

2022 - 2023

ANNUAL REPORT



DarienLibrary

FRIENDS FINANCIAL RESULTS

Darien Library is supported by a longstanding and highly effective public-private partnership between the Town of Darien and the Friends of Darien Library. An annual grant from the Darien Board of Selectmen funds the majority of staff salaries, benefits, and essential building operations such as utilities and maintenance. Everything else—books, multimedia, and other circulating materials; digital collections and research databases; magazines and newspapers; technology; programs, classes, and events; staff development; fundraising expenditures and support for Friends operations; and capital improvements—are all funded by contributions from you, the Friends of Darien Library.

Friends revenues include contributions to our Annual Fund, including donations raised via special fundraising events such as the Novel Tea, Mini Golf, and 1894 Day; transfers from our Capital Fund; and revenues from Library operations including overdue fines, room rentals, and an annual grant from the Connecticut State Library.

OUR MISSION:

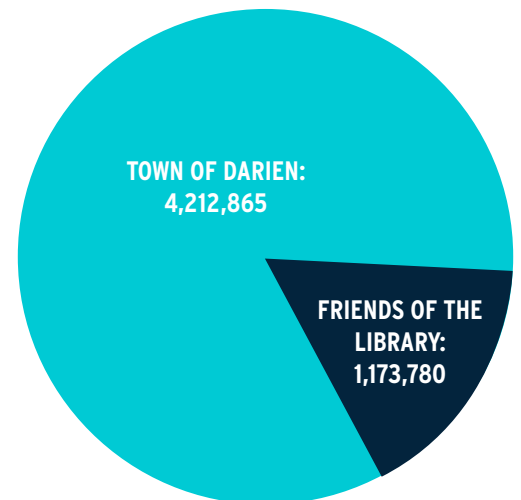
To provide education, entertainment, enrichment, and community building through compassionate service to all.

UNAUDITED FRIENDS FINANCIALS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR: JULY 1, 2022 TO JUNE 30, 2023

REVENUES		
Donations	708,390	
Transfer from Capital Fund	390,000	
Total Friends Funding		1,098,390
Library Operations	33,580	
CT State Library Grant	51,679	
Total Friends Revenues		1,183,649

EXPENDITURES		
Books in All Forms	349,795	
Magazines & Newspapers	33,587	
DVDs	12,210	
Other Collection Items	1,909	
Bloomberg Terminal	27,660	
Research Databases	71,343	
Programs & Events	143,606	
Technology Services	130,541	
Staff Development & Dues	83,367	
Fundraising	35,323	
Library Operations	284,439	
Total Library Friends Expenditures		1,173,780

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET



Darien Library's audited results will generally be available four to six months after the end of the fiscal year.

In addition to the annual operating expenditures, the Friends of the Library's endowment funded the replacement of several end-of-life air handling HVAC units, a capital project totaling \$217,377.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

We often say that great libraries build great communities. It's a reminder of our mission to serve as a place for lifelong learning, to be a destination where curious minds come together over shared interests and new ideas. But great libraries are only made possible by a community that values and supports literacy and free access to information, high-quality resources, and a broad range of perspectives.

Public libraries are unique institutions. We are not motivated or guided by profitability, ideology, or politics. Our aim is simply—powerfully—to keep our community educated, informed, entertained, and connected. Darien Library is not just a welcoming physical location filled with a collection of world-class books and resources, staffed by the most intelligent and compassionate information professionals, where you can receive assistance with anything from filing your taxes to researching your family history. It is also a place where people of all ages and stages come together to learn, explore ideas and perspectives, play, craft, and meet their neighbors.

Over the past year, over 40,000 people attended one of our over 1,200 free events, including a visit from an Olympic Gold Medalist and a bevy of *NYTimes* Bestselling authors. Our skilled reference librarians and technology specialists answered over 100,000 queries and requests. And over 480,000 books and materials were checked out by readers of all ages.

You helped make all of that possible! Generous support from our Friends fuels all that we do each year. In addition, our longstanding partnership with the Town of Darien, in the form of an annual grant from the Board of Selectmen, funds the salaries and benefits for our exemplary staff as well as the annual maintenance of the Library building and grounds. We are so grateful for the support of our taxpayers, elected officials, and our generous donors. Thank you for fueling the heart of Darien!

