



Friends News and Notes

Friends of Libraries Section — A Network of Library Advocates in New York State

Volume 9, #2 -- January 2023

FLS at the 2022 NYLA Annual Conference

It was **Back to the Future** at the 2022 NYLA Annual Conference in November. It all looked "normal!" Just like the old days pre-pandemic. The exhibit hall was lined with vendors and NYLA units displaying their products and services. There were raffles and giveaways and lots of networking going on.

The ballrooms were full at the various meal functions - and so were the meeting rooms where all the programs were going on. For repeat conference goers, other than seeing masks, this looked a lot like the previous #bestconferenceever events at the Saratoga Hilton and City Center. And that's a very good thing.

FLS rolled out a Friends-of-the-library-themed lineup of well attended offerings for Friends, trustees, staff, and community volunteers. Starting on page 5 you'll find articles about each of the programs. Program resources are available on the FLS Events page at www.NYLA.org/Friends. You'll find these items informative and useful even if you weren't at the 2022 conference. Hope to see you in 2023!

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Apply Now for the FLS Randall Enos Conference Scholarship

Are you a member of a Friends of the Library group? Do you serve as the Staff Liaison to your library's Friends group? Do you have a stellar Friends group at your library? Could you or one of the Friends volunteers benefit from a professional development opportunity at the NYLA Annual Conference?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, please consider applying for the FLS Randall Enos Conference Scholarship (RECS) to attend the 2023 NYLA Annual Conference. The award pays up to a maximum of \$750 for an individual to attend the conference. Reimbursements may include registration, tickets for events and meal functions, lodging, and travel expenses.

"Some people are drawn to bars, some to church groups, I was drawn to the library!" This quote is by Randy Enos, who has spent a very successful professional career supporting libraries and library Friends groups. The FLS Executive Board has honored him by naming him President Emeritus and paid tribute to his commitment to professional development for volunteers and staff by establishing the FLS Randall Enos Conference

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FLS creates a network to connect and inspire Friends groups in all types of libraries to support the New York library community.

FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award Call for Nominations

It's that time of year again, where you have the opportunity to honor an active library supporter, Friend, or Friends of the Library group. The FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award is sponsored by the Friends of Libraries Section of NYLA. This prestigious award has been given annually since 1993 through the precursor of FLS, the Empire Friends Roundtable. The award honors a volunteer member or group from the library community whose efforts have contributed to the growth of libraries or Friends of the Library organizations.

Additional Goodies:

The award recipient will receive a one-year organizational membership in FLS for the Friends of the Library group with which the individual or group is associated. If the Friends group is currently a member of FLS, their organizational membership will be extended for one year. The recipient will also receive a plaque honoring their work.

To learn more about Daniel W. Casey and to find the nomination packet, go to www.NYLA.org/Friends > Awards & Scholarships. The deadline to submit nominations is Thursday, June 1, 2023. This year's award recipient will be acknowledged at the FLS annual membership meeting in November.

Nominations must include all relevant information outlined in the packet and form. Make sure to describe the contributions of the nominee (group or individual) to library service in detail, including positions held, years of

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A Message from FLS President Kerstin Cruger

Hello Friends!

Looking for a new challenge in 2023? Have you considered running for the Friends of Libraries Section Executive Board or taking on one of the many appointed auxiliary positions which represent FLS on NYLA committees, help support our award programs, website, and newsletter? The FLS Executive Board welcomes volunteers to participate in our activities that further the Section's mission, including continuing education, advocacy, and representation on NYLA's standing committees. If you are hesitant to jump right into a bigger role, we are actively seeking volunteers to serve as assistants to our key positions, including a Coordinator for National Friends of Libraries Week, a deputy treasurer, assistants for our award coordinators, assistant web editor, and other positions. Most of our work is handled virtually and you can design your involvement at a level comfortable to you. An assistant position is a great way to ease into becoming a more active member of FLS.

Asking about how to get more involved is obligation free! Fill out one of our Active Member forms found at www.NYLA.org/Friends or send me (Kerstin Cruger) an email at fls.kerstin.cruger@gmail.com and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Speaking of getting involved, we are once again at the height of Library Advocacy Season. If you have not already, make sure you visit www.nyla.org/advocacy to find out more about NYLA Library Advocacy Day on February 28 and how you can make your voice heard either in-person, online, or both. Join hundreds of library advocates to support legislative and budget priorities that will strengthen #NYSLibraries! Friends know all about the importance of supporting our libraries, so you are a perfect spokesperson when it comes to letting our legislators know just how important the library is to our community. (See the article below.) Your participation will benefit every New York library and citizen!



All the best,

Kerstin

Library Friends: Working to Advocate for New York Libraries

by Jean Sheviak

Do you think there is nothing you can do to support funding for New York libraries or legislation that will benefit services for your library patrons? Do you think you can't impact the legislature in Albany? Not true! You can do a lot!

Many people think that advocating for libraries is the responsibility of library leaders and administrators. Of course, their role is vital. However, our legislators work for all of the people of their districts. And they need to know what those people think is important. That's where library Friends come in. They are members of their community. They understand their community and the vital role that their library plays. Talking about that role is what advocacy is all about.

How does library advocacy work in New York?

