



Friends CONNECT

www.FriendsKyLibraries.org

**FRIENDS OF
KENTUCKY
LIBRARIES, INC**

**P O BOX 537
FRANKFORT
KENTUCKY**

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Our Mission:

- to advocate for public libraries on the local, state, and national level;
- to provide support for the formation and success of local Friends chapters.

FKL Awards Establishment Grants

Friends of Kentucky Libraries offers non-competitive grants to newly formed local Friends chapters in the amount of \$400. This is to help defray the cost of fees incurred when a chapter seeks 501(c)(3) tax exempt status with the IRS.

These grants are reimbursing ones, meaning the applying chapter must show written approval from the IRS to qualify. However, as they are non-competitive, meeting the requirements is all that is necessary to receive the grant. The other requirements are:

- IRS status gained within the past six months
- the chapter supports a Kentucky public library
- the chapter is a member of Friends of Kentucky Libraries, Inc.



FKL Board Member Nelda Moore presented check to the Friends of the LaRue County Public Library. Left to right: Kent Black, Linda Simmons, Ruth Ann Brown, Lynn Claycomb, Rita Smith, Judy Bridges, Annetta Rafferty, Dana Jolly, Judy Greenwell, and Joe Jolly.

FKL encourages those chapters that have not applied for 501(c)(3) status to consider doing so. It allows individuals and businesses to contribute to your organization and count that contribution as a charitable donation exemption on their tax forms. That can be a big plus in your fund-raising efforts.

To date the following Friends chapters have received establishment grants from FKL:

- * Muhlenberg County Public Library Friends
- * Friends of the Oldham County Public Library
- * Friends of the Henry County Library
- * Friends of the Carter County Public Library
- * Friends of the LaRue County Public Library

As membership in the Friends of Kentucky Libraries is required for consideration for the grant, if you have not yet joined FKL, you may submit your membership application along with the grant application. The membership application can be found at www.FriendsKyLibraries.org.

Grant applications may be found at [grant application](#) and mailed to Friends of Kentucky Libraries, Inc., P O Box 537, Frankfort, KY 40602-0537.

Libraries, Friends, and Lawsuits

Like the rest of our library community, the Friends of Kentucky Libraries are concerned about recent tax-related lawsuits filed against public libraries.

As of this date, lawsuits have been filed by attorney Brandon Voelker against the Anderson County Public Library, Boone County Public Library, Montgomery County Public Library, Campbell County Public Library, and Kenton County Public Library.

At the heart of the lawsuits are conflicting statutes concerning how rates should be set by library districts. Since the 1979 enactment of legislation commonly known as House Bill (HB) 44 and based on opinions of two attorneys general, library taxing districts have carefully followed the HB 44 restrictions.

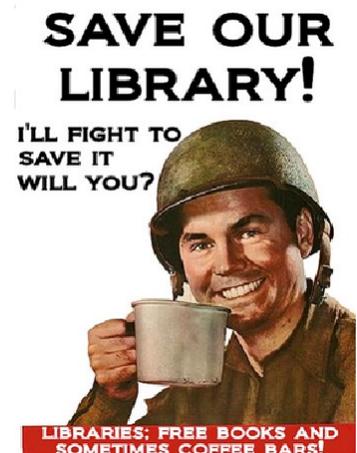
The plaintiffs in these lawsuits, however, contend that library taxing districts are not under HB 44 and can only increase taxes by petition or by ballot. In April of this year, the courts found in favor of the plaintiffs in both the Kenton and Campbell County cases. Those cases are now under appeal.

A final ruling on these cases could affect as many as 99 libraries in this state and in the case of a negative ruling, the outlook is bleak. A negative final ruling could require affected libraries to roll back their tax rates to 1979 or to the date of their last petition. Most of the affected counties could face a 60 to 80% reduction in tax revenue. In almost every case, library services would be drastically reduced. Most libraries would reduce hours and staff; others might be forced to close one or more of their branch libraries; many would be forced to take bookmobiles and outreach vehicles off the road; and in some cases, a local library might have to close its doors altogether.

This is the **single most critical issue** within the library community since the Friends of Kentucky Libraries was established five years ago and the Friends are devoting much of their time, energy, and resources to fighting this battle on several fronts. We have hired legal counsel to work with the Kentucky Public Library Association on an amicus brief to be filed with the Kentucky Court of Appeals in the Kenton and Campbell counties lawsuits.

We are also working closely with the Kentucky Public Library Association's Advocacy Committee and will keep you involved in our efforts, which may include seeking action by the General Assembly. In the meantime, we urge you to keep reminding folks of the great programs and services provided by your public library every day—and how important the library is to your community. Be an advocate for your library, and by extension, for all our libraries every day in every way you can.

Note: See page 4 of this newsletter for preliminary information about Friends of Kentucky Libraries' Annual Meeting on November 16, 2013 in Frankfort. Learn the latest news on the library lawsuits and more about how you can help in the fight for our libraries.



October Means Legislative Meet & Greet Time

Advocate Every Day!



