



MFOL NEWS

MASSACHUSETTS FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES

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NOTES FROM THE WORKSHOP

An enthusiastic group of Library Friends met at the Walpole Library on March 9 to share ideas and information at the annual Friends Sharing with Friends Meeting. If you weren't able to get to the conference, you can find presentation slides from most presenters at <http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/friends> under the Friends Sharing with Friends Tag.

Here is a quick review of their comments.

April Mazza, Friends Information Specialist at the Massachusetts Board of Library commissioners who organized the event, welcomed participants and introduced the presenters.

Reaching Out with Social Media

James Fox, President of the Friends of the Somerville Public Library, talked about using social media to expand the reach of your friends group - publicizing programs, recruiting volunteers and increasing community support for the library.



James Fox

He began with an overview of some of the venues available, including Facebook,



Group Discussion at Friends Sharing with Friends at the lovely new Walpole Library

Twitter, Tumblr, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Instagram. He then talked about the way in which he had used these tools to expand the role of the Somerville Public Library in the community, reaching segments of the population that had not been active at the library in the past.

He suggested that a logo for your organization that

can be used in a variety of ways allows viewers to quickly identify your message is an important starting task. While his message dealt primarily with social media, he emphasized that it was important to "be everywhere" - stalls at tag sales, farmers markets, festivals - flyers in usual and unusual places (fire stations, DPW offices) - using standard as well as social media forms of communication. While all of the on-line groups offer their own benefits, he felt that Facebook and Twitter were the most productive for library groups.

Members of the audience had lots of questions on using these tools. One of the most frequently asked was about the time required to maintain a productive presence on-line. He admitted that he is on-line quite

a bit but suggested that a group could set up a schedule for posting comments and assign specific days or times to a variety of people to spread the workload.

Using Facebook Effectively

The second presentation of the day was by **Brandy King**, whose company Knowledge-linking supports non-profits and small businesses find, organize and share information. She echoed James' recommendation that Facebook was the most



Brandy King

useful tool for library groups, being where you can most easily reach the general public. She recommended that you create your Facebook account as a "page" rather than a group or individual. Her presentation gave specific guidelines on creating an effective Facebook presence. She recommends that you plan to post two to three times a week and once on the weekend. You should check your page twice a day and respond to users who post comments or questions within 24 hours if not sooner. Knowing your audience and their schedules allows you to post at a time when they are most likely to be on-line. To get this information, she recommends a 3 question multiple choice survey using Survey Monkey (see the sample questionnaire in the sidebar). She also recommends that you offer something to people who complete the survey - perhaps a free book from your booksale shelf.

Moving on to the question of what to post, Brandy had many suggestions. She suggested that you think of a Facebook posting as a conversation - not a broadcast. To encourage feedback, she recommended asking questions - from soliciting responses to a query on what they would be willing to pay for an item the library is considering selling to queries like "What was the last book you bought at our book sale?" or "What's the best movie based on a book?" When you get responses, she encourages you to "LIKE" the response so that your posters can see that you are paying attention to them. Quotes are also fun - either from famous people or from people in town - with permission, of course.

Pointing out that Facebook is an inherently visual medium, she suggests that posting photos and graphic images will be attention getters, remembering that you need approval to post photos of individuals and must pay particular attention to posting photos of children, being sure you have parents approval. She did suggest that

Sample Survey Monkey

1. Did you know we had a Facebook page (include the link to your page)

Yes No

2. How often do you use Facebook?

- At least once a day
 At least once a week
 At least once a month
 I have an account but seldom use it
 I do not have a Facebook account

3. If you are an active Facebook user, what times of the day are you usually on? Check all that apply.

- 6 a.m. - 9 a.m.
 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
 12 p.m. - 3 p.m.
 3 pm - 6 pm
 6 pm - 9 pm
 9 pm - 12 am

you could frame your photos to make sure the individuals could not be identified, showing an example of a child's hands playing with a block train.

