



Why Have Friends of the Library?

Your library needs a Friends group because Friends can:

Advocate

- ❖ Libraries need more advocates as budgets are cut or when they may be in danger of closing.

Increase public awareness of the library

- ❖ Friends provide the opportunity for people who have a passion for their library to give time to benefit the library in their community.

Partner with other community groups

- ❖ Friends have friends with whom they can share their enthusiasm about volunteering for the Friends and who may decide to become members as well.

Raise funds

- ❖ Examples of successful fundraisers include: book sales, bake sales, yard sales, harvest festivals, silent auctions, film festivals, as well as capital campaigns and other major fundraising projects.
- ❖ Funds go towards purchasing items for the library, such as:
 - Books, magazines, CDs, and DVDs
 - Materials for the children's area, such as furniture, rugs, and Maker Space materials
 - Specialized materials, such as software (JAWS and ZoomText), or digital audio players for people with vision loss
 - Walkers
 - iPads

Sponsor events and programming

- ❖ Friends sponsor, plan, or host a variety of programs and events, such as Books for Babies, the TD Summer Reading program, or Adopt-a-Book programs.



Starting a Friends Group

Friends of the Library groups planning to become a more formal organization will have the following characteristics:

- ❖ Formal committee structure to do administrative work and planning – executives, board and committees within the group
- ❖ Arms' length relationship with library management and governance
- ❖ Elected executive and/or board
- ❖ Governing documents – constitution or articles of continuance, bylaws
- ❖ Separate bank account
- ❖ Incorporated
- ❖ Charitable status (Revenue Canada)

Planning

Strategic planning allows your group to look at their strengths and opportunities and outline what your group plans to do and why. As a group intended to support the library, your goals and objectives should complement the mandate and strategic plan of the Library Board.

Your group can write a simple mission statement and prioritize goals, and perhaps develop some action plans for the coming year. Tasks can be matched with the expertise and interests of various volunteers. Timelines will help you have a sense of accomplishment, and provide an annual schedule of projects and events.

Planning takes time at the beginning. However, it helps to attract volunteers if they can see at a glance what the time commitment is. Job descriptions are also helpful.

Goal setting

- ❖ Fund raising
- ❖ Advocacy
- ❖ Volunteering
- ❖ Support
- ❖ Programming
- ❖ Event Planning
- ❖ Promotion and marketing
- ❖ Community partnership
- ❖ Membership recruitment

Arms' Length Relationship

A good relationship should be established between the Friends board and the Library Board, with open communication. Many Friends organizations have a Library Board member on their board. Often the Library CEO or a staff member acts as a liaison between the library and the Friends.

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee will start the work to form a Friends of the Library group. The group may form the first executive of the Friends board. A Library Board Trustee and a library staff representative should be part of the Steering Committee.

- ❖ One of the Steering Committee members should be the treasurer.
- ❖ The Steering Committee will be responsible for drafting the Friends' constitution and/or bylaws.
- ❖ Discuss the need to incorporate as a non-profit organization.
- ❖ Consider applying for charitable status in order to issue charitable receipts.

Elections

Elections are held to fill these positions. Individuals can volunteer for positions rather than wait to be nominated.

- ❖ President
- ❖ Vice President
- ❖ Secretary
- ❖ Treasurer

In addition to the Executive Committee, your full board will help to share the workload and manage special tasks, such as book sales, fundraising, event planning and communication.

Governing Documents

You may choose to keep your constitution and/or bylaws simple, and provide more detail in an Executive Manual. A "Memorandum of Understanding" between the Friends and the Library Board is a useful document, as are some policies that:

- ❖ Outline the purpose of your group
- ❖ List the executive positions and a job description for each position
- ❖ What happens to the funds you raise
- ❖ Your relationship to the Library Board and staff
- ❖ How your assets are to be distributed at time of dissolution

Bank Account

Find a bank in the community that does not charge fees for community groups. Decide on signing authority – how many signatures are required, and who these people will be. It is usually the Treasurer and one other member of the Executive Committee who sign each cheque.

Communication

Your website, social media, and newsletter can help to recruit new members, promote your events, and solicit donations.

- ❖ Website
- ❖ Social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)
- ❖ Email groups
- ❖ Newsletter

Incorporation

Check provincial regulations on not-for-profit organizations to learn if incorporation is required.

Charitable Status

A non-profit organization can exist without having registered charitable tax status. However, some advantages to having charitable status are that it attracts donations, the organization can issue tax receipts and it is exempt from taxation. Application can be done through the Canada Revenue Agency.

Support from the Library

Libraries invest in Friends of the Library groups by providing support. Common types of support include:

- ❖ Meeting rooms and use of office facilities or supplies
- ❖ Space on the library website or newsletter
- ❖ Storage space for merchandise and/or book sales
- ❖ Help from library staff

Content taken from van Haaften, J. (2016) *Starting a Friends of the Library Checklist*. Distributed at Ontario Library Association Super Conference, Toronto, ON.



