Learn the latest tips and trends for Friends, Trustees, and more at the ALA Midwinter Meeting

United for Libraries will offer programs, discussion groups, and more at the 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston from Jan. 8 to 12. Friends, Trustees, and Foundation staff/board members, can attend the sessions at no cost; for information and to register, visit www.ala.org/united/events_conferences/midwinter.

United for Libraries members who cannot attend the Midwinter Meeting will be able to access information and resources from the workshops, discussions, and more in upcoming newsletters and at www.ala.org/united.

Nuts & Bolts for Trustees, Friends and Foundations will be held Fri., Jan. 8, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Library Friends, Trustees, volunteers, and staff are invited to share best practices and hear from experts on several topics.

During the Midwinter Meeting, separate discussion groups will be held for academic library Friends and development officers, Friends of the Library groups, library Foundation staff, and library Trustees. These open forum discussion groups will allow participants to explore topics, issues, and trends of interest to them.

United for Libraries’ Spotlight on Adult Literature will be held in the exhibits hall on Sat., Jan. 9, 2-4 p.m. Publishers will be giving away advance reader’s copies of upcoming publications and hosting author signings at their booths. This event is sponsored by United for Libraries and ALA Conference Services.

The Gala Author Tea, sponsored by ReferenceUSA, will be held on Mon., Jan. 11, 2 to 4 p.m. Bestselling authors Janice Y.K. Lee, Liz Moore, Val McDermid, Stephanie Danler, Jennifer Haigh, and Robyn Carr will discuss their writing lives and forthcoming books. Enjoy a light offering of tea, finger sandwiches, and a variety of sweet treats.

For more information on programs at events at the Midwinter Meeting, visit www.ala.org/united/events_conferences/midwinter. For a preview of the Annual Conference in June, see page 21. Paula Poundstone will be back for The Laugh’s On Us sponsored by SAGE. and don’t miss the Gala Author Tea, sponsored by ReferenceUSA.
Where would libraries be without their Friends?

In addition to all the other work they do on behalf of the library, Friends of the Library groups often help augment critically important literacy initiatives by supporting such things as Books for Babies programs (www.ala.org/united/products_services/booksforbabies), teen programs, summer reading programs and STEM programs. Where would libraries be without their Friends? Where would the children in your community be without your library?

Friends groups across the country often support their library’s summer reading programs every year. These programs aren’t just fun (which of course they are!); they are also critical for the kids involved in avoiding what has become known as the “summer slide.” Numerous studies indicate that students who don’t read or read infrequently during their summer vacation see their reading abilities stagnate or decline. This effect becomes more pronounced as students get older and advance through the school system. The situation for economically disadvantaged students is especially grim: if students from low-income families don’t read over the summer, they are much more likely to fall behind their more privileged peers, widening the “achievement gap” (www.ed.gov/blog/tag/summer-slide).

It’s not just the summer that matters, however. Studies show categorically that children who do not have a book rich environment prior to kindergarten enter far behind those who do — and sadly, many never catch up. Libraries remain the unique community agency that provides every child with a treasure trove of books, a professional librarian to match the right book with the right child, a broad collection of parenting materials, and reading and story time programs all for free! This is nothing short of amazing!

I can recall as a child going to the Birmingham (Ala.) Public Library, and how proud I was of my library card and my summer reading list of books I read. I know love to hear my granddaughter tell me stories of going to the Macomb County (Mich.) Public Library, and how much she loves to take home books at age 3! Clearly reading sparks the imagination and provides a solid foundation for a life full of learning.

As important as the work you and your library do, however, it is equally important to get the word out to all the members of your community about collections and programs for kids — especially those who may not have a background in using the library. It may be possible, as well, for you to volunteer to deliver books to daycare centers or to read to children at fairs, parades, and other community events. I know firsthand the impact of the work you do for libraries and your communities, and I have seen how your work changes lives so please keep up the outstanding work you are doing and know what you are doing changes lives!

United for Libraries has a number of resources to help you promote literacy and your library — from Fact Sheets, to sharing best practices with other Friends groups across the country, to a free download of 101+ Great Ideas for Libraries and Friends — we have the tools and resources you need to ensure that everyone knows about your library and the indispensable role it plays in creating a more literate community. For more information, visit www.ala.org/united.

I thank you for all you do in supporting kids and literacy through your library from someone that has personally benefitted from the work of a Friends group many years ago!
WHCLIST Award applications due April 1

The White House Conference on Library and Information Services Taskforce (WHCLIST) and the ALA Washington Office are calling for nominations for the WHCLIST Award. Each year, the award is granted to a non-librarian (Trustee, Friend, or general supporter) participant in National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) in Washington, D.C. NLLD will be held May 2-3, 2016. The winner receives a stipend of $300 and two free nights at the NLLD hotel.

WHCLIST has been an effective force in library advocacy nationally, statewide and locally since the White House Conferences on Library and Information Services in 1979 and 1991. WHCLIST has provided its assets to the ALA Washington Office to transmit its spirit of dedicated, passionate library support to a new generation of advocates. Both ALA and WHCLIST are committed to ensuring the American people get the best library services possible.

The criteria for the WHCLIST Award are:

- The recipient should be a library supporter (trustee, friend, general supporter) and not a professional librarian.
- Recipient should be a first-time attendee of NLLD.

Representatives of WHCLIST and the ALA Washington office will choose the recipient. The ALA Washington Office will contact the recipient’s senators and representatives to announce the award. The winner of the WHCLIST Award will be announced at NLLD.

Applicants must register for NLLD and pay all associated costs. Applicants must make their own travel arrangements. The winner will be reimbursed for two free nights in the NLLD hotel in D.C. and receive the $300 stipend to defray the costs of attending the event.

To apply for the WHCLIST award, please submit a completed NLLD registration form; a letter explaining why you should receive the award; and a letter of reference from a library director, school librarian, library board chair, Friend’s group chair, or other library representative, to Lisa Lindle (llindle@alawash.org). For information or to mail an application, visit www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/nlld/funding.

Save the date for Leg Day, May 2-3, 2016

Online registration for National Library Legislative Day (May 2-3, 2016) is now open. To register and for more information, visit www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/nlld.

Hundreds of library advocates will descend on Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress and their staffs. For information, visit www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/nlld.

Library advocates who cannot make it to Capitol Hill for the event can still be a part of the effort by participating in Virtual Library Legislative Day. Call and/or email your elected officials on May 3, or any time the week of May 2-6. United for Libraries, the ALA Washington Office, ALA Chapter Relations, and the ALA Office for Library Advocacy will lead Virtual Library Legislative Day, an opportunity for all library advocates to make their voices heard on a national level. For more information, visit www.ala.org/united/advocacy/virtuallegday.
ALA launches Libraries Transform public awareness campaign

On Oct. 29, ALA President Sari Feldman officially launched Libraries Transform, a national public awareness campaign that will highlight the transformative nature of our nation’s libraries and elevate the critical role libraries play in the digital age.

As part of the national launch, Feldman toured a variety of libraries in Washington, D.C. (including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library and George Washington University’s Gelman Library) to view the power of libraries in action and to gather best practices that will be shared with the library profession and the public at large.

Rapid advances in technology are fueling a library renaissance. No longer just places for books, libraries now offer an assortment of free digitally-based programs and services including 3-D printing, ebooks, digital recording studios and technology training. Such tech-based resources are transforming lives through digital literacy and lifelong learning, contributing to education, employment, entrepreneurship, engagement and empowerment. Yet libraries are often overlooked as catalysts for powerful individual and community change.