- NYLA helps to make advocacy easy by providing a structure to help in advocating for New York libraries. Each year the NYLA Legislative Committee, working with NYLA staff, develops budget goals for library aid and library construction funding. They also develop a set of policy initiatives that form the basis for bills to be introduced in the Assembly and Senate.
- NYLA hosts an annual Advocacy Day, either in person or virtually, so that everyone can personally interact with their legislators to encourage them to support the NYLA budget and policy goals.
- NYLA sends regular emails to provide information on

legislative efforts and to encourage people to contact their legislators about library-related issues.

What can library Friends do to help?

- Think about what is important to you. Friends groups should consider collaborating with library trustees to develop a set of concise talking points about how **your** library impacts **your** community.
- Communicate! This can be very easy: If you get an email asking you to contact the governor or your legislators, do it. Just click on the link provided and follow the instructions. You will see a form letter, which you can modify if you wish. Add your name and contact information and click to send. Yes, something this simple does make a difference because it shows elected officials that people care about the issue.
- Attend Library Advocacy Day in Albany on **February 28, 2023**, to see your legislators in person. Or sign on to a virtual visit. Bring those talking points you developed. But don't worry if you aren't comfortable doing the talking. You'll be in a group from your region, and someone will be designated to do most of the talking. Just being there matters.
- Be a Social Media Advocate.

The NYLA website, www.nyla.org, provides a number of

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FLS Connections! E-Newsletters and Email Marketing

Whether you want to grow your membership, increase the number of people actively working in the Friends, or let folks know what activities are being sponsored by the Friends, email is a proven, powerful tool to connect with your audience.

Join us on Thursday, March 9, at 4 p.m. when Tony Iovino, Assistant Director of the Oceanside Library, will share how to integrate basic marketing methods to create a marketing culture within your Friends group. Engage your members and enhance your message to your community by using email and email newsletters.

There are easy practices you can implement to improve your communication with your supporters, often at little or no cost. Appointing a team or an individual volunteer to develop and implement a coordinated marketing plan can provide the structure and direction needed to regularly get your message out to the public and grow your Friends membership.

Registration is required. Please send a message to

FLSregister@yahoo.com indicating your interest to attend. Put Connections in the subject line. In the body of the message, please give your first and last name and the Friends group or library you are representing. You will receive a confirmation email with the Zoom access code and any other pertinent information prior to the event. Registration closes on Monday, March 6 at 5 p.m. This session runs 75 minutes and will not be archived.

FLS is building an online community across the Empire State. Please join with FLS members and Friends volunteers for the continuation of this series of conversations we started in 2021. Each *FLS Connections!* has a specific topic and invited speakers share with everyone informally, followed by open mics where everyone can participate and provide their own groups' experiences and ideas. Days and times are varied to try to reach a wide audience. Have an idea you want to talk about? Send us a suggestion when you register.

You can view previous topics and read through the minutes and other resources distributed after each session. Visit www.NYLA.org/Friends > Events > FLS Connections!

Friends Councils Offer Networking Part 1 (in a 2 part series)

When Joyce Maguda said yes to Karen Sperrazza, she set in motion a new opportunity for her local Friends organizations in Buffalo and Erie County. In January 2021, then FLS President Karen Sperrazza was appointing a task force on Friends Councils. In several of New York's public library systems, volunteer representatives of Friends of the Library groups gather in-person or virtually once or twice a year to support one another in their work and share best practices. The goal of the FLS task force was to help establish Friends Councils in more systems across the state.

The first step undertaken by the task force was to inventory Friends groups in several systems. Friends leaders were asked if they thought a local network of Friends would be useful to support and provide encouragement for their important work. Joyce Maguda, President of the Friends of the Eden Public Library, succeeded in identifying 18 Friends organizations in Buffalo & Erie County Library System and then offered to do an inventory for her neighbor to the south, Chautauqua - Cattaraugus Library System.

Once the census was complete, Joyce approached the staff of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library about starting a Friends Council for these community volunteers. Dorinda Darden, Assistant Deputy Director of Public Services, is now the coordinator for the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Friends Council. Dorinda says, "we were delighted to assist." The initial step was to reach out with a Doodle poll to the groups Joyce had identified.

Please Give Your Input for the Long-Range Plan

FLS is embarking on the process of writing its third long-range plan and our task force wants to hear from YOU! We want to learn how FLS can better assist its members and where we should be putting our volunteers' efforts going forward, as we continue to create a network to connect and inspire Friends groups to support the New York library community.

What FLS member benefits and services are most important to you and your Friends group? You can help provide input in two ways. FLS Board members will be holding some focus group sessions on Zoom in early March. You can select from a variety of times convenient to you. Come chat with other FLS members, library staff, and community volunteers. Watch for our member blast with dates, times, and how to sign up to participate. Each focus group discussion will last about 60 minutes.

And as we did in 2020, we'll be having a survey. Both FLS members and future members can take part. The survey will be fifteen questions (mainly multiple choice) and should take less than 10 minutes of your time. You'll find the survey link on the FLS homepage www.NYLA.org/Friends after March 1.

It's YOUR Section. Please help to shape its future. We look forward to meeting you at our focus group sessions and encourage you to also take the survey, which will close on Friday, April 21. We appreciate your time and your support of the Section.