Yes, of course Friends should advocate for libraries every day, every chance they get to do so, but come October of each year, there's a special opportunity to let your state and local officials know how important all libraries are—and yours particularly. It's the Legislative Meet & Greet facilitated by Friends of Kentucky Libraries.

For the past three years, the M&Gs have been multi-county events, grouped by Senate Districts, but the weakness in this plan has been getting library patrons to travel beyond their home county. So, this year we are introducing single county M&Gs statewide. This means everyone can have an event convenient to their customers, but it also means your legislators will be spread among all the counties they represent. It is doubtful Houdini could manage the scheduling, so FKL will offer only this advice: the earlier you contact your state legislators, the better your chances of getting a date that works well for you. It's a version of the old "early bird gets the worm" philosophy.

Speaking of dates, FKL is asking that these be done in October, so you have 31 days to choose among. When is totally a local decision: some have morning coffees, others afternoon teas, but most are after work hours. Experience has shown that one hour is sufficient and anything longer is usually counter-productive. Your patrons come expecting to see their legislators and keeping said officials there for longer than 60 minutes is difficult. Plus, a little communication between or among counties that share a senator or representative to see if two in one day will work, might be worthwhile.

What do you do at the Meet & Greet? Let your supporters (aka patrons) mingle with the legislators and other officials. Speeches aren't necessary, but if you do want to have people speak, be sure to offer this to all of them and, if you have several, consider time limits. You might think of it as a cocktail party without cocktails and forego any speeches beyond a welcome from the library board or Friends president. You might wish to provide your frequent and loyal patrons with a few facts, but mostly we want them to just tell, in their own words, why their library is important to them and their community. Even if they don't want to speak up, just being there shows their support. And the bottom line is, we want legislators and local officials to know how much their public library is valued by the public.

As we have done in all the previous years, FKL will offer suggestions for planning your event, will provide sample letters of invitation, thank you letters, mailing labels for state legislators, a checklist of local officials to consider, templates for signs and bookmarks advertising your event, and encouragement every step of the way. Over 40 libraries have hosted previously and can offer advice as well.

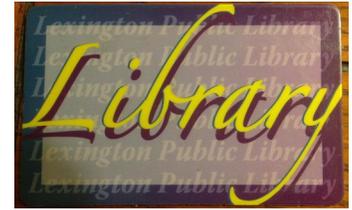
It doesn't have to be an extravagant affair. Coffee, store-bought cookies, lemonade or soft drinks are plenty. And what a great project for the Friends of the Library to undertake so the staff doesn't have any extra burdens put on them. But, if your library doesn't have a formal Friends chapter, don't let that stop you from participating. Volunteers have done it in other libraries and some boards have undertaken the task. The important thing is to provide your supporters and the decision makers some face-to-face time to talk library.

“What we need most of all is simply for every library to get its supporters there.”

From our Facebook page...

...and worth sharing again:

It should be on every student's list of school supplies. It is FREE but oh so valuable: a Public Library Card! Feel free to take a photo of your library's card and use this slogan for local promotion. And check out our facebook page for more great ideas—search for Friends of Kentucky Libraries. Be sure to “Like” us while there.



FKL Annual Meeting & Awards

Mark your calendars and save the date. November 16, 2013 will be a great day for library lovers in Kentucky. Not only will there be the annual Kentucky Book Fair in Frankfort, but Friends of Kentucky Libraries has moved its Annual Membership Meeting to the same date and location. FKL will host two workshops, one before lunch and one after. The business meeting will be during lunch and will feature keynote speaker, George Ella Lyons, celebrated Kentucky author of children's books and poetry for all ages, along with the awards presentation for Outstanding Friends Chapter and Outstanding Friend (individual). Nominations are solicited from the membership and forms can be found at www.FriendsKyLibraries.org. Deadline is October 15, 2013.

Full details about the workshops and lunch registration will be posted on our website, facebook, and through the various e-discussion lists.



Useful Tools for Friends

If your Friends chapter is a member of United For Libraries, a division of the American Library Association (ALA), you can access several toolkits free of charge. You can download them as PDFs and save them for future use. Current titles available are:

- Starting a Friends Group or Revitalizing the One You Have
- Friends and Libraries: Working Effectively Together
- Incorporating and Tax Exempting Procedures for Friends
- Expanded Model Friends' Cooperative Network
- How to Sell Books on the Internet: Online Book Seller Tells All
- Selecting, Cataloging, and Pricing Books for Online Sales
- **NEW!!!** Tapping Into the Biggest and Most Active Group of Volunteers in Town - The Baby Boomers

The toolkit on getting Baby Boomers involved, for example, covers such topics as why we need new active members and how they differ from traditional ones, along with the nuts and bolts of recruiting and retaining older volunteers. According to David Eisner, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service, “American's baby boomers are an untapped resources of extraordinary proportions. They are the largest, healthiest, best-educated generation in history—and they can leave an incredible legacy through service to others.”

FriendsCONNECT is published four times a year by the Friends of Kentucky Libraries, Inc.

For membership information, visit www.FriendsKyLibraries.org.

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