

*Helping build stronger  
Georgia communities  
through stronger  
Georgia libraries!*

# BETWEEN FRIENDS

News for Friends Of Georgia Libraries

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## FOGL Annual Workshop Draws State Friends to Fayetteville

Susan Schmidt of Bethesda, Md., led dynamic sessions entitled "Back to Basics" at the Friends of Georgia Libraries third annual fall workshop Nov. 15, 2008, in the Fayetteville Public Library.

Fifty-four attendees listened and also contributed best practices and experiences on such topics as starting a new friends group, revitalizing existing groups, developing effective board members, fund raising tips, advocating for your library, marketing, and public relations, just to name a few.

Ms. Schmidt drew on her considerable experience as a school media center assistant, her lengthy tenure as president of the Little Falls chapter of the Friends of the Library for Montgomery County, Md., and her work as president of the Friends of Libraries USA (FOLUSA).

She encouraged all Georgia friends of library associations to join FOGL to take advantage of the networking opportunities, and she also emphasized the wealth of free resources that can be found at the FOLUSA website: <http://www.folusa.org/>.

The FOGL Board wishes to thank Christeen Snell, Fayette County Library director, for hosting the workshop so graciously and arranging for delicious continental breakfast, lunch and break foods, in cooperation with the Fayette Friends group. 📖

—Contributed by **Dr. Bede Mitchell**, FOGL Board member and Dean, Georgia Southern University Library



**Top:** Workshop leader Susan Schmidt. **Bottom:** Friends share in workshop exercise.



**From left:** FOGL president Wally Eberhard; Fayette Friends president Arlys Farrell; FOGL treasurer Christine Hoskins; Schmidt; Fayette County Library director Christeen Snell.



Friends fill in a chart during one of Schmidt's exercises.

## From the President: Good News in Hard Times



Every Saturday morning at the Wadsworth Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia, patrons gather to protest a planned closing of that branch. The closing of this branch and a dozen others is part of the mayor's plan to balance the budget for his city.

The closing -- and the accompanying protest -- is one of many we've read about across the country as governments search for ways to keep going in hard times.

Those of us who think the library is as important a community asset as streets, sewers and police protection wish public officials would look elsewhere for operating funds. There's plenty of evidence that people turn to libraries in a recession as they rediscover what's inside. The computer terminals and Internet connections are both money savers for all and tools for job seekers. Checking out books on a free library card is an obvious way to trim personal outlays on books.

We have not heard of library closings in Georgia, although the impact of state and local budget cuts is widely felt. There's even some refreshing and reassuring news that speaks to how much the public values community libraries as institutions vital to their everyday lives. We refer to the overwhelming approval of a \$275

million dollar bond issue on Nov. 4 for building and remodeling libraries in the Atlanta-Fulton County system.

The trustees and library professionals who developed the building plans and the campaign to sell it to the public are to be commended. What they achieved will have a positive outcome for years to come. The voters looked at an issue that will raise their taxes for many years. The affirmative vote said they thought the plan was a good one and the need was real, outweighing the tax savings of a "no" vote.

While libraries may not be immune from belt tightening during hard times, the Atlanta vote tells us that it's possible even in a recession to rally support when the need is established. Advocating, in case you haven't heard it before, is a continuing commitment that can pay off for libraries, even when the economy is in trouble.

*Wally Eberhard*  
President, FOGL  
wbe1955@aol.com

## Friends, Volunteers Boost Fulton Bond Referendum

A \$275 million bond referendum was approved by 65 percent of Fulton County voters on Nov. 4, 2008, for new, expanded and renovated libraries in the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System. Volunteers and Friends organized a "Vote Yes for Libraries" campaign and worked throughout the county for passage of the referendum. Despite a gloomy economic outlook, voters resoundingly supported a master facility plan which includes eight new libraries, two expanded libraries and renovation of 23 libraries and funding for a new Central Library to be matched by private funds.

Jay Higginbotham of the Friends of the Central Library said, "Passage of this referendum is a victory for the entire community. Our current facilities will get improvements that are badly needed and service will be provided in underserved areas. The demand for library system services continues to grow and an excellent plan exists to improve our libraries for decades to come."