“Today’s libraries are not just about what we have for people, but what we do for and with people,” said Feldman. “The goal of the Libraries Transform campaign is to change the perception that ‘libraries are just quiet places to do research, find a book, and read’ to a shared understanding of libraries as dynamic centers for learning in the digital age. Libraries of all kinds foster individual opportunity that ultimately drives the success of our communities and our nation.”

“This is an exciting time for libraries, as institutions of all types continue to transform to meet the digital and print information needs of their users,” Feldman said. “It is through the transformation of library organizations that library professionals can continue to fulfill their role in leveling the playing field for all who seek to transform their lives through education and lifelong learning.”

For more information about Libraries Transform, visit http://www.librariestransform.org.

Top 10 ways to engage with the Libraries Transform Campaign

1. Tweet about your most innovative and impactful services using the #librariestransform hashtag.
2. Download and print “Because...” posters and them around your community (www.ilovelibraries.org/librariestransform/toolkit). Consider posting them in unexpected places.
3. Download and print the postcards and send them to your stakeholders with messages about new, innovative programs and services at your library. Or, use them to reconnect with lapsed cardholders, inviting them to re-visit the library.
4. Include Libraries Transform messaging in your community newsletters, e-newsletter or regular email blasts to stakeholders.
5. Download the Libraries Transform web banners and embed them on your website (www.ilovelibraries.org/librariestransform/toolkit).
6. Invite your community members to share their stories of how “libraries transform” on your social media platforms — Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc.
7. Host an event to launch/build community awareness of a new creative service at your library (such as a makerspace, new collaborative work spaces or a new digital collection).
8. Use the Libraries Transform brand on flyers and brochures to promote special programs and services at your library.
9. Include Libraries Transform messaging in your press releases, print and radio PSAs, op-ed's, and letters-to-the-editors to local media.
10. Conduct your own creative guerilla marketing stunt to delight and surprise your community. For inspiration, check out the Outside the Lines initiative to see how some libraries have creatively connected with their community (www.getoutsidethelines.org).
ALA releases National Policy Agenda for Libraries

Libraries are in a revolution fueled by rapid advances in technology, and thus the roles, capabilities, and expectations of libraries are changing rapidly. National public policy for libraries must reflect these changes. This year ALA released a National Policy Agenda for Libraries (http://bit.ly/1QUamyg) to guide a proactive policy shift.

The agenda was developed in concert with major library organizations that serve on a Library Advisory Committee for the Policy Revolution! initiative and with input from a public comment period. Funding for this project is provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation as part of a three-year grant that also supports efforts to deepen national stakeholder engagement and increase library advocacy capacity.

“Libraries cannot wait to be invited to ‘the table.’ We need proactive, strategic and aligned advocacy to support national policies that advance the public’s interest in the digital age and support libraries as essential community assets,” writes Deborah Jacobs, director of the Global Libraries Program at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, in a foreword to the agenda.

The agenda flows out of library values and the imperative of “opportunity for all,” as well as within a context of national political, economic and demographic trends. It seeks to answer the questions “What are the U.S. library interests and priorities for the next five years that should be emphasized to national decision makers?” and “Where might there be windows of opportunity to advance a particular priority at this particular time?”

The agenda articulates two broad themes — building library capacity to advance national priorities and advancing the public interest. Among the areas for capacity building are education and learning, entrepreneurship, and health and wellness. Public interest topics include balanced copyright and licensing, systems for digital content, and privacy and transparency. The agenda also identifies specific populations for which there are significant demographic shifts or bipartisan opportunities to address specialized needs.

“National decision makers often don’t understand the roles or capabilities of modern libraries,” said Alan S. Inouye, director of ALA’s Office for Information Technology Policy and co-principal investigator of the Policy Revolution! initiative. “Thus, an underlying imperative of the agenda is communication about how modern libraries contribute to society. Progress on specific policy goals is significantly impeded if this broader understanding is lacking.”

“Sustainable libraries are essential to sustainable communities,” said Ken Wiggin, president of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), which is a grant partner. “I believe this agenda will help unify and amplify our voices at the national level and can be customized for state-level action, as well.”

Using the Agenda, the ALA Washington Office will match priorities to windows of opportunity and confluence to begin advancing policy goals — in partnership with other library organizations and allies with whom there is alignment.

While initiated at different times, the Policy Revolution! initiative dovetails with the new proposed strategic framework and plan for the ALA, which focuses on three Strategic Directions: information policy, advocacy and professional and leadership development. “Taken together, along with a growing focus on transforming libraries, we are ‘connecting the dots’ across the profession and strengthening our collective voice,” said Larra Clark, deputy director of ALA’s Office for Information Technology Policy and co-principal investigator of the Policy Revolution! initiative.

More information on the initiative is available online at www.ala.org/oitp.
10 practices every Foundation should be doing

1. Collaborate with your Friends
   Friends groups and Foundations are looking more and more at ways they can collaborate or merge to increase support of the Library and present a more easily understood structure to the community. When members of the general public are confused by more than one group that supports the library, they may choose not to support either. If both groups are going to coexist, they need to develop communication plans that clearly articulate the role that each group plays while referencing the other group in their messages to their members and donors.

2. Hire fundraising staff
   Library Foundations are finding it necessary to hire fundraising staff rather than taking on all of the work with volunteers. In short, it takes money to make money. Fundraising is far more than asking someone to make a contribution. A comprehensive development program includes nurturing donors, providing ways to recognize donors, keeping track of donor activity in a database, and communicating with donors at times other than when asking them to contribute. Volunteers should not be expected to do all of this.

3. Never fund lost public funding
   Library Foundations should not fund the areas of lost public funding in a library’s operating budget. Foundations should focus their funding on enhancements and innovative programming including things such as the summer reading program, homework help centers, outreach programs, specialized collections, and enhancements to a building project through a capital campaign. Losses to the operational budget should be addressed through a political advocacy effort, which all library Foundations should conduct.

4. Regularly perform advocacy efforts
   All library Foundations should conduct political advocacy activities in support of strong public funding for the library. If you fundraise for an institution that is predominantly public funded, you should also conduct political advocacy activities to remind the elected officials that your private donors will never fund the general costs of operating a public library. Lobbying is a legal activity for nonprofit organizations to conduct as long as they do not endorse a specific candidate for elected office and they do not spend more than 20% of their annual operating budget on lobbying activities. There are few other prohibitions with which you should become familiar.

5. Have profitable special events
   If you conduct a special event (gala), do it in such a way that you will make a profit. There should be a major emphasis on finding corporate and media sponsors for the event. A media sponsor will not usually give money, but they can provide exposure through in-kind ads that your corporate sponsors will want to see. Corporate sponsorship should account for at least half of your attendees. You will never be profitable by selling 100% of your seats to individuals.

6. Don’t limit the size of your board
   A library Foundation’s board should be large enough to represent all spheres of influence in the community. There is no need to limit the size of the board in the organization’s by-laws. A fundraising organization’s board needs to be of a size that will allow the board to penetrate every part of your community’s donor base. In addition, a large board may be needed to populate the variety of standing committees which a successful library Foundation needs to have.

7. Make sure your board is donating
   All Foundation board members should make an annual financial contribution to the organization. Most Foundations do not dictate the size of gift required. One hundred percent participation is more important than the actual amount of a gift. Specifying the size of annual giving may eliminate some board members from participating on your board such as former elected officials who may not have personal wealth but who know virtually everyone in the community.

8. Create a development plan
   Every library Foundation needs to have a current development plan to guide all of the organization’s activity. The development plan should be a three-year strategic plan to indicate the types of fundraising activities to be undertaken with annual goals and responsibilities delineated.

