

SOLDOTNA LIBRARY FRIENDS – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Annual General Membership Meeting held on January 10, 2024 at noon

Attendance: Joan Merrick (President), Jane Fuerstenau (Winter Vice-President), Pam Joslin (Treasurer), Barbara Olson (Secretary), Romi Haseo

Absent: Mary Lou Wilcox (Summer Vice-President), Jane Gabler, Heather Rasch, Vicki Johnston-Freese

Guests: Rachel Nash (Librarian), Elaine Woodburn, Jeanette Pedginski, Nick Conner, Joel Hildebrand

1) **Call to order at Noon:** Joan Merrick called the meeting to order. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

2) **Approval of agenda (See Packet A):** Pam moved, Jane F. seconded, agenda approved.

Nick Connor was given the opportunity to speak. He and his wife wanted to help the community. He presented the Soldotna Library Friends a check for \$2,000 to be used where needed to benefit the community. Pam explained that the board will vote to accept this in our regular meeting as he placed no restrictions on this donation. Everyone expressed appreciation to him for his concerns for our community.

3) **Treasurer's Report for 2023:** Pam

- Annual Treasurer's Report as of 12/31/2023 (See Packet B)
 - This report is for the entire year. We exceeded our fundraising goals, funded library programs as planned, and increased our cash funds for the future. The donations this year from Pick.Click.Give. were greater than ever. Our operating expenses were less than budgeted as we did not expend money on Professional Fees.
 - We began the year with \$32,234.35 and ended the year with \$42,499.76.
- 2023 Budget vs Actual Report (See Packet C)

4) **President's Report on 2023 Accomplishments and 2024 Goals:** Joan (See Packet D)

- Joan read through the report of accomplishments in 2023 and goals for 2024.

5) **2023 Fundraising Recap:** Barbara (See Packet E)

- The Fundraising Recap shows how many people attended the book sales, and breaks down the money coming in from Book Sales, Book Sale Shelf Box, Donation Box, Art Sales, and Bake Sales which totaled over \$13,000.

6) **2023 Membership Report:** Barbara (See Packet F)

- Barbara read through the 2023 Membership Report. There are 157 people in our database. We have 82 active members. We still need to cross train another system administrator. Jeanette suggested we put a QR Code for our website on our bulletin board to encourage use.

7) **Member of the Year Announcement:** Barbara (See Packet G)

- Vicki asked that Christine DeCourtney and Jim O'Neill be awarded Member of the Year and given Lifetime membership in appreciation for their volunteer efforts in the Basement Bookstore. Barbara moved, Joan seconded it, all agreed.

8) **Librarian's Presentation:** Rachel (See Packet H)

- Rachel presented 2023 Year In Review handout and slide presentation. Physical checkouts are increasing but are not yet back to 2019 pre-pandemic levels. Digital checkouts have jumped. Number of library visitors continues to increase.

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- Highlights are:
 - New Patrons Added: 946
 - Items Added: 4,162
 - Library Programs: 369 with attendance of 6,583
 - Summer Reading Participants: 1,047

- This year the focus was on programs, facilities, and our collection.
 - The collection focused on reference training when helping members of the public get information they need. The SLED databases are available to all Alaskans (Learning Express, Do It Yourself, SAT studying, NovelList, tons of reference information). The staff is very customer focused and strives to improve everyone's experience in coming to the library.
 - They completed a weeding project in a systematic manner to remove items from the collection so that there is space for new books. The system is called MUSTIE (Misleading, Ugly, Superseded, Trivial, Irrelevant, Elsewhere). There were 7,021 titles weeded. Most books are passed on to the Friends Basement Bookstore.
 - Increased usage of the collection through special displays on a common topic, such as How Not to Die. Every month is a new display to help patrons know what books are in the collection.
 - Held programs for all ages, such as December's Music by the Fire, Paint Your Pet, and Gardening 101.
 - Increased focus on programs for Teens, Tweens, and Adults. Added back after-hours teen programs. The staff wants to make sure teens and tweens feel welcome in the library.
 - Programs for Tweens (ages 10-14) were new this year with some special programs over winter break.
 - Introduced a new pre-school program called Cool Kids Crafts (ages 2-5) to work on school readiness skills (using scissors, learning alphabet, etc.).
 - Sew Fun at the Library program using sewing machines for basic sewing skills.
 - 1KBK (One Thousand Books Before Kindergarten)
 - Summer Reading Program for 2023 whose theme was 'All Together Now' had 1,047 participants. A community quilt was created as well as a community cookbook.
 - The Story Walk® is continuing at Parker Park which is walking distance from the library. Some programs that used to be held at Soldotna Creek Park have been moved to Parker Park.
 - Family Workstations were purchased with a special donation. Little ones can be in a safe place while parent/caregiver uses the computer.
 - They have been using LibCal for a full year as their room reservation system. It has been very successful. Rooms can be reserved online.

- 2024 Plans
 - Catalog de-dupping project which will clean up the catalog of duplicates.
 - Another catalog project that will improve customer service by making options less confusing while placing holds.
 - A capital project starting in July goals and wish list:
 - Increase staff office space and work space
 - Additional study space
 - Decrease the size of the main service desk
 - Customer service improvements
 - Reading room

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- Parking lot improvements
- Improvements in traffic patterns and sightlines
- Armchair Travel Series will be continued and expanded this year
- Summer Reading Program for 2024 theme will be 'Adventure Begins at Your Library'. They have a lot of ideas of working with community partners to make this program exciting.
- Rachel thanked the Friends for their continued support.
- Nick encouraged Rachel to make her presentation to the City Council as it has so much useful information.

Reminders:

- The regular Board of Directors meeting will be held following the Annual General Membership Meeting

Adjournment: 1:05 pm