

FRIENDS FOCUS



FOHL Celebrates 50 Years of Service

The Friends of the Hockessin Library (FOHL), formed in 1975, recently celebrated 50 years of supporting the Hockessin Library and its community.

To mark this milestone, FOHL expanded funding for library programs and added six new museums to the Delaware Libraries Museum Pass Program: The Delaware Contemporary, Delaware Museum of Nature and Science, American Helicopter Museum, Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum, Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, and Eastern State Penitentiary. FOHL also sponsored additional adult art workshops through the Center for Creative Arts, redesigned the library's display cases, and purchased new furniture and a rug for the Children's Room.

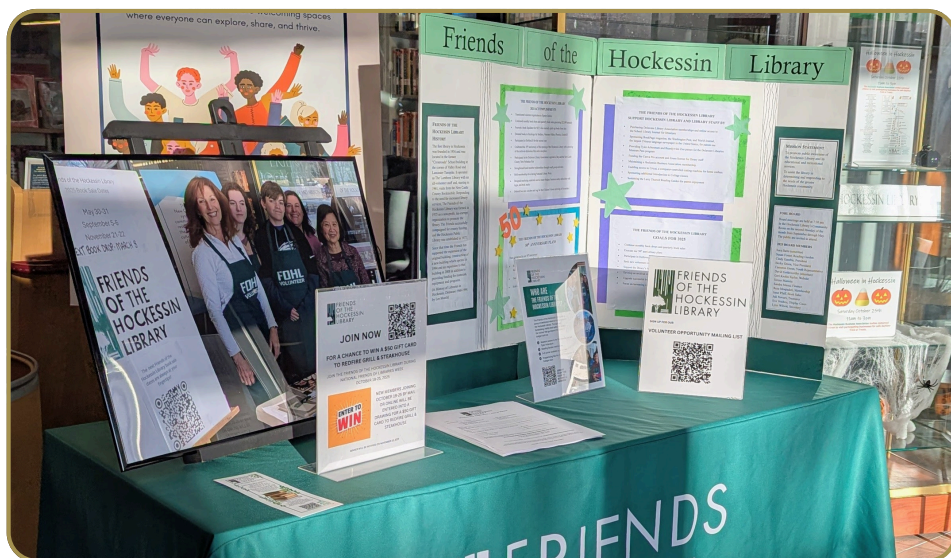
FOHL has long been part of Hockessin's story. As the community transformed from a rural farming community into the suburbs of today, the Friends advocated for the construction of the Hockessin Library, which opened in 1994, and later supported its renovation and expansion in 2008.

The anniversary was celebrated with a special brunch for board members and longtime volunteers, where New Castle County Manager of Libraries, Diana Brown, presented a proclamation recognizing FOHL's milestone from Executive Marcus Henry.

After 50 years of service, The Friends remain committed to supporting the Hockessin Library, strengthening its programs and resources, and responding to the evolving needs of the community. We are grateful to our members, volunteers, and the Hockessin community for helping make all of this possible—and look forward to what the next 50 years will bring!

“Bringing people together to learn, grow, and enjoy is the library's mission, and these additional programs are making that possible.”

Rachel West, Library Manager



Among Friends

When my children were students at Brandywine Springs School, I asked the principal, Buzzy Cooke (Cooke Elementary was named in his honor), why so many teachers wanted to work for him. Buzzy explained that his philosophy was not to tell teachers how to teach, but to remove obstacles and enable teachers to focus their time and energy on teaching. I hope to lead the FOHL Board this year, in the same way that Buzzy Cooke empowered his teachers to do their best in the classroom. My plan is to support both new and returning Board members as they bring fresh ideas to the organization and move forward with their goals for their committees.

We will continue to evaluate our mission this year. Established 50 years ago, FOHL aims “to promote public awareness of the Hockessin Library and its educational and recreational services, along with assisting the library in determining and responding to the needs of the Hockessin community.”

When this mission was established, the current Hockessin Library building did not exist. The rural farming community of Hockessin was transforming into the suburbs of today, and the needs of the community were different. Are there now additional ways we can help our community or expand our mission? Or is FOHL appropriately positioned to serve our community as it is today? We will look closely at our mission and its relevance this year.

Before all this happens, I want to thank the outgoing members of FOHL who have stewarded the organization over many years. Sandy Massa, our immediate past Investment Chair, served for 30 years and grew the investment account to a point where FOHL has the capacity to expand its support for new initiatives. Sirena Manista also served for many years; Susan Foster and Geri Krolin-Taylor both served terms as President; and Juli Powers just completed her busy term as Treasurer. FOHL enters its 51st year in a strong position because of their dedication and leadership.

A terrific year lies ahead for us!

If you're interested in helping us by joining a committee, please let me know at FOHL.de.president@gmail.com.

Cindy Gamble, President



A Sizzling “Summer with the Library” for Adults

It has been a very busy, HOT summer at the Hockessin Library, with lots happening for adults! Craft programs—including knitting, beading, rock painting, cooking, and Cricut crafting have been especially popular, while the weekly Dungeons & Dragons group continues to draw interest.

