

friends of kansas LIBRARIES

Assist - Support - Educate

FoKL POINT Newsletter — January 2025



JOIN US ON ZOOM TO DISCUSS

GRANTS FOR FRIENDS GROUPS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7
9 AM CENTRAL

Join the Zoom meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88484969231>

KLA Legislative Day

KLA invites all library staff, trustees, and friends of libraries in Kansas to join them on **Tuesday, January 28th** for Legislative Day in Topeka at the Kansas Statehouse. It is organized as an all-day – come and go as needed – type of event.

Visit the KLA Event page [here](#) for suggestions on scheduling appointments, sample emails, and more.

And whether you attend or not, KLA's list of talking points will be useful to all library advocates as positive ways to ask legislators and others to support libraries and to protect Kansans' intellectual freedoms. [Download the talking points here.](#)



So Many Good Reasons to Join!

You are invited to join FoKL and connect with a community of hands-on library advocates from [across](#) the state. Your FoKL membership helps you:

- **Increase your impact** with access to Challenge Grants of up to \$500 matching funds for special library projects.
- **Shine a light on your successes** through our annual Outstanding Individual and Group awards.
- **Gain expert advice** with guidance from our experienced board.
- **Stay connected** by engaging with fellow library advocates through FoKL's newsletter and interactive "First Friday with Friends" events on Zoom, where successful programs and innovative ideas are shared.

Your dues also support start-up grants to help establish new Friends groups.

Memberships are available to Friends groups, Libraries, Foundations, and individuals. Watch your mailbox for your renewal membership letter. New to FoKL? Find sign up forms at www.fokl.net.

In this issue: • First Friday • Membership Drive • Focus on Friends • And More!

The Upside of Friends Membership



Our January 3 *First Friday with Friends* event was an interesting and in-depth conversation about the benefits of Friends membership. Whether you are a volunteer, library director or staff, trustee, foundation board member, or a member of the community, it is a powerful advantage to your library (public, school, or academic) to have a Friends group. “Volunteers can be essential to the success of a library,” one participant said. Below is a summary of ideas that came to light. Watch a recording of the full Zoom event at [this link](#).

Benefits to Friends members:

- Many Friends groups offer incentives for joining, including early-bird access to book sales, book sale discounts, fine forgiveness, Friends newsletter subscription, and membership incentives such as a book bag or other gift.
- Joining the Friends brings the satisfaction of contributing to something bigger than oneself that benefits the entire community.

Benefits to Friends volunteers:

- The opportunity to learn more about how the library works. Working alongside the director and staff, Friends volunteers have an inside track to learn about collection development, book challenges, budgets, and more. This in turn strengthens the volunteers in their role as library advocates. See “Further Thoughts on Advocacy” on page 3 for more from this part of the First Friday discussion.
- Volunteers have the pleasure of working with like-minded people who are passionate about the importance of libraries.
- Members bring their own unique skill sets (technology, graphic design, organizing and setting up book sales, gardening, cooking) and appreciate the good feeling that comes from being a part of a bigger, successful endeavor.

Benefits to the Library and the Community:

- A Friends group adds direct value to a library by providing financial support for summer reading, author visits, book clubs, exhibits, and other library programs.
- Friends are willing to volunteer at library events, and can also plan and carry out their own innovative programs.
- Having a diverse group of volunteers expands the library’s network of connections and provides new opportunities for both collaborative projects and links to new donors. By representing multiple perspectives from the community, Friends can also help provide insights and ideas for services that cater to a wider range of ages and interest areas.
- The more Friends you have, the more positive “word of mouth” the library receives in the community — a kind of marketing/promotion that can’t be bought.
- Because Friends groups tend to be stable over time, they can help provide continuity between staff and/or trustee changes. The Friends are rooted in the history of the library but also supportive of progressive updates.

Everyone needs Friends!

[Find information about starting a Friends group on the FoKL website.](#)

Tonganoxie Expands Book Sale



The Tonganoxie Library has created a nice new space for an ongoing book sale within the Library. The new setup is located in the Adult Lounge section of the Library, and sports eight full bookcases of books and audiobooks for sale for just \$1.

The librarians said, "We always get asked when the next book sale will be, but we decided to do something a little more permanent. Welcome to our new little book store!"

2025 FoKL Board

Officers

President: Judy Burgess, Manhattan
Vice President: Linda Knupp, Wamego
Secretary: Cheryl Sylvester, Perry
Treasurer: Diana Weaver, Lawrence
Past President: Barbara Mathews, Eudora

Regional Trustees

CKLS: Janet Schmidt, Salina
NEKLS: Open for nominations
NCKLS: Open for nominations
SCKLS: Christy Molzen, North Newton
SWKLS: Open for nominations
SEKLS: Marilyn Von Soosten, Girard
NWKLS: Open for nominations

Trustees at Large

#1 Carolyn Little, Topeka
#2 Cindy Lightle, Hays
#3 Open for nominations
#4 Open for nominations
#5 Susan Bryant, Robinson
#6 Open for nominations

Further Thoughts on Advocacy

Our recent *First Friday* discussion naturally led to the topic of the role of Friends members as advocates on behalf of the library. While advocacy may not come naturally to all of us, a good place to start thinking about how you will talk to others about the library is to think about which of the **E's** of library service are most important to you.