One new feature on Facebook allows you to schedule all your posts at a future date and time. Rather than needing to remember to log on several times a week, you can select a time each week to create your posts and then indicate when you want them to be displayed. After you have entered your post, hover over the clock image on the bottom left beneath your post text to select date and time.

Active Fund Raisers - Mini Golf and Croquet

The final presentation of the day was by **Bernadette Rivard**, the Director of the Bellingham Library and **Suzy Axelson** from the Friends of the Reading Public Library. They talked - in detail



Bernadette Rivard and Suzy Axelson

with great handouts - about fundraisers at their libraries. The Bellingham Public Library held a Croquet Tournament in conjunction with their annual booksale. They wanted a very low upfront cost program. Equipment for the tournament was borrowed from the Northborough Public Library and from town residents. The croquet paths were laid out using leftover books from the sale. They solicited prizes for a raffle and ads on their scorecard. The tournament was held on Sunday while the library was closed. They charged \$3 per person or \$10 for a family. They thought this project was successful, bringing people into the library,

raising some money and - perhaps most important - attracting 23 new Friends members. Bernadette said the crucial thing for an event like this is recruiting some good people to run it.

The Reading Library held an indoor miniature golf tournament - while the library was open. They had 18 holes of golf, a raffle table and a refreshment stand. They worked with an organization called Library Mini Golf out of Florida to plan and conduct this event and were very pleased with that relationship. They had an event sponsor that provided the up front donation to pay this company so they were sure they wouldn't lose money. They sold sponsorship to each hole and advertised library events on the holes they could not sell.

This was a very successful event for them. About 300 people participated and they made a profit of \$8,703. The one item that wasn't as successful as they hoped was the T-shirt sale. Their recommendation is "don't date the t-shirts".

Roundtable Suggestions

After the presentations, April opened the floor to the audience to share their latest events, programs, and suggestions. A member of the Friends from the Fitchburg Library told the group about The Nancy Project, named for her mother. She contacted dedicated knitters in the community and asked them to donate scarves to the library for sale between Thanksgiving and Christmas. She manned a table at the library when it was open and raised \$1,600 the first year. Other items -like mittens - have joined the scarves in subsequent years and this year she raised \$2,500 for the library. In addition to the knitted items, a town resident donated some handmade bird houses.

John Tavares from the Acushnet Friends group talked about their calendars. This year's was local scenes and they were able to sell it for \$12 because they had it printed at low cost at their Vocational School. Their most successful calendar was Working Men of Acushnet (fully clothed in their working outfits holding an appropriate book). It was also mentioned that some of the local prisons can do printing inexpensively.

Another library held a used jewelry sale, two had art sales (all donated art), and raffles were held for a bike and for a portrait of a child by a talented local painter by other Friends groups.

A recommendation was made for the use of Wild Apricot Membership Management software (<http://www.wildapricot.com>) which allows you to manage your membership information, send e-mails and newsletters and automatic reminders to your members.

The **Walpole Library** recommended workshops by Gary Gekow (<http://www.resumeyourcareer.com>) around employment issues. He charges \$200 per workshop and response from participants has been very enthusiastic.

Friends Sharing with Friends is a great way to get ideas, have problems solved and meet Friends from neighboring communities. Evaluations from the program attendees were very positive - "Great speakers. Very useful information." "This was a wonderful program, and I'll be joining the Mass Friends of Libraries." But a recurring comment was that one of the best things was the opportunity to hear from other attendees.



While we have to wait a while for the next conference, you can continue to share. The Massachusetts Friends of Libraries organization and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners have introduced

a new email list for Friends groups to communicate with each other online. The Friends email list provides an electronic information forum for Massachusetts Friends members to discuss topics of interest and to share advice and best practices. To sign up simply go to <http://mblc.state.ma.us/sympa/info/friends> click "subscribe" and enter your email address into the box. Once subscribed send messages to: friends@mblc.state.ma.us



Continuing our sharing theme - here is what is happening in a few libraries around the state

The **Friends of the Newburyport Public Library** were chosen by The Yoga Center in their town for a month of recognition and support. They displayed materials about the Friends at their center and donated proceeds from a class.