As we look ahead at the many ways that Darien is changing and growing, we are excited for the future and the possibilities on the horizon. With your continued support, we will remain poised to respond to this community's evolving needs and expectations—be they the rise of work-from-home schedules and the growing popularity of our private meeting rooms to continuing to serve as a safe and supportive space for our tweens and teens to hosting erudite authors and expert speakers on topics that illuminate and inspire.

With Hope and Gratitude,

Kiera Parrott, Director

KIERA'S FAVORITE BOOKS OF THE YEAR



STATS-AT-A-GLANCE

1,226
EVENTS HOSTED

14,813
NEW ITEMS
ADDED

213,059
LIBRARY
VISITORS

1,595
INTERLIBRARY
LOAN REQUESTS
FULFILLED

42,608
EVENT ATTENDEES
85%
INCREASE

1,948
DOCUMENTS
NOTARIZED

Darien Library continues to be one of the busiest and most well-used libraries around, with the highest per capita circulation of any library in the state of Connecticut. All of our key measures—materials borrowed, programs attended, spaces utilized, questions asked and answered—are up and growing!

88,178

**DIGITAL ITEMS
BORROWED**

5,716

**STUDY ROOM
BOOKINGS**

**101%
INCREASE**

107,317

**REFERENCE
QUESTIONS
ANSWERED**

122,081

WIFI SESSIONS

5,791

**BOOK
RECOMMENDATIONS**

393,899

**PRINT BOOKS
BORROWED**

"Darien Library is exceptional! It is the gold standard for what a public library should be and offer."

IT'S FOR YOU!

NATHAN CHEN GOES FOR GOLD!

In March, Gold Medal figure skater Nathan Chen shared his picture book, *Wei Skates On*, with a packed room of excited kids and parents. “Nathan is such a big inspiration and role model! I’ve been following his career for years and he is a class act,” shared an attendee.



NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHORS

Standout author events this year highlighted gripping history, in-depth investigative journalism, resonant poetry, and can't-miss recipes. Some of the most popular authors we hosted included David Grann (*The Wager; Killers of the Flower Moon*), Walt Bogdanich and Michael Forsythe (*When McKenzie Comes to Town*), Kate Baer (*And Yet; What Kind of Woman*), and Deb Perelman (*Smitten Kitchen Keepers*).



BOOK BUZZ FOR BOOK GROUPS

Representatives from top publishing houses share upcoming and bookgroup-worthy titles at this exclusive September event that “sells out” in minutes!



WEEKLY PLANT CLINIC WITH UCONN MASTER GARDENERS

In this eight-week series held throughout May and June, gardeners at all levels could drop-in for expert advice from Master Gardeners on everything from designing beds to identifying invasive species.

The Library hosts over 1,000 free events each year, offering a range of events—author talks, hands-on learning workshops, film screenings, community conversations, and more—for adults, children, and teens. These are just a few of the exciting and community-building events and special programs held this past year.

EXPANDING ACCESSIBILITY

This year, Darien Library became a hub for Connecticut State Library’s Connecticut Library for Accessible Books (CT LAB). The program lends books and magazines in audio and braille formats, for no cost, to any Connecticut resident who is unable to read regular print materials due to a visual, reading, or physical disability.



YOUR PASS TO THE BEST MUSEUMS

Our museum pass collection continues to grow in both breadth and use. This year we added four new museums to our offerings: the Met, Frick, Earthplace, and Discovery Center & Planetarium.



LONG NIGHTS AGAINST PROCRASTINATION

Over 250 students preparing for midterms, AP exams, or finals attended one of our “Long Nights Against Procrastination” events—in which the Library opens extra early or stays open later for teens-only to study. Snacks, guided meditations/yoga stretches, and a therapy dog visit offered calming breaks for the scholars



DARIEN YOUTH COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

In partnership with Thriving Youth Darien, the Library hosted a presentation featuring 30 students discussing what it’s like to be a teen in Darien, and ways they would like to see adults supporting youth in town. The teens and local mental health professionals presented findings from a series of student meetings.

“[Darien Library is] the keystone of our town—not just for the bricks and mortar and materials but for the spirit and inclusiveness of the programs.”

TOGETHER WE CAN...

Did you know that private donations are the only source of funding for all of the books, computers, technology, research databases, programs, and the Library's impressive range of programs? Thank you for your generous contributions to our Annual Fund and support of our fun and festive fundraising events this year!



If you are interested in volunteering in our fundraising efforts, or if you would like additional information on ways to support Darien Library, please contact Melissa Noonan at 203.669.5220.