9. Create endowments
   The Foundation should attempt to create endowments through a planned giving program. An annual drawdown of (4-5% of the endowment value averaged over the previous 12 quarters) should be taken to help support the operations of the Foundation and to support specific library services and programs specified by the endowment. The best way to create and increase endowment funds is through planned giving and by including an endowment component in any capital campaign. All gifts received through planned giving efforts should be placed in an en-
To submit an article to Framework for Foundations, email it to united@ala.org.

To ensure you or your group is receiving all available member benefits, United for Libraries needs your email address. To add your email, send it to united@ala.org.
Tools for Trustees

Ask a Trustee

BY SHIRLEY LANG
Former Trustee, Syosset (N.Y.) Public Library

Art and Egos

A director writes: We have a large lower lobby where our meeting rooms are. This is where we have our art exhibits. We also have several display cases for art glass, ceramics, jewelry, etc. Several artists want to put price tags on their work and want us to sell the items. The library would get a commission on everything we sold. I said no. Was I right?

Even if the law allows you to do this, and I am not sure that you can, there are other things to take into account.

1. If you are going to sell anything, then the library may be considered a retail sales outlet and there would be the matter of sales tax. If the library has to collect the tax, then there is a bookkeeping issue involved.

2. Would the library be responsible if an item was broken or damaged when a potential buyer was handling it? Who would negotiate the final sales price?

3. A commission would have to be considered income to the library and, again, a bookkeeping concern.

I am not in favor of price tags on artwork on display. That is not the purpose of the exhibit. Every item on display should be numbered and should have the artist’s name. A solution is to have handout sheets available with each artist’s name and phone number and the numbers of his/her art. The handout might also include the statement that anyone interested in purchasing something can call the artist directly. In my opinion, you were right.

A Trustee writes: One of our board members is a weekend artist. He paints large, brightly colored abstract pictures and makes small sculptures with what he calls “found” objects. Although he enters many art competitions, he has never won anything. My concern is that he insists that the library display his works in the children’s room since they are so cheerful. We don’t want to hurt his feelings. Any suggestions?

Jackson Pollack dribbled paint onto a canvas. Julian Schnabel embedded shards of broken pottery in his paintings. Today, the works of these artists hang in museums around the world and are worth millions of dollars. Would you ever think that paint smeared on a canvas by zoo animals would fetch lots of money? Taste in art is very subjective.

You may be able to resolve your problem with a policy that says that all artwork given or loaned to the library is done with the understanding that the library shall determine where and when the work will be displayed. All artwork may be rotated and displayed for a limited amount of time. This person needs to be reminded that, just as Trustees do not decide what materials the library purchases, displays are the responsibility of the director and department heads.

Smile, You’re on Candid Camera

A Trustee writes: Is the installation of surveillance cameras in a public reading room a violation of patron privacy? A small group of moms and kids found an opened (but what looked to be unused) condom in the children’s reading room. We are a small library and one of the moms wants to buy cameras for the room. I am against a surveillance camera and feel it is an invasion of privacy. What do you say?

In today’s world there are security cameras all around us; airports, banks, fast food establishments, lobbies, elevators, and even in department store dressing rooms. These devices provide safety, act as a deterrent, and help identify someone who has committed a crime. The use of security cameras has proven to be effective. There have been legal challenges to the use of such cameras based on the issue of privacy but to the best of my knowledge, none have been successful. (Have the library attorney check this for you.)

Would a camera in your children’s reading room have helped you find the offending object before the moms did? Probably not. Remember, as Trustee, you are responsible to provide a safe and secure environment for everyone in your library, and to protect the entire building and its contents. To me, that means a security system with cameras for the whole building, which is what most libraries have today.

Who’s Minding the Store?

A Trustee writes: I am at my library three to four times a week and I like to speak to the director whenever I am there. I want to be kept up-to-date on everything in the library. Lately I’ve been told that he is not in and no one can tell me where he is. Do I have a right know his whereabouts and to see his time sheet?

Most library directors are diligent in providing comprehensive monthly reports to their Trustees prior to board meetings. These reports may include circulation statistics, collection development, computer usage, reference questions answered, program attendance, staff visits to schools, etc. Department reports and the director’s report summarize events of the past month. Usually included in the board packet is back-up information on agenda items awaiting board action.

One must ask why you feel it is necessary to speak with the director each time you visit the library or to check on his whereabouts. All requests for information come from the board.
Trustees need to understand that the board has broad authority, but it is a collective authority; thus, Trustees can only act in their official capacity during board meetings.

Under the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) there are no rights to any material maintained in personnel files. Also, time sheets are not considered public records.

You might consider asking the board to establish some criteria whereby the director provides the board with advance notice of dates for his upcoming off-site meetings, conferences, etc.

This would be a good time for the board to meet and re-examine the role and responsibility of the Board of Trustees and to establish a mutual understanding of the limitations of authority of the individual Trustee.

The above are the opinions of the author and do not constitute legal advice. Always check with the library attorney regarding legal issues. The above article addresses governing boards.

United for Libraries offering Skype and in-person consulting

United for Libraries is offering libraries, Trustees, and Friends a budget-friendly alternative to on-site consulting — Skype sessions.

Groups of all sizes can receive professional consultation services via Skype at an affordable price. United for Libraries staff has more than 30 years of combined experience in the areas of library governance, advocacy, marketing, fundraising, Friends development, establishing a social media presence, strategic planning, conflict resolution, and more.

In addition, United for Libraries board members can provide professional expertise in such areas as academic Friends group development, board recruitment, financial management, and more.

Pricing includes the Skype session, along with handouts and up to 30 minutes of consultation with the convener prior to the event.

In addition, United for Libraries offers in-person workshops, seminars, training, and assistance in a wide range of areas. Services can be customized to meet the needs of your library community and its supporters. Staff and board members are available to lead programs or workshops.

For more information and pricing options, call United for Libraries at (800) 545-2433, ext. 2161, or email united@ala.org.

United for Libraries Trustee Citation applications due Jan. 15

United for Libraries gives the ALA Trustee Citation to a Trustee(s) annually. The application deadline is Jan. 15, 2016.

The ALA Trustee Citation, established in 1941 to recognize public library Trustees for distinguished service to library development, honors the best contributions and efforts of the estimated 60,000 American citizens who serve on library boards.

It is presented during the Opening General Session of the ALA Annual Conference. Recipients are expected to be present to accept the award, and expenses for attending must be borne by the recipients or their library organizations. The next ALA Annual Conference will be held in Orlando, Fla., June 23-28, 2016 (for more information, see page 21).

Trustee service may have been performed on the local, state, regional or national level or at a combination of levels. Equal consideration is given to Trustees of libraries of all sizes. Citations may not be awarded when there is not sufficiently outstanding achievement brought to the attention of the Awards Committee.

To apply for the ALA Trustee Citation, visit www.ala.org/united/grants_awards/trustees/trusteecitation. Applicants who have questions can email united@ala.org or call (800) 545-2433, ext. 2161.

To submit an article to Tools for Trustees, email it to united@ala.org or mail it to:

United for Libraries
859 W. Lancaster Ave.
Unit 2-1
Bryn Mawr, PA
19010

Archived Ask a Trustee columns, along with toolkits, newsletters, publications, and special offers for Trustees, are available in the Trustee Zone on the United for Libraries website. Visit www.ala.org/united/trusteezone and sign in with your login and password. If you need help logging in, call (800) 545-2433, ext. 2161, or email united@ala.org.
Building a better relationship with your Friends of the Library group

BY ANNE M. SEURYNCK
Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, P.C.

