



# Friends of the Salem Library

Promoting Library Services

## Twenty-fifth Anniversary of The Friends of Salem Library



Displaying the twenty-fifth anniversary commemorative plaque are (L to R) past presidents George Ziegler and Betsy Butts and current president Carl Nawrocki. Absent is past-president Sandy Teixeira

On May 20, 2015, the Friends of Salem Library commemorated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their founding with a plaque placed in the library's entryway. The plaque recognizes The Friend's ongoing support to the Salem Library. From its beginning, the mission of the Friends has remained simple, but constant – support Salem's Library. Last year, The Friends provided nearly \$14,000 that was used to fund programs, additions to the collection, the Summer Reading program, museum passes and Storytime. It is estimated that over the last five years, The Friends have provided nearly \$60,000 to our library. These funds are raised through the hard work of the Friends and come mainly from membership dues, donations, and fundraising activities. Last year was an especially good year for Friends' fundraising and this success means we have more money to support the library. We expect to provide about \$17,000 in funding this coming year.

Support was not so lucrative. In the early 1990's, there were no programs and additions to the collection were severely limited simply because there was no room in the old library. Yet even with no room for people or additional books, The Friends found ways to improve library services; including buying the first

public access computers for patron use, upgrading circulation software, and conducting an inventory of the collection that allowed the library to become part of the inter-library system. The Friends had a water heater installed, providing hot water to the library. All this time, the Friends were saving money to help defer the cost of a new library.

In the late 90's, the Board of Selectmen authorized studies and formed committees to explore building a new library. Friends served on committees and also became politically active in trying to convince taxpayers to vote for a new library. There was an overwhelming vote to build a new library and the Friends conducted a town-wide fundraising campaign which ultimately provided \$124,000 to defer some of the cost of the building. In 2005 the new library opened and the Friends turned their sights on making our library a wonderful place to visit, learn, be entertained and go home with a great book or movie.

The Friends of Connecticut Libraries (FOCL) awarded Salem's Friends an Outstanding Friends Group Award for their contributions to a new library. A number of individual Friends have received honors for their efforts on both local and State levels. While receiving honors is appreciated, it is the support our library receives from its patrons and especially from The Friends that is the best reward. We hope you will join The Friends as we continue to support the Salem Library for at least another twenty-five years.