How to Form a Steering Committee

1. Promote the first meeting.

- ❖ In the library and other prominent locations, advertise a meeting to attract interested people who are regular library users, who care about the library, and who might have time to give in support of the library.
- ❖ You may want to enlist the help of Library Trustees and staff who can spread the word.
- ❖ Advertise the meeting well in advance using social media, the library's website, or the library's newsletter.
- ❖ In all advertising, emphasize that the proposed Friends group wants to help the library and needs people who really care about their library.

2. Plan the first meeting.

- ❖ If a member of the library staff is spearheading the formation of the Friends group, they can make the necessary arrangements for booking a meeting room, arranging for chairs, etc. If not, a key volunteer can take on the responsibility.
- ❖ At the first meeting, at least one Library Board Trustee and one library staff member should be present to speak about the need for a Friends group, and to answer questions and offer support.
- ❖ Find out if the library needs advocates in the near future or if there are some smaller items the Friends could fund.
- ❖ Always provide refreshments.
- ❖ The primary organizer should draw up a simple agenda to keep the meeting on track:
 - Introductions
 - Explain what a Friends group can do for the library
 - Discuss the difference between Friends and the Library Board
 - Brainstorm ideas about the types of activities your Friends group might undertake

3. Choose the members of the Steering Committee.

- ❖ At the initial meeting, ask for volunteers to form a Steering Committee, which will lead to a Friends of the Library group. Some of these people may be the first executives of the Friends Board.
- ❖ A Library Board Trustee and a library staff representative should be part of the Steering Committee (ex officio).

- ❖ The Steering Committee will be responsible for drafting the Friends' constitution and bylaws.
- ❖ Members of a Steering Committee might include:
 - President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Other positions, such as a Volunteer Coordinator or Fundraising Chair, depending on the number of volunteers available
 - Ex-officio Library Board Trustee
 - Ex-officio staff liaison

4. Draft the group's governing documents.

- ❖ The Steering Committee should review sample constitutions and bylaws, choose which ideas they like and draft a version of them that fits their library's goal and plans.
- ❖ The Steering Committee should strive for comprehensive, clear and uncomplicated documents.
- ❖ These documents should contain the purpose of the group, the executive positions and a job description for each, an explanation of what happens to the funds that are raised and the group's relationship to the Library Board and staff.
- ❖ Remember that these documents can always be altered.

Content taken from Macnaughton, D. (2008) *How to start a friends of the library group*. Presentation at Ontario Library Association Super Conference, Toronto, ON.



Maintaining a Successful Friends Group

KEYS TO MAINTAINING A SUCCESSFUL FRIENDS GROUP:

- ❖ Establishing an organized decision-making process
- ❖ Effective communication between the Friends board and volunteers
- ❖ Developing community partnerships

Decision-Making Process

- ❖ Develop good communication among Friends members, volunteers, and library staff.
- ❖ Develop a good system for organizing events – analyze how well it worked after each event and adjust it in time for the next.
- ❖ Hold regular board meetings where the group can discuss the Friends' initiatives and make decisions as a group on how funds will be spent.
- ❖ Hold effective meetings where Friends members can discuss events that they want to undertake and where they can brainstorm ideas and agree by consensus.

Communicating with Volunteers

- ❖ Keep track of volunteers – names, emails, phone numbers, types of tasks that they enjoy.
- ❖ Be welcoming to everyone and value peoples' ideas.
- ❖ Try to spread the workload as much as possible.
- ❖ Make every member feel that their contribution is important to the group's success.
- ❖ Use the library's website and/or newsletter to thank volunteers and to notify the public about upcoming events.
- ❖ New volunteers will want to be involved with a group of people who love books, love the library, and enjoy what they do to support the library.

Community Partnerships

- ❖ Understand the demographics of your community and plan events accordingly.
- ❖ Identify the library's role in the community and its relationship with local government.
- ❖ Participate in community events.
- ❖ Recognize the contributions of other groups within the community and collaborate.
- ❖ Keep track of local issues.
- ❖ Develop and maintain a good relationship with the media.

Content taken from Macnaughton, D. (2010). *A little help from your Friends*. Presentation at Ontario Library Service North Conference, Sudbury, ON; and Magahay, L. Marshall, V. & Durand, S. (2008). *What does it take to sustain a Friends group?* Presentations at OLA Super Conference, Toronto, ON.



How to Revitalize Your Friends Group

How to make your friends organization a good group with whom to volunteer:

- ❖ Make sure there is a welcoming atmosphere at your meetings, activities and events, and that your Friends group is inclusive.
- ❖ Have a well-organized structure with smaller committees, such as a membership committee or a media committee, to directly involve more people.
- ❖ Recruit more voting members to your board. Encourage your current Friends to promote membership and involvement in the organization to their friends and family.
- ❖ Plan for succession in all aspects of Friends administration, book sale coordination, and book store coordination. This is critical to the future health of your organization.
- ❖ Recruit people who have the skills you're looking for, give them tasks that they enjoy doing and encourage them, over time, to become more involved.
- ❖ Ask! Library volunteers and patrons are the easiest people to start asking.
- ❖ Create job descriptions for committee chairs, so they will understand what their responsibilities are. Use co-chairs to further distribute the workload.
- ❖ Volunteers need to know what skills the organization needs and the time commitment required.
- ❖ Get people involved in the future planning of the organization.
- ❖ Send out reminder emails and make reminder phone calls about upcoming meetings.
- ❖ Advertise volunteer opportunities on the library website and in the Friends group's newsletters.
- ❖ Have a committee or board member follow up *quickly* with new Friends members, so they feel important to the organization. Call them regularly and encourage them to become more involved.

