and Justice, “Repairing the Historical Record through Community Collaboration” (Presenters: Christine L. Ridarsky, City Historian & Historical Services Consultant, Rochester Public Library, and Mekko Griffin Byrnes, MLS, MPH, Manager, Business Insights Center and the Carlson Center for Intellectual Property at Central Library), and Insight Center and the Carlson Center for Jobs and the Economy (Presenter: Jennifer Bynes, MLS, MPH, Manager, Business Insights Center and the Carlson Center for Intellectual Property at Central Library). We highlighted the Rochester Public Library’s 50th Anniversary, which once again showcased Library services/resources.

FFRPL … HELPS PRESENT AND PROMOTE EXHIBITS

FFRPL continued to be active on Central’s Exhibits Team. FFRPL helped plan, promote, and present the Earth Rhythms & Precious Inhabitants, Art of the Book & Paper 2021, and the India Heritage Museum’s exhibit Punjab: Land of Five Rivers. In appreciation for FFRPL’s/ RPL’s efforts in presenting and promoting the exhibit, The India Heritage Museum contributed $5,000 towards the Library’s Lincoln Branch Renovation.

FFRPL planned, promoted and presented the in-person Sokol High School Literary Awards. All 6 winning students attended, and all had friends/family members with them as well. They did an outstanding job reading excerpts from their work and everyone was pleased and proud to be a part of the program. Since 2015, winning entries have been downloaded collectively more than 2,000 times, from at least 44 countries! Watch the Sokol video (posted to the Library’s YouTube Channel) here View or download the Sokol 2022 booklet (with all winning student work, and comments from judges) here. Thanks to our partners at The College at Brockport, the winning entries for 2022 can be viewed and downloaded here. The complete collection of Sokol award winning entries (2015 through 2022) can be viewed and downloaded here.

FFRPL promoted and funded Phillips Wheatley Community Library’s 50th Anniversary Celebration in August 2021, which included free ice cream provided by Lugia’s Ice Cream Truck as well as African drumming and dancing with Womba African Drumming.

FFRPL helped support and promote the 5th Annual Anthony Mascoli Rainbow Dialogue, held March 19, 2022 at the Memorial Art Gallery (presented in partnership with the Out Alliance and Central Library’s Local History/Genealogy Division). Learn more about the Rainbow Dialogues here.

FFRPL … SUPPORTS SPECIAL PROJECTS

The program trains parents in how to develop the habit of sharing books with their children. High quality books are rotated into the home on a weekly basis for families to practice regular book sharing. Families are connected to the local library to help them sustain book borrowing and book sharing practices. Central Library has a few hundred Raising a Reader families participating in the program. Learn more here.

Rochester Black History Archive Project

FFRPL helped raise funds for Central Library’s Rochester Black History Archive Project, led by Central’s Local History & Genealogy Division. Funds are to be allocated for a Historical Services Consultant, Librarians, a paid Community advisory board, as well as an internal staff advisory committee.

FFRPL … HELPS CREATE SPECIALIZED SPACES

FFRPL provided significant funds for the Business Insight Center, in support of the purchase of 10 proprietary databases on market trends, patent holdings, registered trademarks and business & financial reports; and towards professional services so RPL is able to offer no-cost legal advice and consultations to patrons.

Capital Expenses: support towards the Rundel Terrace Revitalization Project (note: this expense line reflects the 2021-22 FY, the project itself spanned several Fiscal Years). Construction began Spring 2020 and was completed August 2022. Learn more here.

Expansion of Arnett Branch Library Mural

With the completion of Arnett’s murals, the Library has become a destination location and a source of pride for the neighborhood.

