

friends

HELPING
LIBRARIES REACH
NEW HEIGHTS

Friends of the Library, Montgomery County • www.folmc.org

Pivoting Progress

Remember when people said that computers were going to replace books?

Or when they said Little Free Libraries were a threat to libraries?

Skeptics will always find a reason to believe the sky is falling, but the truth is, they are underestimating how resilient libraries—and librarians—are. Libraries have always been at the forefront of embracing change, from digitizing collections and library catalogues to offering eBook downloads and Internet access. Pre-COVID, MCPL Cardholders could check out iPads, laptops and even Internet hotspots, which were funded by FOLMC.

That's why it came as no surprise that MCPL quickly adapted to the challenges presented by the global coronavirus outbreak by offering a wealth of completely free digital content and moving its in-person events online. As restrictions eased, MCPL reopened book drops and introduced contactless pickups for its book holds.

Similarly, FOLMC pivoted by transforming its *Mosaic* awards program for middle school writers and annual *Library After Dark Gala* into successful virtual formats. *Contemporary Conversations*, a series of talks about cultural and current issues with journalists and authors, became online events, and our *Vinyl Record Day* welcomed a New York singer-songwriter to judge our virtual talent competition.

Customers could still shop for FOLMC's used books and music online through our five online marketplaces, and we published weekly staff-curated reading lists on Bookshop.org. At a time of deep social and political division, we introduced FOLMC Book Bundles that spoke to timely events such as social justice and awareness and PRIDE month.

As soon as it was sanctioned by the county, **we reopened our beloved Rockville Bookstore**, implementing COVID-19 health and safety protocols, and resumed book donation acceptance. Customers could shop safely during our new business hours and select after-hours appointments. Our staff has been busy behind the scenes, working remotely, processing donations, and planning events for next year and beyond.



“A library is a growing organism. A growing organism takes in new matter, casts off old matter, changes in size and takes new shapes and forms. “

— S. R. Ranganathan,
5 Laws of Library Science, 1931

This newsletter was sent to print on Oct. 30, 2020.
For our latest free online events and most up-to-date Chapter information, visit our website, www.folmc.org.



Letter from the Board President and the Executive Director: Finding Our Rhythm

Tom Thomson and Ari Z. Brooks, MSW

The Resiliency of Libraries

Libraries are a trusted source of information, an institution that gives you what you need when you need it.

- Where do you go when you are searching for accurate information about what the CDC is recommending?
- Or if it's safe to travel?

When you want to know how to interpret information, or what the experts are saying, the library has all of that, and more.

Sometimes you don't even know you need what the library offers—for the parents who have read *Click Clack Moo* one too many times, Virtual Storytimes can get you through.

When the pandemic is the catalyst of change, and people need to reinvent themselves—now—the library offers Udemy, an online learning platform that offers hundreds of job skills and certificate training courses. These courses cost money but they are free with a library card.

Libraries make it possible to entertain or improve ourselves. Libraries help us grow. Libraries have opened a whole world to us we couldn't have done in person, and that's how we will get better in the end. Donate to FOLMC to help us continue to help support MCPL.



“Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities.”

-R. David Lankes



FOLMC is supported in part by funding from the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County.

In the beginning of COVID-19, we were in crisis mode. Nothing was easy, but we were patient with ourselves and figured out the best way to live (and work) in quarantine. My husband and I were able to work remotely but made time so we could all eat dinner together—the first time in a long time—and get in our daily walk.



Chaos continues to surround us, but we are learning to find our rhythm. As the summer ended, I had found it difficult to imagine how virtual school was going to work, but when my children were in their classes, I could have my meetings. Just how would we do PE? I had wondered. One weekend we built an obstacle course in our backyard.

Just like my personal life, FOLMC has had to figure out how to settle into the chaos and make things work. We have come a long way since March and created new ways to serve our members and support MCPL. The fact is we never stopped—and at times it feels like we really are doing the impossible.

At each stage of the recovery, FOLMC's mission to support libraries remains critical, because our communities need library resources to stay healthy, safe, and informed. As the economy shifts, people need to access the free job resources, interview support, and digital skills training that the library provides. We are helping them find their rhythm, too.

Just like you, I look forward to resuming the life I once knew – and as hard as it is to believe, there will be an end to these difficult times. With grace, humor, and resilience we will continue to get through it.

Many Thanks!
We thank outgoing Board President Tom Thomson for his two terms of professional leadership.

