



## **Sixth Annual Library After Dark Gala is a “Virtual” Success!**

### ***Event raised over \$38,000 to support Montgomery County Public Libraries***

A spectacular – and virtual – Sixth Annual Library After Dark Gala raised over \$38,000 on Saturday evening, May 30 to support Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL). Sponsored by Friends of the Library, Montgomery County (FOLMC), the event drew hundreds of participants who took the opportunity to pay tribute and give back to MCPL.

“Our sixth annual gala became our first-ever virtual gala,” said FOLMC Executive Director Ari Z. Brooks, MSW. “And the event was more successful than we could have imagined. We are deeply grateful for the generous support from so many Friends who helped ensure that our library system continues to provide incredible, industry-leading programming.”

With NBC4’s Juliana Valencia serving as host and Sherry Truhlar from Red Apple Auctions as the auctioneer, participants bid – and donated – from the heart! Ms. Truhlar later highlighted the impressive work – and success - of the gala team in this brief video: How a small nonprofit converted to a virtual gala in 8 days.

A top auction item was this beautiful bookcase quilt, featuring detailed embroidering of classic and bestselling titles and handcrafted by a team of librarian quilters.



Won by longtime FOLMC supporter Mayor Jeffrey Slavin of the Town of Somerset, Maryland, the quilt will be on display in Somerset’s city hall for all to see! The event also recognized top library staff, volunteers, donors, and community leaders who make MCPL an outstanding, nationally recognized system.

Award winners for outstanding contributions to the library system are:

**The Cokie and Steve Roberts Award** – presented to Steve Roberts and dedicated in memory of Cokie Roberts.

Newly created in 2020, this award honors achievement in literary excellence and is dedicated to the late Cokie Roberts. Over the past 20 years, the long-time Montgomery County residents participated actively in FOLMC in support of MCPL. They spoke at library events, including our Literary Luncheon series, and gave generously of their time and resources. Recently, Mr. Roberts moderated a panel on Immigration in America for the county-wide NEA Big Read program with FOLMC, helping residents better understand the immigrant experience.



**The B. Parker Hamilton Award** - Twinbrook Library Branch Manager Eric Carzon.

This award recognizes the excellent work carried out in MCPL on a daily basis. The award highlights the best practices and especially outstanding work of the nominee. As Branch Manager, Mr. Carzon created the *Library of Things: Music*, produced the *Make Music Montgomery Competition*, worked diligently on the *Just for the Record - A Vinyl Day Committee*, and has proven himself an exemplary leader to his peers.



**The Charles W. Gilchrist Award** - Carol W. Leahy

This award is presented to an individual, family, family foundation, corporation, or civic group that has demonstrated exceptional service to MCPL through volunteer and/or philanthropic support. Mrs. Leahy has a long history of fundraising, advocacy, volunteer support, and service to MCPL and FOLMC. Her work has spanned from hands-on activities to board leadership including serving as Acting Board President. Mrs. Leahy also has been a loyal member, generous donor, and sponsor of FOLMC's programs and events.



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*For over 38 years, FOLMC has supported MCPL and promoted lifelong learning in Montgomery County, MD. FOLMC provides supplemental funding, programs, and materials and equipment to MCPL to augment public funding. Since its founding, FOLMC has grown to be the parent organization of 17 volunteer chapters at library branches across Montgomery County. The organization also operates two used bookstores in Rockville and Wheaton, MD.*