- ❖ Hold frequent programs, including fundraising events, book sales, literacy, or arts events.
- ❖ When upcoming events or projects are discussed, promote them as opportunities to get involved.
- ❖ If you are advocating for funding for your library or to prevent library closures, events can lead to increased interest. Capitalize on this opportunity to recruit new members.
- ❖ Advertise volunteer opportunities on social media.
- ❖ Break down time-consuming tasks into manageable jobs.
- ❖ Have fun! More people will want to be involved if they hear that your group enjoys what they do.

Content taken from Macnaughton, D. (2010). *A little help from your Friends*. Presentation at Ontario Library Service North Conference, Sudbury. ON.



Roles and Relationships

Many Friends groups form because of initiative taken by a Library Board Trustee, manager or staff member. However, there is an important distinction between the role of the Library Board, Friends, and library management and staff.

Open communication on a regular basis by all parties is critical. Representation at Friends meetings by the Library Director/CEO or a liaison person and a Library Board Trustee demonstrates to the Friends group that they are important and worth the time and support of the library.

The role of the Friends of the Library is not to set library policy. A member should not have more power and authority than his or her peers on either board. A conflict of interest could arise if a member of the Library Board setting policy is also a member of the Friends' Board, in a position to influence decisions about funding. As such, it is best if there is a clear sense of the different roles of key players, as well as minimal overlap in terms of decision making and authority.

Things to consider:

- ❖ How will the Friends be incorporated into the library's planning process?
- ❖ What support will the library give the Friends in terms of publicity, space, and staff support?
- ❖ Will the Friends engage in advocacy campaigns on behalf of the library and, if so, who will be involved in determining the design and message of the campaigns?
- ❖ What role and authority will the Friends have for developing and implementing programs?



Defining the Relationship between Friends & Library Staff

The relationship between Friends and library staff should be defined by collaboration, communication, and cooperation. Each party should respect the responsibilities and needs of the others when setting their priorities and developing policies and procedures.

Friends of the Library support the library and receive guidance from the Library Board and management.

Accountability: Friends operate with a self-elected board of directors, but may provide the Library Board with regular updates and annual financial reports. Minutes of regular meetings of the Friends are sent to the library's liaison person and/or the Library CEO.

The Library Board provides guidance to the Friends of the Library because of shared areas of interest, including advocacy and fundraising. Trustees may attend meetings of the Friends and may volunteer at the Friends' events.

Accountability: The Library Board is governed by provincial legislation and reports to the municipal council in terms of financial management and providing the library services needed by the community.

Chief Executive Officer/Chief Librarian provides guidance and key information and/or resources to the Friends of the Library. The librarian informs the Library Board and staff on Friends' activities.

Accountability: The Chief Executive Officer is employed by the Library Board and reports directly to them at regular meetings.

Library staff should be aware of the Friends' activities and the value of what they do, and are often willing to provide support, as approved by the CEO. This could include providing meeting room space, use of a photocopier, or storage space for book sales.

The library liaison is a staff member, such as the CEO or a Trustee, who may attend the Friends' meetings on a regular basis and may play the role of liaison with the Friends to assist with meetings, promotion, and activities.

Library volunteers may be involved at the library for specific tasks, such as a homebound service or homework club. They may or may not belong to the Friends group. The library will have a volunteer management policy, or else offer a training program for library volunteers and Friends volunteers. This is governed by the library's policies relating to privacy and code of conduct.

Municipal Council members may serve on the Library Board or may be library supporters in the community.

Should a member of the Library Board also serve as a member of the Friends of the Library Board?

It is important to avoid overlap between members of the Library Board and members of the Friends of the Library Board, as having one person serving on both boards could lead to:

1. A member having more power and authority than their peers on either of the boards.
2. A perceived conflict if a member with a policy-making role on the Library Board is also in a decision-making role on the Friends Board.
3. A potential conflict of interest when a policy that the Library Board is proposing might not be considered to be in the best interest of the Friends.

If the Library Board and the Friends Board are separate, how can they keep each other informed and work towards the same goals?

1. A library staff member on the Friends Board should be appointed as a liaison to the library's Board of Trustees. This liaison should attend the Trustee meetings in order to report the Friends' activities to the Trustees, and to report the Trustees' activities back to the Friends.
2. Friends should be kept informed of the library's plans, progress, and challenges by the Library Director. They should support the policies set by the Library Board of Trustees.
3. Friends can serve as "connecting links" between the library and the community, analyzing the needs of the community and communicating them to the library staff.

