National Friends of Libraries Week
Not Too Soon to Start Planning
by Marie Orlando

National Friends of Libraries Week will be celebrated this year from October 18-24. That may seem like a long way off, but to have an impact in your community and around the State we should start planning now. NYLA Friends of Libraries Section is getting the ball rolling by seeking sponsors for a legislative resolution recognizing the contributions of library Friends groups. Timing is critical as the Assembly and Senate can only consider such a resolution while in session from January to June. We will keep you posted on this project as it develops.

Many Friends groups also prepare a resolution for their local municipality, be it County, Town or Village. While it’s probably fine to wait a few months to get that going, it’s not too early to start cultivating the idea in your local legislatures, talking up the contributions of your Friends group with your local representatives whenever you have the opportunity.

And here’s another idea to think about now. Is your Friends group planning to make a significant donation to your library in the near future? Perhaps you are considering a cash contribution to a capital campaign, purchasing a piece of needed equipment, or a donation for a special program series. If so, why not schedule the presentation of that gift for National Friends of Libraries Week? A press release and photo in local publications would be a great way to recognize what your Friends group does for the library community, promote membership, and raise awareness of this national celebration. Start by presenting this idea to your Friends board and your library director so that all the pieces will fall into place by October.

For further information about National Friends of Libraries Week, visit the United for Libraries website at www.ala.org/united/events_conferences/folweek.

FLS 2015 Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award Call for Nominations

Given annually, the Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award has been sponsored by the Empire Friends Roundtable since 1993. The Friends of Libraries Section is pleased to continue this tradition which honors a volunteer member or a group in the library community whose efforts have contributed to the growth of libraries or Friends of the Library organizations.

To learn more about Daniel W. Casey and to find the nomination form, go to www.nyla.org/friends to the "Awards and Scholarships" page. The nomination submission deadline for this prestigious award is July 1, 2015. The award recipient will be announced at FLS's annual meeting at the NYLA Annual Conference in Lake Placid on October 23, 2015.

Nominations must include all relevant information (including nominee and sponsor mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses). Describe in detail the contribution of the group or individual nominee to library service, i.e., positions held, years of service, accomplishments, successful fund-raiser, etc.

Please submit the nomination form and all supporting materials (clippings of press releases, promotional materials, etc.) electronically to jrlaiosa@gmail.com or by mail to Joyce Laiosa, 22 McCormack Road, Slingerlands, NY 12159. These materials will not be returned.

For further information please contact Joyce Laiosa at jrlaiosa@gmail.com or call 518-439-7839.

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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.

Quarterly Newsletter of the Friends of Libraries Section of the New York Library Association
Let's Sit Down and Talk
A Message from FLS President Lisa C. Wemett

Growing the FLS membership, growing the FLS Executive Board, and helping local Friends groups learn ways to grow their own volunteer ranks are all parallel efforts for FLS. All of us need people who are passionate about a cause, engaged and willing to try new things, enthusiastic about the tasks they are handed, and outspoken advocates for libraries. It’s a tall order.

When was the last time your Friends President and your executive board (a.k.a. officers, Friends Council) had a "meaningful conversation" with the director of your library? Not an e-mail; a true face-to-face meeting. Not just popping in the director's office to mention (again) the lack of storage where you are being buried by donations for the next book sale or the cramped sorting area where more than two folks working together makes it feel like the International Space Station. But a talk about the goals for the book sale or fund-raiser, the need for more community involvement and ways to recruit residents to become Friends, or how the Friends can assist with advocating to local government to increase the library's funding.

This is the kind of conversation that requires setting an appointment for the discussion to take place. All interested parties need to be reminded of the big picture, why the Friends were established, and continue to work for the library's benefit. Use the time together to focus on the future: where is the group going and how does that dinner/bake sale/raffle basket support the library's goals? What help do the Friends need from the library staff to complete their projects? How can the work get accomplished together? Ask for feedback and give honest, constructive feedback in exchange.

Now is the perfect time to acknowledge the volunteers who support the library. April is National Volunteer Month, established to honor the people who dedicate themselves to taking action and solving problems in our communities. This year April 12th through 18th is National Volunteer Week, which also runs concurrently with National Library Week. Use these national designations as an opportunity to recognize those who give so much of their time and talent to help.

The Friends Board needs to show their appreciation for the volunteers that support the group's work, but who do not necessarily chair a committee; those folks who work in the background sorting books every week, baking cookies for a program, or making reminder phone calls to those who signed up weeks ago to help with a project. The library administration (director, Board of Trustees) needs to thank volunteers for their longevity and tireless efforts, to encourage individuals to extend their volunteer service. A staff-organized breakfast for the Friends, a colorful "Thanks!" banner in the sorting area, featuring photos of volunteers on the library's electronic message board, waiving overdue fines for active volunteers, or other tangible benefits will go a long way to provide some well deserved recognition and good will.

