



Pages - of - Progress

FALL 2026 EDITION

The Friends of the Aiken County Public Library is a nonprofit, volunteer organization that supports the library's programs and funds many of the library's capital and operational needs to make the library accessible to all.

aikenlibraryfriends.org

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- THE FOREWARD -

A Word from our President

Welcome to the first edition of *Pages of Progress*, the Friends of the Aiken Library e-newsletter!

Whether you've been a Friend for years or recently became a Friend, thank you for believing in the important role our library plays in our community. Your support ensures the Aiken Library remains a vibrant place that inspires curiosity, creativity, and lifelong learning for ages 0-100+.

This newsletter will keep you informed of Friends of the Library news, programs, events and, most important, the impact of your support. There's nothing more rewarding than seeing firsthand the difference being a Friend can make.

Thank you for being a part of the story.



Maureen Lawrence
*President, Friends of the
Aiken County Public Library*

- CHECK IT OUT! -

Have you seen the Friends' new logo and website?



aikenlibraryfriends.org

Of all people, Library Friends know you shouldn't judge a book by its cover. But first impressions still matter. The Friends of the Library website and logo recently had a makeover to better reflect who we are, what we do, and the impact we're making throughout our community.

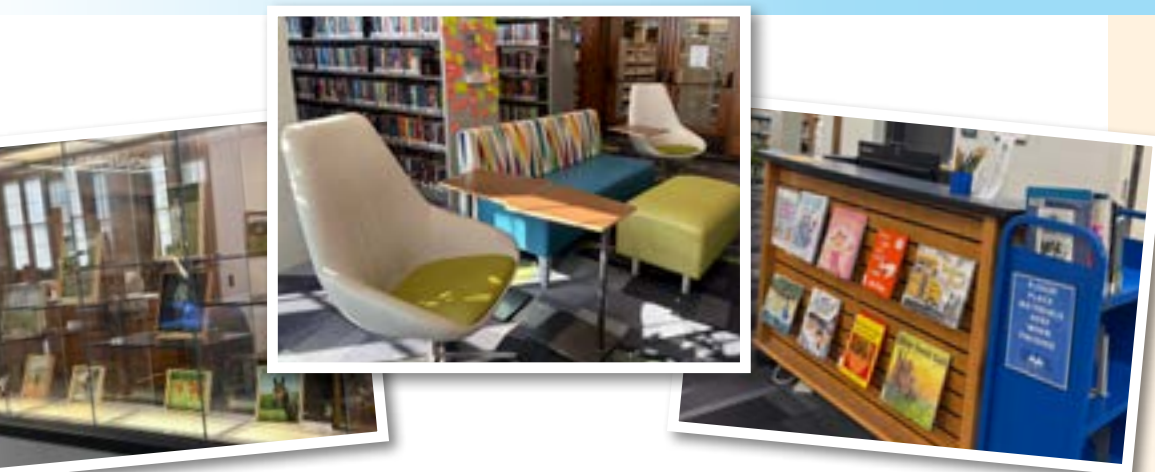
The refreshed website features a bolder design, easier navigation, and updated information about our purpose, programs, and press. Take a look. And check back frequently as we periodically update the library's [Wish List](#).

Help Spread the WORD!

In addition to the Friends' new look, we've also stepped up our social media presence.

Following us on **Facebook** and **Instagram** is the best way to see the impact you're making at the library and throughout the community. Plus, every follow, like, comment, and share helps introduce more people to our mission, grow our community, and strengthen our support of the library.

FOLLOW US ON



- BEYOND THE BOOKS -

Recent Capital Improvements at the Aiken Library

The spaces that welcome our patrons are every bit as important as the books, programs, and events they house. Through a generous bequest from the late Kathy Petty, the Aiken Library and the Friends of the Aiken Library were recently able to complete several major improvements that have enhanced the library experience, including:

- » ADA Standard Bathrooms
- » Renovated Kitchenette
- » New Landscaping
- » New Second-floor Carpeting & Lighting
- » New Stair Treads & Railings
- » New Circulation Room Cabinets
- » New Juvenile Book Display
- » Renovated Display Case
- » 32 New Book Trucks
- » Creative Lab
 - Stow & Show Closet
 - Noise Dampener for Walls
 - 2 Additional Tables & 8 Chairs
 - Sink
 - Closet
- » New Outside Book & Media Drop
- » New Hub Benches & Laptop Tables

The Main Characters

MEET YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Maureen Lawrence
President & Finance Committee

Karin Jaros
Vice President, Marketing & Communications

Cheryl Crawford
Secretary

Cathy McHugh
Treasurer & Finance Committee

Marilyn Palladino
Immediate Past President

Victoria Hampton
Past President

Jim Moor
Finance Committee

Jeff Powell
Finance Committee

Mary Shultz
Landscaping

Glenda McNichols
Art Among the Authors

Emilee Heise
Annual Giving Platform

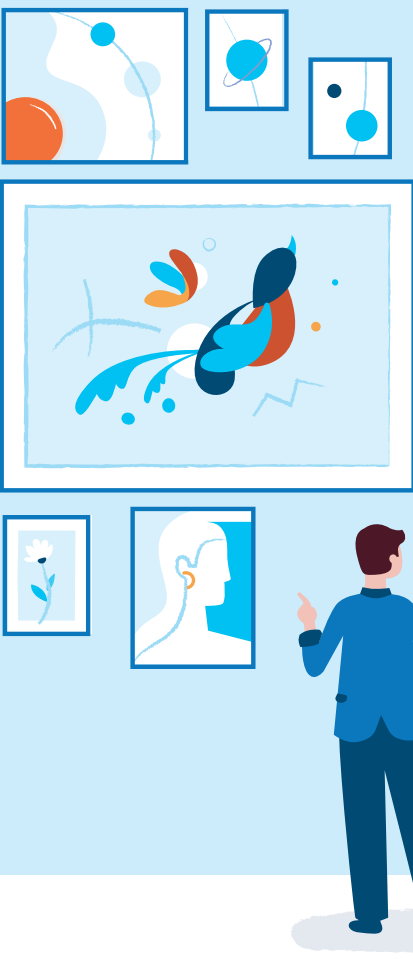
- NOVEL NEWS -

Cheers to Art Among the Authors!

