

# friends

HELPING  
LIBRARIES  
REACH  
NEW HEIGHTS

Friends of the Library, Montgomery County • [www.folmc.org](http://www.folmc.org)

## Get Involved with FOLMC!

### Share your passion for libraries through our flexible volunteer program

April is National Volunteer Month, and FOLMC thanks the 56 new volunteers and the 198 total volunteers whose time and dedication make a significant difference in the success of our mission to serve Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL). We look forward to celebrating everyone at FOLMC's Volunteer Appreciation Event taking place during National Library Week (April 14-18).

If you've been thinking about getting more involved in your community, now's the perfect time to start. FOLMC invites you to a special Volunteer Open House on April 24 at Rockville Memorial Library where we'll showcase all the ways **you** can support libraries—and fit volunteering into your busy schedule. More details to follow.

### Why Volunteer Now?

Volunteering is an important way to make your community a better place. It expands your reach and makes a positive impact. Volunteers experience a variety of benefits, from learning new skills to lowering stress levels, achieving shared goals, and meeting friends with like-minded interests.

According to U.S. Census data, the national rate of volunteers declined significantly during the Covid-19 pandemic, which made it challenging for organizations to host events and conduct meetings. While volunteering rates have been on the rebound, there's still a significant gap between pre-pandemic and current levels.

In the Washington, DC region, for instance, 34.1% of people volunteered formally in 2023, compared with just 28.1% nationally. Yet that number is still 5% less than its 2019 high, when nearly 39.5% of people in the DMV volunteered.

### Ways to Get Involved

Help "close the gap" with a cause you care about by supporting libraries as a FOLMC volunteer. Support is needed at nearly every level of operations, from organizing shelves at our Branch Booksales to serving on our Board of Trustees.



Poolsville Day 2024 (Left to Right) - Isabel, Angela, Ann

Depending on the position, FOLMC volunteers serve on a weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis, with longer-term commitments required for our Booksale Leads.\*

Signing up is easy: Simply fill out and submit a volunteer application at our website: [folmc.org/support/volunteer-with-us](http://folmc.org/support/volunteer-with-us)

### Branch Booksales

Booksale volunteers serve at the organization's front lines. They arrange and sort materials and keep bookshelves organized and tidy. Due to the volume of donations received, help is often needed on a daily basis.

You can volunteer as an individual or organize friends to serve together (just make sure to note this when submitting your application). There is no hourly time commitment, but we do ask that you volunteer over a long-term period; yearly preferred.



Picture - left to right - Angela, Rhoda, Carol - Gaithersburg Branch Booksale Volunteers

### Branch Booksale Lead

Interested in getting even more hands-on? If you have a bit more time to devote and can volunteer on a regular basis, consider becoming a Booksale Lead. This leadership role manages the Booksales and works alongside FOLMC's

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## From the Desk of Ari Z. Brooks

Executive Director, FOLMC

## Volunteerism Matters, Now More Than Ever

### Take Action During National Volunteer Month

Now more than ever, I encourage you to make a contribution to your community by becoming a volunteer—they're the backbone of healthy and connected communities.

Volunteerism has always been an important force for meaningful change in America, from the Revolutionary War to the Great March on Washington. The courageous efforts of enslaved Black people like Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman played a prominent role in abolishing slavery. Black volunteers fought for political representation and educational rights during Reconstruction. Through the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks inspired countless volunteers to organize sit-ins, freedom rides, and voter registration drives. Volunteer action gained further momentum from the 1970s through the present day with the formation of

nonprofits that aid underserved communities through public health and social justice.

My volunteer story started as a Girl Scout in Southern Maryland, where we would sing for residents at our local nursing home. At the time, I didn't know the significance of our actions, but as I grew older, I understood how those touch points could be transformational, uplifting both the residents—as well as ourselves. As a matter of fact, my first job in Montgomery County was as a Volunteer Coordinator.

National Volunteer Month celebrates the long history of volunteers in America, but most importantly, it encourages others to get involved. So, if you've been thinking about volunteering, now's the time to step up. You can contribute your time and energy wherever you feel the greatest need is, and wherever your passions are.

I hope you will consider volunteering with FOLMC—you can even bring along a friend! Sign up today at our website, [folmc.org](http://folmc.org), and help amplify your impact in our community. All change is possible because of volunteers like you.

