

Oakmont LIBRARY Has Gone fine free as of January 2022

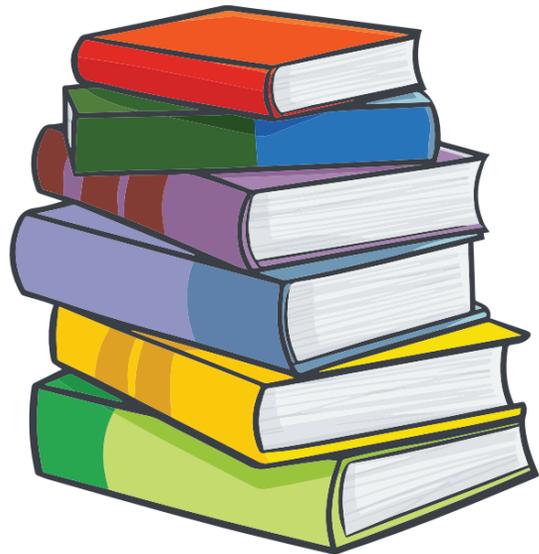
What does that mean?

It means that the library no longer charges daily late fines on items that are overdue, and if your home library is Oakmont, any existing fines lingering on your account have been waived. You may still be charged for lost or damaged materials, printed items, or other fees, but you can turn in that stack of children's picture books a day or two late without fear of racking up a big bill!

All library materials will still have a due date, and books that are lost, damaged, or otherwise not returned will be charged just as they are now. As the due date approaches, the library will notify the patron of the due date and ask that they return it (if the item is **not** eligible for renewal). If the item is six weeks overdue, a bill to replace the item will be issued, and if an item is more than six weeks overdue, the account may be referred to a collection agency depending on the registering library.

Overdue fines generate less than 1% of our annual budget at this point. We constantly explore other ways of generating income to help supplement our operating budget.

Our expectation is that the majority of items checked out will still be returned within a few days of the due date, regardless of an overdue fine. Other libraries that have made this change have not seen a significant change in the rate of items that are overdue and see around 95% of items returned within one week of the due date.



Oakmont Library's mission is to "is to serve as a community source of lifelong learning, information, recreation, and inspiration." We believe this policy change will help us better accomplish our mission to create an inclusive, welcoming environment. Studies have shown that overdue fines create a barrier to access for the library patrons who need our services the most. We want everyone to feel welcome at the library!

Though we will continue to collect fees, fines and past fines will be eliminated. What is the difference between a fine and a fee?

Fines: funds owed for overdue items

Fees: funds owed for replacement items, collection agency charges, and other manual charges.

Beth Mellor

Beth Mellor, Director
Oakmont Carnegie Library

Friends of The Oakmont Library
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FOOL'S FORUM

A Newsletter by and for the Friends of the Oakmont Library

(affectionately known by the acronym "FOOL's")

700 Allegheny River Blvd., Oakmont, PA 15139 • 412-828-9532



VOLUME 27 • SPRING 2022



Happy 30th Anniversary!



A Message from the President

As you see, the FOOL's are celebrating our 30th year of our existence. It was 1992. Although the Oakmont Carnegie Library had constant and continued support from the Borough as well as the community's civic organizations, our library, along with all free public libraries across the nation, felt the impact from cuts in state funding. These cuts lead to not only reduced hours of operation but reduced book purchases, library services and programming.

The Library Board invited concerned citizens to form a steering committee to discuss alternatives. This committee evolved into a Board of Directors with Bill McGrath, who ran Beauchamp Printing in Oakmont, as President of the newly formed Friends of the Oakmont Library, an organization with a purpose of raising funds, through membership donations, which would financially aid the Oakmont Carnegie Library in being a cultural and an educational mainstay in the community. It didn't take long to realize that our new acronym would be F. O. O. L. An obvious risky choice to attract members. The connection was made between our potential name and the court jester in the works of Shakespeare. To this day our letterhead has been two little fools sitting facing each other reading books.

Other such library organizations trying to raise donations would have a bake sale, an auction, or a spaghetti dinner. It was decided that the best way to encourage our community to donate and join was to show, in an annual newsletter, just where their donations will go. The mailing of the Friends of the Oakmont Library newsletter would, and still does, take place around our anniversary...April Fool's Day.

Inside this 30th anniversary edition you will see just where past membership donations have gone. We started very broadly, including a large pledge to the 2003 library expansion. Over the years, our mission has narrowed the focus, from bricks to books, to providing programs, equipment and books to children and young adults as it remains today.

