



# MFOL NEWS

## MASSACHUSETTS FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES

December 2013, Volume 23, No. 3

November 2 saw an enthusiastic group of dedicated library trustees and Friends members at the annual joint conference. This conference offered some new activities aimed at helping members share information and a delicious hot buffet served by the staff at the Worcester Technical High School.

### FANTASTIC FRIENDS

One of the highlights of the opening session of the conference was the presentation of the second annual Fantastic Friends Award. The winner this year was the Friends of the Pollard Memorial Library in Lowell. Their entry was a Children's Shopping Day. Children ages 4 to 14 were invited to the library's community room to shop for gifts at bargain prices and get them gift wrapped. Items to be sold were solicited from people's closets and attics - nice items no longer needed that could now be recycled. Tax-deductible donations receipts were provided for the donations. Items not bought were donated to a Lowell public school's holiday fundraiser and to the Lowell Adult Education Center where they were used as prizes and incentives for its immigrant adult learners. The event gave young children the opportunity to shop without their parents (but with high school student volunteers if requested) and it raised \$1,000 for the Friends. It involved people from many sectors in the community and was so successful that it will become an annual event.

As recipients of the award the Pollard Friends will receive \$300 for their organization, \$200 for their library and a plaque.



Photo by Dick Luxner

*Alice Welch, MFOL president, presents the Fantastic Friends award to members of the Friends of the Pollard Library.*

support library technology is down 56 per cent and State Aid to support local libraries is down 31 per cent, the lowest it's been since 1994.

**Increased funding to Technology and Resource Sharing means library networks can have an onramp to participate in the new eBook system and can meet residents growing needs for technology. Increased funding to Technology & Resource sharing means library networks can stop playing catch-up and start integrating technology on an ongoing basis. It will also provide statewide support for the new eBook system.**

We all need to contact our state legislators to get their support in having increases to all library accounts.

### View from the Board of Library Trustees

Alice Welch

Years of underfunding libraries have left them struggling to bring new technology into libraries and into the hands of our residents. Funding to



Photo by Dick Luxner

Frank Murphy, Chairman, Mass Board of Library Commissioners

# KEYNOTE ADDRESS

## How to Handle Difficult People

Joyce Hinckley, PhD

Carol Gafford

Public libraries have become community resources and a gathering place for many diverse populations.

Psychologist Joyce Hinckley spoke to an attentive audience on how to handle difficult people, skills many can use in their professional and volunteer capacities. "There is no magic in psychology. There is logic, common sense and matter of factness" noted Hinckley.

Difficult people come to the library. Dr. Hinckley made a clear distinction between people who suffer from illness as opposed to people with complex personalities, which she titled Pils (pains in the library).

In a humorous and delightful lecture Dr. Hinckley proceeded to teach members of the MFOL/MLTA community how to deal with PIL's. Several key suggestions were made including not taking things personally, understanding the interaction style of difficult people, and how to respond calmly and safely.

She reminded the audience that they have control of themselves and how they respond and offered suggestions such as: having a planned response, remembering that you are in control of you, walking away from bad behavior, and taking a wait and see attitude by minimizing interaction and response. People work and volunteer in libraries because they "love what they do and are working towards a goal that is important to us and that we believe in."

Dr. Hinckley gave a few tips on physical responses to stressful situations such as establishing personal space and taking a deep breath. "The key is to respond and not react". Responding creates mutual control. Ways to respond include using value free questions which will elicit value free responses. Be polite by actively

listening, using the patrons name, smiling and maintaining normal voice tones, finding something to agree on and always maintaining manners. "Good breeding always show."



Dr. Hinckley noted that there are several behavioral rules to follow. All behavior has a purpose. You do not need to know the purpose. Behavior that is rewarded continues and behavior punished is diminished.

She concluded with a message that encouraged library staff and friends to "keep choosing and working toward your goals."

## Annual Meeting of MFOL

Carol Gafford

President Alice Welch opened the meeting with a large crowd of Friends in attendance. The MFOL website has received a lot of use this year and President Welch told all to contact any member of the Board with any questions that Friends have as they work with their individual organizations. She also noted that April Mazza has put together a listserv and resource guides that offer help and assistance online.

This past year saw the resignation of two dedicated members, Stacey Whittier and Robert Abruzzo. Their help and contributions were appreciated. New Board members and Friends are needed and she asked that attendees consider serving. Donna Forand, MFOL treasurer gave her report and currently we have 298 public libraries as members along with 147 Friends groups. It was also noted that Board Members would be willing to go out and talk to libraries about the benefits of membership in MFOL. The nomination of officers took place and the roster for 2014 includes Alice Welch as President, Donna Forand as Treasurer/Membership chairperson and Terry Dorsey as secretary.