For many public libraries, the Friends of the Library group plays an important role in furthering the mission of the library. The Friends provide valuable assistance with coordinating volunteers, fundraising, and advocating for the library. Unfortunately, sometimes the library and the Friends do not see eye to eye. So, how can you help your library stay “friends” with the Friends? The library should start by understanding the respective roles and responsibilities.

The Friends are separate and distinct organizations from the library; therefore, the library should not treat the Friends as a department or part of the library. Public libraries are typically local units of government with revenues generated from taxes, municipal government contributions, service agreements, fines, and state aid. The Friends are often set up as private nonprofit corporations or unaffiliated groups. Many will have received a tax exempt 501(c)3 status.

Because they are separate organizations, the library should approach the relationship with the Friends from a business-like perspective so that the two groups understand their roles and can avoid potential areas of conflict. To that end, here are some questions that the library should ask and resolve regarding its relationship with the Friends:

What authority does the library have to work with, donate to, or deal with the Friends?

Depending on the state law for your particular library, the library may have different rules for working with nonprofit corporations. For example, in your state, is there a specific state statute that allows the library to give donations to or interact with a nonprofit corporation or, more particularly, to the Friends? The library must evaluate whether there is specific constitutional, statutory, or other legal authority to permit the library to conduct a certain activity with the Friends. So, the first question the library must ask itself is does the library have specific legal or contractual authority to do this particular activity with the Friends? If so, the library must determine how to lawfully move forward with that activity.

Do the Friends occupy space in the library, and, if so, whose space is it?

Does your library provide dedicated space to the Friends for a used book store or for storage? We recommend that the library and the Friends discuss this issue. If the library is leasing space from another entity, the library should be careful that allowing the Friends to use space in the library does not violate the lease. Further, the library should ensure the Friends understand who ultimately controls the space. For example, what if the library determined it no longer wanted a used book store? The Friends should understand that the library has ultimate control over the use of the space in its public building.

Whose books are they?

Many libraries accept donations of used books at the library. One question the library should ask itself is “whose books are they”? Does the bin for collection indicate that the books will be donated to the library or to the Friends? If the books are donated to the library, then the library should process the collection of those books under its own laws and policies regarding donations to the library. However, if the books are donated to the Friends, then the library should understand that it will not have control or use of those materials. Resolving this issue will avoid problems in the future.

Whose proceeds are they?

If a fundraiser is conducted by the Friends, who is the “owner” of the proceeds from the fundraiser? If there is a dedicated used book store in the library, do the proceeds go into the general fund of the library or are they collected and distributed to the Friends? If the Friends are merely staffing the library’s book sale, the money should be put directly into the library’s treasury. The parties should come to a mutual understanding regarding who should receive the funds.

Who directs the employees?

A common problem is that members of the Friends begin to expect the library director or staff to address all their needs. Both parties should understand that the library staff does not work for the Friends but works for the library. The library board and director play an important role in making sure library employees are not being improperly directed by the Friends.

Who decides what materials or services are donated to the library by the Friends?

What if the parties do not agree on what goods or services the Friends will provide to the library? For example, if the current goal of the library is to promote its children’s programs, the library may ask the Friends to sponsor several of these planned programs. However, instead, the Friends decide to purchase a large piece of artwork to display in the library’s foyer. What should the library do then? The library should be very clear to the Friends that the Library has the ultimate authority to determine what types of materials or services are purchased for the library.

www.ala.org/united 1-800-545-2433, ext. 2161
So, how does the library address these issues?

First, the library should communicate with the Friends. To gain a better understanding of each other’s organization, the library should work with the Friends to set a list of goals and include the Friends’ representatives in the library’s long-term planning. The parties should have representatives attend each other’s meetings so that questions may be asked and concerns may be raised to either group. The library should provide the Friends with a “wish list” so that there is no miscommunication regarding the services or goods the library would like fulfilled.

One way to accomplish this understanding is to have a formal agreement between the Friends and the library that addresses the above issues. Having such an agreement may reduce the number of conflicts between the two organizations.

You may ask why the library needs an agreement if the library and the Friends have historically worked well together. First, the library will want to ensure it has a good legal basis for the relationship with the Friends. A contract will typically set forth the legal authority for the agreement or the contract itself will provide a good legal basis for the exchange of services between the library and the Friends.

Second, in the future, the parties may not have the same relationship they have now. So, if the Friends and the library have a good relationship presently this may be the best opportunity to enter into a mutually agreeable agreement to dictate the two groups’ future operations.

Ultimately, the Friends and the library should have a mutually beneficial relationship to further the common goal of education, literacy, and service to the public.

Join the United for Libraries electronic discussion group to share your experience and ask other for advice. Visit http://www.ala.org/united/discussion-groups

Apply for United for Libraries’ Major Benefactor Citation

Giving public recognition to an individual, family, or corporate body that has made a major gift to your library will generate publicity that can encourage other gifts as well.

United for Libraries’ Major Benefactor Citation comes with a plaque for the library and a plaque for the donor. (Please allow six weeks from the time of application for receipt of both plaques.) These plaques, along with a library celebration and a press release from your library, can let your community know that gifts to the library are truly appreciated and make a real difference.

Major Benefactor Citation recipients are featured on the United for Libraries website, and a press release about each recipient is issued through United for Libraries and ALA.

Applicants are asked to include documentation describing the nature of the library’s relationship with the benefactor; benefits to the library in the form of money, real or personal property, negotiable paper, or other tangible contributions; why the gift is considered major, and any publicity generated as a result of the gift.

A fee of $400 ($300 for United for Libraries members) covers all administrative costs and materials.

To apply for the Major Benefactor Citation, visit www.ala.org/united and click on “Awards & Grants” then “Major Benefactor Citation.” Past awardees can also be found on this site (www.ala.org/united/grants_awards/benefactor).

A downloadable application as well as submission guidelines are available on the website. Applications may be submitted at any time, however, please allow for a minimum of six weeks to receive the plaques.

For more information, call (800) 545-2433, ext. 2161, or email united@ala.org.

United for Libraries resources: Working with Friends groups

United for Libraries Fact Sheets (www.ala.org/united/friends/factsheets)

- Fact Sheet 10: The Role of the Friends Board
- Fact Sheet 11: The Role of Library Trustees
- Fact Sheet 25: Sample Memorandum of Understanding
- Fact Sheet 26: Library Support for Friends Activities
- Fact Sheet 27: When Friends Aren’t Friendly

Understanding Roles: The Separate but Complementary Roles of Friends, Trustees, and Library Directors (www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/friends/orgtools/role.pdf)

Focus on Friends

Ethics for Friends of the Library, Trustees, and staff

BY DONALD B. REYNOLDS, JR.
President, Friends of Tennessee Libraries

As National Friends of Libraries Week (October 18-24, 2015) brought into focus the work of volunteer citizens in local libraries, Trustees may have questions about the relationships between Friends, library staff, and Trustees.

A Friends of the Library group is made up of individuals who value public library services to the community, and are willing to join together to volunteer their time, talents, and efforts to promote and support the library’s goals and objectives in whatever way will be helpful. Library Friends organize to support the work of the library, not to engage in the work and responsibilities of library board members or the library staff. Friends of the Library cooperate with both, but do not interfere with either.

To guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library Trustees and library staff, the American Library Association developed a Code of Ethics in 1939 (last updated in 2008) that can be found at http://tinyurl.com/ALACodeofEthics.

In 2012, United for Libraries adopted an updated Public Library Trustee Ethics Statement (http://tinyurl.com/PublicLibraryTrusteeEthicsStatement) to help Trustees understand their obligations.

Over the years, statements also have been developed to describe the public’s expectations from the library: Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View (http://tinyurl.com/LibraryRights Freedoms).

