FKL @ KPLA

Friends of Kentucky Libraries President MaryLynn Collins presented grants of $200 each to two Sister Library Projects: one to the McLean County/Campbell County partnership and the other to the Carter County/Kenton County project during the conference Awards Luncheon.

The funds awarded to the Carter County and Kenton County partnership will be used for a two-day summit to strategically plan a course of action in the area of program development for the Carter County Public Library.

The funds awarded to the McLean County and Campbell County partnership will be used to fund a staff exchange. The McLean County Public Library director will travel to the Campbell County library, meet with the staff there, observe library operations, and take back to McLean ideas for improving the McLean Library operations.

FKL presented a program at the KPLA Conference on the Legislative Meet & Greets, unveiling a new initiative in 2013. This October, rather than conduct the face time with legislators and local officials in multi-county Senate Districts, FKL is organizing these events on a county level.

The past has consistently shown that attendance by library patrons is significantly higher in the hosting county, so in an effort to bring more library users into the conversation supporting libraries, a more focused approach is being promoted. Once again, FKL will provide detailed instructions, templates for signs and bookmarks to promote the events, sample letters, invitations, and press releases, along with address labels for state legislators. Counties will be urged to include local officials of their own choosing as well.

This is an excellent opportunity for library supporters to mingle with the decision-makers in their communities, making sure these officials realize that libraries are important to them. A wonderful way to advocate at the most local level.
Friends of Paul Sawyier Provide Library Van

After evaluating the community, the Paul Sawyier Public Library saw there were many children unable to come to the Library and decided an outreach van could bring the library to them. They submitted a proposal to their Friends in 2009 with the idea of purchasing a youth services van to be ready for Summer Reading 2010. The Friends approved $27,000, but the library was able to strike a deal with their local Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep dealership in Frankfort for a 2010 Grand Caravan for $19,999. It was bought on March 25, 2010, the colorful, eye-catching wrap added for an additional $2,890, and once stocked with books, it was ready to roll in time for the Summer Reading Program of 2010.

In the words of Sarah Whitworth, Youth Services Outreach Librarian: Driving the outreach van, with its attention-getting exterior, always garners interesting looks from others as I drive around Franklin County. I receive many questions regarding the van and the services we offer—both outreach services and library services. The services we provide on the van are aimed at children who don’t or can’t come to the library and know the joys of a great story well told.

We offer services to all ages of children. Last summer, we provided programming at a local elementary school as part of their childcare program. We have provided library services to a local elementary school. While they have a very nice library and strong collection of books, we have supplemented those services. One group of high school students that we serve regularly are those students at our alternative high school. These students have a broad range of backgrounds and their school does not have a lending library. The first service we always offer is a library card. When these students first received their library cards they were overwhelmed. One student asked (with a look of astonishment on her face), do you mean I can get books for free? My response was “Yes, books for free” She beamed!

FKL Sends Delegate To National Library Legislative Day

This year, for the first time, Friends of Kentucky Libraries sent a delegate to Washington DC to visit with Kentucky’s federal legislators during National Library Legislative Day on May 7-8. Lance Ferris (Muhlenberg County), Past President and charter board member, joined other library delegates to discuss the importance of adequate funding for libraries of all kinds as Congress continues to make cuts that impact them.

Library supporters back home were urged to contact their Senators and Representative by calling or emailing as part of the Virtual Library Legislative Day, although it was not limited to the same time frame. All month long library advocates can let their legislators know just how important our libraries are to the communities they serve. From helping the unemployed find jobs; to teaching students the digital skills they need to be career and college ready; to helping Americans get access to the information they need to be engaged citizens; libraries do it all.
Friends of Mary Wood Weldon Library Host Tech Exhibit
Joy Stryzek, President of FOMMWL

The Friends of the Mary Wood Weldon Memorial Library were very busy this January and February volunteering to help with the eight week Discover Tech Exhibit: Engineers Make a World of Difference. This exciting new exhibit for libraries introduced the public to the role of engineers in our lives. Eight libraries in the nation were selected for this tour. The exhibit targets communities that do not offer this type of learning opportunity.