(From the story aired by WAMC90.5 ABC; photographer: Matt Chupruta/WAMC)

Thanks to the many individual donors — as well as our Foundation funders — whose support enabled FFRPL to provide $125,000 towards the Rundel Terrace Revitalization Project, including an art installation: the Rochester Area Community Foundation, the Ames Amzalak Memorial Trust, the Gannett Foundation, and the Max and Marian Farish Charitable Foundation.

special projects & specialized spaces highlights: FY2021-22

Program & Exhibit Highlights: FY2021-22

Publications:

- Sokol award winning entries (2015 through 2022) can be viewed and downloaded here.
- Winning entries for 2022 can be viewed and downloaded here.
- Downloaded collectively more than 2,000 times from at least 44 countries.
- Watch the Sokol video here.
- View or download the Sokol 2022 booklet here.
- All winning entries for 2022 can be viewed and downloaded here.
- Complete collection of Sokol award winning entries (2015 through 2022) can be viewed and downloaded here.

Highlights:

- FFRPL helped raise funds for Central Library’s Rochester Black History Archive Project.
- FFRPL helped raise funds for the Rundel Terrace Revitalization Project.
- Expansion of Arnett Branch Library Mural.
- Thanks to the many individual donors and foundation funders.

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FFRPL purchased eSports equipment for imagineYOU, which organized Central Library’s Esports Club (free to high school and middle school students), enabling them to participate in tournaments, streaming, content creation and game creation/gaming.

FFRPL purchased Empire Passes for every MCLS library: Central, branches, and towns. Empire Passes for New York State Parks allow Empire Passes for every FFRPL purchased.

FFRPL helped purchase books and bags for the “Talking is Teaching” program, a national campaign to boost the early learning and brain development of children from birth through age five. The “Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing” campaign is part of Too Small to Fail, a national initiative of the Clinton Foundation. “Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing” aims to give parents and caregivers the tools to talk, read, and sing more with their young children from birth, increasing meaningful interactions that are critical to healthy brain development. Learn more here.

FFRPL purchased a new state-of-the-art camera and equipment for Central Library’s Kate Gleason Auditorium, to improve livestreaming/recordings programs. The equipment purchased in FY2021-22 is now being used by FFRPL and the Library to livestream programs directly to the Library’s YouTube channel.

FFRPL purchased funds and equipment for the Rochester downtown development corporation (RODDC) to purchase, FF2011-22.

FFRPL purchased critical to healthy brain development.

Increasing meaningful interactions that are critical to healthy brain development.

For the Benefit of the Library

Select Bequests and Endowment Funds

Held for the Benefit of the Library

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Chester F. Carlson Patent & Trademark Center Fund

Friends of the Rochester Public Library Legacy Fund

George R. Parsons Jr. Fund for Branch Libraries

Surena Forbes Fund for Local Writers

Harold Hackett Fund for the Advancement of Libraries

Irving L. Kessler, Esq. Fund in Memory of Rose & Max Kessler

Sharon & Ron Salluzzo Fund for Librarians Serving Children & Teens

Albert O. Frensvy Fund for Branch Libraries* Anthony Mascioli Revocable Trust* Shoulders to Stand On Fund

Special Projects:

Equality Fund for Humanity & Enlightenment

Stephan & Mary Clarke Fund for Digitalization & Preservation of Genealogical Records

Supplemental Materials & Equipment:

Edna & Kenneth Kroll Fund for Library Audio-Visual Equipment

Frances Weiss Holtzman Fund for Literature & Poetry

Kate Gleason Library Fund

Kusler-Cox Fund for Outreach

Myles Yeiden Fund for Outreach & Extension Services

Robert & Georbianna Becker Fund for Local History in Memory of Walter F. Becker

Ruby M. Jefferson Memorial Trust

Vietnam Learning Center at Central Library

Toys Resource Center – Toy Library Fund

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 20 Fund for The Vietnam Learning Center at Central Library

William Bresteller Lee Fund for Humor In Our Lives

William E. Beene Fund for Children’s Books & Programs

*Note: Based on the donor’s original intentions, this fund may be used for the purposes described above but is not required to be a permanently endowed fund. In order to provide a continued benefit to the Library, FFRPL Ad reserves the option to change future expenditures based on changing library needs.