# Issues for Small Libraries

Robert Hayes

Imagine you are director of a library for a community of less than 2000 citizens. What unique challenges do you face? This was the topic for a panel discussion led by **Mary King**, MA Library System consultant with Library Directors, **Kathy Morris**, Royalston Public Library and **Cathy DeFoe Becket** Athenaeum serving as panel members. Some of the challenges are: a scarcity of resources (heavily dependent on volunteers); a lower tax base; geographic and attitude isolation and in some instances technology isolation (limited or no cable and cell phone service).



Photo by Dick Luxner

*Kathy Morris discussing small library issues*

**Kathy Morris** provided insight into the work involved in automating a small library. The first major decision was what system to use. They chose to adopt the MassCat system because of cost considerations. Once the system was selected then the process of getting the work completed needed to be developed. First came a weeding of the



Photo by Dick Luxner

*Cathy DeFoe*

collection. No need to bar code books that would not stay in the collection. Then using some of their state aid they paid staff to barcode each book and set a firm date for "going live". The advantages to automating the collection are many; circulation reports can now be easily produced, overdue books can be tracked, and the MassCat system interfaces with C/W Mars.

**Cathy DeFoe** shared her insights into making the library an integral part of the community. The library recognized the need for an after school program and applied for a grant to develop the program. The program has proven to be so successful that they now have a waiting list. One of the key components to the success of the program is that parents/guardians must support the program through volunteer work and students must help with clean-up. This has resulted in increased adult volunteers and an increase in the library hours. The library is now partnering with the local "Y" on a leadership program.



One of the items tried this year to encourage information sharing was the invitation to display a poster about an activity your friends group conducted. Four libraries submitted posters. The photo above shows attendees perusing them.

## Friends Sharing with Friends

SAVE THE DATE

Two Dates - Two Locations

Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

March 1 @ Wilmington Memorial Library, Wilmington

March 22 @ Agawam Public Library, Agawam

**Celeste Bruno**, MBLC Communications Specialist will discuss getting your message out to the media and the public followed by time to share your stories and questions.

Because our membership is so varied and our conference time so short, we decided to try a new approach this year to provide an opportunity to talk about topics of interest to our attendees. During lunch, some of the tables had signs indicating the topic to be discussed and discussion leaders to get the chat started - and it just took a sentence or two since our Friends and Trustees have lots of information to share and lots of questions to ask. Here are reports from a couple of these table talk sessions.

## Table Talk – Programs

Vicki L. Kaufman

Ideas flew around the table as one suggestion sparked others. Some of the more interesting and/or successful projects were:

- Basket raffle – done annually, and very successful financially
- Movie nights with popcorn (especially popular with family movies)
- Magician who comes every year to introduce kindergarten classes to the library
- Juried art show, which artists pay to enter
  - o This was so successful, that a juried photograph show, and then a juried “3-D “ show were also held.
- Children’s activity day, with face painting, other activities, to get children into the library
- Jazz singer, who brought his own keyboard – paid for with a MA Cultural Council Grant
- Craft classes – some included:
  - o Cardmaking
  - o Knitting
  - o Felting
- Hobby Displays, organized and maintained by friends
- Antiques Appraisal (a library’s version of Antiques Roadshow; individuals pay per item for appraisal.)
- Flower arrangement contest, in conjunction with local garden club. Could be turned into a fundraiser by auctioning off the arrangements.

- o Also, work with garden club for displays – inside the library or on grounds

- Entering a library float in local parade
- Pot luck dinner – everyone participating picks a recipe from a cook book in the library’s collection; cooks it and brings it to share
- Native American cultural program
- Actors portraying historical figures\
- On-going jigsaw puzzle table – anyone can stop and fit in a few pieces
- Author night, with an author speaking, and copies of their book available for purchase, to be autographed

-Selling library book bags at book sale – customer can then fill it, either just for the cost of the bag or for a set amount \$2, \$5, etc.



Photo by Dick Luxner

*Conference attendees discussing membership issues over lunch*

## Table Talk - Membership

Donna Forand

Does your friends group need more members? Here are a few ideas that were discussed at the Membership Table Talk session.

Newsletters should be used to communicate not only what event your Friends group is planning, but it should also list other things that are going on in the library such

as what groups, other than the Friends, use the library on a regular basis and when. You might want to tell your newsletter recipients where your dollars come from, i.e. fundraising events, membership, donations etc. and let them know the process that is used in determining how those dollars are spent.

Conduct on going person to person membership drives. Talk to your neighbors, friends, family about your Friends group and have membership forms with you. If possible be at the library during peak hours to talk about your group and its mission. Have copies of your latest newsletter and membership forms available.

