



Among Michigan Friends

INFORMATION • SUPPORT • ADVOCACY

Volume 16, Issue # 1 September 2008

www.foml.org

Message from the President

*Dan Stock,
Robert J. Parks Library*

In the previous issue of this newsletter (April 2008), I discussed the proposed changes in the funding of the cooperatives that serve libraries throughout the state.

In response to the scores of e-mails, letters, blog comments and personal comments received by the state librarian on the draft revised model for state aid to public libraries, the Library of Michigan (LOM) has postponed plans for implementation of the changes and will now take some time to digest and ponder this grassroots input.

This does not mean that the changes will not be proposed and implemented in the future. The LOM is still committed to facilitating change that will strengthen the outlook for state aid and public funding of libraries as a part of the FY 2010 budget process that is in its beginning stage.

This means that as public library users and supporters, you will still have an opportunity to participate in the process either directly or through your representa-

(continued on page 2)

Message from the President continued from Page 1

Stand Up and Be Counted: A Linking at the Hastings Public Library

Friends as Advocates

Now more than ever, libraries need Friends. Not just for our ability to supplement ever-tighter budgets—they need us to become activists, to stand up and be counted in our communities as people who value libraries and who will do what it takes to make sure that they continue to thrive and grow. Meet up with FOML in West Michigan for a panel discussion on “Friend”-ly advocacy at the grassroots level and beyond.

Our guests are Tom Genson, director of the Herrick District Library in Holland, and Glenda Middleton, manager of the Sand Lake Branch of the Kent District Library. Genson’s talk will focus on how libraries need Friends to advocate. He speaks to that topic not only from the perspective of a library director working in an urban setting, but also as an activist at the state level. Middleton, who hails from a small, rural community in northern Kent County, will be sharing her experiences as the driving force behind a years-long effort to secure a much-needed new library for residents of Sand Lake and its environs.

Sign up today to attend this informative linking and learn the who-what-when-where-and-why of library advocacy. Whether you’re facing a millage vote, a building project, a challenging financial situation, or you just want to raise your group’s profile a bit, we’ll have some tried-and-true suggestions for making your case.

“Table Talks” Featured in the Afternoon

After lunch and a tour of the new Hastings Library, FOML’s “Table Talks” will take center stage in the afternoon. These casual, fast-paced, and informative small-group discussions focus on a variety of subjects. We invite you to attend two, thirty-minute-long sessions—you choose what interests you the most. Table Talk topics in Hastings will include a segment on advocacy with Tom Genson as well as a chat with FOML’s Harriet Larson on book sales, plus a third topic yet to be determined.

**This linking will be held on Wednesday, October 15, 2008,
from 9:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.**

See page 7 for registration and travel information.

Calendar

- It’s not too late! Renew your FOML membership today (see page 6)
- Deadline for applying for a grant from FOML (see page 6)
September 30, 2008
- A Linking February 2009
Plymouth Public Library
For more information, see a future issue of *Among Michigan Friends*

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FOML and Mid-Michigan Library League Team Up for Workshop

Holly Mercer,
Mid-Michigan Library League

Friends help each other, work together, and support one another. Friends of the Library (FOL) groups help their local libraries with programs and projects; Friends of the Library members work together to achieve goals and plans; they also support their library and its mission. There is great value in a network of friends.

At the *Supporting Friends: How to Build Successful and Helpful Library Relationships* workshop on September 23, 2008, library friends will gather at the Cadillac Wexford Public Library to learn how FOL groups can further assist their libraries. The training session is a joint collaboration between the Friends of Michigan Libraries and the Mid-Michigan Library League. The workshop has two sessions: a morning session from 9:30 to 12:30 and an afternoon session from 1:00 to 3:30. All are encouraged to attend both sessions.

The morning session material is designed with the purpose of helping FOL groups who are just forming as well as FOL groups who are established, but inactive. Morning topics include forming a FOL organization, writing by-laws, roles of the library administrators and friends' members, and recruiting and retaining group members.

The material in the afternoon session builds on the morning material and will help those FOL groups that are already established and presently active. The afternoon topics include FOL advocacy and its role in supporting marketing and millage campaigns, traditional and innovative fundraising, and FOL-sponsored programs.

The workshop is offered at a cost of \$25.00 for full-day attendance for Mid-Michigan Library League and Friends of Michigan Libraries members. For those who will be attending just one session, the cost is \$20.00 for members of either group. For non-members of the sponsoring organizations, the cost is \$35.00 for the all-day attendance and \$30.00 for one-session attendance. Lunch is included for all attendees in the workshop fee.