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Have a Seat!

By Carol Kuhr



The Argyle Friends of the Library held an online Chair Auction last June. The library trustees had asked the Friends to support their fund drive to raise money for much needed renovations to our Circulation Desk. This gave us the opportunity to try a fundraising idea that was shared at a NYLA Friends of Libraries Section workshop several years ago.

We put out an appeal to the community asking people to donate orphan chairs. With the help of our Library Director Faith St. John who has contacts in the local arts

community, we were able to find 12 artists who each adopted a chair and gave it a fabulous facelift. The auction was staged on BetterWorld.org, which posted pictures of each chair and managed the bidding. We were able to raise more than \$1,300, which in this small town is a very good success.

The only part of the project which required considerable time and effort on the part of Friends was collecting and storing the old chairs until the artists could pick them up at the library. Our library has NO storage, so for a few weeks my dining room was crowded with an odd assembly of mis-matched chairs. We minimized the problem of distributing the chairs after the auction by ending the sale on the day of our annual plant sale. Auction winners were asked to come to the library during the sale to claim their chairs.



This is definitely a project that we will revisit in the future. Instead of doing chairs we may do small tables or other accent furnishings. A suggestion was made to do the auction by raffle instead of online, which is an idea worth exploring.

Thanks to FLS for another great fundraising idea!!

Diversity Report from ALA United for Libraries

It has been nearly two years since the FLS Executive Board adopted a statement of commitment to diversity and inclusion. As an organization, FLS strives to promote and nurture an environment in which diverse perspectives and experiences are respected and valued, wherever Friends groups are located.

Our Friends groups represent the communities we serve, including people of different social and ethnic backgrounds, abilities, genders, sexual orientations, and lived experiences. As we welcome more people to take part and reflect the many different voices of our communities, we have an opportunity to showcase and celebrate a wide range of talents, expertise, and creativity.

Thriving, sustainable Friends groups need to continuously recruit diverse members with different skills, attributes, and connections. Representation matters. People are more likely to get involved in an organization where they can see themselves, helping to combat stereotypes. It is vital to the ongoing viability of volunteer support organizations to recruit diverse members who can share their experience and know-how, ensuring a steady stream of new ideas and opportunities.

Still, some Friends groups, library Boards of Trustees, and foundations struggle as they seek to recruit and retain diverse members. As a part of the American Library Association's 2022 Emerging Leaders program, a team of four librarians examined case studies, stories, and real-life examples of equity, diversity, and inclusion in these organizations of library civic leaders.

In the course of their research, they surveyed, spoke with, and held focus groups with individuals across the USA and Canada including members of the FLS/NYLA Board. The team uncovered common trends in groups that have been successful in building and sustaining diverse memberships as well as those who are still struggling. Working with United for Libraries, The Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations, the team provided information and resources that will support library support groups in achieving diversity and retention. Read their report, *Diversity in Library Boards, Friends Groups, and Foundations: Successes and Struggles in Recruiting and Retaining Diverse Members*, and watch a short video on the project under Team C at

<https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/emerging-leaders-2022-project-summaries>

Find additional resources on diversity posted under "Membership, Volunteer Engagement, and Diversity" on the FLS webpage at

www.nyla.org/flsrural/?menukey=fls



FLS Rural

Back to the Future!
NYLA 2022 Annual Conference & Trade Show
November 2 - 5, 2022, Saratoga Springs, NY
FLS Program Recap

**Trivia, Literati, and Wildly Successful
Community Fundraising**

by Joyce Laiosa

Kerry A. Barnes, Executive Director of the Tompkins County Public Library Foundation, presented some of their tried and true fundraisers that did not involve a book sale.

The first fundraiser, the Readathon, is in its 10th year. It is a large number of hours (8 am - midnight) where a person or group reads whatever they want for a half hour. They must reach a set fundraising goal in order to participate. Barnes explained that everyone had access to software that allows donations to come into each person's Readathon page. Participants did not take pledges, they took donations which went to the Foundation. "Give Butter" had the lowest platform fees and the foundation paid the platform fee.

Here are the most important takeaways:

- Focus on one goal. The point of this is to raise money! With this one goal you can focus your decision-making and everything else will fall into place.
- Superstars (celebrities) are the people "in your neighborhood." If there is a celebrity in your community, use them. It could be the Mayor, a special shop owner, a coach, someone everyone knows.
- Fundraising takes place before the event. The reading is the reward for their fundraiser.

The Readathon helps the biggest library lovers become library supporters. Recruit them to participate. Encourage, support, and motivate them. Use sponsors. Allow for creativity and fun. A group could do a play reading, poetry, or a book with a lot of dialog. At least one group read song lyrics. Use your social media to find vocal and connected people in your community. Even local colleges and universities need and enjoy community service. Celebrate



Lisa C. Wemett, Jim Foster, Cheryl Jones

What makes successful relationships between Friends and library staff and trustees often boils down to one important thing, communication. Representatives from three libraries, Jim

We all know how vital Friends can be in supporting their libraries, through fundraising, advocacy, and public relations.

