



# BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

brookslibraryvt.org

224 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301

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Dear Friend of Brooks Memorial Library;

Last year we combined the library's Annual Appeal with the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library's membership drive and were so successful — thanks to all of you! — that we are doing it again. As we keep saying, everyone who supports the library is a friend as well as a member of the Friends!

This past year has been a busy one for the library staff, the Trustees and the nonprofit Friends. Many of you have already experienced the wonderful updating and refreshing of the building, including the colorful new carpeting and open-space layout on the main floor, additional new meeting rooms, a new Young Adult reading room, the upgrading of the Children's Library, the addition of a spacious downstairs bathroom, the upgrading of an upstairs bathroom and new signage — among other things.

After voluminous on-line and paper surveys conducted both in-house and on the street as well as community conversations, the library staff and the Trustees have produced a Strategic Plan (copies are available at the library) to take us from 2017 to 2021. We focused on seven priorities:

- To stimulate the imagination of library users and support life-long learning
- To engage the community through awareness and collaboration
- To support young readers from early literacy on.
- To empower teens by providing materials, resources and programming
- To provide a welcoming physical and virtual space for library users
- To foster technological understanding
- To develop information literacy

On September 23 we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Brooks Memorial Library building at 224 Main Street, close to the heart of downtown Brattleboro, with an all-day party open to the public and attended by over 300 people.

The library is now one of only two Vermont partners for the Foundation Center, which gives library patrons and area nonprofits access to complete grant-making databases, directories, fundraising and philanthropy publications. The library is sponsoring a series of training seminars on how to use these databases, which can be accessed within the library. Our connection with the Foundation Center is due to a major contribution from the Friends.

In addition to bringing in the Foundation Center, your annual appeal funds last year supported the children's room with programs, parties and a summer reading program; bought Jellyfish chairs for the teen room; provided library users with free passes to 20 area museums including MassMOCA, Hildene and the Shelburne Museum; approved the purchase of new stackable chairs for concerts; will bring us another First Wednesdays lecture series, put on by the Vermont Humanities Council (for the schedule of speakers go to the Friends web page (<http://friendsofbrookslibraryvt.org>) and much, much more.

Without your support, these programs and other services would not be possible. Brooks Memorial Library is an essential resource for the people of our community. We rely on your ongoing tax deductible support of our Annual Appeal to make these and other programs available.

We live in a community that values the intellect. It is remarkable that in 2015 the librarians fielded over 16,728 questions. That is more than one reference question from every resident of Brattleboro and more than one for each of Brook's 10,941 borrowers.

This community's previous history of giving has made us what we are today and today's giving will shape what we are tomorrow. All of us have a stake in the evolution of Brooks Memorial Library.

Sincerely,

Joyce Marcel  
President of the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library

Robert Stack  
President of the Board of Trustees