4. All fundraising by the Friends should be done with the approval of the Trustees and with the coordination of the Library Director.
5. The funds raised by Friends supplement the library's operating budget to provide materials and programs that enhance the library's service. These funds should not replace the money that is provided by the city or institution and should only be spent after conferring with the Library Director and Trustees.

Content taken from the *Working Relationships Toolkit*. OLA Super Conference 2014; and Nawalinski, Beth. *Fact Sheet #10: The Role of the Friends*. United for Libraries: Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations.



	BOARD	CEO	STAFF	FRIENDS
Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To govern	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To administer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To support
Mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Public Libraries ActMunicipal By-law	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mission statement, goals and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Job description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Constitution
Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Policy and planningAccountabilityAdvocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">AdministrationPlanning and proceduresAdvocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ImplementationAdministration as delegatedAdvocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">FundraisingVolunteer supportAdvocacy
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fiscal health of the libraryServices that meet the needs of the communityLiaison with CouncilSecuring support from Council and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivery of servicesStaffingBudget monitoringRepresenting the library in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provision of servicesAdvising CEO on servicesRepresenting the library in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fundraising campaignsVolunteer hours or schedulingSpeaking out for library services in the community
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Monthly meetingsBudget presentationDevelopment and review of policiesCEO performance appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement Board directivesMonitor service delivery through output measuresSupervise staffReport to Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Executive proceduresReport to CEO or delegate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Plan and execute fundraising activitiesWork as volunteers on specific servicesReport to Board

This table originated from the Southern Ontario Library Service.



Duties of a Friends Board

President

- ❖ Preside at all meetings.
- ❖ Overall supervision and administration of the Friends.
- ❖ Ensure all policies and actions are approved by the membership and that they are properly implemented.
- ❖ Prepare and present an annual report to members.
- ❖ Be a representative of the Friends in the community.

Vice-President

- ❖ Carries out the duties of the president when the president is absent.
- ❖ Other duties as assigned by the president.
- ❖ Be a representative of the Friends in the community.

Secretary

- ❖ Prior notice of meetings.
- ❖ Preparation and circulation of all correspondence.
- ❖ Recording, preparation and circulation of the minutes of all meetings.
- ❖ Presentation of the minutes at meetings.
- ❖ Maintain a copy of all records (e.g. constitution, membership list, ad hoc committees, reports, etc.).
- ❖ Be a representative of the Friends in the community.

Treasurer

- ❖ Manage and oversee the financial affairs of the group.
- ❖ Develop and follow the group's financial policies, including decisions on cheque signing authority, expense reimbursement, and credit card usage.
- ❖ Prepare and monitor the group's annual budget.
- ❖ Keep up-to-date records that detail the all financial transactions.
- ❖ Be a representative of the Friends in the community.



Effective Board Meetings

During the first few years, while your Friends of the Library group is being organized, you may want to consider meeting every month. You should also plan for an Annual General Meeting during one of those months.

Once the location, day and time of your Friends' regular board meetings have been determined, find a volunteer who is willing to send out emails or make phone calls, about a week ahead, to remind people of the upcoming meeting. A brief message, along with the agenda and minutes of the last meeting (if available), reminds people that the regular meeting is coming up.

Ensure that the location, day and meeting time are mentioned on the group's social media accounts, as well as noted on the library's website and newsletters.

Before the meeting:

- ❖ Review notes from the last meeting.
- ❖ Create a fairly detailed agenda to ensure all necessary business is covered.
- ❖ Distribute the agenda and any related material several days in advance.

During the meeting:

- ❖ Start on time.
- ❖ Introduce visitors and/or new board members.
- ❖ Follow the agenda and be as productive as possible.
- ❖ Ensure there are opportunities for brainstorming and discussion, but try to keep the discussion on track.
- ❖ Be clear and establish action items: who, what, when.

After the meeting:

- ❖ Announce the date of the next meeting and note any agenda items that will be considered.
- ❖ Email agenda and minutes to all board members.
- ❖ Follow up on action items.



An Introduction to Advocacy

Advocacy means actively supporting a cause by *taking action*. Friends can be effective advocates by offering support when the library requires people in the community to highlight specific issues or concerns in a coordinated way.

A consistent message will be delivered if everyone is kept informed. The same information will come from the Friends, library staff and the Library Board Trustees.

Advocacy may be formal, such as an email or letter writing campaign to municipal or provincial politicians, or writing letters to the editor in local newspapers. Advocacy may also be more informal, such as when a Friend talks to someone else about how much a particular library service means to them.

Friends of Libraries are invaluable advocates when library branches are about to be closed, or if much needed funds might be decreased, instead of increased. They can be the reason libraries are saved or the reason new libraries are built to replace old, outmoded buildings.

Your Friends are very passionate about the intrinsic value of their library. Since Friends are library patrons and have their own important reasons for caring about their library, they have individual and often moving stories to tell about why their library means so much to them.