What makes

Keeping It Friendly: Connecting Staff and Friends

by Lynne Madden

Foster, Assistant Director of the Clifton Park – Halfmoon Public Library; Cheryl Shelton Jones, former Youth Services Librarian at the Ethelbert B. Crawford Public Library, Monticello; and Lisa Wemett, FLS First Vice President discussed their experiences as liaisons to their libraries' Friends groups and explained how this role was so valuable to both the library and the Friends.

All three agreed that a dedicated liaison, a member of the library staff, works best in this role. This liaison attends

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**FLS Program
Resources QR Code**

Use this QR code or go to
www.NYLA.org/Friends >
Events > FLS Programs >
2022 for links to
presentation materials.



multiple year participants. Offer trainings or workshops to share lots of ideas and tips to make fundraising easy. Make people practice! And if someone wants to shoot off a confetti canon at midnight, make them donate for the privilege (you can set the amount). What started as an in-person event went to a virtual event and is now a hybrid event. Some of the people are pre-recorded, which only makes it easier to participate.

There wasn't a definitive answer about copyright infringement. It could be considered Fair Use, although it is not educational. However, you do control the audience with a special link for livestream and you must take it down right after the event.

NPR's amusing news and comedy program "Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!" is the basis for a virtual library trivia fundraiser, "Hold On...Let Me Ask a Librarian!" The three panelists answer questions about the library, i.e., "What has not been found in the book drop?" Then they have 3 or 4 multiple choice answers to choose from. All of the answers are funny and they have jokes that go along with the questions. Meanwhile viewers can watch the "show" on Zoom and donate through a QR code, text, or online. This fundraiser takes a different skill set for success:

- A tech supervisor will need to be hired.
- Borrow or rent equipment (cameras, lights, microphones, buzzers, etc.).
- A few staff people need to be at the library.
- Someone needs to write (or contribute) to a script.

For more information Kerry Barnes is willing to answer your questions. Email her at kbarnes@tcplfoundation.org.



Jeff Budge gives a tour

presentation by Jeff Budge, manager of The Book Shop operated by the library Friends which is located in the library building.

Jeff gave a highly detailed accounting of the aspects involved in operating a successful, mostly volunteer bookstore. He is the only paid employee overseeing a contingent of up to 50 volunteers, plus additional members from youth groups. Jeff has managed The Book Shop for 11 years.

The audience heard about how to deal with large volumes of donations – an issue that became acute in the aftermath of the pandemic shutdown. Individuals wishing to donate more than 3 boxes of items are required to make an appointment to insure that the volunteer staff will be in place to readily handle the incoming materials.

The bookstore workers, divided into "shop volunteers" and "sorting room volunteers," receive perks for their efforts, including a 50% discount on purchases after 10 hours of

Field Trip to a Friends-Operated Bookstore / Best Practices for Bookstores

by Randall Enos

work and extensive recognition after one year or more of service.

Credit card sales represent 30% of all bookstore transactions. Online sales through Amazon and eBay account for 33% of the store's revenue.

The bookstore provides outreach to the community by donating books to other nonprofit organizations such as the soup kitchen. Books are also given to Better World Books which are sold by that organization with a percentage of the sales returned to the bookstore.

Training for the volunteers is extensive. Manuals have been created to guide the cashiers, sorters and those who do the online sales. Following Jeff's presentation, the program attendees were treated to a guided tour of the bookstore facility. Email Jeff at friendsbookshopspl@gmail.com to discuss bookstore operations with him.

This in-person presentation and tour was a reprise of the online version of this program during the 2020 NYLA Virtual Conference. A large cache of documents is available online from that presentation, as well as updated files for 2022. Visit www.NYLA.org/Friends > Events > FLS Programs at the NYLA Annual Conference and then scroll to the Field Trip listing.

Keep It Growing!: Strengthening Your Friends of the Library Group

by Joyce Laiosa

This two-part workshop on Saturday morning focused on recruitment of new members to your organization, and keeping them. Today's volunteers are looking for meaningful volunteer opportunities. This workshop emphasized practical systems for volunteer recruitment and engagement in Friends groups. Networking and messaging with your community plus marketing that message will revitalize core supporters and maintain the important advocacy work for the library.

When recruiting volunteers, clear expectations with written up-to-date job descriptions are very important. New recruits need to see procedural manuals or instructions for all the work that is being requested. Mentoring is important for new volunteers to learn the tasks they are being asked to do. Groups can grow their leadership by listening to new voices and thinking outside the typical "box." For instance, perhaps you can't find anyone to take over the presidency of your organization; that might be the opportunity to recruit co-presidents or even three or four co-presidents.

Time was spent sharing ideas on how to "care" for your current members while also recruiting for more members.

Older/long-time members may feel ignored or that there is "no value" to their membership. Communication of the group's projects and successes needs to be relayed through donation "thank-you" letters and email blasts to all members about the Friends activities. There is also a place for volunteer recognition - from social events to mentions on digital signage or in the library's newsletter, with awards, and more!

Getting younger volunteers may seem difficult, but this workshop had a multitude of ideas from where to recruit to personally asking people who might have a volunteer mindset. Community partnerships are a place to make yourselves known and to show off your participation within the community (from farmers markets to parades and festivals). Stay positive, work with a team which will sustain the group, and you will grow a strong base of supporters.