Programs focused on self-care and health, including yoga, meditation, balance, and dementia, have also been well received.

Monthly book groups, including Noon, Evening, and Chick Lit, continue to attract new attendees. A new Pen Pal program connecting participants with people in New Zealand and Ireland has also generated enthusiastic interest.

The “Unearth a Story” Summer Reading program saw a steady stream of registrants on Beanstack, with support from the Friends providing funding for the Grand Prize and \$2.00 vouchers for upcoming FOHL book sales.

The library has also welcomed lots of NEW books, along with growing collections in its “Library of Things,” Graphic Novels, and Seed Library. Puzzles, games, telescopes, and other non-traditional materials are available to borrow, while 3-D printing requests remain steady.

There is always something new to discover at the Hockessin Library! Stop by, browse, and check something out.

Visit the [Hockessin Library webpage](#) for upcoming events.

Shelley Stein, Adult Services Librarian

From the Director's Desk

Established in 1977 in the Lambourn Library building on Valley Road, the Hockessin Library is preparing to celebrate 50 years of community service in 2027. As we look toward this milestone, we also honor the legacy of Grace Husted, who passed away on July 20, 2026. Ms. Husted served as our first director from 1977–1987 before becoming Director of the New Castle County Department of Libraries. She played a pivotal role in shaping our history, including our transition into the county library system in 1989 and our move to our current location in 1994.

Following our 2008 expansion, which added the Children's Room and meeting rooms, subsequent renovations have focused on the interior of the library, including fresh paint, new flooring, replacement furniture, and equipment upgrades. Through all these changes, our core mission remains the same: bringing people together to learn, grow, and enjoy.

During our "Library Snapshot Week" survey in July, visitors reminded us of what matters most:

- Foundation & Access: Free access to books and materials remains our most cherished core service.
- Connection for Families: Caregivers highlighted the Children's Room as a vital hub—a place where children can learn through play while adults build valuable connections.
- Growth & Curiosity: Readers and lifelong learners emphasized that our programs, study rooms, and flexible seating provide essential spaces to explore new hobbies, develop skills, and discover new ideas.

Thank you for being part of our story over the past five decades. As we look ahead to our 50th anniversary, we are excited to continue growing alongside the Hockessin community for many years to come!

In service,
Rachel West (she/her)
Library Manager, Hockessin Library



Hands on Learning

This summer, I was awarded a Delaware Library Association Community Engagement Grant, which I am using to create STEAM-focused circulation backpacks. Filled with hands-on activities and interactive manipulatives, the backpacks will explore topics such as telling time, measurement, farms, and the ABCs.

Inspired by similar kits at libraries around the country, I wanted to give children opportunities to develop fine motor and critical thinking skills while exploring new concepts and using their imaginations. Because not every family has access to these materials at home, the backpacks will allow children to borrow them from the library again and again.

Libraries are community centers where people come together to discuss, learn, grow, and share. My hope is that children and parents will learn something new or build on what they already know through activities that feel like play but are rooted in educational practices.

Hands-on learning is one of the most effective ways to build children's confidence and joy in exploring. These backpacks are a wonderful way to make that kind of learning accessible to more families.

Think Libraries First!

Terri Jones, MLS,
Youth Services Librarian



From Left to Right: Rocco Buetti, Ethan Hampton, Cindy Gamble, Samantha Ford, Ashrin Islam, Reza Moqtaderi, Josephine Olatubosun, Sandy Massa, Susan Foster, Geri Krolin-Taylor

FOHL Archive *Update*

University of Delaware students completed their senior Capstone project by moving FOHL's archive online. Fifty years of records were scanned, organized, and placed on a cloud drive to safeguard FOHL's past.

The FOHL archive team, under the leadership of Susan Foster, is thankful for the excellent work done by these UD students.



Pollinator *Garden*

Gateway Gardens, Boy Scout Troop 50, library manager Rachel West, and the Friends came together to install this small garden to the left of the library's front door, filling an open area with seasonal color and food for our pollinators.



Storytime and *Celebration*

New Castle County Executive Marcus Henry stopped by the library during storytime to celebrate the library's recent upgrades.

New Castle County installed new flooring throughout the library, and FOHL provided new seating and a rug for the Children's Room.

Save the *Date*

Board meetings
Second Monday
of the month
September - May,
7:30 PM

Book Drops
Second Saturday
of each month
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

2026-2027 Book Sales
November 20th & 21st
February 26th & 27th
May 21st & 22nd
August 27th & 28th
November 19th & 20th

Halloween in Hockessin
October 31st
11 AM to 3 PM

**National Friends of
Libraries Week**
October 18th - 27th

Hockessin Library Hours of Operation

Sunday — 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday — 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Tuesday — 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Wednesday — 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Thursday — closed
Friday — 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Saturday — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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