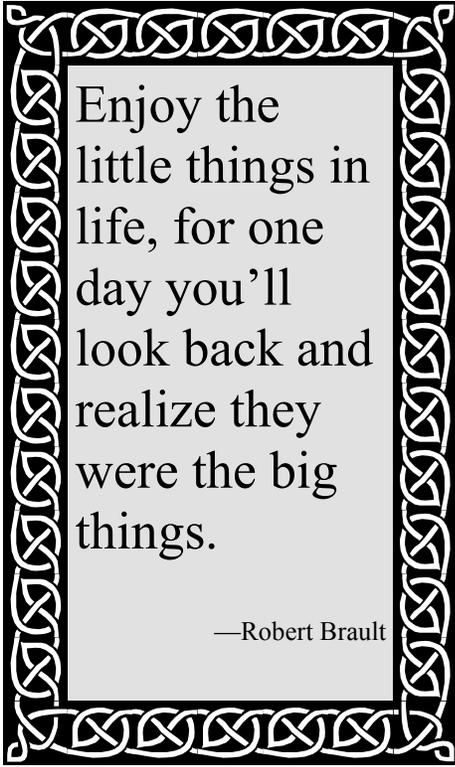
To register for the training session, please visit www.mml.org/Workshopsandevents.htm and click on "September 23—Supporting Friends."

tives in Lansing to assist LOM in arriving at a sustainable model for disbursement of state aid to public libraries. I encourage you to continue to keep informed on statewide issues that will have an impact on the operation of your library.

As highlighted in the article at the top of this page, FOML is cooperating with the Mid-Michigan Library League on the presentation of a workshop in September designed to help both new and existing Friends groups assist their libraries. Although FOML admittedly has let opportunities like this pass in the past, we are excited to be given this opportunity. As many of you have related to us and as anyone who has read *Bowling Alone* by Robert D. Putnam knows, it is becoming more difficult to attract and retain new board members. Faced with the maturing of our current board, we—much like the Library of Michigan—have to look for

ways to do more with less. Frankly, it requires much less effort on our part when another group takes the lead in organizing an event to which we can bring a recognized expertise and a wealth of experience to the table to share.

In our planning, we have underscored our commitment to more actively reaching out to newly forming groups and existing groups in need of assistance. Please help *us* by inviting us to be of help to *you*.



Enjoy the
little things in
life, for one
day you'll
look back and
realize they
were the big
things.

—Robert Brault

Money Matters and More in Charlevoix

*Dan Stock,
Robert J. Parks Library*

The morning session at FOML's spring linking in Charlevoix consisted of a wide-ranging panel discussion on fundraising and finances. Mary McCormack of the Petoskey Public Library discussed the role of the trustee, Cynthia Postmus and Mary Ann Chew of the Charlevoix Public Library represented the Friends' point of view, and Cindy Poquette, the director of the Indian River Area Library, spoke on behalf of her fellow directors.

A recurring theme of the discussion was the need for trustees, Friends, and the director to mutually cooperate in a familial manner in their fundraising efforts on behalf of the library.

Mary McCormack opened the session with a quote from Jack Short, Region 1, ALTA Vice-President: "The library advocates who have the most power are the friends of the library. If their role as friends is executed well, town, city, and state elected officials will listen.

"The need is not to identify which group is more valuable but rather to meld library trustees and friends into a common effort, with each group keenly aware of its unique role.

"Add a talented professional to the mixture and we have the formula for success. Trustees, Friends and Staff are a Family."

McCormack further explained that the role of the trustees is to set policy, approve the budget, hire the director and do public relations on behalf of the library. It is important for the trustees to understand not only the amount of money budgeted but also where it comes from and how it is going to be spent. They must be particularly aware of the sources of financing, be it from a millage or to a lesser (and shrinking) extent from penal fines and state aid.

Cindy Poquette offered quite a different perspective. She believes that money is not the most important part of the equation; rather, while the administrator and trustees comprise the skeleton of the library, the Friends are the *heart*. She would take the efforts of Friends over money any day. She regularly meets with the Friends board before meeting with her library board to get their input. In this way she uses the Friends as a community sounding board and a connecting link with the community. She has found through experience that the Friends tend to know the most about what goes on in the library because they have been there regularly. Friends also have influence with politicians and are listened to in the community.