Captivating stories don't just fill the shelves of the Aiken County Public Library – they also fill the walls. The Library Friends recently partnered with the Aiken Artist Guild, the Aiken County Public Library, and the ABBE Board of Trustees to introduce **Art Among the Authors**, a rotating exhibit showcasing works by local artists that enrich the library experience and celebrate our community's creative talent. Themed exhibits rotate every three months and the response has been fantastic!

Be on the lookout later this year for an invitation to a **January "Meet the Artists" cocktail party** at the library.

The evening will bring together fellow Friends and artists for conversation, camaraderie, and a first look at the new collection.



THEIR STORY. YOUR IMPACT.

What Your Support Makes Possible

"As both a mother and a teacher, I'm so appreciative of the resources and support the Aiken Library provides to the homeschooling community. The Mission Possible Homeschool

Co-op for families in Aiken and North Augusta takes advantage of all the programs, STEM activities, book clubs and creative classes the library offers throughout the year. We've even recently been granted use of the Creative Lab as a safe space for our students to periodically gather. Marie Davidson, the Youth Services Librarian, has hosted field trips for our students and knows every one of them by name. No other library in the region offers the breadth of classes and programs that the Aiken Library does. It really is the envy of other libraries and homeschooling communities – and we feel incredibly fortunate to have it right here in Aiken."

Samantha Altizer

Co-teacher, Mission Possible Home School Co-op





- FRIENDLY FACES -

Meet Library Friend Mary Shultz

Have you tried the new human sundial and admired the colorful landscaping along the walkway from the playground to the library entrance? This beautiful addition, including the installation of the Kathy Petty Memorial Garden, was spearheaded by Landscape Committee Chair Mary Shultz. Her dedication has helped create a more welcoming library for everyone who visits.

Past Presidents Marilyn Palladino and Victoria Hampton with Landscape Committee Chair Mary Shultz.

Delaney Stabler, daughter of Library Friends Jamie and Ross Stabler, tries out the new human sundial.



DID YOU KNOW?

Poetry in Motion

Of the nearly 500 programs offered by the Aiken Library, **more than half are funded by the Library Friends**, including **Art of Words Poet's Open Mic**, a monthly event open to adults, young adults, and teens designed to help writers and spoken-word artists gain confidence, receive feedback, and connect with the local literary community.



COMING IN JANUARY

Once Upon a Canvas

Date + Details to Come

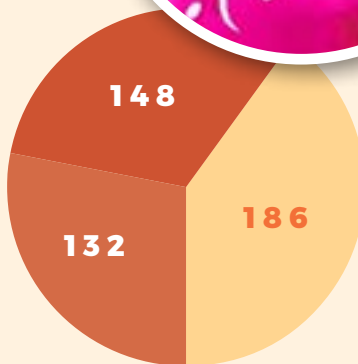
An evening of creativity, conversation, and cocktails with the artists of **Art Among the Authors**.

Aiken County Public Library

Watch your email for your exclusive event invitation.



◀ Tamell "BiG" Bailey, cohost of the Aiken Library's Art of Words: Poets Open Mic.



- 2025 Programs fully funded by Friends
- 2025 Programs partially funded by Friends
- 2025 Programs funded by other sources



Bound Together to Change Lives

THE PEOPLE BEHIND
THE PAGES & PROGRAMS

Every chapter of the library's story is made possible by people like you. Like the song says, "Thank you for being a friend!"

* Repeat Readers – Friends who have donated three or more consecutive years at any level.

- 2026 Friends of the Aiken County Public Library -

Donors from November 1, 2025 through date of publication.



Epic Friends
\$1,000+

Aiken County –
Gary Bunker &
Andrew Siders *

Aiken Pickleball, Inc.
Mike Beckner *
Doris M. Begley *

Edie and Robert
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Diane E. Davies *
Sharon A. Filler
Janet M. and
James R. Kabel *

Cynthia Hazen and
Nicholas Stratas *
James R. Stainbrook
Kathleen and
John Wills *



Classic Friends
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Larry Buck *
Mary Gellman

Mary Hunter *
Bonnie D. and
Hank Kania *
Maureen Lawrence

Marilyn and
Woody Ware *
Kathleen Wise *



Loyal Friends
\$250+

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Cathy E. Sabol *
Sand River Women's Club
Mary Shultz
Freda A. Smith

Cynthia VandeGrift *
Gregory F. Weis
Tad Whiteside *
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Will Williams
Ellen Wood and
Michael Durkee *



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Mryna and Robert Engle	Karin and Jerry Jaros	Sally Pfeifer	Sara and Michael Wood
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Special Friends \$50+

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Good Friends \$25+

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Not seeing your name? Become a Friend or [renew your friendship here](#). Know someone who would make a great Friend? Please forward this newsletter and invite them to join!