

Our Purpose

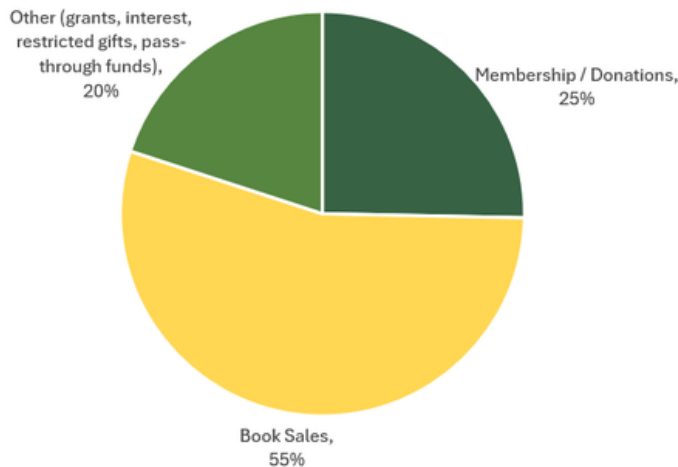
The Friends of Watauga County Public Library (FWCPL) raises funds to support the Watauga County Public Library by paying for equipment, supplies and services for the library not provided by state or local governments. We promote the use of the Library's resources and services, support the Library in developing Library services, and aid in providing for adequate facilities for the Library.

Financial Information*

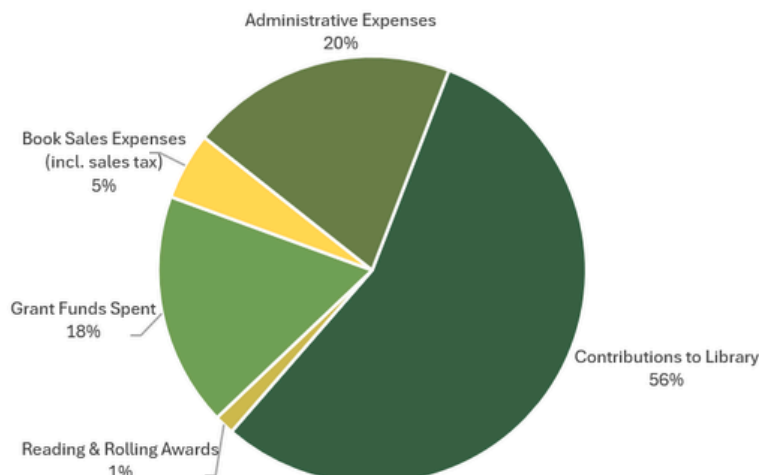
July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

(amounts rounded to nearest \$100)

Revenues \$57,500



Expenditures \$54,000



246

MEMBERS

89

VOLUNTEERS

4318

VOLUNTEER
HOURS

\$30,000

GIVEN TO
LIBRARY

* Renovation Project revenue and expenses tracked separately.



What an extraordinary year it has been for the Watauga County Public Library and the community that believes in it.

Over the past fiscal year, the people of Watauga County have come together in an inspiring display of generosity and community spirit. Through donations, pledges, fundraising events, and merchandise sales, the community has provided

91% of the \$1.5 million

needed to turn the library renovation project from a vision into reality. Construction is scheduled to begin this coming winter, with completion anticipated by summer 2027. The response has been remarkable. More than

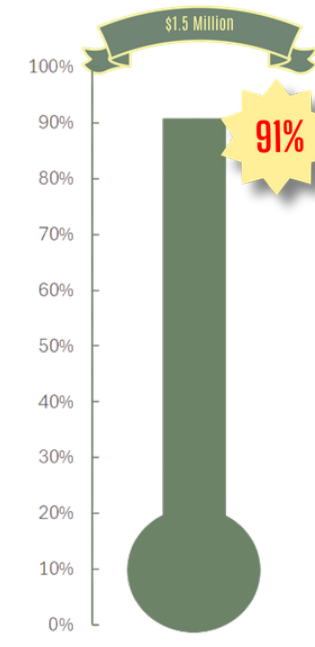
190 individual donations and pledges

have been made by members of the public and local businesses. Countless additional gifts, given anonymously through fundraisers and donation jars, have added to the momentum. The Friends of the Library have also reached out to and applied for grants from more than 30 agencies and organizations, resulting in more than \$140,000 in grant funding already awarded for the renovation project.

But the numbers tell only part of the story. Behind every gift is someone who believes that a library matters.