Cynthia Postmus and Mary Ann Chew both declared that Friends do better when they feel good about the library. As an example, the Charlevoix Friends used volunteers to give a PowerPoint presentation over 100 times during their fundraising efforts to build support for the new library. The volunteers not only called on supporters but also approached those known to oppose the issue and invited them to attend the sessions. The Friends also regularly participate in community events to increase awareness of the library.

At Charlevoix, the Friends have actively participated in the search for grants in support of library activities and improvements by sending letters to all foundations thought to be library-friendly and submitting applications to grant sources thought to be most promising. At the Indian River Library, this role has been assumed by the director. But both parties indicated that partnering with other community organizations plus having an understanding of how to use the proper "buzzwords" are important keys to success in receiving grants.

In response to a question from the audience regarding the handling of a sizable donation, the answers given were case specific. The Charlevoix Friends would be prepared to accept it. In the case of Indian River, the library would accept

it as the Friends' funds are considered library funds for state matching purposes. Routing the funds through a community foundation for use by the library was also suggested as an option.

Following the morning session, half of the attendees enjoyed a delicious lunch while the other half toured the Charlevoix Library, a converted school building noted for its very well-utilized new addition (the community meeting room where our meeting was held). The roles were then reversed to allow those who had not eaten to have lunch while those who had already eaten went on a tour.

Because of the length of the tour and lunch hour, the afternoon session consisted of only one cycle of Table Talks, including an animated session led by Mary McCormack and Cindy Poquette that expanded on the topics of roles, money matters and related subjects. Harriet Larson concurrently led a very well-attended session on "All about Book Sales."

Our special thank-you to the Charlevoix Friends for being such gracious hosts and for the morning goodies they provided.

Our next linking is scheduled for October 15, 2008, at the Hastings Public Library. (See pages 1 and 7 for details and a registration form.) Hope to see you there!

Best Practices from Your Colleagues



News Around the State

FRIENDS OF
MICHIGAN
LIBRARIES
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Long Lake

Don't see news about your Friends group here? It might be because we haven't received a copy of your newsletter. If you publish a newsletter—or if your library publishes one containing information about the Friends—please send it to FOML, c/o Debbie Straub, 9700 Grand River Dr. SE, Lowell, MI 49331. You can also send it via e-mail to EditorDAS@aol.com (please put "FOML news" in the subject line).

Every February, the **Friends of the Long Lake Branch Library** (part of the Traverse Area District Library) team up with Long Lake Township to hold what they've dubbed "Sleddi-Spaghetti." This fun-filled event takes place on a Sunday afternoon at Twin Lakes Park. Inside the park's lodge, a fire blazes as attendees play games, do art projects, enjoy music, listen to stories, and take part in a raffle and silent auction. Outdoor activities include sled races and games. The day ends with a spaghetti dinner. All this for a small donation—and a hefty return in the form of community good will, so important as the Friends help in the fundraising drive for a new library. The 2008 event, held in blizzard conditions, brought in what the Friends called a "phenomenal" \$2,800 in profits.

Rochester Hills

The **Friends of the Rochester Hills Public Library** make good use of their logo in their library's newsletter to denote which programs they fully or partially fund. This eye-catching reminder of the Friends' support ensures that members of the community are made aware of how much the Friends do to enhance the library's offerings.

The Rochester Friends also report that they've "gone green" in their gift shop, using bags made of recycled paper, featuring greeting cards made of recycled paper, and selling reusable tote bags. In addition, they routinely test the toys they sell for lead to ensure that their merchandise is truly safe for children.

Tawas City

Tara Western reports that "**Tawas City Library Friends** held its winter fundraiser, an audience interactive murder mystery at the Tawas City Library, on a cold night in February. Friends and members of the local community theater group, the Tawas Bay Players, came together to provide an evening of fun, solving the 'murder.' Written by TCLF's own treasurer and published playwright, Michal Jacot, the mystery centered on the cast and crew of TV-C, a fictional TV station. Forty-three participants attempted to solve the unscripted mystery by questioning the actors who ad-libbed their answers. The group made over \$300. Most of the \$108 in expenses was spent on advertising, thanks to the generosity of our membership. Members donated food, supplies and decorations. As most of TCLF's income is from summer book sales, they were thrilled to find a way to make money in the winter. The group is considering taking their show on the road!"