In addition, many local library boards, like our seven counties in East Tennessee, have developed codes of ethics to help provide specific guidelines for their members (http://tinyurl.com/LocalLibraryBoardCodeofEthics).

These statements are designed to assist library staff and Trustees, but there has not been a national ethics statement to help Friends of the Library identify their place in relation to both. To define these relationships, in 1994 the Tennessee Regional Library and State Library staffs developed “A Comparison of Responsibilities: Local Library Board of Trustees, Local Library Director, Regional Library, and Friends of the Library” (revised 2013). It can be found at http://tinyurl.com/ComparisonofResponsibilities.

In Working Ethics: Strategies for Decision Making and Organizational Responsibility, Marvin T. Brown writes that, “Although this may sound odd, the purpose of ethics is not to make people ethical, it is to help people make better decisions.”

So, to clarify Friends responsibilities and help member Friends make better decisions, the Friends of Tennessee Libraries (FOTL) developed and adopted an Ethical Dozen for Friends of the Library statement for local Friends groups to use as a model for their own ethical behavior (http://tinyurl.com/FriendsEthicalDozen):

The Ethical Dozen for Friends of the Library

Adopted Sept. 18, 2015

http://tinyurl.com/FriendsEthicalDozen

“Friends can make the difference between a mediocre and an outstanding library.” —Jean A. Ashfield, Friends of Library Handbook

Friends support and help their library’s staff and Trustees integrate the library thoroughly into the life and work of the community they serve.

1. Friends of the Library is a group of individuals who value public library services to the community and who volunteer their time, talents, and efforts to promote and support the vision, mission, and objectives of their library in whatever way will be helpful.

2. Friends organize to help support the work of the library, not to engage in the work and responsibilities of the library Trustees, board members, or the library staff. Friends of the Library cooperate with both, but do not interfere with either. Friends recognize that they do not perform a decision-making role for the library: they are familiar with and support the policies of the library. Friends provide input into the library’s long-range planning process and remain knowledgeable as to the status of the plan.

3. Friends support quality library services in the community through fund raising, volunteerism, and serving as advocates for the library’s program.

4. Friends work to ensure that the public has equal access to information, both as a Constitutional right and as the best way to sustain a democratic way of life.

5. Friends subscribe to and believe
in the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read, and the Freedom to View statements (http://tinyurl.com/LibraryRightsFreedomsEthics).

6. Friends recognize that authority rests with the whole Friends board assembled in public meetings and shall make no personal statements or promises nor take any private action which may compromise the board. They support the actions taken by a majority of the board and clearly differentiate personal opinions from board decisions.

7. Friends do not interfere with the library operations of the library staff.

8. Friends promote the library program to the public.

9. Friends conduct fundraising which complements the library’s mission. Friends’ activities support library board long-range plans and policies. Friends decide how to spend their funds after conferring with the library director.

10. Friends follow legal, professional, and ethical practices in making decisions. They scrupulously avoid personal conflicts of interest and do not condone them in others. They say nothing in a board meeting that could be construed to violate anyone’s civil rights.

11. Friends serve as advocates for local, state, and national library issues and represent the library program to legislators and funders.

12. Friends are open and welcoming to suggestions, questions and communications from the library staff, trustee board members, and the public.

Donald B. Reynolds is president, Friends of Tennessee Libraries; retired director, Nolichucky (Tenn.) Regional Library and founding director, Association for Rural and Small Libraries.

For more information about Friends of Tennessee Libraries, visit www.friendstnlibraries.org.

Applications for United for Libraries/Thrift Books Friend Conference Grant due Jan. 15

Applications for the United for Libraries/Thrift Books Friend Conference Grant are now being accepted and will be due Jan. 15, 2016.

The United for Libraries/ThriftBooks Friend Conference Grant will enable a Friend of the Library to attend the ALA Annual Conference (www.alaannual.org). Applicants must be active in their Friends of the Library group. The 2016 ALA Annual Conference will be held in Orlando, Fla., from June 23-28.

A grant of $850, plus full Annual Conference registration, will be awarded to the recipient. The Conference Grant, made possible by a gift from Thrift Books, is administered by United for Libraries. The winner will be required to write an article chronicling his or her experience at the conference, which will be featured in United for Libraries’ newsletter, The Voice.

Applicants must be a member of a Friends of the Library group in a public library and a first-time attendee of any ALA conference (Midwinter or Annual).

Applicants must include a recommendation from a member of the Friends of the Library group or the library director, a one-page summary of their activities in the Friends of the Library group, and an official release form.

The recipient will be expected to attend United for Libraries programs at the ALA Annual Conference.

For more information and to apply, visit www.ala.org/united/grants_awards/friends/thriftbooks, call (800) 545-2433, ext. 2161, or email united@ala.org.

Information for Friends, including past issues of The Voice, archived issues of News Update, special offers, publications, and toolkits, is available to United for Libraries personal and group members.

To log in to the Friends & Foundations Zone and access resources, visit www.ala.org/united and click on “Friends & Foundations Zone.”

If you need your login or password, email United for Libraries at united@ala.org or call (800) 545-2433, ext. 2161.

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To follow United for Libraries on Twitter, visit www.twitter.com/ala_united.
Applications for United for Libraries/SAGE Academic Friend Conference Grants due Jan. 15

Two academic Friends will be selected for United for Libraries/SAGE Academic Friend Conference Grants. Applications are due Jan. 15, 2016.

The United for Libraries/SAGE Academic Friend Conference Grants enable a person who is active in his or her college or university Friends of the Library group, or an academic library staff member who works in development, to attend the 2016 ALA Annual Conference. Grants of $850 each, plus full Annual Conference registration, will be awarded to the two recipients.

“SAGE is delighted to provide two academic 'Friends of the Library' with the opportunity to attend an American Library Association conference for the first time,” said Ed McBride, executive director of library sales at SAGE. “An important gathering of information professionals and library enthusiasts, the ALA conferences offer enriching educational experiences for tomorrow’s library leaders and supporters. SAGE is a proud supporter of United for Libraries and values the work that they do to support libraries and their champions.”

For more information and to apply, visit www.ala.org/united/grants_awards/friends/sage.

Founded in 1965, SAGE is an independent company that shares with librarians the belief that flourishing educational programs and engaged scholarship create healthy minds and healthy societies.

SAGE’s publishing program, which ranges across the social sciences, humanities, medicine and engineering includes journals, academic and reference books, innovative teaching texts for college courses, professional books, and primary sources archives through Adam Matthew (now a part of the SAGE group).
Like many Americans, my love affair with libraries began when I was a child. During the many hot and humid summers I spent growing up in Chicago, I often found myself wandering through the air-conditioned stacks of the local public library, content to wade through old newspapers and National Geographics. As I grew, the library seemed to evolve with me and by the time I reached high school, my summer oasis had transformed into an intellectual safe haven where I laid-in-wait for college. I turned from an intellectual safe haven where I found myself reconsidering many of the tactics I have tried in the past year at Columbia. While I remain enthusiastic about my work, I find myself constantly fine-tuning it, forever convinced that if I just change just one more thing, it could somehow be better, cheaper, or more inclusive. Attending the ALA Annual Conference showed me that I am not unique (or alone!) in this regard. With each workshop I attended and every librarian I spoke to, I became increasingly clear that we are here because we love libraries, and we will stop at nothing to try to make them better. This realization came as a great comfort to me, as fundraising sometimes feels like shouting into the dark. Having now seen the sheer size and intellectual energy represented at the 2015 ALA Annual Conference, I no longer feel alone.