Independent Sector (www.independentsector.org) is an advocacy group based in Washington, DC, that tracks statistics about volunteerism. In 2013, they stated the estimated dollar value of volunteer time was $22.55 per hour. With nearly 65 million adults volunteering 7.9 billion hours of service, that’s a value of $175 billion. Yes, that's quite the economic impact!

Not only has the amount of volunteerism increased over time, but also its effect on the community. Many corporations encourage their employees to engage in volunteer activities, bringing long-term, skill-based volunteerism to organizations. The Baby Boom generation contributes its skills from the workplace, such as working in teams, to an organization like the Friends that runs largely by committees. I know those volunteers are working at your library.

Some people want things to happen; some people wish things to happen; volunteers make things happen. Celebrate your accomplishments!

Hot Topic: Taxes

"Tis the season! And not only in April. When two or more Friends get together, the subject of "how do you handle sales tax?" comes up rather regularly. Being recognized as tax-exempt by the IRS under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3) allows the Friends to accept tax-deductible charitable donations. But the organization must still comply with regulations of the NYS Department of Taxation & Finance. Paying sales tax for purchases for the Friends is an entirely separate process from collecting sales tax from the public when they purchase materials from the Friends.

At the conference in Saratoga Springs, attorneys from the Pro Bono Partnership addressed several issues about Friends groups both paying and collecting sales tax. (You can find their entire PowerPoint and handouts at www.nyla.org/friends; then click the Events button.) Even if your organization has been granted sales tax exemption by NYS for purchases made by your group (see last
From Our Regional Reporters
This is a new feature in Friends News and Notes. The stories here are from our eyes and ears around the state. Thanks to our current regional reporters, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich and Susan Swanton.

MHLS Friends Support Group Meeting
by Rebekkah Smith-Aldrich

The Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) serves five counties in the mid-Hudson Valley of New York (Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Putnam and Ulster counties). With 66 public libraries and over 30 active Friends Groups, MHLS works to support regional Friends activities in a variety of ways, including a regular "Friends Support Group" (FSG). This meeting provides a forum for area groups to gather and share best practices.

Our most recent meeting, held at the Kingston Library in Ulster County, provided attendees with an update on the Nonprofit Revitalization Act and a guest speaker, Vicki Kosovac, President of the Friends of the Hudson Area Library in Columbia County, shared her group's wonderful story of community engagement.

Nonprofit Revitalization Act (NPRA)
Briefing for Friends Groups:

Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Coordinator for Library Sustainability and FSG organizer, presented a briefing to ensure that Friends Groups understand the implications of the new NPRA that went into effect July 1, 2014. Friends Groups that are incorporated with NYS separately from their libraries and hold their own 501(c)(3) status must comply with the following:

**Policies:** A conflict of interest policy and whistleblower policy is now required of all separately incorporated Friends Groups. Those not separately incorporated will fall under the library's conflict of interest policy. Those in charge of their own policy must disclose any conflicts of interest in writing. NYLA has shared their policies as models for libraries and Friends Groups to use. You can access the samples at [http://bit.ly/1ujvRxQ](http://bit.ly/1ujvRxQ).

**Electronic Communication:** Membership meeting notices may be sent electronically (via email). However, if a message to a specific address bounces back twice, a paper notice must be sent (via mail). Attendance at a Friends board meeting is allowable via video communication. A Friends Group bylaws must be amended to allow or disallow.

**Audits:**
- Gross revenue over $500,000 must file an independent audit with the Office of the Attorney General and must have an independent audit committee
- Gross revenue between $500,000-$250,000 must file financial reports with an independent CPA's review report
- Gross revenue under $250,000 must file unaudited financial statements signed by the treasurer and president

Community Engagement with Huge Dividends
Vicki Kosovac, President
Friends of the Hudson Area Library:

Ms. Kosovac has served as president of the Friends of the Hudson Area Library for the past four and a half years. In that time their membership has increased 110% and donations have gone up 137%. Their book sale room revenues have increased ten-fold during this time. So what is the key to their success?

Ms. Kosovac outlined her five basic principles of how to successfully stay within your mission, become more functional, and still have fun!

1. Make money.
2. Make new Friends and keep the old.
3. Create awareness in the community for the Friends and the library. "Letting people know who you are and what you do is essential communication for both promotion, and ultimately, recognition."
4. Engage the local community outside of the library. "Participating or holding events outside the confines of the library puts us in the community and better able to interact with new friends and supporters."
5. Associate or collaborate with winners – a strong community event or established brand name. "By doing this whenever possible, you're better able to reach new audiences, and then target your fund-raising techniques."