Libraries are among the few places left where everyone is welcome, regardless of age, income, background, or circumstance. Everyone belongs. They are places to learn, connect, discover, gather, and find opportunity.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has given, volunteered, attended an event, bought merchandise, dropped a donation in a jar, or simply shared the vision. This is truly a community effort, and together, we are making a lasting investment in the library and in the future of Watauga County.



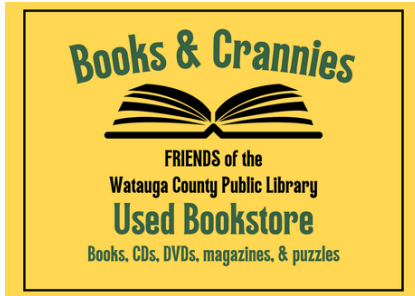
CORNERSTONE SPONSORS



RENOVATION SPONSORS



Books & Crannies Used Bookstore December & June Book Sale Events



Our used bookstore, located just inside the Library's entrance, has successfully completed its first year of operation under its new identity as Books & Crannies. Thanks to new interior and exterior signage, an established online presence via Google and Yelp, and additional shelf and display options, our

sales have increased by 39% over the last 12 month period.

Our biannual used book sale events (December and June) raised record high sales as well as had the largest attendance on record.

These milestones were made possible by the continued generosity of our book donors, our loyal customers, our many dedicated volunteers, and the support of the Library staff.

Fall into Books - Spring into Books

In the fall of 2025, the Friends introduced a new annual author series for all members of the community. The series, entitled Fall into Books and Spring into Books, was held in the fall of 2025 and spring of 2026. The programs featured several local authors representing a variety of genres and offered attendees an opportunity to learn about their writing process, published works, and the journey to becoming a published author. Presenters also shared practical advice on getting a manuscript published and marketing a book.



Designed for the entire community, the series welcomes both aspiring writers and avid readers. To date, presenters have included poets, adult novelists, and young adult authors, with each bringing a unique perspective and experience to the program. The series has provided an engaging opportunity for community members to connect with local authors, discover new books, and gain insight into the craft and business of writing.

Boonerang

Each year, the Friends organization looks forward to participating in Boonerang's Kids Zone, a lively community celebration filled with fun, laughter, and families. We're delighted to offer free lemonade and popcorn to everyone who stops by, along with one of our favorite giveaways—free children's books! In June 2026, we helped put books into the hands of local children by

giving away an impressive 320 books.

It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with families, promote the joy of reading, and share a little library magic with the community.



Little Free Libraries

The Little Free Library volunteers have been busy this year, engaging with Eagle Scouts from App State to build and repair LFL's, with Boone United Methodist Church to add one there, and with F.A.R.M. Café to steward their free book shelves.

We now have 13 Little Free Libraries,

each offering books for all ages, scattered around Watauga County, including locations intended to reach students, visitors, and locals, whether downtown or in remote areas of the high country.



AMERICA 250 Grant-Funded Quilt Collaboration & Celebration



As part of the America250 NC initiative celebrating 250 years of American history, a stunning, museum-quality 14-foot quilt, "A Gathering of Voices and Visions of Freedom," was created through a partnership between the Mountain Laurel Quilt Guild and the Friends of the Library. Local quilters, volunteers, Appalachian State's Appalachian Studies Department, Cherokee educators, and the North Carolina DAR Society collaborated on the quilt

The Friends of the Library secured an America250 NC grant to fund the quilt's creation, historical educational materials, travel, and exhibits. Crafted over six months, the quilt features historically accurate scenes depicting Watauga County's past and the evolution of modern-day Watauga County.

The quilt traveled to each county school library, as well as to civic groups, historical societies, the BRAHM, and the Western Watauga Branch Library, providing students and community members with a hands-on way to explore local and national history.

The commemorative quilt came home to the library on June 27 for a joyful America 250 Commemoration and its unveiling for permanent display. The well-attended celebration was a wonderful reflection of the spirit behind the quilt itself, bringing generations together through history, creativity, music, and shared community. Inspirational speakers and patriotic music set the tone, while children explored history through hands-on activities including weaving, making corn husk dolls, creating quilt squares, scavenger hunts, and a mock archaeological dig.

More than 6,000 people have now viewed this remarkable quilt, each having an opportunity to discover the stories and visions woven into its beautiful design.

The quilt's permanent home is in the Adult Services area of the Watauga County Public Library.

This location ensures that these stories will continue to inspire curiosity, conversation, and connection for years to come.

Hugh Hagaman Outstanding Volunteer Awards Presented April 18, 2026

Don Olander

For over 30 years, Don has provided dedicated service to the Friends of the Library. He has served as President, Treasurer from 2016 to 2024, Endowment Board member, book transporter, and dependable volunteer at book sales and other events.