To help their community celebrate its sesquicentennial in 2008, the **Friends of the St. Clair Library** entered a float in a parade and also held an ice cream social.

The **Friends of the Sterling Heights Public Library** collect used inkjet printer

cartridges and old cell phones for recycling. Patrons can either drop them off in a collection box in the library or pick up a mailing envelope from a nearby dispenser. All proceeds are used to support library programs.

In July 2008, one of those programs featured author Jim DuFresne and his presentation entitled “Michigan’s Top Ten Backpacking Treks.” Combining breathtaking photography and colorful narration, DuFresne led his audience from one end of the state to the other as he discussed the wide variety of backpacking experiences available to hikers.

Every August, the **Friends of the Bayliss Public Library** share an informational booth with their library at the Sault Summer Arts Festival. They have a small selection of books for sale and put up a display showing what the Friends have been doing for the past few years.

The **Friends of the Robert J. Parks Library** partner with the Oscoda Area Schools to provide a backpack full of prizes to the winner of a special series of summer programs known collectively as “The Battle of the Books.” The programs benefit Advanced Placement literature students and give participants extra credit toward their summer reading assignments.

And from out of state...

In October 2007, the **Friends of the Hoboken (New Jersey) Public Library** held an evening of literary-themed dinners at the homes of more than a dozen local hosts. A variety of novels and nonfiction books served as inspiration for the meals, which included specialties from New York, India, Morocco, and Italy, among other places. Attendees had to identify their top five choices in advance and were then assigned to dinners on a first-come, first-served basis. Tickets to “Novel Night: A Literary Dining Event” sold for \$100 per person.

In a somewhat similar vein, the **Friends in North August, South Carolina**, held a special literary tea party at which participants were able to dine with their favorite book character. Tables were decorated with a book representing the character and other items linked to that character.

In an article in *FOCLPOINT*, the **Friends of Connecticut Libraries** newsletter, a contributor addresses a potential downside to the increasingly popular practice among Friends of donating statues and other expensive pieces of artwork to their libraries—namely, who is liable for repairs or replacement in the event the item is damaged or destroyed? Declares the writer: “Any group that wishes to make such a donation to their library should consider who is responsible for it once it is installed and should especially have a clear understanding of the insurance situation.... The Friends and the library board should have a discussion and then put in writing who is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of these items.... The key is to think through those special donations so they don’t become a future financial burden on your library.”

St. Clair

Sterling Heights

Sault Ste. Marie

Oscoda

Out of State

Three Friends Groups Receive FOML Grants

FOML offers grants of up to \$250 twice a year to Friends groups whose applications meet the necessary criteria and the deadline requirement. The grants are intended to help new or revived Friends organizations in their efforts to become more effective. This typically includes developing materials that explain who the Friends are and what they do. In the past, FOML grants have enabled deserving Friends groups to design and print brochures, create new logos, and purchase banners to display at Friends events.

Awarded grants of \$250 each in the spring of 2008 were Friends groups from Portland, Coe Township (near Mt. Pleasant), and Surrey Township (near Clare).

In Portland, the Friends of the Portland District Library are in the process of reforming after twenty years of inactivity. They plan to use their grant money to purchase a vinyl banner and print brochures and bookmarks to make people aware of their group.

The Friends of the Coe Township Library want to devote their grant money to create and print promotional materials designed to entice more members of the community to join their organization.

Finally, the Surrey Township Friends of the Library, established in January 2008, will spend their grant money on purchasing a banner and sending out invitations to local residents to join the group.

Congratulations and good luck to all three recipients!

Could *Your* Group Use a Grant?

Applying for an FOML grant is easy! There are two different ways to obtain the necessary form: you can download it from the FOML website (www.foml.org), or you can request a copy by mail by contacting Betty Newton, FOML, c/o Livonia Civic Center Library, 32777 Five Mile Rd., Livonia, MI 48154.

Once you have filled out your grant application, submit it along with a brief explanation of how you intend to make use of any money you might receive. Be sure to keep in mind that the purpose of an FOML grant is to assist new or revived Friends groups become more effective.

Also, please note that applicants must agree to join FOML prior to receiving the grant if selected and to report on their grant-related activities periodically following receipt of a grant.

Applications received by September 30 will be considered for the fall grant cycle, and those received by March 31 will be considered for the spring cycle.