There were many handouts referenced during this double session. Visit www.NYLA.org/Friends > Events > FLS Programs at the NYLA Annual Conference and then scroll to the Keep It Growing! Strengthening Friends Groups Part 1 and Part 2 listing.

It Takes a Village

And fortunately, FLS has lot of dedicated villagers. Thank you to **everyone** who played a role for FLS at the 2022 NYLA Annual Conference! Our success depends on you.

Speakers:

Kerry A. Barnes, Executive Director, Tompkins County Public Library Foundation
Valerie Acklin, Library Director, Gloversville Public Library
Jim Foster, Assistant Director, Clifton Park – Halfmoon Public Library
Cheryl Jones, Library Director, Mamakating Library
Jeff Budge, Manager, The Friends Book Shop, Saratoga Springs Public Library
Joyce R. Laiosa, FLS Regional Workshop Trainer
Lisa C. Wemett, FLS Coordinator for Professional Development

Presiders:

Christopher Lund, FLS Member At Large
Karen Sperrazza, FLS Immediate Past President
Kerstin Cruger, FLS President
Mary Giardini, FLS Member At Large

Assistant Room Monitors:

Jean Sheviak, FLS Representative to the NYLA Legislative Committee
Carol Fortier, FLS First Vice President/President-elect
Lynne Madden, FLS Secretary
Randy Enos, FLS President Emeritus
Ristiina Wigg, FLS Member At Large

Staffing the FLS Booth at the Trade Show:

Terry Mulee, FLS Second Vice President
Randy Enos
Kerstin Cruger
Joyce R. Laiosa
Helen Rados, FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award Coordinator
Christopher Lund
Jean Sheviak
Karen Sperrazza
Ristiina Wigg



FLS 30th Anniversary Celebration:

anniversary cake and sparkling juice:
Erica Freudenberger, FLS Member At Large
Cake cutter, Randy Enos

FLS 2022 NYLA Annual Conference Curator:

Lisa C. Wemett

FLS would love to see your name on this list for the 2023 NYLA Annual Conference! We've got ways for you to help out. (See the President's Message on page 2.)

Make an Investment in Your Library's Staff

In her message in *American Libraries*, President of the American Library Association Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada said, "We must value our library workers. We cannot have libraries without library workers, many of whom are stretched thin and are feeling burned out and frustrated in the face of book challenges, budget cuts, and uncertain socio-economic landscapes."

In addition, public librarians in NYS are certified by the State Education Department. To keep their certification active, these library staff members must complete 60 hours of professional development every five years. Attendance at NYLA's Annual Conference is one way that librarians can meet these certification requirements.

Unfortunately, library administrators have had to adjust the library's budget over the past few years. Sometimes difficult decisions led to vastly reducing the funding for staff development, severely limiting continuing education opportunities for staff at all levels. Conference registration costs for library staff members are considerably more than for Friends. Even at the early bird rates, the charge for one day could be nearly \$200 and a package plan can be double that amount.

Consider using some of the funds the Friends have raised to help a staff member attend the statewide conference. Talk to your library director about this kind of financial assistance. Even purchasing a ticket for a special event like "Author! Author!" or a luncheon might be just the "perk" that helps to re-energize a staff member! They can recharge, reconnect with their colleagues from around the state, and will return with new energy, great ideas, and great appreciation for the Friends support and advocacy.

Want to hear what they learned? Ask the staff members to attend some FLS-sponsored sessions and make an oral report to your Friends leaders after the conference. Thanks for considering this type of support for your library staff. Follow the details of this year's NYLA Annual Conference as it develops: www.nyla.org/conference.



FLS In-person Executive Board Meeting

FLS had an excellent turnout for its first in-

person board meeting at a conference since 2019. Front: Carol Fortier, Terry Mulee, Kerstin Cruger, Karen Sperrazza, Mary Giardini; back: Erica Freudenberger, Rusty Wigg, Randy Enos, Chris Lund, Lynne Madden, Jean Sheviak, Joyce Laiosa, Lisa C. Wemett

Partners in Planning: A Recap

Joy Fuller brought FLS our latest webinar on October 6, *Partners in Planning: A Strategic Planning Approach for Friends Groups*. In two quick online polls, participants answered, "How engaged is your Friends group in your library's strategic planning process?" and "How familiar are you with strategic planning concepts and approaches?" Although 62% of the participants indicated they were not very engaged in their library's planning, 53% indicated they were somewhat familiar with planning concepts.

Joy outlined how the involvement of the Friends of the Library in the planning process is mutually beneficial to the Friends and the library. As Friends partner in strategic planning, they can fulfil their own purpose and mission, to expand both the human and financial resources for their community's library. The Friends can help the library create a community-focused plan since their leadership and volunteer base are critically connected to the library, supercharging the library's reach. Involvement facilitates alignment, builds awareness of the volunteer support network helping the library, and can possibly boost membership in the group.

The strategic planning process has a four-step framework: prepare for strategic planning; conduct community assessment; develop strategic plan content; implement and measure progress. For each of these four key phases, Joy outlined what the library would do during that phase, how the Friends could be involved in that work, and what benefits the Friends might receive from partnering during this phase. For example, as the library prepares to plan, selecting their core planning team, the Friends could be included as key stakeholders, providing a representative on the planning team. Representation in the process would benefit the Friends leadership by their awareness of the plan's timing and next steps. A Friends group developing their own strategic plan would follow this same framework.

