

Friends of Alamance County Public Libraries

Have you attended a library program recently? Did you participate in Alamance Reads last year? Have you checked out a new audio book or browsed any of our libraries' new non-fiction selections recently?



If you can answer “yes” to any of these questions, then you are familiar with a few of the many ways that the Friends of Alamance County Public Libraries support your local public libraries. The Friends are our best advocates, spreading the word about the great value of public libraries across Alamance County.

Our Friends are busy people. The bi-annual book sales alone require countless hours of organization. The book sales have grown remarkably since their humble beginnings. The first book sale was held on the sidewalk in front of the old K-Mart. The books were stacked in boxes for shoppers to rummage through. The Friends made around \$2000 that year.

Today the Friends' Book Store, located in the basement of May Memorial Library, is well-stocked and organized so that shoppers can easily browse during the fall and spring sales. Volunteers work throughout the year sorting the boxes of donations that roll in, and put in long hours during the sales. The fall 2009 sale brought in over \$30,000.

It is not the amount of money our Friends raise, but the ways in which they spend it that make them so important to our libraries. Funding from the Friends supports a wide variety of programs and collections.

Each year, the Friends donate money for our Summer Reading Program. They've also sponsored the “What's After High School” Expo at North Park since it began in 2007, and purchased a movie license that allows us to show blockbuster films free to the public. Alamance Reads, author visits, craft programs, book discussion series, magicians, storytellers – with the Friends' help, we are able to offer programs for every interest and age group.

The Friends donate generously to our materials budget each year as well. From 1993 through 2009, they have given us over \$200,000, allowing us to purchase great new books, audio books and DVDs during even the leanest budget years. In 2003 alone, the “Boost for Books” campaign raised an additional \$45,000 for books.



Each spring, the Friends send representatives to Raleigh for Library Legislative Day. Volunteers travel to Raleigh to meet face-to-face with our elected officials to encourage them to support legislation that benefits North Carolina's public libraries.



A Friends' membership is just \$5.00 a year. What a great way to show your support for your local public libraries. We definitely get a lot of bang for your buck, so consider becoming a part of the future of the Friends.

The Friends of Alamance County Public Libraries celebrate their 25th birthday today, and you're invited to join the festivities. The party is at May Memorial Library, from 2:00 until 4:00 this afternoon. Stop by and enjoy live music, yummy refreshments and Storybook Theatre as we reflect on 25 years of getting by with a little help from our Friends.