They are willing to put aside other commitments to give untold hours, often at short notice, to make phone calls, to write and to spread the word that the library needs community advocates to make a difference to the final outcome of budget deliberations.

A well organized, informative advocacy campaign can inform the public about the issues. Friends can often sway public opinion in favour of retaining libraries or library services. With the possibility of almost instant communication with anyone in your district, no matter how geographically isolated some smaller, outlying communities may be, your Friends volunteers can garner a great deal of support quickly and effectively.

For tips on using social media to advocate for your library see the [OLA Advocacy Toolkit](#).



Tips for Effective Advocacy

Advocacy is one of the key roles of a Friends of the Library group. Here are tips on how to effectively advocate for libraries within your community:

- ❖ Be vigilant.
- ❖ Involve demographics whose voices are less likely to be heard, especially children.
- ❖ Build a reputation for credibility. Do your research and be accurate.
- ❖ Be vocal about your cause at all times – not just when it is threatened.
- ❖ Start with a legislator you know and keep in touch.
- ❖ Work in all legislative levels – federal, provincial, and municipal.
- ❖ Get to know library staff.
- ❖ Gain the confidence and support of the Library CEO.
- ❖ Be personal. Use charm to help make your case.
- ❖ Stick to the issue.
- ❖ Seal the deal. Know what you want and ask for a commitment.
- ❖ Find advocacy partners. Use social media to connect with groups that are similar to yours.

Oftentimes, advocacy initiatives will involve pushing back against legislation that could negatively impact libraries. To effectively do this, Friends should adhere to **the ABC's of Playing Politics**:

- ❖ **Analyze** community assets and challenges.
- ❖ **Build** a membership base, indicating strength.
- ❖ **Choose** issues that you can win:
 - Immediate
 - Specific
 - Realizable
- ❖ **Develop** partnerships with groups in the cultural, health, social, and economic sectors.
- ❖ **Enhance** relationships with local media.



Fundraising Activities

If libraries require additional funding for specific programs, Friends can step forward and hold a variety of fundraisers. Used book sales are the most popular fundraiser. Merchandise may also be sold, and some Friends groups operate a book store, gift shop, or café in the library.

Friends of the Library are non-profit organizations. Many register as public charities or foundations and, because of their charitable status, they may attract large donations from corporate and private donors. Often, Friends groups are asked to raise funds for a new library or provide furniture and equipment for a new or renovated library.

SOME OF THE WAYS FRIENDS RAISE FUNDS:

- ❖ Book sales, operating a book store or selling books online
- ❖ Bake sales
- ❖ Yard sales
- ❖ Plant sales
- ❖ Bingo contests
- ❖ Raffles
- ❖ Silent auctions
- ❖ Author readings or hosting other speakers, garden tours
- ❖ Special events or gala fundraisers
- ❖ Operate a gift shop or café
- ❖ Film festivals



Book Sales

KEYS FOR SUCCESS

- ❖ Good Volunteers
- ❖ Good Timing / Location
- ❖ Good Publicity
- ❖ Good Books

Good Volunteers

- ❖ Coordinators/Committee
 - Volunteer recruitment and scheduling
 - Student volunteers
 - External contacts
 - Treasurer or committee member to keep track of cash, count and deposit
 - Publicity at least three weeks ahead of the sale
- ❖ Workers
 - Sorters, ongoing throughout the year
 - Stockers for ongoing book sales
 - Cashiers
 - Re-stockers
 - Someone to make contact with organizations that will take excess books
 - Sorters and disposers

Good Timing

- ❖ Don't conflict with other big events – check your community calendar
- ❖ Establish dates early and get on the community calendar
- ❖ In spring, beat the gardening season
- ❖ In fall, tie in with upcoming holidays

Good Location

- ❖ Easily accessible
- ❖ Good public parking
- ❖ Ideally, same location as stored books
- ❖ Meets space requirements

Good Publicity

- ❖ Prominently featured on Friends' website and the library's website
- ❖ Advertise on various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- ❖ Mentioned in Friends' newsletters and/or the library's newsletters
- ❖ Public Service Announcements and press releases to community newspapers
- ❖ Flyers/Posters
 - Distribution to schools
 - Library locations
 - Local businesses

Good Books

- ❖ Well-organized
- ❖ In good condition and reasonably priced
- ❖ If selling donated books, clearly communicate what makes for a good donation

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE BOOK SALE

Sorting:

- ❖ Work area, shelving, boxes, storage place
- ❖ Recycle books not suitable for sale
- ❖ Categorize and box books for sale in reasonably sized boxes
- ❖ Volunteers sorting throughout the year

Setting up for the sale:

- ❖ Determine the layout of the tables
- ❖ Clearly defined areas for different categories of books - signs or colour-coded tablecloths
- ❖ Display – titles easily read
- ❖ Keep boxes out of sight
- ❖ Keep tables tidy and replenished
- ❖ Supply bags or small boxes for customers

Pricing:

- ❖ Make up several price lists for volunteer sellers - hardcover, paperback, DVDs
- ❖ Decide on any special pricing for sets and/or "buy one, get one" deals
- ❖ If some books are specially priced (e.g. collectible or out of print books), have signage indicating special pricing

Selling:

- ❖ Schedule two people per shift for selling
- ❖ Have a box with all necessary supplies
- ❖ Keep a float available in the cash box
- ❖ Have Friends' membership brochures and volunteer forms available
- ❖ Encourage volunteers selling books to talk about becoming a Friend and about volunteer opportunities

HOW TO MAKE LIFE SIMPLER

- ❖ Decide who is responsible for what and when
- ❖ Committee Chair keeps volunteers on track
- ❖ Involve as many volunteers as possible, especially new members
- ❖ Praise jobs well done
- ❖ Offer pizza and pop for student volunteers
- ❖ At the end of the sale REVIEW, ASSESS, REVISE

SOME TYPES OF BOOK SALES

- ❖ General Book Sale
- ❖ Children's Book Sale – held where parents and children congregate for a special event in the community
- ❖ Antique and Collectable Book Sale
- ❖ Gently Used Book Sale (particularly successful in late November/early December, prior to the holidays)
- ❖ Smaller Theme Sales
 - Diet/Fitness/Self-Help (January – New Year's Resolutions)
 - Romance (close to Valentine's Day)
 - Horror/Halloween/Mystery (close to Halloween)
 - Crafts and Cooking (end of October/November in preparation for Christmas)
 - War (close to Remembrance Day)

Much of the content taken from a presentation by Denis Nolan and Barbara Dubrule, Oakville Public Library, Friends Day at OLA, 1999.



Signature Events

What is a signature event?

An event that is:

- ❖ Successful and well-attended
- ❖ “Owned” by an organization

Why do a signature event?

- ❖ Raise funds to support special projects
- ❖ Increase awareness of the library’s service program
- ❖ Community and relationship building
- ❖ Generate positive publicity

What is involved in planning a signature event?

- ❖ Create a mission statement
- ❖ Map out your goals and objectives
- ❖ Put together a committee
- ❖ Brainstorm ideas
- ❖ Decide on possible sponsors

What needs to be decided during the planning process?

- ❖ Budget
- ❖ Type of event
- ❖ Theme of the event
- ❖ Target participants
- ❖ Location

How should the event be advertised?

- ❖ Social media
- ❖ Friends group and library websites
- ❖ Invitations
- ❖ Newsletters

Sample Plan

Mission Statement

“After Hours @ the Library” is an annual event that raises funds to support special projects at the Any Town Library.

Goals

1. Raise funds for the library.
2. Increase awareness for the role of the library in the community.
3. Generate positive publicity for the library.

Objectives

Goal A (Fundraising)

1. Raise \$1,000 net.
2. Secure at least \$250 in event sponsorships.
3. Sell 50 tickets.

Goal B (Awareness)

1. Develop invitation list of 200 to include school staff, elected officials, business owners.
2. Post flyers about the event in at least 5 locations outside of the library.
3. Speak at local service clubs about the events and the project for which it is raising funds.

Goal C (Publicity)

1. Present pre- and post-event social media posts and news releases (with photos).
2. Invite local media to attend.

Content taken from Guthrie, C. (2014) *Signature special events*. Presentation at Ontario Library Association Super Conference, Toronto, ON.



Special Events Budget Planning Checklist

1. Facilities

- ☐ Rental of meeting or reception room(s)
- ☐ Overnight accommodation

Rental of:

- ☐ Chairs
- ☐ Tables
- ☐ Props
- ☐ Lectern
- ☐ Tent
- ☐ Canopy
- ☐ Lighting
- ☐ Extra help
- ☐ Coat checkroom
- ☐ Special electrical hookups
- ☐ Setup charges
- ☐ Cleanup charges

2. Food Services

- ☐ Number of people to be served

Cost per person for:

- ☐ Coffee
- ☐ Luncheon
- ☐ Dinner
- ☐ Afternoon break
- ☐ Cocktail hour
- ☐ Liquor
- ☐ Wine
- ☐ Other beverages
- ☐ Table linen
- ☐ Rented table service
- ☐ Gratuities
- ☐ Test meal

3. Equipment Rental

- ☐ Flooring or carpeting
- ☐ Risers
- ☐ Ropes or stanchions
- ☐ Outdoor toilets
- ☐ Booths
- ☐ Lighting
- ☐ Backdrop
- ☐ Trash containers
- ☐ Fencing

4. Decorations

- ☐ Flowers
- ☐ Tables decorations
- ☐ Extra plants
- ☐ Props
- ☐ Corsages, boutonnieres
- ☐ Candles
- ☐ Direction signs
- ☐ Decorations (ribbon, balloons, etc.)