Ms. Kosovac then shared multiple examples of events and programs they've done that have successfully used most of the five principles: their annual membership appeal; specialty book sales (cookbook sales at the local farmers market!); partnership with the Columbia County Photography Club; and the Hudson Children's Book Festival.

"We make friends, create awareness, position ourselves in the community, and associate with a strong brand name event, all while generating revenue for the Friends and Library."

Would you like to be the FLS Regional Reporter in your area? For more information, please email FLS.NYLA@yahoo.com
Golf Tournament Benefits Two Friends Groups!
by Jennifer Eaton (story arranged by Susan Swanton)

The idea of holding a golf tournament to raise money for a charity is not a new one. But the concept of two not-for-profit organizations joining forces with a sponsor to share in the rewards of hosting a charity golf tournament - for the mutual benefit of all - is one that is uncommon, if not unique.

This past summer, the Friends of the Chili Public Library and the Friends of the Gates Public Library did just that, when they teamed up with the Gates-Chili Chamber of Commerce to co-organize the Chamber's 18th annual Golf Tournament at Brook-Lea Country Club on August 4.

In 2013, the Gates and Chili Library Friends Groups were invited by the Chamber to be the beneficiaries for the 2014 tournament – a long-running, successful event that only needed a new charity to continue its tradition of supporting the local community. As the organizing beneficiaries of the tournament the Friends Groups only had to help plan and execute the event.

The concept was simple – or so it appeared:
1) Secure a golf course to host the tournament
2) Set a date - and order good weather
3) Add golfers
4) Have fun

Of course, there was much more that was involved in the process.

The first challenge that faced the Friends Groups was the fact that planning for the event began in January – while most other charity golf tournaments begin planning for their next event almost immediately after the conclusion of their most recent tournament.

The Gates and Chili Library Friends Groups quickly got down to work. Over the course of monthly meetings at first - then bi-monthly, then weekly meetings as the tournament date approached – the all-volunteer tournament committee gradually assembled the many parts necessary to ensure a successful charity golf tournament.

The first order of business was to secure a contract with Brook-Lea to host the tournament which included setting a date for the event. Next, the fee structure was decided - from the price for individual golfers to the rate for foursomes, as well as sponsorship levels.

As the year progressed, the committee set about collecting donations for prizes from local businesses, along with soliciting golfers, corporate sponsors, and volunteers to help staff the tournament the day of the event. Ultimately, the success of the tournament was as much about teamwork between all three organizing groups as it was about the bottom line. Due to the hard work and dedication of all who volunteered their time and effort, this will be the first of many more to come.

Members of the Golf Tournament Committee accepting the two checks for the libraries (each check for the two Friends groups was $4,453.83)

Good Ideas from All Over
by Phyllis Kitt

Freedom of speech and artistic expression - the hot topic of recent weeks - is useless, even dangerous, without freedom of information and easy access to knowledge. These are the library's reason for being, and the library is where facts trump hearsay and fiction is labeled "Fiction." Its Friends Groups are what make it "user-friendly." For instance:

Rochester, NY  The Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library presented a seminar on bookkeeping for new and first time small business operators. It was presented by the College at Brockport's Small Business Development Center.

Bristol, CT  "What's an APP?" The Bristol Public Library's technical librarian, Adam Delaura, teaches Friends who want to get "current" how to create Web and Facebook pages, tools that are a must in order to function at maximum potential in today's world.

Muncie, IN  "Who Are These People?" was a fall program presented by the Friends of the Bracken Library which invited townspeople to come and help identify people and places in photos of Delaware County from the library's collection of "unknowns," making the collection far more valuable.
Friends groups have always taken the lead to help libraries with start-up funds for new collections and services. I'm dating myself here, but I remember our Friends funding books-on-tape, then books-on-CDs; video tapes and then DVDs. You never can have a collection of "one" of the latest thing to come along; you need a variety of titles to make it a viable service. Some Friends groups underwrite extra copies of best sellers in hardcover, to help the library shorten up the wait time for high-demand titles.

But what of new technology, those devices and machines that we have only heard about and not seen in action? Patrons are consumers: of books in a myriad of formats, the daily paper, a seat at the computer where they can access the Internet or write up a résumé. But many libraries are taking the lead to turn patrons into creators with do-it-yourself tools unheard of until they came on the scene in recent years.