The **Thomas Crane Library** in Quincy celebrated the one year anniversary of their Library Bookstore. The store is open on Saturdays from 10 - 4 and Thursdays from 6 - 8. Sales for the first year were \$21,088 thanks to unwavering support from their volunteers. A policy that has been especially popular is their 50% reduction each month for a selected category of books - in January, it was cookbooks.



The **Cary Library** in Lexington celebrated Lexington's 300th anniversary with a month-long art exhibit featuring work by 25 artists in a range of media. They presented awards for Most Distinctive, Most in Keeping with the theme, Best in Show, People's Choice Award and Honorable Mention. The month long celebration included a reception for the artists and a percentage of sales from the show went to the Cary Library Memorial Foundation to support library programs.

The **Uphams Corner Branch of the Boston Public Library** held a tour in March of six sites on the Boston Women's Heritage Trail in a program called Walking in their Shoes: Historic Women of Uphams Corner.



The **John F. Kennedy Presidential Library** has an on-line connection to their series of public affairs programs that can be viewed in iTunes for free. You can find the link at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/>



The **Newton Free Library** offers ESL classes - one entitled Speak English with Confidence and another that is a short story reading and discussion group. They also have a Playwrights Group for people interested in reading or writing plays. Attendees can bring an original manuscript to share and receive critiques.



The **Waltham Public Library** offered a computer course taught by members of Support and Friendship South Asian Women that included computer basics, Internet basics, e-mail, and Microsoft Word and Excel.



The **Palmer Public Library** is holding their 9th annual Palmer Public Library Poetry Pageant fundraiser in April. Poets must register and pay a fee to participate. Details at <http://www.palmer.lib.ma.us>.



The **Agawam Public Library** is celebrating the publication of the first book by Agawam librarian **Jolene Mercadante**. Titled *The Angel on My Shoulder: My Life with an American Pit Bull Terrier* gives a different picture of this often misunderstood breed.

The **Concord Public Library** Thursday Author events program will present **Michelle Coughlin**, author of *One Colonial Woman's World: The Life and Writings of Mehetabel Chandler Colt* on April 11. Check out their website for details. <http://www.concordlibrary.org/index.html>



The **Forbes Library** in Northampton offers an ambitious event program that serves users from toddlers to senior citizens. Here is a sample of some of their on-going programs



- Community Concerts
- Film series
- Book discussion groups for every age
- Poetry reading and discussion groups
- Children's story times
- Yoga classes
- Art exhibits
- Knitting clinic
- Writer-In-Residence programs
- Writing groups
- Gaming clubs
- Author readings and lectures
- Computer help



The libraries in **Barnstable and West Barnstable, Marstons Mills, Cotuit, Hyannis, Sturgis, Centerville, and Osterville** share a joint events calendar. You can see a copy here http://www.sturgislibrary.org/pdf/joint_calendar_mar2013.pdf or check out the individual library websites for their specific events.

Mark your calendars now - the annual Massachusetts Friends of Libraries and Massachusetts Library Trustees Association joint conference will be November 2, 2013 at Worcester Technical High School



Members of the Friends of the **East Longmeadow Library** are busy with their annual Spring Baskets and Beyond event with the drawing in mid-April.



Pottery for Beginners at the **Holliston Public Library** will be held in April with Rick Hamelin. It is an opportunity to make a pinch pot and see a demo of a potter's wheel. The program, sponsored by the friends of the library is supported in part by a grant from the Holliston Cultural Council.



The **Mattapoisett Free Public Library** and others offer an interesting benefit for library patrons with a SAILS library card. They can sign up for a free Universal Class - with over 500 topics to choose from. The Mattapoisett Library also has a Junior Friends organization that sponsors a bottle and can drive once a month outside the library.