Be visible in the community. Have representation at community events. Make the most of holidays such as Halloween. Give out candy or books to the children who visit the library and membership forms to their parents. Be sure to wear visible bright colored name tags with your Friends group logo so everyone will know who you are.

Volunteer to help when other community groups are having an event. Be sure to wear your name tag so that others will know you are from the library Friends group. It never hurts to make some contacts with other groups.

When your Friends group sponsors a program or event at the library or elsewhere - **BE THERE!** Don't expect your library director to introduce your program/event. Use that time to briefly talk-up your group and have membership forms to hand out at the conclusion.

The bottom line is **MAKE YOURSELVES VISIBLE AND AVAILABLE.**



Sally Cartwright, April Mazza, and Sally Thurston discuss maintaining good relationships with Trustees, Friends

Photo by Dick Luxner

## We Are All In This Together

Robert Hayes

In “We Are All In This Together,” **Sally Cartwright** (Trustee at Wayland Free Public Library), **Sally Thurston** (Friends President at Maynard Public Library), and **April Mazza** (Trustee/Friends Information Specialist for the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners) discussed ways to maintain good relationships and communications among board of trustees, friends of library groups, and library staff. Psychologist and educator Joyce Hinckley served as moderator, leading a successful panel discussion in front of a standing-room only crowd.

### *How do Friends/Trustees/Staff communicate?*

Three major recommendations to consider emerged from this discussion. (1) The Library Director should be expected to attend BOTH Trustees and Friends meetings, not just Trustees meetings. (2) There should be “cross-meeting” attendance between the Trustees and Friends, with a Trustee representative attending Friends meetings and a Friends representative attending Trustees meetings. (3) There should be agenda time set aside for reports from both the Director and Trustees at each Friends meeting and, likewise, agenda time set aside for reports from both the Director and Friends at each Trustees meeting.

*How do Friends support the library?* A long list of answers was compiled, including: advocacy; volunteers; fundraising; funding programming for adults, teens and/or children; funding museum passes; and helping out during a crisis. Some libraries (e.g., Maynard Public Library) even rely on their Friends groups to plan and execute adult programming due to limited staffing.



Attendees share membership recruitment ideas at lunch

Photo by Dick Luxner

*How is funding requested from your Friends group?* Three major funding models were touched upon during the discussion. (1) The Friends sit down with the Director and craft a realistic Friends budget on an annual basis that will best meet the needs of the library. (2) The Director brings funding requests forward from staff on a monthly basis at each Friends meeting. (3) A hybrid model of monthly requests with an agreed-upon underlying annual lump sum.

*How does your library determine its priorities?* There appeared to be general consensus that the Director, with the assistance from staff, determines the library's priorities, with heavy input from the Trustees and much lighter input from the Friends.

*How do Friends/Trustees/Staff recognize and appreciate each other?* A common suggestion was for staff to hold volunteer appreciation events and for Friends to hold staff appreciation events. Never forget that a simple "thank you" can go a long way!

MBLC Friends/Trustees Specialist April Mazza distributed a handout entitled "Model Friends' Cooperative Network," outlining the roles of the Library Director, Trustees and Friends in the areas of (1) general administrative; (2) policy; (3) planning; (4) marketing; (5) fiscal; (6) legislative; (7) meetings; and (8) networking. The handout was adapted from "Model State Friends' Cooperative Framework," which can be found in the *Friends of the Libraries Sourcebook* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) by Sandy Dolnick (ALA, 1996).

## Library Advocacy At The Local Level

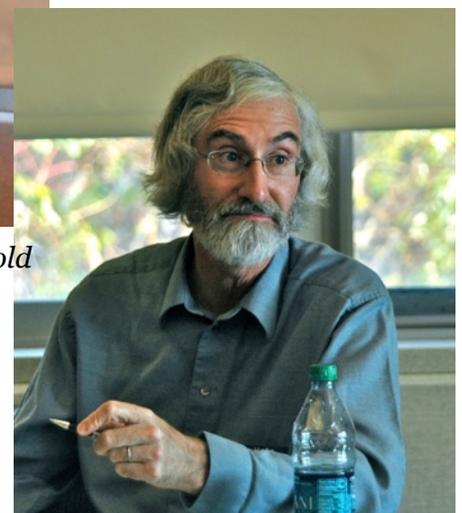
Robert Hayes

In "Library Advocacy At The Local Level," **Jim Walsh** (Trustee at Fitchburg Public Library), **John Arnold** (Advisory Finance Committee in Westborough), and **Liz Babbitt**, State Aid Specialist at the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners discussed different aspects of advocacy. **Katherine Dibble** (Massachusetts Friends of Libraries Board Member and former

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioner) served as moderator, leading another successful panel discussion to a packed room.