5. Design and Printing

- ☐ Fee for design concept
- ☐ Advance announcements
- ☐ Invitations
- ☐ Programs
- ☐ Promotional flyers
- ☐ Posters
- ☐ Tickets
- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Place cards
- ☐ Signs
- ☐ Registration packets
- ☐ Name tags and holders

6. Postage and Shipping

- ☐ Postage for invitation and reply cards
- ☐ Bulk mailing of promotional materials
- ☐ Mailing-house charges
- ☐ Shipping

7. Recognition Items

- ☐ Awards, plaques, trophies
- ☐ Engraving
- ☐ Calligraphy
- ☐ Framing
- ☐ Shipping and handling

8. Miscellaneous

- ☐ VIP travel and expenses
- ☐ Honoraria
- ☐ Gifts
- ☐ Mementos
- ☐ Extra help
- ☐ Security
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ First-aid station
- ☐ Recording and transcribing proceedings
- ☐ Visitors' center materials
- ☐ Electrical connections
- ☐ Water hookups

9. Transportation

- ☐ Buses
- ☐ Vans
- ☐ Parking
- ☐ Valets

10. Entertainment

- ☐ Fees
- ☐ Additional equipment
- ☐ Promoter fees

11. Publicity

- ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Photographer
- ☐ Printed photos
- ☐ Duplication
- ☐ Mailing
- ☐ Entertaining/hospitality for the press
- ☐ Press-room equipment
- ☐ Banners

12. Audio-Visual Equipment

- ☐ Projectors
- ☐ Screens
- ☐ Extension cords
- ☐ Microphones
- ☐ Mixers
- ☐ Speaker system
- ☐ Pointers
- ☐ Technician and operation services

13. Office Expenses

- ☐ Staff time
- ☐ Overtime and compensatory
- ☐ Additional staff
- ☐ Data processing
- ☐ Duplicating
- ☐ Postage for general correspondence
- ☐ Supplies (pens, decals, folders)
- ☐ Committee materials
- ☐ Hospitality for committee members
- ☐ Complimentary tickets
- ☐ Staff accommodations
- ☐ Staff travel and expenses

*Checklist assembled with information
courtesy of AFP Review*



“Event Ready” Checklist

Prior to embarking on an event, ask yourself these questions:

- ☐ Do you need the money?
- ☐ Do you have a convincing case for support?
- ☐ Do you have the staff expertise?
- ☐ Do you have active and highly motivated volunteers to help execute the event?
- ☐ Do you have access to funding sources (sponsors, ticket buyers, etc.)?
- ☐ What is the competition up to? Is there room for another gala, tournament, walk, etc. in the community?
- ☐ What are your unique selling points?
- ☐ Are you willing to cover the necessary expenditures?
- ☐ What are your organization’s fundraising priorities? Do events fit into the mix?
- ☐ How successful have you been with executing your existing events? Have they been cost effective? Have they been worth the staff investment of time?
- ☐ Is your organization well known in the community?
- ☐ How well does your organization work from a business perspective?
- ☐ Do you have an idea as to who the chairperson should be? Do you think that person will agree to lead? Do they have the right contacts to help?
- ☐ Can you identify prospective sponsors, including a lead?



Volunteer Recruitment

Why do people volunteer?

- ❖ To help a cause they believe in
- ❖ To support a cause that has personally affected them
- ❖ To use their skills and experience
- ❖ To explore one's own strengths
- ❖ To improve job opportunities

What groups might have something to give?

- ❖ Retirees
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents of children involved in library programs
- ❖ Book clubs
- ❖ Other cultural groups and service clubs

What do we offer volunteers?

- ❖ Chances to give back to the community
- ❖ A shared love of libraries and books
- ❖ Opportunities to make connections with professionals
- ❖ Leadership experience
- ❖ Fun events for socializing

What are some strategies for attracting potential volunteers?

- ❖ Cultivate the organization's image – make sure people know its mission, goals, etc.
- ❖ Build a presence on multiple social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)
- ❖ Word of mouth – satisfied volunteers will tell their family and friends
- ❖ Public Service Announcements
- ❖ Host information nights/talks
- ❖ Make contact with high schools and work with guidance counselors
- ❖ Articles in community or library newsletters

What are successful recruitment methods?

- ❖ Write clear, comprehensive job descriptions
- ❖ Be honest about the position
- ❖ Appeal to motivations and describe benefits
- ❖ Show the impact of volunteer participation
- ❖ Ask for a short term commitment up front

What should you do once you've recruited volunteers?