Has your Friends group kept pace and bought your library something other than plush chairs for the magazine section? Let's be forward thinking! Here are some ideas from Friends who are helping their community by offering some high tech gadgetry for public use:

**3D Printers:** 3D printers have many exciting applications, creating plastic objects through virtual blueprints generated by computer aided design (CAD) software. But there are many bio-medical and scientific applications that are just being explored. Maybe your patrons have an artistic bent and will decide to build a sculpture layer-by-layer. Libraries that offer 3D printing services need to consider developing user policies that are practical and consistent with their mission. *Progress in the Making: An Introduction to 3D Printing and Public Policy* is a tip sheet developed by United for Libraries, the Public Library Association, and other divisions of ALA.

**Digital Media Labs (DML):** A DML consists of equipment to convert older media to digital formats. Do you have video tapes of family gatherings and want to share the memories with a younger generation that uses DVD players and not VCRs? What about a cassette tape of a conversation with your grandparent that now could be saved as an audio file? The conversion from one format to another is not difficult to learn, but the equipment for personal use for a one-time-only project can be prohibitively expense. Let's go to the library and do this! Similarly, equipment can be provided to create video, audio, or other original digital content, allowing the creator to post it online. Libraries can offer self-guided tutorials or workshops on how to use the equipment. Find out more in *Digital Media Labs in Libraries* by Amanda L. Goodman in her article in Library Technology Reports (Sept./Oct. 2014 issue). As Amanda says, "A DML is more than a room with equipment. It's a creative space for making and sharing memories."

**Digital resources and e-readers:** Some Friends are helping underwrite subscriptions for their patrons to borrow magazines that can be read on their personal devices. Some groups donated funds so their libraries can expand the number of ebooks for loan. Other popular services include loaning e-readers and one-on-one technology assistance for patrons from a library staff member at a BYOD (bring your own device) session. (What DO you do next, once you've taken that e-reader out of the box on Christmas morning?)

**Mobile apps:** There are many people who don't have computers, but do have a mobile device. Libraries who offer apps for mobile devices need funding to have vendors design or customize the app for them.

**Disc inspection, cleaning, and repair equipment:** If your library loans DVDs, music CDs, audiobooks on CD, or game discs (or all of these), one bad scratch can render that item useless. Disc repair equipment is pricey, but earns its keep as the staff restores the discs and keeps the collection in good shape, keeping them in circulation much longer. Some libraries allow patrons to pay a fee for supplies to restore discs in their personal collections.

**Roku devices:** The Kent Public Library and Liverpool Public Library are among the growing number of libraries nationwide that are lending Roku devices: digital video players that can be plugged into home televisions so patrons can watch digitized programming archived online (like PBS.org and the Smithsonian Channel) and other streaming platforms (such as Netflix). Patrons must have broadband Internet access at home to receive the programming on their TV. Subscriptions like Amazon Prime can also stream through Roku. The player and all accessories are loaned in a kit. The lending programs are wildly popular; some libraries have over a dozen units for patrons to borrow.

Share this article with your library's staff. They might have been thinking about offering these services or gadgets. Let them know the Friends want the library to reach the community with new technology and are willing to help fund a new initiative (or two!).
Taxes from page 2

paragraph) and has a Form ST-119, "Exempt Organization Certificate," the Friends may still be required to collect and pay NYS state sales tax on retail sales to the general public. The Pro Bono Partnership said, "Each Friends group needs to analyze how it sells materials in order to determine whether or not it needs to collect sales tax. Generally speaking, the more frequent your book sales, the more likely it is that you need to collect sales tax." The attorneys stated that sales must be collected in the following scenarios: the Friends operate a store or book sale area within the library where patrons can purchase books during normal library hours; the Friends operate a booth at a flea market or other similar venue where there are also vendors who are required to collect sales tax; the Friends regularly sell used books through an online Web site. If the Friends operate a book sale one weekend during the year, they probably are not required to collect sales tax.

Posted with the Pro Bono Partnership’s materials on the FLS Web site is a link to NYS Publication 843, "A Guide to Sales Tax in NYS for Exempt Organizations." If additional information or clarification is needed about your group’s specific circumstances or the information in the publication, groups can request an opinion from the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance by submitting Form AD-1.8 or by calling (518) 485-2889.

Another caveat: When buying something for the organization, complete Form ST-119.1, "Exempt Purchase Certificate," and present it at the store at the time of purchase. Payment must be made using the debit/credit card that is in the name of the organization, cash, or an organization’s check. The shopper cannot use their own personal check or personal credit/debit card to make a tax exempt purchase, even if the shopper is going to be reimbursed by the Friends.

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NYLA leads, educates, and advocates for the advancement of the New York library community.

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