*Successful Trustee Actions:* **Jim Walsh** described his experiences as a Trustee during the Fitchburg Public Library's recent budget crisis. In 2008, Fitchburg's library was hit with a 67% cut, decimating staff and slashing hours from 63 hours to 21 hours. The library, which went from being from 1.3% of the city's budget to 0.48%, is now getting much of its budget restored. Walsh credited the library's turnaround with supporters keeping the library in the news through many avenues, including town newspapers and local cable.

*How To Influence The Finance Committee:* **John Arnold** gave a fantastic presentation on how the library can improve its presentation to the Finance Committee. Arnold's three biggest takeaways when advocating for your library: (a) show that you care about the library; (b) demonstrate how the library benefits the community; and (c) work on telling and selling your story. His recommendations included: (1) know your community; (2) know the rules surrounding town finance; (3) know both sides of the story (don't have a 'us vs. them' mentality, but know what other departments are requesting); (4) tear down the walls of stereotypes; (5) don't



*Jim Walsh (above) and John Arnold discussing Library advocacy*

use library jargon; (6) anticipate questions and practice answering the hard ones; (7) personalize the argument and find a way to get the Finance Committee members into the library; (8) take advocacy on the road to the Finance Committee meetings; (9) have a condensed, concise argument (elevator speech) in addition to a formal

presentation; (10) peer-to-peer communication (e.g., trustee to finance committee member) is often most effective, especially if Library Director is from out-of-town; (11) find your library champions – patrons who are ready to tell how the library has transformed their lives; and (12) be authentic.

State Budget Library Line Items And What They Mean For Your Library: **Liz Babbitt** distributed a handout tracing library funding patterns from FY2001 to present. There are currently six line items in the state budget that library supporters need to watch: (1) Board of Library Commissioners (#7000-9101); (2) State Aid to Regional Libraries (#7000-9401); (3) Talking Book Library in Worcester (#7000-9402); (4) Talking Book & Machine Lending at Perkins School for the Blind (#7000-9406); (5) State Aid to Public Libraries (#7000-9501); and (6) Library Technology & Resource Sharing (#7000-9506).

Astonishingly, state funding for libraries has DECREASED BY 35+% from FY2001 to today. Panelists and audience members encouraged Friends of the Library members to lobby their state representatives for increased funding. Contact your legislators NOW (before the budget process formally begins) and again in late winter. Attend a library legislative

breakfast in your area. With a 2.5% overall budget increase in the past three years, it appears “Library Nation” is finally beginning to be heard on Beacon Hill.

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## More on Advocacy from Katherine Dribble

Friends groups in Massachusetts do so much for their local libraries, including providing monies for programming and special purchases and volunteers for activities. However, we know that Friends’ funding cannot – and should not – substitute for the responsibility of government to finance institutions that serve the public good.

Massachusetts Friends of Libraries wants to encourage local Friends groups to keep active in informing local and state representatives of the important services that libraries offer and the great benefits to residents that come from these services. Politicians do respond when they hear from their constituents.

Has your Friends group met with your local and state officials to tell them about your library? We’d like to ask you to do so, especially in the next few months when the legislature is in the process of adopting a budget for Fiscal Year 2015. You can invite them to your library or see them at local office hours or at the State House. MFOL can provide materials with facts and figures that you can use in talking with the officials. Please contact Katherine Dibble, 617-327-7851 or [kkdibble@gmail.com](mailto:kkdibble@gmail.com) for information.

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## How to Apply for Grants

**Robert Hayes**

Free money? Is this what grants are about? If so, why doesn't everyone receive one? **Mora McAvey**, Librarian and Manager of Grants and Community Outreach Programs at the Worcester Public Library gave an excellent overview of the work that needs to be done to identify and apply for grants. She provided a copy of her presentation which walks the reader through the grant process from designing your project, identifying your timeframe, documenting your project, identifying potential funders, and writing the grant. She emphasized the need to form a relationship with the grantmaker and follow the grant proposal guidelines to the letter. Her presentation ended with a question and answer session that brought out ideas and suggestions for all who rely on grants to supplement their funding.



*Mora McAvey with one of the slides she used in her presentation on applying for grants.*

- **Grantspace**

Great place to begin!

<http://grantspace.org>

- GrantSpace ([grantspace.org](http://grantspace.org)) is your one-stop shop for information and resources specifically designed for grantseekers.

- **Foundation Centers**

• <http://grantspace.org/Find-Us>

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FIRST CLASS

← Your expiration date

### Address Correction Requested

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