



Friends of Libraries Section

The mission of the Friends of Libraries Section is to promote and inspire local Friends groups in libraries of all types for the betterment of New York State's library community.

Administrative Teams: A New Approach for Friends Leadership

A Webinar sponsored by FLS/NYLA

Tuesday, February 12, 2019 2 – 3 p.m.

Become a member of FLS/NYLA by December 15, 2018, to attend this webinar at no cost!!

Looking for an alternative to the traditional Friends of the Library leadership model? Today's volunteers need flexibility in their involvement in community organizations. Coming from their work world, these volunteers want to provide input into how a task is completed, focusing on tangible results. Officer positions in most Friends organizations have so many duties that they are full-time jobs. It is unrealistic to recruit volunteers willing to devote the number of hours needed to provide careful oversight to such an important support group focused on the community library.

Shared leadership may be an attractive alternative for your Friends group with focused individual involvement. For a manageable investment of time, a volunteer will see impressive results for their efforts as they join with other members of a leadership team. Being open to change and adopting a new way of leadership will attract the next generation of Friends volunteers and help accomplish the organization's goals.

After 20 years, the **Friends of the Clifton Park – Halfmoon Public Library** had grown into a complex organization whose most recent presidents were challenged to provide the level of leadership needed. The **CPHL Friends** has a membership base of 700+ individuals in a township serving more than 55,000 residents north of Albany. The group had already changed their by-laws once to put a two-year term limit in place for the President and adding two positions, a President-Elect and a Past President, to provide additional support. Although this model was effective for two terms, when the next President-elect felt she could not assume the Presidency, the group reached a critical moment.

And yet it was an opportunity to examine what the group was doing and why. The CPHL Friends always seemed to say "yes" to any new initiative suggested and the projects were daunting. A community-wide read, more sophisticated e-mail marketing, and events that drew upon the cultural diversity of the community were proving to be too much. The group determined to examine what they were doing and more importantly, why.

Realizing the issue was more than just who held office, a cohort of invested volunteers who would not let the CPHL Friends fail decided to convene their first Futuring project with the professional guidance of a facilitator. At this two-session retreat, they were able to prioritize the Friends current activities in relation to the library's mission as well as examine the leadership crisis and how to address succession planning for the group. The consultant helped the officers to consider a new way of delegating oversight, one they could field test and fine-tune as they went.

Four well-defined areas emerged: finances including book sales, marketing and technology, coordination between the Friends and the library, and author events. **A four-person presidency, the Quad Leadership Team, was floated and piloted in December 2015.** After their trial period was deemed successful, the CPHL Friends modified their by-laws to reflect the permanent change to their group's joint leadership.

The Quads stress the importance of taking time for an exploratory process, the value of a neutral facilitator who is a good listener, and the crucial role of flexibility and open communication. Embracing the idea of the new structure as a pilot project allowed for trial and error. This might not be the permanent solution, but let's try. Collaboration is key; the Quads recognize each other's strengths and expertise.

Now fully three years into the trial organizational structure, the Quads are functioning as a strong team overseeing a Board with 17 members and a tight committee structure. The organization's revenue streams include book sales, membership dues and donations, and travel with trips both domestic and international. Volunteers provide assistance with the book sales (100 strong) and a plant sale (30 volunteers), just to mention two projects. Bookmarks and posters let the public know specific ways individual volunteers can help the group: "Join us on the Social Media Committee!" or "Share your talents: be part of the Friends Board to manage a dynamic organization!" Becoming involved seems far less onerous. These Friends are going to be around for another 25 years, for sure.

Meet Our Presenters



Wilma Jozwiak, Ph.D., facilitated federal school improvement grants for New York State for ten years before retiring in 2012. She was previously an adjunct faculty member at The College of St. Rose in the graduate Masters in Special Education program. After retirement, Wilma immediately jumped into greater involvement with nonprofit organizations. She held the Presidency of the Friends of the Clifton Park – Halfmoon Public Library for two years (2012 and 2013). Wilma collaborated with fellow Board members to present at the 2016 NYLA Annual Conference about the CPHL Friends community read project, "Two Towns—One Book."



Sheila Morrone received her Master's in Educational Psychology at The College of St. Rose. She spent most of her career with the NYS Education Department, directing its effort to evaluate noncollegiate learning and, when warranted, recommend it for college credit. Now Sheila is one of the members of the CPHL Friends leadership team, with responsibilities for Technology, Communication, and Publicity. She has served on the Friends Board since 2013, overseeing the Friends' website and its web-based e-mail marketing campaigns.



Rhona Koretzky has dedicated her professional life to libraries, beginning as a high school student shelver at the Adriance Memorial Library in Poughkeepsie and making a career choice as a college student at SUNY Geneseo where she received a master's degree in library science. Throughout a 35-year career, she worked in public, school, prison, and state libraries. After retiring from her full-time job at Saratoga Springs Public Library (SSPL), she now serves as a member of the leadership team for the Friends of Clifton Park – Halfmoon Public Library. She is also active in the Friends of SSPL and coordinates travel programs for both libraries.

This panel discussion was first presented at the 2017 NYLA Annual Conference, sponsored by FLS. Attendees who completed evaluations of the session rated it "outstanding" overall, citing the presentation as "an interesting concept" and "inspiring." Each team member's areas of responsibility are outlined on the Friends website (www.Friendsofcphlibrary.org). Questions about the webinar can be directed to FLS.NYLA@yahoo.com.

Cost and Registration: Current personal and organizational members of the Friends of Libraries Section (FLS) of NYLA whose membership expiration date is beyond 2/12/19 may register at no charge. When registering, current FLS members select an "FLS Member Reg Pass" that will waive the webinar registration fee. *Please note: At the time of registration, FLS cannot be added to an existing NYLA membership in order to attend the webinar at no cost.*

All others pay these rates: \$25 for NYLA personal or organizational members (who are not members of FLS) and \$35 for those who are not yet members of NYLA. Group registrations are also available (\$75 member rate /\$99 non-member rate). Interested participants may choose to join NYLA prior to registering for the webinar to receive the NYLA member rate. Registration is through the NYLA Online Membership Center. A credit card is required for payment. Checks and purchase orders are not accepted. **Registration begins after January 1, 2019.**