I will use the tools and experience gained at ALA to help reinvigorate our Friends program by engaging past donors as well as new and potential donors, and expanding services which will help our library grow. Now more than ever, libraries are a valuable resource, and it is my sincerest hope that the Friends of the Columbia College Library will grow to support new and ongoing efforts in technology, programming, and collections, which will benefit our community for years to come. Thank you again to SAGE and United for Libraries for this opportunity.
**Programs**

**Phillipsburg, N.J.**

Tuesday afternoons at Phillipsburg Free Public have been full of laughter and learning! To draw new users and promote fun experiences at the Library, the Friends of Phillipsburg Free Public Library launched a “Friendly Games” program for adults 18+. Surveys about types of games and schedule preferences were distributed and collected in the weeks prior to the launch date. A press release was sent to the local papers, and posters and announcements about the program were displayed in the library, and in the print and online newsletter. Friends members acquired the games most requested and scheduled the “play dates.” More than 275 participants this year have learned to play games such as Rummikub, Farkle, Mah Jongg, Canasta, and Jeopardy! The Friends are also looking into conducting a chess workshop in the near future.

**Bryson City, N.C.**

Fontana Regional Library’s Read Local Book Fair was so successful last year in Macon County that the Friends of the Jackson County Library held the event again in 2015. Many authors read selections from their works throughout the day, and had copies of their works available for purchase. Authors were seated at tables throughout the library, where they met and chatted with readers and autographed books. Some also conducted brief readings as a way to introduce readers to their work. City Lights Bookstore in Sylva was on hand to sell books.

**Newport Beach, Calif.**

The Newport Beach Public Library Foundation held a Creative Writing Contest opened to all students who were currently attending high school (public or private and regardless of school district). The winner, Kayla Cleland, received $250 and her manuscript was published on their website (www.nbplfoundation.org) and in The Bookmark, the Foundation’s quarterly publication. The runner-up received $100. Contest guidelines required that short stories were set in a library, featured a library-themed element, or in some way revolved around a library. For more information, visit www.nbplfoundation.org/content/Creative-Writing-Contest.html.

**Rochester, N.Y.**

Earlier this year, the Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library were selected by the American Library Association and Story Corps to participate in a national pilot program called “StoryCorps @ Your Library.” The library was one of 10 sites chosen to collect interviews throughout the community. This program allows them to bring popular StoryCorps interview methods to the City of Rochester, through the program “New American Journeys @ Rochester Public Library.” StoryCorps is an independent nonprofit whose mission is to provide people of all backgrounds with the opportunity to record, share and preserve the stories of our lives. The City of Rochester is one that is incredibly diverse, including many immigrants, or new Americans, who have moved there from outside the United States. While every story is important, and none will be turned away, they are specifically focusing on recording the stories from this portion of their community. This opportunity from the Public Programs Office of the American Library Association is now closed, but other opportunities for programs are available at www.ala.org/programming/apply.

**Lexington, Mass.**

The Friends of the Cary Memorial Library promote their Museum of Fine Art (MFA) passes in Boston jointly with their four part program “ARTMATTERS.” This fall, the program focused on American art, beginning with an introductory program titled, “Art Keeps of Human.” The remaining three programs dealt with American art from 1776-1900, 1900-1950, and 1950-1990. The MFA passes allow patrons access at a reduced price of $10 each for adults (instead of the normal $23) and also include access to the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Harvard Art Museums, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and the Peabody Essex Museum.

**Brentwood, Tenn.**

Because the Friends of the Brentwood Library take art to heart, library patrons can enjoy art exhibits, purchase original creations, and even borrow paintings to decorate their homes. Every month the Gallery Wall of the Brentwood Library displays the talents of a different local artist. In exchange for the opportunity to display their creations in the library’s space, the artists generously donate one of their pieces to the circulating art collection.

**Walnut Creek, Calif.**

The Walnut Creek Library Foundation presented a four-part program focusing
Good Ideas From The Network

on how to care for your aging loved ones at home.

**Boca Raton, Fla.**

The Friends of the Boca Raton Library host a Sunday Matinee Music Series one Sunday for nine months of the year. A wide variety of musical styles are presented, helping the Friends fulfill their mission to make their libraries an important part of the cultural core of Boca Raton. In addition, the group screens foreign films on the second Tuesday of each month.

**Allen, Texas**

The Friends of Allen Public Library showed the effects of their group and donors on the Allen community by publishing these interesting statistics of their summer reading program:

- 900 people attended the Summer Reading Kickoff Party.
- 4,586 children, 727 teens, and 938 adults registered for summer reading—a 11% increase over last year.
- 2,176 children and teens read at least 8 hours this summer.
- 272 adults read at least 1,632 books and 1,980 hours.
- 159 volunteers worked a total of 2,289 hours at the library (that’s more than a full-time employee works in a whole year).

**Walnut Creek, Calif.**

Spearheaded by the Walnut Creek Library Foundation and the Contra Costa County Library, the Walnut Creek “One City, One Book” program for 2015 featured Yes, Chef: A Memoir, written by world-renowned chef Marcus Samuelsson with Veronica Chambers. The beauty of this choice is that the programs surrounding the city wide read all featured either food programs and makes them available to the public on YouTube channel and on their library’s website. You can hear the performance of musician Anne Stott during their September Writer’s Voice Café at www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fq3Qq7AcXw. You can also view the presentation of two short plays at www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVxkEl3rCJE.

**Phoenix, Ariz.**

The Friends of the Phoenix Public Library have their own blog called “LiteratePhx,” which they send out to members. You can visit it at www.pffriends.org/blog. If you are interested in starting your own blog, you’ll be happy to know that it’s quite easy to do. You can find easy to follow instructions here: http://computer.howstuffworks.com/internet/social-networking/information/blog1.htm.

**Bristol, Conn.**

“What’s an app?” The Bristol Public Library’s technical librarian teaches Friends who want to stay current how to create web and Facebook pages, tools that are a must in order to function at maximum potential in today’s world.

**Awards & Grants**

**Pittsburgh, Pa.**


**Provincetown, R.I.**

Provincetown Public Library is planning a Moby Dick marathon reading from April 22-24, 2016. Intended to be an annual event, it will bring together more than 120 participants at the library to read the Melville classic work aloud for more than a total of 24 hours. The Marathon will be the latest entry in a series of new annual events created by the library Trustees focused on expanding Provincetown’s involvement in national literary, art, and academic communities. Admission to all three days of the Marathon will be free.

**Social Media**

**Provincetown, Mass.**

The Provincetown Public Library tapes
Good Ideas From The Network

Notable Quotables

“Libraries are the foundation for learning.”

Mark Davis, M.D., Irresponsible: What Surgeons Won’t Tell You and How to Protect Yourself, 2015

“I think the most powerful gift you can give someone is a book. My mother gave me my first book (Horse Of Course) and taught me to read when I was 4. Since then, books have been my must-have source of inspiration, entertainment, and connection with friends. How do I support my book habit? Through my local library, where all the librarians know me and gather up my giant piles of on-hold books as I walk in the front door. Libraries, quite simply, feed me... I could not exist without them.”

Sonia Ellis, Talk to Me, 2014

“Libraries are the reason I’m a writer today. I spent hours after school at my local library, pore over books and doing research. About what? Anything I wanted! That was just the point. I knew that someday I wanted to see my books on those shelves.”

Jennifer Keishin Armstrong, Seinfeldia, 2016

“Where else but at a library can a person with no money in their pockets walk into a place of quiet and peace, and walk out with something beautiful and borrowed?”

Don C. Reed, Stem Cell Battles: Proposition 71 and Beyond, 2015

Library’s most active members—he has been volunteering for more than 20 years and in the past two years he has contributed more than 3,000 hours to the library.