The role of the Friends was to aid in the set up and dismantling of the 10 hands-on exhibits which consisted of 9 crates, some weighing close to 1,000 pounds. It took three of our members two full days to complete the effort and we thank them for their exhausting work.

The other role of Friends was to participate in a workshop for the K-2nd grade classes from the various schools who attended. For example, Joy Stryzek, with help from David Stryzek, developed a Wind Turbine workshop where students learned about wind and wind turbines and then tested different configurations of propellers to see which would produce the most electricity. The turbines were made out of PVC pipe, cereal box cardboard, and plastic from milk jugs. The students monitored the electrical output using volt meters.

There were 7 different work stations monitored by FOL members. These workshops were scheduled for 2 - 3 a week, with some being both morning and afternoon and lasting an hour and a half each time. This took extreme dedication from the FOL members since these workshops went on for 6 weeks.

When Discover Tech arrived it was time to develop displays concerning programs that were scheduled. Examples were: the pictorial history of the Barren River Dam; what is a transportation engineer; the making of the Corvette, including a real console from a corvette signed by the leading engineer; and how wind turbines and solar cells bring electricity to your house.

With Discover Tech gone and time to rest up from our hectic hours, the FOL is still smiling over the fact that we were able to touch the lives of about 500 children by introducing them to the library as a place where they can have fun learning and they are appreciated.

We believe our Friends of the Library have planted seeds in these children that will ultimately grow into future lovers of the library. And isn’t that what Friends of the Library do? We advocate for our library in as many ways as possible.

“Some of the comments we heard from the children:

The library is an awesome place!
I want to stay here forever!
I never knew the library could be fun!
I am going to bring my parents to the library!
I have never been to the library before this is fun.”
New Director Elected to FKL Board

Friends of Kentucky Libraries Board of Directors has elected Linda Hitchcock, Glasgow, to the Board of Directors for a term to expire in 2015. Linda is actively involved with the Friends of the Warren County Public Library.

Useful Tools for Friends

Even More Great Ideas for Libraries and Friends
by Sally Gardner Reed and Beth Nawalinsk

The first edition of this breakthrough book was a huge success, so FOLUSA (Friends of Libraries U.S.A.) collected 101+ more terrific ideas and best practices to help you and your team connect with your community with Even More Great Ideas for Libraries and Friends. Following an introduction which sets the stage for effective library/community partnerships, you'll discover ideas for innovative programs, successful fundraising, strategic advocacy, powerful public relations, memorable membership campaigns, and more. As in the first book, each idea is presented with practical instructions, graphics, and implementation tools so you can adapt these programs successfully and creatively to match your library’s specific needs and opportunities.

United for Libraries personal and group members may purchase the book for $40 plus $4.95 shipping & handling. All others may purchase from Neal-Schuman Publishers at the list price of $74.95 plus $9.00 shipping & handling. To place an order: United for Libraries personal and group members may order by phone with a credit card or can print and mail the order form with payment. To request an invoice, please contact the United for Libraries office at (800) 545-2433, ext. 2161, e-mail united@ala.org, or complete and fax or mail the order form checking off the box for ”Please invoice me.” Payment must be received before the book is mailed. To pay by credit card, please call the United for Libraries office at (800) 545-2433, ext. 2161.

Making Our Voices Heard: Citizens Speak Out for Libraries
by Sally Gardner Reed and Beth Nawalinsk

Thanks to a grant from the American Library Association, FOLUSA published a highly usable how-to-do-it guide on library advocacy for Friends called Making Our Voices Heard: Citizens Speak Out for Libraries. Published in CD-ROM format with an accompanying workbook, this guide will take you and your group through the advocacy process step-by-step. The CD will tell you how to engage in advocacy for your local library and the workbook will allow you to design your own plan for action. United for Libraries personal and group members may receive a downloadable version of this publication free of charge by accessing the Friends & Foundations Zone or the Trustee Zone. A limited supply of hard copies is available for purchase. The member price to purchase is $20 plus $2 shipping. The non-member price is $30 plus $2 shipping. Please contact the United for Libraries office at (800) 545-2433, ext 2161 or by e-mail at united@ala.org to order.