"This is a tremendous day for the children of Fulton County, particularly those served by severely inadequate facilities or no facilities at all," said library director John Szabo. "The yes vote is proof of the value that people place on their public libraries and their understanding of what libraries provide, especially in challenging economic times." 📖



## Georgia Friends Roundup: Best Sellers and Book Nooks

Georgia's Friends continue to support their libraries in ways small and large, showing special commitment during a period of strained and slashed budgets. Here's a roundup of some of those activities.

- 📖 **MACON:** Friends of the Macon-Bibb County Libraries presented a check for \$50,000 to a new branch, the Charles A. Lanford M.D. Library. They've committed to supporting area libraries during the budget crisis.
- 📖 **ATLANTA-FULTON COUNTY:** Gifts of more than \$150,000 have been donated by 22 Friends groups in the past year.
- 📖 **HART COUNTY:** The Friends group has committed to paying the cost of buying the *New York Times* top 10 fiction and nonfiction books each month.
- 📖 **SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL LIBRARY:** Friends gave \$8,000 so far in 2008, including a \$1,000 for each branch and \$3,000 for the main library. The gift of \$1,000 is providing 28 percent for one branch library's operating budget.
- 📖 **EAST POINT:** Author visits, cultural programs and receptions are being kept alive by a \$5,000 gift from the Friends group there.
- 📖 **CALHOUN-GORDON:** Library officials thanked the Friends for their continuing role in maintaining a successful library, including the opening of a "Book Nook" storefront annex in downtown Calhoun.
- 📖 **TOWNS COUNTY:** A gift of \$5,000 from Friends of Towns County helped make up for cuts in the materials budget with money raised from book and bake sales.
- 📖 **CHATTAHOOTCHEE VALLEY LIBRARIES:** Friends gave \$25,000 toward the cost of the Mildred Terry Branch Library construction, in addition to \$35,000 for programming and support for recognition events and staff service days.
- 📖 **HALL COUNTY:** More than \$50,000 was raised by Friends for a new branch library as well as sponsoring staff travel, children's programs and scholarship money for an MLS student.

Did we miss the contributions of your Friends group? Apologies. Please send or resend to Halley Little,

## Macon Friends, Junior League Join for Holiday Bazaar

In an effort to increase community awareness and to raise needed funds, the Friends of the Macon-Bibb County Library participated in the local Junior League's annual Christmas Bazaar. When Macon's Barnes & Noble moved to a new location, the store donated a portion of its new books to the Friends. The group decided to utilize the windfall donation by renting a booth at the popular annual bazaar. The Friends worked at the booth during the three-day event, encouraged shoppers to join the Friends and managed to make a profit.



At Macon Friends Yule party: From left: Dr. Charles and Mrs. Shirley Lanford, who donated land for a new branch library, and Mr. and Mrs. George Skene.

The Macon-Bibb County Friends is committed to serving the community in ways beyond its successful Old Book Sale now in its 42nd year. The group is looking to offer more opportunities for the members to have fun. This year the Friends held a Christmas Party for the members at the new Charles A. Lanford M.D. Library, which opened in June. Along with refreshments and conversation, the members had the chance to purchase

## Mark Your Calendar...

...for two important dates in 2009 for Georgia's libraries and their Friends.

- 📖 **Thursday, February 26** is Library Day at the State Capital. Friends, trustees and library professionals will gather to speak with their legislators and hear updates.
- 📖 **Friday, April 17** is the date for the annual meeting of Friends of Georgia Libraries. Warner Robins will be the host city. Several Board of Directors slots will be filled at the meeting. The program will include a keynote speaker and panels useful for Friends groups.

Note: If you're interested in being a candidate for board vacancies, please contact FOGL vice president Elaine Yontz, [eyontz@valdosta.edu](mailto:eyontz@valdosta.edu). 📖



## Yes, I want to join Friends of Georgia Libraries!

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_ cell \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Categories of Membership

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Individual (\$10)   | \$ _____        |
| Local Friends Group (\$50)<br><i>(provides benefits for up to five local Friends members)</i> | \$ _____        |
| Other Organization (\$100)  | \$ _____        |
| Sustaining Member (\$500)   | \$ _____        |
| Additional Gift   | \$ _____        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$ _____</b> |

*Friends of Georgia Libraries, Inc. keeps all personal information private and does not share members' phone numbers, mailing addresses or e-mail addresses with third parties.*

Make check payable to: **FOGL**

Mail payment and membership form to: **Friends of Georgia Libraries (FOGL)**  
 c/o Christine Hoskins  
 112 Willow Creek  
 Bonaire, GA 31005

# FOGL

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