As the library conducts a community assessment, the Friends can play their largest partnership role. The group can promote participation both in the survey and community conversations, possibly identifying groups or individuals to be included in focus groups. The Friends might be able to have one or two actionable questions included in the survey. (See the article in the next column, *Planning for Success: Friends of the Penfield Public Library*, on how just one question on the community survey helped to revitalize the Friends of the Penfield Public Library.)

The Friends can provide updates on the library's plan to the organization's members through community newsletters, outreach events, social media posts, and communications about fundraising or membership appeals. Of course, the library's plan is very staff-focused since the staff are tasked to carry it out day-to-day. But involving the Friends in this process puts the community into focus as well—the vision of

Planning for Success: Friends of the Penfield Public Library

by Lisa C. Wemett



As part of their strategic planning process, the administration of the Penfield Public Library gathered feedback via a community survey. The final question on the survey, "The Friends of the Library fund all programming through their annual book sale. If you would like more information about becoming a member of the Friends, please leave your name and email below," elicited nearly 600 names and emails from the 1130 respondents. This question was included to build awareness of this volunteer support organization, providing the Friends a unique opportunity to connect with members of their community.

After the conclusion of the survey in fall 2021, the Friends steering committee received the email addresses of survey respondents who had requested more information about the Friends. Because these individuals opted to provide their contact information in response to the survey question, the library's Board of Trustees could share the email addresses with the Friends. The Friends sent an email to these community members, along with everyone on the group's current membership roster, in early January 2022. It may have been the message or the opportune timing, at a point in the year when many folks are looking for a fresh start or dedicating themselves to a new project, but the response was extremely positive and energizing for the Friends. More than a dozen individuals stated they would like to volunteer!

The email message was direct, with a paragraph outlining activities the Friends supported and library services underwritten by the group, with concrete examples like museum passes and sign language interpreters for programs. "We would love to see this continue, but the current Friends leadership, after decades of service, needs to move forward with the help of the next generation." The email concluded with a half dozen key positions and brief list of duties. "We are looking for assistants to work alongside our current volunteers to learn our organization's procedures." One crucial aspect of this appeal was the statement that the group was recruiting co-chairs and that mentoring would be provided to help with the group's needs for publicity/marketing, secretarial duties, membership, and other leadership roles.

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FLS Enos Scholarship continued from page 1

Scholarship in 2018. The scholarship is underwritten through an endowment funded by designated contributions to FLS.

Previous recipients of the RECS have written about their experiences after the conference that they attended. Their reflections include details on the programs and events they attended, takeaways from the event, and what they hoped to accomplish with their Friends group afterwards. Links to these articles are on the RECS web page. See below for that link.

Whether a community volunteer or a library staff member, applicants must be a member of FLS/NYLA and involved in a local Friends group at any type of library in New York State. Applications must be received by 5 p.m., Thursday, June 1, 2023. Learn more at www.nyla.org/friends > Awards & Scholarships > Enos. The application form and supporting documentation should be submitted to Marie Bindeman, FLS Scholarship Coordinator: mariebind1955@gmail.com. Please contact Marie with any questions via email or by phone: (716) 433-0548. The Scholarship Committee will review all eligible applications and notify applicants of the final results in the summer. Thank you for your interest and support. It's not too soon to think about applying!

FLS Casey Nominations continued from page 1

service, accomplishments, successful fundraisers, etc.

Please submit the nomination form and all supporting material (clippings of press releases, promotional materials, etc.) electronically to Helen Rados, Coordinator, via email at hrados@gmail.com. Only electronic submissions will be accepted.

If you have any questions, please contact Helen Rados at hrados@gmail.com or call (845) 866-2565 and leave a message.



You can check out the previous FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award recipients at www.NYLA.org/Friends > Awards > Casey.

Thank you for your interest in the FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award.

Friends Councils continued from page 3

The Council first met on Zoom on October 22, 2021. Members have gathered again virtually in both the spring and fall of 2022. Groups let Dorinda know if there is a topic they would like to discuss, and the sessions include time for sharing of activities and ideas on topics such as fundraising and membership recruitment. Dorinda maintains an email distribution list which includes the Friends representatives and the library directors/managers. Libraries who do not yet have Friends groups are also encouraged to attend the meetings.

The Council "is a great opportunity for the Friends groups to network with each other and provide support, discuss topics of interest, and share ideas," says Dorinda. During National Friends of Libraries Week in 2022, the system's Development & Communication Office circulated a press release to the media highlighting the new Friends Council and encouraging the public to join their local Friends group. This marketing is one tangible benefit for all the groups involved.

A similar networking opportunity was held by the Nassau Library System in October 2022, hosted by the Nassau Member Library Directors Continuing Education Committee. Nicole Scherer, NSL's Assistant Director and the staff liaison to the CE Committee, reported that the NLS Friends Forum gathered 45 participants representing 18 libraries on the western end of Long Island for a half day of presentations for Friends, foundations, and library administrators. The agenda included several hot topics: sustainability, legal considerations for Friends groups, member recruitment

(Friend-raising), and novel ideas for fundraising. (FLS thanks long-time supporter and FLS member Frank McKenna, director of the Seaford Public Library, for distributing FLS newsletters and membership literature to those who attended the forum.)