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volunteer manager, Angela Meyers, to train new volunteers, maintain the volunteer schedule, and conduct outreach in the community.

Booksale Leads are asked to commit to weekly schedules over a long-term timeframe.

### 2026 Mosaic Judges

Mosaic is FOLMC's language arts competition that encourages middle schoolers to express their cultural identity through the written word. Volunteer judges are needed to grade student submissions.

Judges will review one grade level's worth of materials, which is typically a mix of 50 short stories, essays, and poems. The reading period takes place from February - March. Judges are invited to attend the Mosaic Ceremony honoring the winners and honorable mentions.

### FOLMC Board of Trustees

As the organization's governing body, Board Members do more than provide financial oversight and manage risk; they also help set FOLMC's strategic direction, collectively make decisions, and build relationships with the community.



Volunteer Appreciation Event April 2024. Back row standing, Left to Right - Connie, Jyotsna, Diana, Karen, Linda ; Seated at table, Left to Right - Kati, Barbara

FOLMC currently seeks Members with skills in finance, fundraising, human resources, IT and/or marketing. Candidates must be able to commit to attending quarterly Board meetings, participating in at least one FOLMC program, and serving on at least one FOLMC Board committee.

FOLMC is grateful to **all** our dedicated volunteers for their hard work and great efforts—without you, what we do would not be possible!

\*Note that FOLMC Rockville and Wheaton Bookstores are currently fully staffed. Check our website for the most up to date opportunities.



## A Note from MCPL Director Darcell Graham

### Dear Friends,

As the season changes at the libraries, it's clear that the talent and commitment of our staff are constant. Since coming to MCPL late last year, I have been impressed daily by their efforts to build centers of learning, creativity, and community throughout Montgomery County.

I am especially grateful for the generosity of Friends of the Library, Montgomery County. Your contributions over the years, from piloting new initiatives to providing ongoing support, have made a profound impact on our operations and staff morale. Thanks to your funding, we have been able to invest in key enhancements that empower our team to serve our community even better:

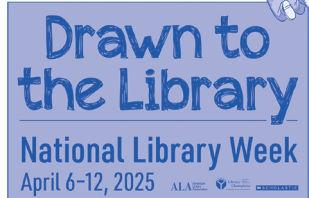
- **Annual Staff Development Day:** With your support, our team comes together to learn new skills, share best practices, and have a little fun.
- **Self-Checkout Machines:** These innovations streamline the borrowing process, ensuring a smoother, more user-friendly experience for everyone.
- **People Counters:** This technology provides precise data on library usage, allowing us to tailor our services to meet the evolving needs of our customers.
- **Session Management Software:** This essential tool keeps our branch computers and other digital services running seamlessly, enhancing both staff efficiency and visitor experience.
- **Bar Scanner:** This upgrade refines our inventory management, helping us maintain and organize our collections with greater ease.

Your support enriches our library's infrastructure and supports staff expertise and collaboration. As we celebrate our colleagues this spring, we also celebrate our partnership with FOLMC, and your advocacy and contributions.

I look forward to continually exploring new opportunities to innovate and serve our community with you. Thank you for your commitment to MCPL.

Warmly,

Darcell  
MCPL Director



## Just for the Record, A Vinyl Day

Saturday, August 9, 2025  
Brigadier General Charles E.  
McGee Library (Silver Spring)



READ. RUN. REPEAT.

## Read. Run. Repeat. Run/Walk for Libraries

Sunday, October 19, 2025  
Wheaton Regional Park



Visit our website, [www.folmc.org](http://www.folmc.org) for more details as they become available!

Mark Your Calendars



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Recreation Center  
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(301) 933-1110

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 [Friends of the Library  
Montgomery County](https://www.linkedin.com/company/friends-of-the-library-montgomery-county)

**SATURDAY MAY 17, 2025  
10AM-6PM**

friends OF THE LIBRARY @

 **GAITHERSBURG  
BOOK  
Festival**

**Be Sure To Visit Us At Our  
Park Pavilion Location!**

Bohrer Park  
506 S. Frederick Ave  
Gaithersburg, MD

[folmc.org](https://www.folmc.org)