DESIGNATE FOLMC IN YOUR WORKPLACE GIVING



CFC Designation Code 42387



United Way NCA Designation Code 8728



Maryland Charity Campaign Designation Code 521283371

FOLMC to the Rescue

When FOLMC learned that the Barnes & Noble at Montrose Crossing was moving and its literary murals were not going with it, we sprang into action.

Remember the murals? They were on the second floor of the store, located above the escalators and next to the children's section—five-foot high mosaic tiled depictions of Edgar Allan Poe, Charlotte Bronte, Louisa May Alcott, and Mark Twain.

Director of Business Operations Lance Salins was instrumental in securing the works and, piece by piece, dismantling the 175-lb. treasures and carefully transporting them to a safe location.



Mark Twain Mural

Being library lovers, we couldn't help but do a little research. Who had made the murals? Was the artist still around? We learned that they were created by Alfredo Ratinoff, a mosaic artist who lived in Maryland at the time.

Mr. Ratinoff has served as artist-in-residence at Smithsonian and taught at the Holton-Arms school in Potomac. His many tiled artworks are featured prominently at locations like Strathmore Hall and the Watergate Gallery.

We contacted Mr. Ratinoff to find out if he would be interested in talking to us about them.

"Thank you for rescuing the murals," he said. "I'm happy they have found a home with you."

Mr. Ratinoff has agreed to tell their story as part of our 2021 Library After Dark Virtual Gala, where we will auction them off in order to raise funds to support MCPL. It's one more example of how our work at FOLMC serves to preserve our sense of history and the stories all around us.

SAVE THE DATE & APRIL 10, 2021

LIBRARIES

ARE INSTRUMENTAL

7TH ANNUAL LIBRARY AFTER DARK

Ways to Shop FOLMC!

1 Buy a Book Bundle

Purchase a FOLMC Book Bundle to be shipped straight to your door for just \$30. You can send Book Bundles as gifts or donate a Bundle to someone in need.



Each Bundle includes six-eight (6-8) books in a combination of paperback and hardback formats. Order yours at www.folmc.org/bookstores/book-bundles/

2 Shop FOLMC on amazon

Shop the FOLMC Bookstores online from the comfort of your own home through our Amazon store. Items ship from and are sold by FOLMC. Our Amazon store name is **Friends of the Library, Montgomery County**.

3 Visit Our ebay Store

Shop FOLMC rare and unique texts through our eBay shop. Check often as stock changes frequently! Visit **mcfriends** on eBay to shop our collection.

4 Shop on B Bookshop

Want to purchase NEW books - and support FOLMC? We're on Bookshop, an online book hub that directly supports independent bookstores. Visit Bookshop.org and search by Geographic Location for FOLMC in Rockville, Maryland.

5 Check Out Our Vinyl Collection

Browse our collection of more than 1,500 vinyl records on Discogs by visiting www.discogs.com/user/folmcrockville/collection.

When you are ready to purchase, email bookstores@folmc.org with your order

6 Purchase a Gift Card

Share FOLMC Bookstores with others! Shop anytime day or night for a FOLMC Gift Card at www.folmc.org/bookstores/online-store/



We thank you for your support!



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Suite 310
Rockville, Maryland 20850-2389

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



A BOOK TO LOVE AT FRIENDS' BOOKSTORES

ROCKVILLE BOOKSTORE

Open for shopping and donations

Randolph Hills Shopping Center
4886 Boiling Brook Parkway
(301) 984-3300

WHEATON BOOKSTORE

This location temporarily closed as of Oct. 30

Visit folmc.org/bookstores for up to date information.

Wheaton Library and Community
Recreation Center
11701 Georgia Avenue
(301) 933-1110

The Continuum of What's Next

As the COVID-19 crisis continues to impact just about every aspect of daily life, the future has never felt so unpredictable. These are challenging times for us all, and we hope we can count on you to renew your membership and/or donate to FOLMC so that we can continue our work to support MCPL.

While much of the world has stopped, libraries have been there for us.

When the library building was shut down, it was there for us online—through Virtual Storytimes, Video Wellness Programs, Educational Resources and Job Skills Tools.

In changing environments, it continues to be there for us.

We know we're going to get through this crisis, but we may not always know what will happen next. We can trust that libraries are going to be a part of getting us to that next step. They will continue to provide much-needed information and resources for our communities, from young to old, to help them land on their feet.

Libraries are on the continuum of what's next.

Through your continued investment and support, you will enable libraries to be there every step of the way. In times like these, we are reminded how interconnected we are, and what an important gift the library is to us all.

Use the envelope provided or visit www.folmc.org to help us keep the momentum going today.

On behalf of all of us, thank you for your generosity during this critical time. Together we can overcome all things.

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