



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUTHOR: Katie Hepler, Marketing Assistant
Contact: Virginia Krueger, Head of Marketing & Outreach
PHONE: 734-475-8732 x 229
E-MAIL: vkrueger@chelseadistrictlibrary.org

December 10, 2024 | Chelsea, MI

Title: CDL Honors Dedicated Volunteers at Annual Appreciation Party

On Saturday, December 7, Chelsea District Library (CDL) staff and volunteers gathered at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Party, and presented our 2024 Friend of the Year and 2024 Volunteer of the Year awards. This year, CDL recognized 2024 Friend of the Year Gary Zenz and 2024 Volunteers of the Year Donald and Diane Locker for their exceptional support of the library. Originating in 1992, the awards are an opportunity to recognize the enormous gratitude CDL has for those individuals who help to further the library's mission by doing work above and beyond the normal scope of the CDL staff.

The Friend of the Year Award honors an outstanding member of the Friends of the Chelsea District Library (FoCDL). Gary Zenz has a decades-long history of support for CDL. From leadership positions as a library trustee to rolling up his sleeves to repair furniture or add patron safety measures, he has demonstrated generosity with his time and talents. He has served in a variety of positions on the Friends board, including president and secretary. In 2024 he led the team in recognizing the Friends 75th anniversary.

Dayle Wright, President of the Friends of Chelsea District Library reflects on Gary's service, sharing, "Gary has served the CDL both as a library trustee and as a member and leader of the library's Friends group in countless ways since 1985. He has been a leader in organizing and directing meetings, work projects, and fundraising. He has been willing to do whatever needs done to help the library—from shelving books for the opening day of our building, to replacing light bulbs in high ceilings, to building handrails for patron safety—and recently with summarizing the history and current work of the Friends in a presentation for our 75th anniversary."

The Volunteer of the Year Award honors library volunteers who go above and beyond to support library operations and programs. This year's awardees, Donald and Diane Locker, grew up in Detroit, met at the University of Michigan, and have been members of the Chelsea community since 1988. They are instrumental to the success of the library's Walk to School Wednesday program. About the program, they shared, "Volunteering with the Walk to School Wednesday program has been pure joy, even on the days when it's been chilly and wet. The walkers are all good natured and have quite the variety of interests—lively conversations are part of the fun. As people who knew the extraordinary Detroit Main Library as kids, we're so very proud of the fine library that Chelsea has, and all the ways that our library and its staff make Chelsea a better place."

Lori Coryell, CDL's Director, said, "What a pleasure it is to honor Donald and Diane Locker as our Volunteers of the Year! The Lockers have been bringing their unique brand of joy and support to the library for many years as patrons and as volunteers. The Lockers—a truly dynamic duo—rise before dawn every Wednesday during the school year, hike over to the library, and shepherd students to South Meadows Elementary and Beach Middle schools. They are very special and very dear to us here at the library and to the kids they walk to school."

The staff at CDL sincerely thanks all of our Friends and volunteers for their contributions to the library. Your generosity allows us to engage, inspire, and equip our community! For information about volunteering, please contact Linda Ballard at 734-475-8732 x202. For more information on becoming a Friend, visit friends.chelseadistrictlibrary.org.

About Us: Chelsea District Library (CDL) is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to engage, inspire, and equip through evolving services and resources. CDL currently serves 16,126 residents in the Chelsea library district—City of Chelsea, Lyndon and Sylvan Townships, and the portions of Lima and Dexter Townships within the Chelsea School District. For more information visit chelseadistrictlibrary.org.

#