As Treasurer, Don managed the Friends' finances with exceptional integrity, providing clear financial reports, thoughtful guidance, and timely information. He also stepped forward when his experience was especially needed to help guide the library expansion project.

Beyond his formal roles, Don has maintained Little Free Libraries and delivered books through Reading & Rolling, helping bring books to children and families throughout the community.

Known for his dry humor, reliability, and welcoming spirit, Don has strengthened both the work and the culture of the Friends. His remarkable longevity, leadership, and commitment make him richly deserving of this honor. *

Maggie Christenbury

Since 2013, Maggie Christenbury has given her energy, creativity, and commitment to the Friends of the Library. She has been a driving force behind countless outreach and literacy efforts, including overseeing the Friends' Little Free Libraries and helping bring books to neighborhoods, community events, Hospitality House, and children through Reading & Rolling and other programs.

A former Vice President, dedicated Reading & Rolling volunteer, and advocate for book recycling and book giveaways, Maggie consistently sees a need and steps forward. Her creativity was especially evident in the ARYL Reading Program, which brought books, puppets, songs, and hands-on activities into preschools to make early literacy fun and engaging.

Maggie's strong connections within the educational community, willingness to organize and serve, and commitment to expanding access to books have enriched the lives of countless children and families. Her generous service truly embodies the spirit of this award.

Jack James

In recognition of more than 30 years of extraordinary service, Jack was presented the Hugh Hagaman Volunteer Service Award. Since joining the Friends in 1994, Jack has served in nearly every leadership role, including President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Membership Coordinator. His thoughtful leadership, attention to detail, and commitment to sound financial and organizational practices have strengthened the Friends in lasting ways.

Jack has consistently stepped forward when his experience and steady guidance were most needed. He rebuilt and maintained the organization's membership database during a particularly challenging period and served as the Western North Carolina representative for the Friends of North Carolina Public Libraries. His advocacy contributed to statewide recognition of our organization with the 2011 Frances B. Reid Outstanding Friends Group Award.

Jack's integrity, dedication, and deep belief in the mission of libraries have left an enduring legacy. We are deeply grateful for his remarkable service.

*The library community mourns the passing of Don Olander in early September, 2026.

Reading & Rolling for 23 years!



Reading & Rolling brought the joy of books directly to young readers throughout rural Watauga County during the summer of 2025. Friends of the Library volunteers delivered 5–10 carefully selected books every two weeks to kindergarten through fifth-grade students at four rural schools, with library staff choosing books based on each child's interests.

54 students participated during the summer of 2025

Fifteen dedicated volunteers made these personal deliveries possible, helping children discover new stories, explore their interests, and keep reading all summer long. The program also gave back to the schools, with each participating reader who completed the program earning \$15 for their school's Media Center. We were delighted to provide a total of \$810 to the four schools at the close of the summer, making Reading & Rolling a wonderful example of how volunteers, the library, and our schools work together to nurture a lifelong love of reading.

How Our Contributions Supported Watauga County Public Library

- Summer Reading Program at the library with **680 children**; paid for performers and program expenses
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (**used by over 300 people**) - paid for snacks and an appreciation lunch for volunteer tax preparers
- Co-sponsored (with the Town of Boone) the Shred Truck at the Library enabling residents to recycle **over 8000 pounds of paper**
- Provided funds to purchase Adult and Youth books, magazines, newspapers, CDs, DVDs, a movie license, professional services, crafts and prizes for youth programs, performers and presenters at youth programs and program supplies as well as for email marketing, WOWbrary email newsletter and software used to promote new arrivals

2025-2026 Board of Directors

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

President:	Martha Gray
Vice-President:	Lisa Reynolds
Treasurer:	David Goldston
Secretary:	Cheryl Keller
Past President:	Claire Olander
Directors:	Bettie Bond Barbara Perry-Sheldon Denise Goetz

Committees

Special Events & Prog:	Geri Purpur
In-House Book Sales:	Doris Isaacs
Periodic Book Sales	Martha Gray
Membership:	Marie Hoepfl
Little Free Libraries:	Carolyn Hart
Reading & Rolling:	Laura Johnson
Renovation:	Donna Breitenstein
Volunteers:	Phoebe Politt
Marketing & Comm:	Martha Gray



140 Queen Street | Boone, NC 28607 | 828-264-8784
WataugaCountyFOL@gmail.com | www.WataugaCountyFOL.org
f Friends of the Watauga County Public Library @wataugaFOL