- ❖ Make all volunteers feel welcome and valued
- ❖ Match the right person to the right position
- ❖ Support volunteers with infrastructure for training
- ❖ Offer the volunteers new ways of being involved



10 Tips for Recruiting Volunteers

1. The first person to talk to is yourself!
 - ❖ Disregard stereotypes, don't lie, don't diminish the job, don't apologize, don't beg.
2. Ask one-to-one, face-to-face. It's the best method.
 - ❖ People are more likely to volunteer when someone they know has asked them.
3. Be enthusiastic!
 - ❖ The best recruiter is someone who enjoys what they're doing, and who values the work of the organization – share your enthusiasm.
4. Understand the job for which you are recruiting.
 - ❖ Have a job description prepared that outlines the purpose of the job, its responsibilities, and how to get support. Provide a contact name.
5. Be able to explain why you've chosen that person.
 - ❖ Know the skills, attitudes, and knowledge required for the job and match the right person to the right job.
6. Be explicit about "what's in it for them."
 - ❖ Try to put yourself in their shoes. What needs does this job satisfy for this particular volunteer?
7. Ask!
 - ❖ Oftentimes, people don't volunteer because no one has asked them.
 - ❖ Try the following positive approaches:
 - "I have an opportunity for you..."
 - "I've heard so much about your skills..."
 - "We could really use your talents..."
8. Answer questions honestly.
 - ❖ Answering questions demonstrates your interest in their concerns. Even if the individual says no to you, you've told the story of your organization. This will establish the groundwork for future involvement or a referral to others.

9. Link recruits with a specific project and a personal contact.
 - ❖ The goal is to get someone involved while their interest and enthusiasm are high. Many people volunteer and then aren't contacted. This hurts the credibility of the organization.
 - ❖ A specific project is the "hook" to get people involved. They are learning the language and culture of the organization. Don't have them observing for the first year.
 - ❖ A personal call from the committee chair (or from someone with whom they'll be working) makes the newcomer feel welcome. As well, consider assigning a mentor to watch over the new recruit and to ease them into the organization.
10. Don't promise what you can't deliver.
 - ❖ Enticing new recruits with offers that can't be delivered on will only set up a series of expectations which may not be realized and end up making the volunteer resentful.

Content taken from Macnaughton, D. (2008). *How to start a friends of the library group*. Presentation at Ontario Library Association Super Conference, Toronto, ON.



Volunteer Retention Factors

Volunteers as customers

- ❖ Use a customer service approach to working with volunteers
- ❖ Satisfied volunteers will spread the word

Organizational climate

- ❖ Build trusting relationships
- ❖ Make volunteers feel welcome and supported
- ❖ Lack of tension/politics/infighting
- ❖ Open communication
- ❖ Sense of teamwork
- ❖ New ideas are welcome
- ❖ Have a process for resolving conflict

Orientation and training

- ❖ People want to learn, grow and develop their skills
- ❖ Use the buddy system to match a new member to an experienced volunteer
- ❖ Ongoing training – present opportunities to take on new responsibilities
- ❖ Risk management issue – policies in place and screening required
- ❖ Clear job descriptions
- ❖ Reinforce enthusiasm and commitment

Supervision and support

- ❖ Can be an annual formal chat
- ❖ Show volunteers ways they can be more successful
- ❖ Anticipate potential problems
- ❖ Provide feedback and evaluation
- ❖ Communication with and to volunteers – can be done via e-mail
- ❖ Volunteer satisfaction surveys
- ❖ Every volunteer deserves a formal time to sit down with a supervisor at least once a year
- ❖ Be encouraging and attentive

Recognition methods

- ❖ Dinner/Tea/Food
- ❖ Pin
- ❖ Social evening
- ❖ Draw prizes
- ❖ Invitations to events
- ❖ Media coverage
- ❖ Thank you – written and/or verbal



Volunteer Recognition Tips

All volunteers want to know that their contribution is valued and not taken for granted. Here are a few tips to help your organization recognize the work of its volunteers and to let them know that their efforts are meaningful and appreciated:

- ❖ **Make it a priority.** Recognizing the work of volunteers is crucial for an organization who wants to retain them and attract others. Designate someone to be responsible for ensuring that ongoing recognition takes place.
- ❖ **Do it often.** Recognition of volunteers should happen year-round. It can be on a frequent and informal basis – begin with saying “Thank you!” often.
- ❖ **Do it in different ways.** Vary your recognition efforts from an informal “thank you” and spontaneous treats to more formal events, such as dinners and awards.
- ❖ **Be sincere.** Make each occasion on which you recognize your volunteers meaningful and use it as an opportunity to truly reflect on their value to your organization.
- ❖ **Recognize the person, not the work.** Phrase the recognition to emphasize the contribution of the individual rather than the end result. “You did a great job!” as opposed to “This is a great job!”
- ❖ **Make it appropriate to the achievement.** For example, a paper certificate may be appropriate for a few months of service, but a public dinner and engraved plaque may be better suited to ten years of volunteering.
- ❖ **Be consistent.** Make sure whatever standards of recognition you establish can be consistently maintained by your organization in years to come. Holding a volunteer recognition dinner one year sets up an expectation for future dinners.
- ❖ **Be timely.** Try to arrange for recognition soon after the achievement has been reached – delaying until months later diminishes the value of your gratitude.
- ❖ **Make it unique.** Getting to know your volunteers and their interests will help you decide how best to recognize each individual and make them feel appreciated.

Assist during special events

- ❖ Friends can assist the library by looking after refreshments, offering tours of the library or “meeting and greeting” at special library functions and celebrations.

Help with library services

- ❖ Some Friends groups have volunteers who enjoy delivering books to individuals who can't get out to their library (homebound or outreach service).