

friends of kansas LIBRARIES

Assist - Support - Educate

FoKL POINT Newsletter — June/July 2024

Focus on Friends — Winfield

The teen volunteer group at Winfield Public Library made a big visual impact on the library's summer program this year. The group worked



with Children/ Youth Library Director to do research and make posters and displays related to the theme *Adventure Begins at Your Library*.

FoKL Board member Sheryl Erickson said, "The day I took these pictures, a young man who had been in the teen



group a few years back was sharing about his adventures on the Amazon during a trip he took there." The summer programming is funded largely by WPL Friends.



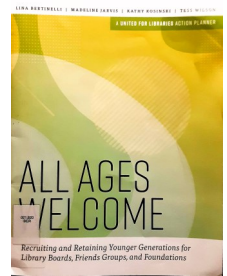
Hats off to the WPL Friends "Green Team" who maintain the library's lovely entry garden areas.



Book Review

All Ages Welcome: Recruiting and Retaining Younger Generations for Library Boards, Friends Groups, and Foundations by Lina Bertinelli, Madeline Jarvis, Kathy Kosinski, and Tess Wilson. A United for Libraries Action Planner. Chicago : ALA Neal-Schuman, 2020

This slim volume is filled with good advice and a handful of practical worksheets your Friends group can use to evaluate your current organization and plan for the future. Topics in the book could serve as useful springboards for discussion at Friends meetings.



The following sections stood out:

- A template for an "elevator pitch" (a concept we visited at 2023 KLA conference with Brenda Hough) that includes both formal and more casual approaches. Working through this exercise would be useful, not only for one-on-one advocacy, but could give a format for a Friends brochure, annual report, or fundraising letter.
- Worksheets for thinking through the diversity of interests, questions, and concerns that new recruits for your group might have. These tools can also help analyze what your group can do to help members stay engaged and achieve their personal goals as well as group goals.
- An excellent Board Orientation checklist!

This book is recommended for Friends groups that are looking to keep things fresh. It is available through interlibrary loan or for purchase through the ALA Store.

Focus on Fundraising — T-shirt Sales

FoKL has noticed a number of Friends groups around the state are hosting T-shirt fundraisers and we think it is a great idea to share! While raising money for your Friends group, it is also a way to build community awareness of the library, and gives library lovers a way to show support.



Wamego Friends T-Shirt

These days, even smaller Kansas towns often have a custom T-shirt print shop that can assist with design and printing. Many local shops will also be able to create an online store for you on their website and (best of all) handle the financial transactions. Supporting local businesses goes a long way to generating goodwill for your library.

We recently talked with Amy Hecke, President of Wamego Friends of the Library, about their ongoing T-Shirt fundraiser. “We had a lot of conversations about design,” Amy said. The group decided to pay a graphic artist to finalize their ideas into an attractive 2-color front-and-back design, and then went to their local vendor, Poppy Tees, to make arrangements for shirt colors, ordering, and pricing.

Their online shop currently offers adult and youth T-shirts, sweatshirts, and totes.

Amy said their group did a strong initial promotion for the shirt sales so they could get a bulk discount price on the first printing. They continue to promote the sales using Facebook and at the Friends book sale space in the newly expanded Wamego Public Library.

If your Friends group is interested in a T-shirt fundraiser, a good first step would be to make a visit to your local vendor. Ask questions about design assistance, set-up charges, additional costs for multi-color printing, minimum orders, and whether arrangements can be made for setting up an online shop on their website. Find out what other products can be imprinted with your design (scarves, hats, mugs, etc) and ask to see samples of their work. Next, brainstorm design ideas with your Friends group and the library staff, get a professional rendering of your design, and then let the printer do their magic. Keep on top of sales by thinking about all of the ways you can continue to promote the project at the library, in your newsletter, on social media, at your book sales (maybe giving a discount to people wearing your shirt!), and even at community events like Farmer’s market. Good luck!

WANTED! Awesome FRIENDS NEWS



What special fundraiser, program, or event has your Friends group accomplished lately? Let FoKL share this awesomeness in our newsletter! Send stories and photos to susanwalkerbryant@gmail.com!

First Friday With Friends
Next Meeting
August 2nd at 9AM

First Friday
with FRIENDS!

JOIN US ON ZOOM

Everyday Advocacy by Susan Bryant

In my experience, Friends of the Library volunteers are also active and engaged in many other parts of the community – on the hospital board, in service organizations such as Kiwanis and Rotary, the food pantry, book clubs, churches, and more.

Does this sound like you and the members of your Friends group? If so, why not use those natural connections in your community to increase awareness in your library. Here are some ideas:

- Service organizations and clubs often have trouble recruiting people to give a program and would appreciate it if you volunteered to present a program about the library. Work with your director to develop a message that shines a light on new programs and services the club members might not be aware of (e.g. downloadable audiobook and ebooks). Print up some bookmarks with the library phone, website, and email address to hand out, and also take information about how to join your Friends group. Think about giving away a library-themed door prize – maybe a book bag with some great titles from your Friends book sale shelf.
- The next time it is your turn to host your bridge club or committee meeting, why not do it at the library? Most libraries have meeting rooms that can be reserved or a quiet corner for a small group to meet. Some of your group members may not have visited the library for some time, and it will be great to remind them of what a great resource you have in your town. If appropriate, give an impromptu tour.
- Chamber of Commerce groups often like to have their monthly meetings or hold after-hours socials in different locations around the town. Take a tip from Friends of Haysville Library and have your Friends group host an annual Chamber gathering at the library, providing snacks or a light meal, along with a tour of the library, and sharing information about programs and services.

This kind of outreach advocacy doesn't seem very daunting if you think of it as just talking to people who are already your neighbors and friends. And the result is like throwing a pebble in a pond. The ripples of knowledge about the library (not to mention good-will) will reach far in your community and will encourage others to get involved, too.



Ag Partners Cooperative recently presented a \$5,000 donation to Friends of the Morrill Public Library in Hiawatha. Ag Partners said, "Thanks to matching funds from the Land O' Lakes Foundation via our fund at the Kansas Rural Communities Foundation, we're helping the library toward their goal of replacing the elevator. This upgrade will ensure that both levels of the building remain accessible to everyone."

Contact us!

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