



Friends of the Jackson County Main Library Annual Report 2009-2010

The 2009-2010 year has been an extraordinary one in the life of the Friends organization. Over the life of our organization, the leadership and members have made several great leaps of faith, but perhaps none greater than the one that culminated this year: our commitment to furnish and equip the new Jackson County Public Library Complex.

Daniel H. Burnham, Chicago's great turn of the century architect and city planner, wrote in the nation's first comprehensive planning document, *The Plan for Chicago*, "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir one's blood. Make big plans, aim high in hope and work." The plans with high aims and hopes, the magic they stirred in our community and among our donors, and the countless hours of volunteer commitment to work the plans have brought us to this celebratory moment. We have reached our initial goal of \$1.6 million and have garnered over \$230,000 additional dollars to enhance the new collection for the library.

All the activities of the Friends have been a team effort, with the Friends Board, the Capital Campaign Steering Committee, the Book store committee, and the library staff linked together with dedicated community members all working toward the same goal: to enhance our library and its services for the education and pleasure of our community. Here follows a partial list of what this team work has accomplished during 2009-2010. We have much success to celebrate!

Friends Board

- The Friends sponsored the fifth Bricks for Books, a summer reading program for children pre-school through 7th grade to encourage summer reading and raise money for the new library complex. Young readers earned \$1,491 for the New Library Fund during the summer of 2009.
- The Friends of the Jackson County Main Library were awarded a First Place Frances B. Reid Award by the North Carolina Friends of the Library for the organization's accomplishments in 2008-2009.
- Mary Otto Selzer was awarded an Honorable Mention Volunteer of the Year Award by the NC Friends for her overall contributions to our Friends organization.
- The Friends co-sponsored the 5th Great Smoky Mountains Book Fair to support writers and readers and to raise money for the new library complex. As part of the Book Fair, the Friends sponsored a student poetry contest for all students in Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties.
- The Friends gifted library staff at Christmas and honored them with a reception.
- The Friends Board participated in its first strategic planning process to set goals for 2010-2012 and strategies for reaching them.
- The Friends participated in Sylva's Greening Up the Mountains with a double booth highlighting our annual membership drive and progress on the new library complex.
- The Friends honored our volunteers with a Volunteer Breakfast.
- Betty Screven, Friends' publicist, produced four handsome and informative issues of the *Bookworm Bulletin*, wrote press releases for Friends' activities and for library events, kept the Friends website updated, and placed ads and news items in area publications to publicize Friends' events and Used Book store sales and events.
- The Friends contributed \$20,469 to the Jackson County Main Library for a variety of expenses and media purchases, including \$5,850 to match a Gates Foundation grant for computers, \$1,000 to help support the Reading Rover, and \$470 for the book rental program.
- The Friends contributed an additional \$10,000 to the New Library Fund.

Used Book store

- The Book Store Committee, Sandra Burbank, Antoinette MacWatt, Jeri Winkles, and Tom Kapp, provided outstanding leadership in the operation of the Used Book Store.
- Sandra Burbank's Volunteer Notes kept book store volunteers and the Board informed of policies and procedures for the smooth operation of the store.

- The book store had a very successful year in an economically stressed time, with sales of \$73,660, an increase of 8.5% from the prior year. Net sales in June were \$8,887.09. Sales for June set an all time record, the previous best being \$8,718.01 in July, 2007.
- Volunteers kept the book store staffed 48 hours per week, Sunday through Saturday.
- Volunteers scheduled book store workers, received donations, priced books, and shelved books to keep the store inviting, well-stocked, service-oriented, and customer-friendly.
- Volunteers teamed up to receive two very large donations of books, over 2,500 books from an individual in Weaverville and over 4,500 books from Ron Goodwin and his Miss Emma's Country Store in Dillsboro. Mr. Goodwin also donated new shelving which was in place within a day or two of receipt.
- Volunteers cleaned and refurbished the book store from top to bottom in January.
- Concurrent with the first day of book store cleaning, the Friends participated in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. Several WCU students and community members joined in the cleaning.
- Volunteers participated with the Downtown Sylva Association in various activities, including strategic planning and a day with Tom Shay, marketing consultant.
- Volunteers conducted a user survey to determine where our customers come from and how they hear about us. Survey results will be used to determine where and when to advertise the book store.

Campaign Steering Committee

- Mary Otto Selzer, with Dr. John Bunn as co-chair, lead this committee to achieving its amazing goal of \$1.6 million + to furnish, equip, and enhance the collection for the new library complex.
- The Committee applied for grants, sent targeted mailings to groups of citizens, collected money from donation boxes in area businesses, spoke to civic organizations and governmental entities, appealed to individuals for donations, and hosted special events in pursuit of the campaign goal.
- The Friends contributed \$12,472 in direct support to the capital campaign fund raising effort.
- Fundraising special events: Beck and Barbeque at Bridge Park; Southern Living at Home Show; Southern Living basket raffle; three performances of Gary Carden's play, *The Prince of Dark Corners*; Lessie Williams concert; one performance each of Gary Carden's plays, *Nance Dude* and *Birdell*; three performances of A.R. Gurney's play, *Love Letters*.

- Other special events: Open house at the library to display furnishing, fixtures, and art work for the new library complex; Media Day on site at the new library complex with area media; public celebration and acceptance of a \$200,000 USDA Rural Development grant that pushed us over the initial fundraising goal; and celebration at the Selzer's home on the occasion of the \$200,000 USDA 'big check' presentation.
- Mary Otto Selzer and Betsey Hamlet have hosted committee meetings and kept myriad records to ensure that all donations are accounted for, that donors receive tax letters and thank you notes, and that grantees are appropriately communicated with.
- Tom Kapp, Friends treasurer, has managed the monies with grace and care. We received a clean audit for 2008-2009 from the independent audit firm Burleson Earley & Keel, PLLC, certified public accountants.

*June T. Smith, President
Friends of the Jackson County Main Library
2009-2010*