Benzonia, Mich.
The Friends of the Benzonia Public Library report that their library received a gift from the Libri Foundation worth nearly $1,500. The Libri Foundation is a nationwide nonprofit organization that donates new, quality, hardcover children’s books to small, rural public libraries in the United States through its Books for Children program. To see if your small library might qualify and to apply for a grant, visit www.libri-foundation.org/apps.html.

Booksales

Sylva, N.C.
Having trouble finding a volunteer bookstore manager? So did the Friends of the Jackson County Library, so a group of 14 volunteers decided to create a “corporate brain,” which is in fact, bookstore management by committee and it has proven very successful for them. The committee meets once a month but keeps in touch with each other daily. Day-to-day operations are carried out by volunteers who work with the committee. Volunteer positions include working in the store as well as behind the scenes soliciting, picking up, and sorting through donations. Key to the success of this operation are committee roles such as volunteer scheduler. All the members, however, bring their own skills and knowledge to the store to ensure its success.

Fundraising

Allen, Texas
This fall, the Austin Public Library Friends Foundation held their fifth annual Illuminate fundraising event. This special evening honors members of the community for their outstanding literary achievements. Categories include fiction, nonfiction, children’s and young adult’s literature, songwriting, and luminary award (literary patron). Tickets for the event were $150 per person or $1500 per table and included drinks, dinner, and silent auction.

Hudson, N.Y.
In the past four and a half years, the Friends of the Hudson Area Library has increased their membership 110%, saw donations go up 137%, and the book sale revenues increase ten-fold. So what’s the key to their success? Here are Friends President Vicki Kosovac’s five basic principles on 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.”

Meredith, N.H.
Friends of the Meredith Library held their fourth annual “Book It!” 5k
To submit an item to Good Ideas from the Network, email it to united@ala.org.

Sacramento (Calif.) Public Library has debuted a new mascot — Otterby Reading.

race in September. This popular race followed a beautiful scenic course and was open to all levels of runners and walkers. Included in the day’s events were two smaller races, “Bookworm” for those wishing to walk a shorter distance, and “Inchworm” for children age 5 and under. The race has been officially certified by USA Track and Field. For more information about the race, visit www.meredithlibrary.org/friends.html.

Sacramento, Calif.

Meet the library’s mascot, Otterby Reading. Otterby Reading is very busy, with many friends to visit with and many places to be, but he still found time to talk to the Friends and tell them about his life in Sacramento. As busy as he is, Otterby always finds time to represent the library. “I like everybody, and I know that the library is for everybody. No matter how old or young we are, our worlds can always get bigger and libraries make that possible. I love the river, and of course I visit it all the time, but I my world has gotten so much bigger since I left the river and found the library!”

Alexandria, Va.

The Friends of Duncan Library provide book recommendations and reviews when they publish their newsletter. The books selected are those enjoyed by various Friends members and staff. The recurring column is called “Books by My Bedside.”

St. Louis, Mo.

As a thank you for helping patrons celebrate the library’s Sesquicentennial, the St. Louis Public Library offered fine amnesty from Dec. 21-31. Borrowers could return any overdue library item (even long-lost items) during this time and pay no overdue fines, no questions asked. Those who returned items received a special gift (one per cardholder, while supplies lasted).

According to the library, “Some people are embarrassed, feel guilty, or simply cannot pay the fine. Whatever the reason, the result is the same — they hold onto the materials and stop using the library. Our goal with Fine Amnesty is to end that cycle in St. Louis.”

Applications for Big Read grants due Jan. 27

Application guidelines for 2016-2017 Big Read grants are now available at www.neabigread.org/guidelines.php. The deadline is Wed., Jan. 27, 2016 at 4 p.m. CST. Two contemporary novels will join the Big Read library — Silver Sparrow by Tayari Jones and In the Shadow of the Banyan by Vaddey Ratner. These novels will be available for organizations hosting a 2016-2017 Big Read project and will further the National Endowment for the Arts’ commitment to expanding the Big Read library by including diverse voices and stories.

The Big Read, a program of the National Endowment for the Arts, broadens our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book. Managed by Arts Midwest, this initiative offers grants to support innovative community reading programs designed around a single book or poet.

The Big Read supports organizations across the country in developing community-wide programs that encourage reading and the participation of diverse audiences. Organizations selected to participate in the Big Read receive a grant, access to online training resources and opportunities, digital guides, and promotional materials designed to support widespread community involvement.

Community partnerships, especially with libraries, are key to the Big Read. Applicant organizations must partner with a library (if the applicant itself is not a library). Partnerships are encouraged with community organizations such as bookstores, museums, middle and high schools, arts organizations, local businesses, community service organizations, community centers, youth groups, senior centers, correctional institutions, community colleges, universities, social service organizations, and military installations.

For more information and to apply for a Big Read grant, visit http://neabigread.org.
The Friends of the Austin (Minn.) Public Library received the 2015 Eve Nordley Award of Best Project by Friends of the Library from the Minnesota Association of Library Friends (MALF). The award includes a $1,000 grant and a presentation at the Minnesota Library Association conference. Finalists were the Friends of the Brainerd (Minn.) Library and Friends of the Ramsey County (Minn.) Libraries.

Friends of the Austin (Minn.) Public Library

Austin, Minn. — like hundreds of communities its size across the country — lost its last independent bookstore several years ago. Area booklovers feel that loss acutely, particularly during the holiday season. In 2014, the Friends of the Austin Public Library stepped in to fill this void in a new and innovative way.

The Friends began by tapping an invaluable relationship. “Earlier in 2014, we had struck up a partnership with staff at the Barnes & Noble store in nearby Rochester,” explained president Sue Grove. “This allows us to provide new books for sale at author presentations in our library, as well as at the annual Austin Artworks Festival.”

After these initial forays into new book sales proved successful, the Friends sat down with the Barnes & Noble community outreach liaison to plan something much more ambitious. “While brainstorming new ways to leverage this connection, board members came up with the idea of hosting a special holiday book sale at the library.”

They reasoned that such a program would allow residents to, once again, buy new books in Austin — while simultaneously drawing people into the library and boosting the public profile of the Friends. “Our board has sponsored two successful used book sales every year for many years, so this really seemed like a natural extension,” Grove said.

Barnes & Noble welcomed the opportunity to expand their reach in this market, knowing that not all readers in Austin are willing to make the 40-minute trek out to their Rochester store. “We hoped to appeal to all ages, and so enlisted the help of people from various backgrounds and with varied interests to select book titles,” Grove explained. For instance, a retired kindergarten teacher picked out an assortment of in-demand children’s books. In total, the Friends spent a full five hours in Barnes & Noble pulling together merchandise retailing at about $7,000 for resale. “We bought so much that the 20 percent discount promised was increased to a 25 percent discount!”

A strong promotions blitz augured well for the three-day event. In addition to distributing flyers and posters, the Friends made appearances on local television and radio stations. The Austin Daily Herald gave the book sale front-page billing on two separate occasions, and Barnes & Noble coordinated web publicity.

“The event succeeded beyond our wildest dreams,” Grove explained. “The room was packed throughout the sale. On the first day, people were even lining up 45 minutes before we opened!” Inventory sold so quickly that Barnes & Noble reps trucked additional books in from Rochester on the second and third days.

At the end of the event, the Friends let Austin’s collection development librarians select books they wanted for circulation. Barnes & Noble accepted back whatever remained, meaning that the Friends lost no money on unsold items.

While fundraising was a secondary objective, the Friends of the Austin Public Library raised over $1,250 through the holiday book sale. They intend to make it an annual tradition — albeit next year, in a much larger room!

