

Dear friends, neighbors and book lovers,

The Westport Friends Book Fair was a joyful and financial success, and we are so grateful! Thank you to all who donated books, purchased books (occasionally even your own), and shared your enthusiasm. We weren't sure you'd come. It had been 3 years, during a pandemic and many difficult life challenges, and we were afraid we hadn't gotten the word out. Forgive us for our silly thoughts.

You came in what felt like record numbers. The ground on the property that first day almost vibrated. By the end of the fair, only 2 of the 40 tables of fiction remained.

What struck us most - what we want to especially thank you for - is that you not only came, but you did with joy and generosity. When someone was short a dollar, we could truly assure them that someone would be along in ten minutes to cover it. One customer gave us sixty in memory of her mother Louise, asking that we use it to purchase books for kind hearted people. When a young man with mobility challenges arrived just at the eleven o'clock whistle on Saturday, the group jammed around two sci-fi/fantasy tables immediately made room for him as he joined the chatter about favorite series and authors.

Over the nine days there were a few tears and many heartfelt thanks at being able to return to an annual event after some difficult time. One afternoon, two women with armloads of books turned around halfway down the driveway and called back, "We love you!" What was there to do but call back, "We love you!"

The book fair is a wonder to us. You give us books to sell. We set up the fair. You buy books. We get the money we need for our budget. And because of the success of the fair in recent years, we can also give money back via organizations such as the Westport Food Pantry, the Immigration Assistance Center, the Community Center for Economic Development in New Bedford, and others

And then we start over. The book shed will reopen for donations on September 3rd. Until then, we hope you enjoy your summer, your books, jigsaw puzzles, music, and movies. We hope you also found a little joy and hope with which to carry on. Thank you for coming. We are so grateful to be part of this community.

Gretchen Baker-Smith
Clerk, Westport Book Fair Committee on behalf of Westport Monthly Meeting of Friends
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