Thank you to the members of the FLS Friends Councils Task Force who completed inventories of Friends groups in the library systems noted: Jim Foster, Staff Liaison to the Friends of the Clifton Park - Halfmoon Public Library (Southern Adirondack Library System); Joyce Maguda, Friends of the Eden Public Library (BECPL and CCLS); Alyssa Ali, Director, Cazenovia Public Library (Onondaga County Library System); Kathy Zipkin, Friends of the Richmond Memorial Library in Batavia (Nioga); Karen Sperrazza (Mid-York; OWWL). Natalie Hurteau, former Adult & Outreach Services Manager for the Upper Hudson Library System, also served on the task force.

Are you inspired to start a Council in your region? Please reach out to the Chair of the Task Force on Friends Councils Jim Foster at jfoster@sals.edu or contact FLS at FLS.nyla@yahoo.com for help. Additional information about Friends Councils can be found on the *Resources for Friends Groups Supporting Small and Rural Libraries* webpage at www.NYLA.org/Friends. Also read the Minutes from the 2018 Conference session *Friendly Café Meet-Up*. Go to www.NYLA.org/Friends > Events > NYLA Annual Conference > 2018.

Next time: Part 2, the Friends Councils of SALS and MCLS.

Partners in Planning continued from page 8

the library is an opportunity to describe what the community would be if the library achieves its mission. As the strategic plan content is developed, identifying the library's priorities and goals, the Friends can utilize the plan to clarify and rank their own initiatives going forward.

Throughout the presentation, Joy provided clear definitions of key terms (mission, priorities, SMART objectives, action plan) making the planning process easy to understand and far from onerous. See Jill Hurst-Wahl's Digitization 101 blog post with her summary and notes on the webinar at <https://hurstassociates.blogspot.com/2022/10/>.

Keeping It Friendly continued from page 5

both Friends and library board meetings. The liaison gives the library perspective to the Friends, reminding them that the purpose of the Friends is to support the library, as well as representing the Friends' viewpoint to the library staff and board.

A clear understanding of the roles of the Friends, library staff and trustees was discussed. The liaison can identify who in each group is responsible for certain things which helps when questions or problems may arise. The value of having a staff liaison work with the library and Friends in requesting funds from the Friends was highlighted. Liaisons can be helpful in guiding Friends by suggesting projects or materials that would be beneficial to the library and help the Friends remember that this is why they raise funds, for the library. An operating agreement between libraries and Friends known as a Memorandum of Understanding was also discussed. This jointly written document provides guidelines and clarifies the roles of each group. It's an important, additional tool that can be used to help keep things running smoothly; a kind of "pre-nup" for Friends, Boards, and library staff. It was noted that a sample of this document can be found on the FLS webpage.

All three of the panelists agreed that serving as a staff liaison to their library was a very important and rewarding role and was vital to the success of their Friends groups and their libraries.

Editor's Note: Valerie Acklin, the Library Director at the Gloversville Public Library participated in the preparation for this session but was unable to present at the conference.



FLS at the Trade Show

The FLS booth was fully stocked and ready for lots of visitors during the no conflict time at the Trade show.

Planning for Success continued from page 8

A Friends steering committee member immediately corresponded by email with each of the individuals who offered assistance and invited the potential volunteers to a meeting with the current Friends leaders at the end of January. An opportunity to attend remotely was also offered.

The meeting led off with the current Friends introducing themselves and describing their duties in various positions. The new volunteers introduced themselves round the table and provided some personal background on their skills. Nearly all the new recruits were recently retired, bringing broad experience in administration, project management, online marketing, clerical skills, and leadership background in other community nonprofits—all skills the Friends could utilize right away!

New volunteers in attendance were paired with experienced volunteers currently in the position and contact information was exchanged so the mentors could meet with the new recruits following the meeting.

This one simple question on the library's community survey has had a lasting impact. In the subsequent months, the Friends held their annual meeting in late spring and elected new officers, many serving in a team capacity (e.g., Co-Vice President of Membership). A Friends website has been established, newsletters have transitioned to electronic communications sent by MailChimp, the ongoing book sale area has had a refresh, and book sale volunteers signed up to work the sale via SignUp.com. The Friends annual fall sale was once again highly successful, netting over \$26,000 in revenue for new library initiatives.

Find out more about the Friends of the Penfield Public Library at www.friendsofpenfieldpubliclibrary.org/index.html.

Working to Advocate continued from page 3

resources to help with advocacy efforts. Click on the drop down arrow next to "For Advocates" on the top line of the NYLA website to see what is available. These resources include information about this year's library legislative agenda, which is updated regularly beginning in December and continuing through the legislative session. You'll also find details on the library budget request, status updates on policy initiatives, and advocacy tools such as links to the New York State Senate and Assembly websites. The page focusing on Library Advocacy Day will give you all of the information you need to participate with library Friends and supporters from across the state and includes links to "Social Media Tools" to help you craft your messages.