Friends of the Brainerd (Minn.) Library

When people design or discuss public awareness campaigns, they usually have an adult audience in mind. While the same usually holds true for public libraries, the Friends of the Brainerd Public Library recently designed a unique public awareness campaign aimed instead at their library’s youngest patrons. After some discussion, the Friends landed on the perfect vehicle to share the library’s value proposition with Brainerd area kids. They decided to coordinate a special children’s book sale bash, drawing on their experience hosting used book sales for general audiences.

They entered the planning stage with two goals in mind: to get a wide assortment of age-appropriate materials in front of children, and to price everything at 25 cents. “All books were sold at a quarter a piece so that all children could leave happy, with books in hand,” explained Friends president Gail Brecht.

Securing children’s materials in the necessary quantities required broad-based community support. The Friends board of directors sent letters to local teachers requesting book donations, and they in turn sent the call out to parents throughout Crow Wing County.

In order to create a festive atmosphere and stoke strong attendance, the Friends invested in snacks and face paints. A local costume shop also loaned the Friends princess and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle costumes at a steep discount.

Friends report that the sale remained incredibly busy throughout its run, with children and parents alike expressing great appreciation for a children’s sale separate from Brainerd’s customary spring and fall sales. As one impressive indicator of traffic, during the sale, over 500 kids signed up for the library’s summer reading program.
Moreover, all told, the Friends raised about $1,000. As Gail Brecht points out, “that’s a lot of quarters!”

**Friends of the Ramsey County (Minn.) Libraries**

F. Scott Fitzgerald died 75 years ago, but the literary luminary and St. Paul native would have felt right at home last February at the Friends of the Ramsey Co. Libraries’ signature fundraising event: the Great Gatsby Gala. For the second time in as many years, more than 200 flappers and fel-las converged on the Roseville Public Library for this memorable night.

The Friends set an ambitious goal of $30,000 (up an even $10,000 from 2014). They came in almost exactly on target, thanks to diverse revenue streams built into their gala model. Moderately priced tickets and generous sponsorships from local organizations accounted for much of it, but other fundraiser activities were unique to the gala and its theme.

For instance, notes long-time Friend and volunteer Sue Gehrz, sales of 1920s-style hats and headbands alone contributed over $500 in revenue. Volunteers crafted the headbands by hand and sold them before and during the gala.

The literary theme also seeped into the fundraiser’s silent and live auction components, in the form of books and period pieces. In total, over 80 items and bundles were donated to the auction.

While the live auction was the highlight for some, dining, dancing and photoshoots anchored the night for others. Still others appreciated the chance to meet their local librarians, and to go on a guided tour of the Roseville Public Library.

This combination of activities and attractions — fine-tuned after the inaugural gala in 2014 — drew a mix of people of all ages. The $30,000 raised by the Friends will allow the Ramsey Co. Library to purchase 1,500 new items for collections.

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**The Laugh’s On Us, sponsored by SAGE**  
*Sun., June 26, 2016*  
*5:30-7:30 p.m.*

Comedian and United for Libraries spokesperson Paula Poundstone will headline this evening featuring a lineup of hilarious writers. Wine and cheese will be served, and a booksigning will follow. Tickets cost $60 in advance ($55 United for Libraries division members), $65 onsite. Tickets will be available in early 2016.

**Gala Author Tea, sponsored by ReferenceUSA**  
*Mon., June 27, 2016*  
*2-4 p.m.*

Popular authors will discuss their writing life and forthcoming books. Enjoy tea, finger sandwiches, and sweet treats. A booksigning will follow. Tickets cost $60 in advance ($55 United for Libraries division members), $65 onsite (if available). Tickets will be available in early 2016.

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**ALA Annual Conference**

The 2016 ALA Annual Conference will be held June 23-28 in Orlando, Fla. For more information, visit www.alaannual.org.

In addition to The Laugh’s On Us, sponsored by SAGE, and the Gala Author Tea, sponsored by ReferenceUSA, United for Libraries will host a President’s Program; Nuts & Bolts sessions for Friends, Foundations, and Trustees; discussion groups; meetings; author events, workshops, and additional programs.


For more information, visit www.ala.org/unit-ed/events_conferences/annual.
The Tsar of Love and Techno
by Anthony Marra

This set of stories are intricately interrelated, offering more a novel moving between time and place to bring the story of life and survival in Soviet Russia from the terrorizing reign of Joseph Stalin into present time.

During Stalin’s reign, many people were arrested and killed on trumped up charges, religion was forbidden, and people sometimes “reported” their neighbors and family members in an attempt to garner favor with the ruling class. Memory was the enemy of the government, so censors were hired to paint out those in the past who harbored ideas unfavorable to Stalin. Books, files, and records were altered to reflect Stalin’s version of “history.”

It is against this time and place the stories unfold; mainly in Chechnya during the wars, and in a town just below the Arctic Circle originally founded to harbor prisoners and later to mine some of the most polluting metals known to man. Because plant life could barely survive, a “forest” was developed of wire and plastic leaves.

The landscape and life in this time and those places could not be bleaker. While not stinting on the backdrop, Marra paints a portrait of (mostly) familial love so encompassing, painful, and constant that it rises above the worst life has to offer — the love of father for son, mother for daughter, brother for brother. With sly humor, exquisite writing, and unforgettable characters, this work is bound to become a classic, and book clubs will spend hours discussing its themes.


The Hours Count
by Jillian Cantor

In 1953, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were executed for allegedly committing espionage against the United States. In this fictionalized account of the event of the Rosenbergs, a friend and neighbor, Millie Stein, tells a gripping story of this notorious couple from her point of view.

When Millie and her husband, Ed — a man with little compassion and many secrets — move into Knickerbocker Village in 1947, she meets and becomes good friends with Ethel. But Ed’s not the only one harboring secrets. Millie’s deeply unhappy in a mostly arranged marriage to a man who cares little for her. As a result, she is drawn to her son’s therapist, Jake (who has secrets of his own) and eventually they fall in love.

When Ethel is arrested at her home, Millie is sick with fear. She has just dropped Ethel’s children off to a hateful grandmother believing Ethel would soon be picking them up. Knowing in her heart that Ethel (and probably Julius, too) is innocent, she has to believe that she will soon be released to collect her sons.

Of course, we know that never happens, and in an attempt to reach the prison to hand over evidence of another’s guilt, Millie is stopped by Jake, who wants nothing more than to protect her. In the end, the only solace she can provide is to be present for Ethel as she dies.

This novel is a perfect choice for book clubs who love history, romance, and intrigue.


Be Frank with Me
by Julia Claiborne Johnson

One thing is guaranteed, there is no one in the world quite like Frank. That’s what Alice found out when the boss at her publishing company deployed her to California to encourage the reclusive M.M. Banning, author of one award-winning novel, to complete her second. She was also asked to be an au pair to Frank, Banning’s son, a 9-year-old genius with serious emotional issues and off-the-charts charm.

Frank is a boy who remembers everything and, therefore, has encyclopedic knowledge about just about everything — especially about early 20th century film, an interest he shares with Alice (and with us lucky readers!). A very natty dresser with his own style (think tuxedos, cravats, driving coats, goggles, and top hats), along with a penchant for completely shutting down when distressed (think playing dead), he is of course the butt of every school child’s jokes.

What saves Frank from total despair is a small but intense network of support from his mother, her sometimes handy-man, Xavier, and his psychiatrist. Eventually Alice becomes part of that small network, though it isn’t an easy beginning. During her first day Alice causes a major meltdown and learns that Frank has two rules which must never be violated: rule number one, no touching Frank’s things; rule number two, no touching Frank.

A most endearing character, Frank will steal the hearts of anyone who lets him in, and that will undoubtedly be anyone who reads this book.

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