If you are member, we thank you for your past generous support. If not, please consider helping us with a tax-deductible donation to maintain the continued quality of the children and young adult programming at the Oakmont Carnegie Library.

Joe Schweinberg
Joe Schweinberg, President
Friends of the Oakmont Library serving Verona and Oakmont

A Message from the Library Director

Imagine having a friendship of 30 years. A friendship that has included support, ongoing interest and helping you to be the best you can be. That's the friendship Oakmont Library has with the Friends of the Oakmont Library, our F.O.O.L.S. This long friendship began with helping us obtain our first public computers and is continuing through the development of our community makerspace and children's programming. Through ups and downs, economic downturns and a pandemic. The F.O.O.L.S. have been there for us, but more importantly for you, the community we serve. We would not be as strong without them. So, thank you for your continued support and interest.



Beth Mellor
Director
Oakmont Carnegie Library



If you have been a member of the Friends of the Oakmont Library for some time, or just received our newsletter each year around our April Fools anniversary date, you probably have enjoyed the bright, colorful illustrations, graphics, current computer tips, stories, and the updates on the Oakmont Carnegie Library's use of your membership donations to enhance the participation of the children and young adults who access or come to our library.

Well, the content, stories, updates, helpful computer usage and graphics for the past 26 years has been the creativity of the Vice President of the Friends of the Oakmont Library for that time, Patricia (Pat) Black.

She always had a passion for young people learning, as was evident through her years as Librarian in the Verona, Oakmont, and River-view school system. She also felt the same about her position with the FOOL's, our mission of helping children and young adults enjoy their use of our Library.

Pat passed away on October 10th 2021. She became a good friend, and it has been a pleasure working with her for the same number of years toward a common goal of helping to improve and enrich what each young learner gains as they benefit from the quality of the Oakmont Carnegie Library.

2021 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

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Marilyn Alexander	Wendy-Emery Hudack	Maria Piantanida
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We have made every effort to present the list of donors as accurately and completely as possible. If any errors have occurred, we apologize most sincerely.

MEMBERSHIP SPONSORED PROGRAMS OVER 30 YEARS

*SUMMER READING *CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS *SUMMER CAMP *POP-UP LIBRARY *AUTHOR IN RESIDENCE
*TEEN PROGRAMS *SOUND SYSTEM *DIGITAL CAMERA *FAX MACHINE *CD PLAYERS *COMPUTER CLASSES *BOOKS
FOR BABIES *CHILDREN'S TRAIN *COMPUTERS AND SUPPORT *UPDATE CHILDREN'S COLLECTION *PURCHASED
ENCYCLOPEDIAS *CHRISTMAS BOOK GIVEAWAY *WALL PAINTINGS *CHRISTMAS PARTIES *GRAB & GO KITS
*3D PRINTER *BUTTON MAKER *HYDROPONIC GARDEN



Grab & Go Bags – Halloween



Grab & Go Bags – Thanksgiving

We are very appreciative for the Friends of the Library for sponsoring our Grab & Go Program for the months of September through December, 2021! Due to the pandemic, we had to move many of our programs to a virtual setting, however, this helped to make it possible for us to continue to offer a hybrid alternative for families who wanted to continue to engage with our library during that time. Our Grab & Go program features a FREE bagged craft for families to pick up in our lobby, starting at 10 am every Wednesday morning. This generous sponsorship from the FOOLs enabled us to provide eighteen additional programs to the public during these four months.

Karen Crowell
Youth Services Dept.
Oakmont Carnegie Library

MAKERSPACE SPONSORSHIP:

Thank you to the Friends of the Oakmont Library for their support of our new Makerspace! This is a new library space that will allow us to encourage STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Art and Math) skills for both kids and families, and we look forward to working with our creative community! In 2021, the FOOLs sponsored makerspace equipment that enabled us to purchase a Flashforge 3D printer, a button maker, two Makey Makey keyboard controllers, and a hydroponic garden.

With recent addition of funds from the Friends of the Library in February, 2022, we were able to purchase even more equipment. Our new additions include a Cricut Maker 3 machine with supplies, and a combination sewing and embroidery machine. This will enable us to offer even more programming in our Makerspace in the coming months! We are looking forward to our upcoming summer programs that will include "Cricut Coffee Mugs" and "Fabric Arts Fun" for all ages.

We also have plans for 3D printing, food science, art, music, and more. We can't wait to open this space to the community to see what they can make and do! Keep an eye on our "Upcoming Events" section of our website for more information about programs, open hours, and how-to training. We are extremely appreciative of the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this exciting new space!!



Stephanie Zimble trying out the Cricut



Our new computerized sewing & embroidery machine