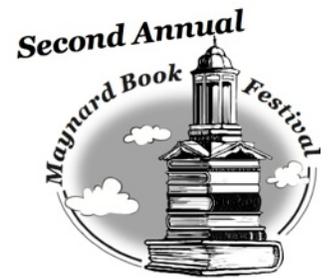


The **Friends of the Medford Public Library** raised funds to sponsor the addition of TumbleBookLibrary - a collection of animated, talking picture books which teach kids the job of reading in a format they'll love.



The **Friends of the Taunton Library** identify several ways that supporters can raise funds for the library. These include donating empty inkjet cartridges to be recycled, recycling papers in their Abitibi Recycling Corp bin and donating books for their monthly book sales.

The **Maynard Public Library** will hold their second annual book festival on April 13 featuring presentations by William Martin, Jef Czekaj, B. A. Shapiro, Maryanne O'Hara, Gregory Maguire, Kathryn Burak and Chelsea Monroe-Cassel. For details:



<http://www.maynardpubliclibrary.org/mbf2013>



The **Richards Memorial Library in North Attleboro** offers a monthly e-mail newsletter service that offers reading lists tailored to user interests. The service is made possible by the Friends of the Richards Memorial Library.



For the Birds is a gala featuring **David Allen Sibley** sponsored by the **Peabody Institute Library** to support restoration of the Library's elephant folio collection of John James Audubon's Birds of America. Details available at <http://www.peabodylibrary.org/forthebirds/>



The **Friends of the Goodnow Library** in Sudbury is one of several library groups that have chosen to be an Amazon.com Affiliate. If you begin your Amazon shopping by clicking on an Amazon banner on the Friends website, they receive a small commission on items purchased.



A four part class on Emily Dickinson with poet **Tom Daley** will be offered by the **Wayland Public Library** beginning in April. Class participation, including reading of Dickinson poems out loud and learning to analyze a Dickinson poem, will be encouraged.



The Framingham Public Library hosted author Nathaniel Philbrick in March as the featured event in their Framingham Reads Together program which selected Philbrick's book *In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex* as their title.



The Boyden Library in Foxborough is in the midst of a major renovation. Here is an amazing photo of the construction.



The Greenfield Public Library offers the Writer's Lunch - a quiet place to work during lunch hour. Beginning the first of March, they included a free 2-hour writing workshop on Fridays led by Jane Buchanan and Joannah Whitney. The Writers Lunch began in 2011 as part of the National Novel Writing Month.

The next meeting of the Board of the Massachusetts Friends of Libraries (MFOL) will be Saturday, May 4 at 10:00 a.m. in the Green Room on the 4th Floor of the Worcester Public Library. Meetings are open to all members.

What's New at the MBLC?

Greetings from Cindy Roach and April Mazza of the Library Advisory Unit at the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners! We both work with Friends groups along with trustees, directors and other library staff. Each day we answer questions from around the Commonwealth asking about anything from how to start or revitalize a Friends group to laws around fundraising. They also help MFOL plan programs and workshops such as the recent Friends Sharing with Friends event in Walpole.

We've been working on ways to assist Friends groups in achieving their goals. We know that making connections is an important way to ask questions and get new ideas. So we developed an email discussion group specifically for members of Massachusetts Friends groups. The list is free and open to any Friends members. Signing up is easy, just go to [http://mblc.state.ma.us/sympa/info/](http://mblc.state.ma.us/sympa/info/friends)

[friends](http://mblc.state.ma.us/sympa/info/friends) click "subscribe" and enter your email address into the box. Once subscribed send messages to: friends@mblc.state.ma.us

We are also very pleased to introduce a new online Resource Guide, again just for Massachusetts Friends groups. The resource guide has sample by-laws and a section for program handouts. We invite you to take our poll and submit your group's website or Facebook page to our guide to share with others. There is much we would like to add to the guide including successful fundraising ideas. Please let us know what you would like to see there. The guide can be found at <http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/friends>

We would love to hear from you, please don't hesitate to call or email us:

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