MINI GOLF

We hosted our Eighth Annual Mini Golf event in February, welcoming over 1,450 golfers to putt their way through the building over the course of a weekend. We were especially excited to see so many newcomers this year!



NOVEL TEA

In October, we hosted our Seventh Annual Novel Tea luncheon featuring *New York Times*-bestselling author Taylor Jenkins Reid. Humble, approachable, and very witty, Reid was a tremendous hit with our sold-out audience.



1894 DAY

In May, we celebrated 129 years of service to the community with our Annual Day of Giving—1894 Day! For the fifth year in a row, we invited our Friends to show their Library love by making a donation and joining us for special festivities in the courtyard. We aimed to raise \$129,000 to mark our 129th year. Nearly 500 families contributed, allowing the Library to exceed our goal.



INTRODUCING THE HERON SOCIETY

In May, we held the inaugural meeting of the Heron Society, a distinguished corps of the Friends of Darien Library comprised of past and current Trustees, key stakeholders, and visionaries. The Heron Society is a brain trust that represents the unsurpassed community organizing and generosity that enabled the opening of the New Darien Library in 2009 as well as the current leadership guiding us forward. We aim to bring the Heron Society together at significant change junctures in the future.

CREATE A LASTING LEGACY

"The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit."
-Nelson Henderson

A planned gift is a charitable donation that is structured during your lifetime as part of your overall financial or estate planning, allowing you to make a long-term charitable commitment that is aligned with your individual goals. When you plan an estate gift, you're helping to ensure the future sustainability of the Library and leaving a strong legacy for future generations. Planned giving may also allow you to make a larger gift than would otherwise be possible during your lifetime.

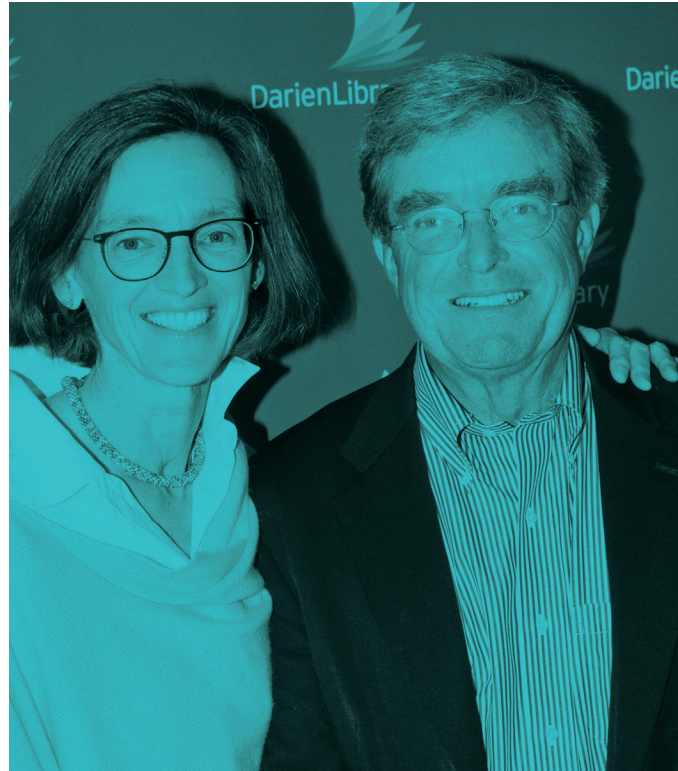
Visit www.darienlibrary.org/legacy
or call (203) 669-5220 for additional information.

THE WYPER FAMILY AUTHOR FUND

George and Susan Wyper and their family have endowed the Wyper Family Author Fund to provide resources to assist in bringing prominent speakers to Darien. This year, the fund sponsored the appearance of Taylor Jenkins Reid at the Novel Tea luncheon.

“My family and I have been to so many great speaker events at the Library over the years, and learned so much, that I could not begin to count them. We know that many in Darien share our experiences. Our goal in establishing the Author Fund is to support the Library in its continuing efforts to provide the community with ever increasingly interesting authors and ideas.”

-GEORGE WYPER, HONORARY TRUSTEE



INTRODUCING MCGRAW FAMILY CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN, JENNA MUSHIN

Jenna Mushin joined the Tween and Teen Services Department in October as the new McGraw Family Children's Librarian. A graduate of Simmons University's Library Information Science program, Jenna has worked in libraries in Northeastern Connecticut since 2017 and now brings her great enthusiasm and exceptional book-talking skills to Darien. This position is generously funded by the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Family Foundation.