Membership or Renewal Application

- YES!** We want to JOIN Friends of Michigan Libraries
 YES! We want to RENEW our membership

Contact Person's Name

Contact Person's Phone Number and E-mail Address

Contact Person's Street Address

City/State

Zip

Library Name

Library phone number

Membership Fees (please check one; all are tax deductible)

- Individual \$ 10.00
 Friends Group \$ 25.00
 Patron \$ 100.00
 Benefactor \$ 500.00
 Corporate Sponsor \$ 1,000.00

Make checks payable to: **Friends of Michigan Libraries**

Send completed application form and check to:

Harriet Larson, FOML
c/o Livonia Civic Center Library
32777 Five Mile Rd.
Livonia, MI 48154

Linking Travel Information and Registration

Stand Up and Be Counted: Friends as Advocates

Wednesday, October 15, 2008, 9:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

(Please see page 1 for program information)

Hastings Public Library

227 East State St.
Hastings, MI 49058

<http://hastings.ilcoop.org>

Telephone (269) 945-4263

Parking

Parking at the library itself is limited, but there is ample parking available at the Felpausch grocery store across the street as well as on nearby streets.

Travel Information

From the Grand Rapids/Holland area:

Take MI-6 East/Paul B. Henry Freeway to the M-37 Exit (Exit 15) toward Grand Rapids/Hastings. Turn right onto Broadmoor Avenue SE/MI-37 South and continue south for about 20 miles. Turn left onto MI-43/MI-37/West State Street. Continue to follow West State Street to the library.

From the Kalamazoo area:

Take MI-43 East and turn right on MI-43/Gull Road. Follow Gull Road and turn right onto D Avenue East/MI-43. Go about

one-tenth mile and turn left onto 32nd Street North/MI-43/MI-89. Continue to follow 32nd Street North/MI-43. Turn left onto 32nd Street North, which becomes South Lockshore Road/CR-611. Turn right onto West Milo Road/CR-406. Turn left onto South Wall Lake Road/MI-43. Continue to follow MI-43 and stay straight to go onto West State Street to the library.

For directions from other areas in west and mid-Michigan, please see www.mapquest.com.

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: **Linking Program Registration**
: **Wednesday, October 15, 2008, 9:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.**
: **Hastings Public Library**
: **Hastings, Michigan**
:

: **Registration Deadline: October 11, 2008**
: Registration includes lunch.
:

: **Make checks payable to: Friends of Michigan Libraries (FOML)**
:

: Send your check and the completed registration form below to:
:

: FOML
: c/o Carol Perrin
: 12319 SW Torch Lake Dr.
: Rapid City, MI 49676
: Questions? Telephone: (231) 322-6122; e-mail: carolper@charter.net
:

: Name _____ Phone _____

: Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

: Library Affiliation _____

: Number Attending _____ x \$20.00. Total Amount Enclosed = _____
:



Friends of Michigan Libraries
Livonia Civic Center Library
32777 Five Mile Rd.
Livonia, MI 48154

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TO: Friends of the Library

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The mission of the Friends of Michigan Libraries (FOML) is to support Friends working on behalf of Michigan libraries, to serve as an information resource for Friends groups, and to be advocates for libraries at the state level.

Among Michigan Friends is published three times a year as part of membership in the Friends of Michigan Libraries. FOML would like to thank The Gale Group for its support in helping to print and mail copies of this newsletter to every public library (including their branches) in the State of Michigan.

Editorial contributions to the publication are welcome and should be sent to:

Debbie Straub, FOML
 9700 Grand River Dr. SE
 Lowell, MI 49331
 E-mail: EditorDAS@aol.com

**Take a Moment to Check Out
 FOML's Website**

Have you ever visited FOML's website? If not, it's time to surf on over to www.foml.org and take a look at what we have to offer!

There are useful links to several library-related and Friends-related websites as well as links to places you can go to for tips on establishing your group as a nonprofit, pricing used books, doing a mailing, using technology to organize and simplify your record-keeping, and complying with state and federal tax laws.

The website also features a helpful section of FAQs (frequently asked questions). You can even submit a question of your own to FOML, and we'll try to find the answer for you.

Click on "Of Interest" to find out about selling used books and other fundraising projects.

Want to join FOML or request a grant if you're already a member? Fill out an application form, print it out, and mail it in.

You can even access back issues of our newsletter, *Among Michigan Friends*.

And if you'd like to have *your* library's picture featured on our home page, please send an electronic file of the picture to Carol Perrin at carolper@charter.net. (Be sure to fill out a release form, too.)