

Helping build stronger Georgia communities through stronger Georgia libraries

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**Our Mission**

To create an informed statewide voice for Georgia's libraries through a grassroots network of citizens who communicate the value of libraries as essential community services

To strengthen the ability of local Friends organizations to support their libraries

# BETWEEN FRIENDS

## Spring Workshop Recap:

### Where Do We Go from Here?

Miss the FOGL spring workshop on fundraising and other ideas? Wish you'd taken more notes? Happy to help! Here's a recap of our great sessions. Thanks to all our presenters!

#### Thinking about Starting Your Own Friends Bookstore? Start Here.

The Cumming Library, part of the Forsyth system, hosted this year's FOGL Spring Workshop. The choice, in part, was made so we could tour the recently opened Friends Bookstore. Key Friend and bookstore manager, Siegrid Myers, shared the lessons she's learned in the start-up and first few months of operation."

"We thought about it for a long time," offered Siegrid. "Everything was too expensive until the library found two rooms that weren't in use." The results? While it's still early, in the first month the Bookstore raised \$1100.

#### Staffing the bookstore

Store is open any time library is open. They have over 30 volunteers who each work 2-hour timeslots. Everyone is a volunteer; there are no paid positions. "The best thing," says Siegrid, "was finding that there were enough people who wanted to volunteer. A lot of people are very willing to give a couple of hours a week."

So far volunteers are a mix of Friends and others. Being a Friend is not required, but they're hoping it may entice people to join. Friends membership doesn't come with any bookstore benefits –discounts, etc.



Virginia Hale (Hall County FoL) and Siegrid Myers (Forsyth FoL) discuss during fundraiser forum.

## Thinking about Starting Your Own Friends Bookstore? Start Here...con't.

### Getting donations

The used books come from library and donations from the public. On the Cumming Friends website they offer to pick up donated books. An audience member



suggested their Friends have a dropbox near the reference desk to gather donations. In addition to the fully stocked bookstore, the Cumming Friends have 23 boxes of books in a storage unit paid for by the Friends.

A question arose about the library donating discarded books to the Friends. One person had heard that libraries had to advertise that they were discarding books. The response from a library director was that once a book is marked "discarded" it can be given to the Friends. In another county they've been told that the library can't capture sales from discarded books; they would be benefitting from county money. Another person volunteered that she thought the law has changed. A show of hands in the room suggested that most can donate their books, though some can't. It would be best to review the law and policy before undertaking a bookstore.

### Pricing and Promotion

Cumming did research at local used bookstores and raised the prices from what they'd been charging at book sales. Hardbacks are \$2, paperbacks are \$1.

Cumming's Friends have a Publicity Committee. The committee has been getting feature articles in the local paper. The bookstore is also promoted on the library website, and signs are up in the library. So far, they are not advertising the store, though it's a possibility in the future.

### Traditional Book Sales

In the past, the Friends have held two book sales a year. They will hold the regular sale in November and see if the bookstore affects sales or book supplies, then adjust if need be. The book sale discussion triggered a discussion of people who bring scanners to the book sales to find books they can sell for a higher price on Amazon or other online sites. One group said these buyers show the Friends the online prices and pay them a percentage of it, rather than the regular price. Cumming charges a "business rate" of \$50 to anyone who wants to bring in a scanner. Someone asked if a Friends group could benefit by buying a scanner and selling books themselves. The Cumming librarian said they'd



looked into it, but that the rigid handling rules of Amazon makes it a lot of work for the money. To get the most value for their books, some Friends have worked out a relationship with a book buyer who checks them before the sale. Other groups rely on a librarian or a Friends doing research and have a bookseller or member offer more valuable books on eBay or Amazon.

## Mystery Dinner Theater Fundraiser

Friends of the Hall County Library recently held their second Mystery Dinner Theater and silent auction fundraiser in April and Virginia Hale and



another member of the event committee shared their insights.

In Year One they had just one performance and made about \$500. There was a lot of set-up for the money, so in Year Two they decided two performances would raise more money without being significantly more work. They also added a silent auction. Total proceeds raised from the two performances was \$2,000 from tickets and food. Silent auction items sold totaled \$2,000.

### The logistics

They held the event at the library and held a buffet instead of a sit-down dinner to save money. Guests seem to like it.

They had the meal catered because an excellent meal is part of the experience, though they handled coffee and tea themselves.

The event was BYOB. Note: the City Council and library board had to approve the alcohol. To add to the mood, they picked up the Mardi Gras theme of their play in food and décor.

The person who sells the tickets and keeps up with seating arrangements is crucial. People usually come as groups that want to sit together. Be prepared to accept cash, check and credit cards.

### Pricing and Promotion

Dinner tickets were \$35. They may go to a

higher price since the event sold out before tickets went on public sale. They sold tickets only by phone, not online.

To promote the event, they sent out a Friends eblast. Information also went out in the library's monthly email to library cardholders.

### The silent auction

It's always hard work obtaining donations; every organization approached offered a contribution. They suggest starting early; large companies may need approval from corporate offices. They tried to get one-of-a-kind items: local sports celebrity Phil Neikro gave an autographed book and ball.

They recommend having the auction and food in the same room to promote shopping. A card to represent "invisible" items, like tickets or gift cards, was used to draw attention. They also advise setting minimum and incremental minimum bid level to maximize the fundraising.

### The show

The script and plan for the play was purchased from a website called LibraryMysteries.com (<http://librarymysteries.com>), which has a library of plays that come with a complete kit of items for success, from director's instructions to audience handouts. The cost was \$75 and it includes everything you need and advice.

Kavish suggests 40 attendees and breaking up the group into teams to solve the mystery. Hall County decided they could handle 60.