“My father supported what Darien Library stands for, especially the Children's Library, which is active in engaging children at an early age to love books, learning, literacy and thinking, and to have fun while doing it. Our family thinks this is a great opportunity to support his interests, and we're confident the lessons learned here will provide benefit to many children.”

-SUE MCGRAW, HONORARY TRUSTEE



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"On behalf of the Library's Board of Trustees, thank you for your continued support. We are committed to making Darien Library the best it can be—the heart of our community. Your generosity allows the Library to fulfill its mission to provide education, entertainment, enrichment, and community building through compassionate service to all, every day. Thank you from all of us."

—Hutch Pegler, President



(left to right) Back Row: Maggie Domont, Elena Whidden, Tyler Kyle, Hutch Pegler, D. Jill McCammon, Karen Knapp, Adrienne Kelly, Kim Westcott. Front Row: Emily Kroenlein, Margit S. Bluestein, Diana Nehro, Angela Riley.

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Deepest thanks to the over 1,300 Friends of Darien Library who contributed to the Annual Fund for 2022-2023. Your donations are the sole source of funding for all of our books, movies, technology, and countless programs and free events held throughout the year for all ages.

Thank you for making Darien Library the intellectual and cultural heart of Darien.



Gifts received July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

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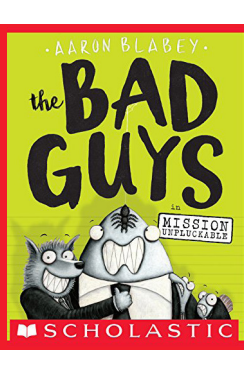
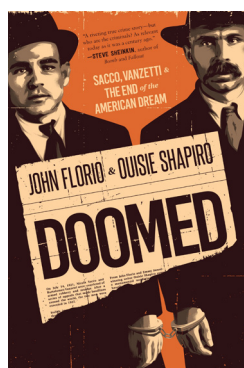
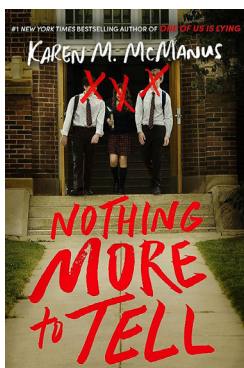
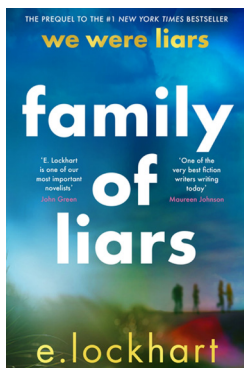
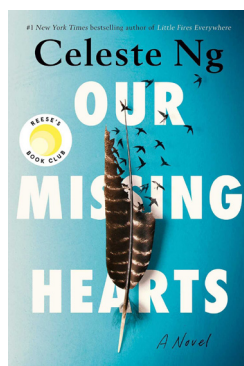
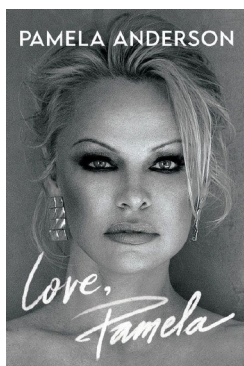
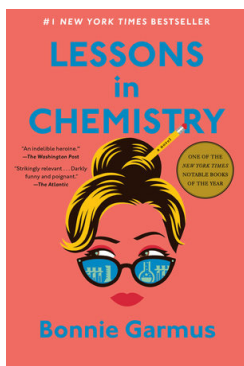
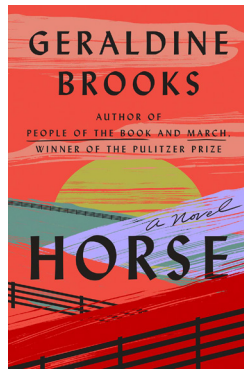
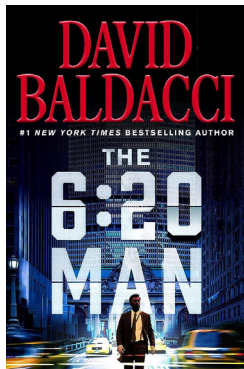


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