Employment - Computers/internet for job search, resume services, classes that teach technology skills, meeting rooms for interviews, and online learning platforms for example.

Education - Books, journals, online databases and research tools, computers and internet access, summer reading programs, book clubs, reading challenges, early literacy programs.

Engagement - social programs such as exercise classes, crafts, book clubs, movie nights, game events, story time.

Entertainment - Books, movies, and all of the above!

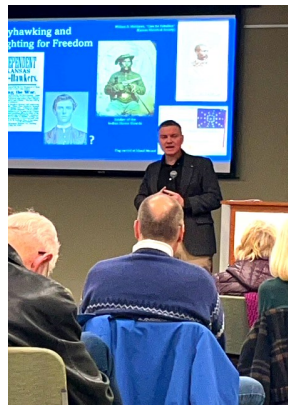
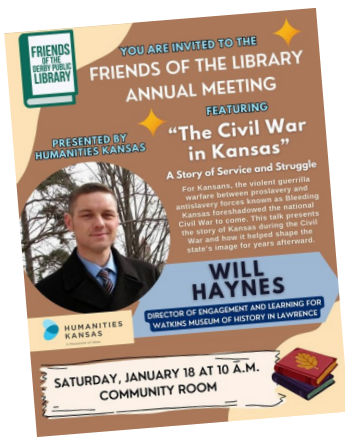
Every Friend member will have a unique appreciation for the library, so the best place to start is to make your advocacy personal and based on your own experiences. Tell your own library story, like the one about the librarian who always lets you know when your favorite author has a new book coming out. Or the home delivery service that kept your Aunt Dorothy supplied with steamy romances while she recovered from her surgery. And don't forget the book club that helped you meet the nicest people when your first moved to town. Your story is the most powerful, so don't be afraid to tell it.

(And don't forget to brag on your Friends group. You can raise awareness and visibility for both the Friends and the library by telling people what your group has paid for - so many wonderful programs, services, and equipment that are now available for free to the public at your library thanks to your book sale, basket raffle, or chili supper.)

Derby Friends Annual Meeting

Friends of the Derby Public Library drew on the excellent resources of the Kansas Humanities Council for a program for their annual meeting on January 18. Attendees enjoyed a program by Will Haynes, Director of Engagement and Learning at the Watkins Museum on the topic of “The Civil War in Kansas.”

Friends members said their annual meeting provides “an excellent opportunity for community members to learn more about the Friends of the Library and how to get involved!”



Silver Lake Fundraiser

The Silver Lake Library held a fun and successful *Bingo Break From the Break: No School, Just Chili and Family Fun* event at the Blacksmith Event Centre on January 2. The event kicked off with chili and cinnamon rolls (no need to cook lunch that day!). There were also fun Bingo games with prizes for the kids, including a “Double the Fun” round where every kiddo went home a winner with \$2 bills donated by Bob Schwarz Financial, and a few surprises for the adults!

The organizers said, “It was an afternoon filled with fun, laughter, and community spirit, and together, we raised important funds for the Silver Lake Library Building Fund.”

They added, “A huge thank you to our incredible Library Board, Foundation members, library staff, and community volunteers for making this event possible. We loved seeing so many smiling faces and are so grateful for the support of our amazing community.”



Coming Soon!

FoKL Grant Applications and Award Nominations



Outstanding Individual Friend Award
For that shining star in your group!



Outstanding Group Award
Because you accomplish so much together!



Challenge Grants
Up to \$500 matching funds for your next great idea!

Applications and info will be posted @ www.fokl.net

Contact us!

Friends of Kansas Libraries
c/o NEKLS
4317 W. 6th Street
Lawrence, KS 66049

friendsofkansaslibraries@gmail.com

Copyright © 2025 Friends of Kansas Libraries. All rights reserved.

ASSIST - SUPPORT - EDUCATE

Libraries: Now More Than Ever

Friends of Kansas Libraries (FoKL) works to encourage and support new and existing local Friends groups. We facilitate the exchange of useful information among organizations of Friends, advocate for excellent library services, and are committed to helping libraries meet the needs and expectations of their communities. If you are interested in contributing to this state organization, please join FoKL and become a supporter of Kansas libraries.

FoKL membership benefits include: • **Start-up Grants** to help establish new Friends groups • **Challenge Grants** up to \$500 to support special projects • Recognition of exemplary efforts through the **Outstanding Individual** and **Outstanding Friends Group Annual Awards** • Advisory support from the FoKL board. FoKL reaches out to the entire library community with our FoKL Newsletter and "First Friday with Friends," an interactive community forum where we share successful programs and ideas.

Follow us on Facebook @friendsofkansaslibraries and on our website www.fokl.net.



Please fill out completely. Your personal information will not be shared with third parties.

Annual Member Levels: New or Renewal

Individual \$15 Friends' Group \$25 Library or Organization \$35

Best Friend \$50 Bookworm \$100 Carnegie Circle \$250

Name (or Contact Person) _____

Organization (if applicable) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Cash Check (Check # _____ Amount _____ Date _____)

Make checks payable to: **Friends of Kansas Libraries**

Send to: **Friends of Kansas Libraries**

c/o NEKLS

4317 W. 6th

Lawrence, KS 66049

Contributions to FoKL, an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, are deductible to the full extent of the law.