Cumming's play required 10 cast members and 10 assistants. They found local celebrities and notables to be the actors, which helped to bring in a crowd. Getting people willing to commit the time isn't easy and they would not attempt to do a third night.

The director is the glue for the play. Last year they hired someone, but this year a committed volunteer was actually more effective.



### Using a video monitor to promote library events and sponsors

Claudia Gibson and Stacy Landhardt from the Dawson County Library shared the way they add visual impact to library messages with a video monitor at their circulation desk. They paired a donated laptop running the program PowerPoint with a \$300 monitor from Wal-Mart. Messages -- from "silence cell phones" to information on upcoming events -- are easily created in PowerPoint and show on a rotating loop. They noted that the screen can be wall-mounted or desk-mounted, and the system can be run wirelessly or via a simple USB connector. Some advantages of the system include:

Messages attract more patron attention

Savings on paper for multiple flyers and posters

There was also a discussion of using the screen as a very public way of thanking -- and attracting -- sponsor for library or Friends events.

To find out more, contact Stacy Leonhardt, Dawson County Library Brand Manager in Dawsonville, at 706-344-3690 x21, or [sleonhardt@chestateelibrary.org](mailto:sleonhardt@chestateelibrary.org).

### The Library Man, The FREE Song the launches your library video

Kathy Ash, FOGL president, participated in an ACCG study committee sponsored by GPLS and saw an impressive video of what's going on in libraries around the state. Then her county commissioner said that a tool like that could help him get more library funding from the commission. Kathy talked it over with Alan Harkness, FOGL's liaison with Georgia Public Library Services, got to work.



Ernie Graham, *The Library Man* author

She then asked a musician friend, Ernie Graham and the Stem Winder, to write a song. The LibraryMan became a reality, and a soundtrack for the Winder video. See it at <http://www.georgia-friends.org/node/52>. Edited on iMovie, it includes great images of Winder events, patrons and staff.

#### Now, you can use that same great song FREE!

FOGL member Friends groups are welcome to use the song to make their own video for their libraries! One request: insert the musician photos at the end, and use ending credits. Ernie gave us a great gift, and it's a small token on our part to mention him in the credits. .

#### Show the human side of your library.

Kathy explained that the power of the video is the human element. They included lots of kids and fun events. They have a pictures of a giant PINES card, their Geek the Library promotional materials, authors events,

readings, and local celebrities. She mentioned that Winder's piece was "a splash piece" to create impact, but it could also include statistics and other hard facts.

If you have questions about downloading the piece or how the movie was made, contact George Tuttle, Computer Services Librarian, Piedmont Regional Library System, 770-867-2762, [gtuttle@prlib.org](mailto:gtuttle@prlib.org).

## National Library Legislative Day 2012 The Georgia Delegation Goes to Washington

Lynn Lilly, a FOGL board member from Statesboro, accompanied Lamar Veatch, State Librarian for the Georgia Public Library Services, to National Library Legislative Day, a campaign by the American Library Association, April 23-24, 2012. Day One of the event was an information and training session with some 200 librarians and volunteers from across the country. On Day Two, each state delegation took to Capitol Hill to meet with their state's legislators. Lynn and Lamar met with Senators Johnny Isakson and Saxby Chambliss, as well as six members of the House of Representatives. Lynn provides this report.



### Top Ten Takeaways from National Library Legislative Day Three things that worried me

1. Even the Capitol Hill staffers admitted that all kinds of funding is at standstill do to a contentious Congress. Last minute bills, the possibilities of shutdowns, the shadow of automatic funding cuts puts libraries at risk.
2. The halls of Congress are crowded with lobbyists – but not those representing libraries
3. Libraries are not top of mind in any of the budget talks

### Three things that made me feel better

1. Legislators understand – at least to some extent – the importance of libraries
2. They now library lovers vote. An invitation to do an event at a library – from a town hall to reading to children – met with bright eyes.
3. It's easier than I ever imagined to be heard. We were welcomed and people took note of our message. We simply need to raise more voices.



Lamar Veatch, Brandon Webb of Congressman John Barrow's staff and Lynn Lilly.

### Three things we all need to do.

1. Don't be afraid of the word "advocacy." Simply speak your part to people you helped to elect – via phone call, email or letter.
2. Visit [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org), the American Library Association's website, and click on "Advocacy and Issues" There you'll always find creative ideas – like They even have a place where you can enter your zip code and see the federal and state issues that need attention, as well as a link to your all your legislators' contact information.

3. Focus the message in terms that matter to legislators – libraries as a driver of education and jobs, through resources, programs for youth and adults, perhaps the only free internet access in a region.

### One thing I'll be doing

1. I intend to "practice what I'm preaching" – stay informed, speak up, and engage my community in the same. That means FOGL will be bringing you more updates and ideas!

## First FOGL Author Grants awarded

FOGL Board Member Claudia Gibson presented the organization's first two \$500 Author Appearance Grants. This year's winners are Friends of the Winder Library (Piedmont Regional) and The Friends of the Nancy Guinn Library (Conyers Rockdale). That's right, the judges found them both to be excellent – so both groups will receive a \$500 grant.

**Applications for 2013 Author Grants will be accepted beginning in the Fall.  
Keep watching and start planning!**



### Luncheon Author Speaker: Thomas Thibeault,

Thomas Thibeault, author of *Balto's Nose* shared his story of Glenn Carnehan, one of the "Monuments Men" who helped track down artworks stolen by the Nazis during World War II. In the book, Carnehan relates the experiences which changed his life to his Grandson, Michael, in modern day New York, so that Michael will change his attitude towards his own family -- and rescue his own life.

### Yes, I want to join/renew membership in Friends of Georgia Libraries!

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

#### Categories of Membership

Individual (\$10)	\$ _____
Local Friends Group (\$50) <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:

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