Editor's Note: An excellent resource for all library advocates, *Advocacy Tips for Friends Groups Supporting Rural and Small Libraries* by Carole Kupelian, may be found at <https://www.nyla.org/flsrural/?menukey=fls>. Scroll down the page to the section on Advocacy.

FLS at the Conference in Photos



Much thanks to FLS President Kerstin Cruger for the wonderful surprise of a 30th anniversary pin to distribute at the conference! It was a huge hit and a great FLS keepsake.

“Besties”
Chris
Lund and
Meghan
Linehan



Below:
more of
the FLS
booth



Bookmarks with QR codes for fast access to FLS web resources were a big hit, along with candy, FLS 30th Anniversary pins, and a quick survey / raffle entry. The candy, pretzels, and QR code bookmarks were all branded for the FLS 30th Anniversary.



Saratoga Springs Public Library
Left: FLS 30th Anniversary celebration with cake and sparkling juice.
Right: Bookstore Field Trip presentation.
Below: FLS in-person Executive Board meeting including guests.

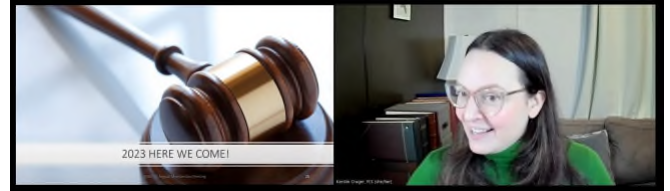


FLS Programs in the Travers Room at the Saratoga Springs Hilton



FLS Annual Membership Meeting

FLS held its third virtual annual meeting in November. The recording is available on both the FLS Home and Events webpages. Take a look to get an overview of the last year with FLS including a recap of the FLS 30th Anniversary celebration, remarks from the 2022 FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award recipient Jane Harkinson, and the installation of the 22-23 FLS Executive Board. FLS President Kerstin Cruger passed the gavel to herself as she will again serve in that role this year.



You'll also find the FLS Annual Report to the Membership and the draft minutes from the meeting at www.NYLA.org/Friends > Events > FLS Annual Meetings.

FLS Executive Board and Volunteers

Officers:

President - Kerstin Cruger fls.kerstin.cruger@gmail.com
First Vice President, Conference Curator - Carol Fortier
2nd Vice President (Membership) - Amy Discenza
Secretary - Lynne Madden
Treasurer - Terry Mulee
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Membership Committee - Amy Discenza
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FLS Volunteers:

FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award Coordinator - Helen Rados, hrados@gmail.com
FLS Scholarship Coordinator - Marie Bindeman, mariebind1955@gmail.com
Coordinator for Professional Development: Lisa C. Wemett
Marketing Coordinator - Meg Sgombick
Regional Workshop Trainers - Joyce Laiosa, Lisa C. Wemett

Contact us anytime at
FLS.NYLA@yahoo.com

Visit the Friends of Libraries Section at
www.NYLA.org/Friends or scan the QR code



FLS Home

FLS is limiting the email addresses published to eliminate phishing scams. Please use the NYLA Membership Directory to find contact information not listed above or use the FLS email. We apologize for any inconvenience.

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Contributor and Proofreader: Lisa C. Wemett

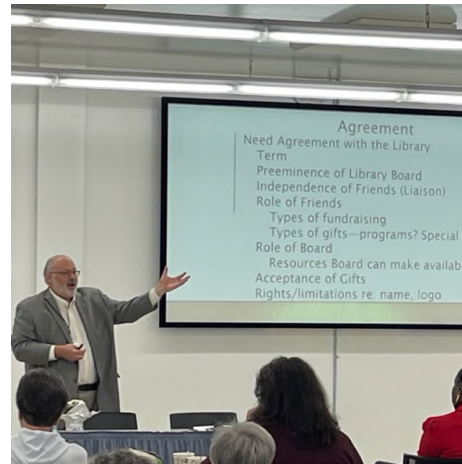
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Double Duty



Tony Iovino of the Oceanside Library presents Legal Considerations at the Nassau's Member Library Directors 2022 Friends Forum. See the article on *Friends Councils* on

page 9. Tony will also be sharing his marketing expertise at FLS Connections! on Thursday, March 9. See that article on page 3. Be sure to register to attend at FLSregister@yahoo.com.

FLS Awards and Scholarships

Do you know of an individual or a group that is worthy of the FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award? It's never too early to send in a nomination! The submission deadline is June 1. See the article on page 1. Find all the details and the nomination packet at www.NYLA.org/Friends > Awards > Casey.

It's also not too early to be thinking about attending the 2023 NYLA Annual Conference in Saratoga Springs this November. If you're an FLS member working with a Friends group, you may be eligible to apply for the FLS Randall Enos Conference Scholarship. See the article starting on page 1. Find all the details and the nomination packet at www.NYLA.org/Friends > Awards > Enos.



FLS Awards

Benefits for FLS Members:

- ✓ receive *Friends News and Notes* quarterly newsletters via USPS
- ✓ apply for the annual FLS Randall Enos Conference Scholarship (available for FLS members only)
- ✓ attend FLS-sponsored webinars at no charge (registration required)

Not a member? Please join us at www.NYLA.org/join or add FLS to an existing NYLA membership.