

GET THE WHOLE SHEBANG; OR, EXPECT MORE FROM YOUR FRIENDS/FOUNDATION

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THE SAINT PAUL FRIENDS – A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED, AWARD-WINNING ORGANIZATION

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library is a private, non-profit, membership organization established in 1945 to support the Saint Paul Public Library. The Friends' three-fold mission is to increase the use of the Library through public awareness and cultural programming; advocate for strong public funding of the Library; and provide private funding to enhance Library services. The Friends' stated vision is to provide the necessary support to ensure that the Saint Paul Public Library is among the foremost library systems in the United States.

Today, The Friends boasts a membership of close to 1,000 households, and is governed by an active, 40-member Board of Trustees. With a professional staff of seven, in recent years The Friends has:

- provided more than \$16 million in financial support to the Library
- added more than \$12 million in public funds to the Library's budget
- increased endowments by 110% to over \$14 million
- conducted more than 750 adult cultural programs
- provided funding for more than 1,500 children's programs
- contributed funds for the purchase of approximately 200,000 library books
- led a major public awareness campaign for the library.

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library has been honored with numerous awards for its innovative work. In recent years, The Friends is proud to have received the following major awards and recognition:

- Baker & Taylor/Friends of Libraries USA Award for Best Friends Organization in the Nation in the Large Public Library Category
- John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award from the Library Administration and Management Association of ALA
- Marshall Cavendish/ALA Award for Excellence in Library Programming
- ALA/American Library Trustees and Advocates National Advocacy Honor Roll inducted Friends President, Peter D. Pearson
- John Sessions Memorial Award honoring significant work with the labor community, from the Reference and Users Service Association of ALA
- Certificate of Merit from the Minnesota Library Association for Noteworthy Contribution to Library Services in the State of Minnesota
- "Best Of Show" Award for Excellence in Library Public Relations for Diversity Materials from the Library Administration and Management Association of ALA
- Governor's Certificate of Commendation for Service to the Hispanic Community of Minnesota

Additionally, The Friends was proud to have nominated the Saint Paul Public Library for the 2005 National Award for Library Service from the federal Institute of Library and Museum Services (IMLS). The Library was chosen as one of three recipients of this prestigious national honor.

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Expectations

What you should expect from your Library Friends or Foundation

- Creating a long-term vision
 - Capture critical library needs as mission
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Expectations

5-10 year goals for the Library Friends or Foundation

- Fundraising:** Providing 5-15% of your library's annual budget for enhancements
 - Advocacy:** Increasing the library's budget by 10-25%
 - Awareness:** Delivering at least 25% of the library's public messages
 - Programming:** Coordinating at least 50% of the library's programming for adults.
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The Integrated Friends & Foundation Model

- "St. Paul Model" merges the functions of a traditional Friends group and Foundation
 - Advantages:
 - Only one board
 - Only one organization
 - Clarity in fundraising
 - Combined resources
 - Focuses on critical support activities that the library can't do as well
-

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Advocacy - The Fundamental Function

- More resources flow from public coffers than ever will be raised from private sources.
- The results are cumulative – money added in one year’s budget stays in until it is removed.

Advocacy - A Friends/Foundation Task

- Best done by private individuals (voters) not employees of the library.
- Needs to be a comprehensive, year-round, long-term approach targeting decision-makers
- Tied directly to the library needs and what the library wants

Fundraising – Expanding the Resource Base

- Growing need in the public library world for more private support
- It takes money to raise money
- More than 80% of philanthropic contributions come from individuals

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Fundraising – A Friends/Foundation Task

- Best when perceived by donors as separate from the library
- Best focused on special projects or needed “extras”
- Best done when dedicated, professional fundraising staff work with board volunteers

Fundraising - Sources #1

Private individuals:

- Membership
- Contributions
- Annual appeals
- Memorial programs
- Capital campaigns
- Planned giving – endowment building

Fundraising - Sources #2

Other major fundraising sources:

- Local businesses
- Small family foundations
- Corporate, community & large foundations
- Government grants
- Corporate sponsorships

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PR & Marketing – Amplifying the Impact

- Fundraising and advocacy will fail to reach their full impact without effective PR/marketing
 - PR is 24/7 – conveys the ethos of your organization
 - Crosses the boundary between library and support groups
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PR & Marketing – Fundamentals

- Identify target audiences. Target audiences for fundraising and advocacy are significantly different than library services.
 - Fundraising & advocacy require different PR strategies to send appropriate messages.
 - Fundraising/advocacy PR is not focused on increasing library use.
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Cultural Programming – Investing in the Community

- Programming for adults is a cost-effective way to reach funders, decision-makers and voters.
 - Book events often have particular interest for library contributors and members.
 - Programming is an excellent promotion
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Cultural Programming – An Ongoing Endeavor

- For adults, promoting the programs is as important as conducting them.
- Programming is a service but also a strategy for reaching adult fundraising and voting audiences.
- Library funders like programming that targets outreach audiences.
- Ongoing process: plan, identify audiences, promote, evaluate – repeat!

Board Development – Hard Work with Big Payoff

- Boards are basic for good fundraising.
- Need for a long-term vision for the direction of the board. Keep focus on critical library needs.
- Recruit community & philanthropic leaders, former politicians, donors – Not necessarily booklovers.
- Process for recruitment & orientation is critical for success.

Board Development – Recruitment & Orientation

- Nominating committee is one of the most important committees
- Formalized process required for recruitment
- Comprehensive orientation to mission is necessary for all new board members

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More is More – Combining the Pieces

- Expectations:** Define and Set High Goals.
- Advocacy:** A Fundamental Task
- Fundraising:** Expanding the Annual Resource Base
- PR & Marketing:** Amplify the Impact
- Cultural Programming:** Community Investment with Dividends
- Board Development:** An Essential Strategy for Success

More is More – Combining the Pieces Part 2

- Fundraising, advocacy, PR and programming all support one another. Each area benefits from integration with the other areas.
- The Library and the Friends/Foundation need to work hand-in-glove.
- The Library and Friends/Foundation will also have different cultures, methods of operation, and audiences.

Feel free to contact us:

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THANK YOU for supporting your local library!

THE FIVE-MINUTE COURSE IN LIBRARY FUNDRAISING

1. Create a separate 501(c)(3) organization distinct from the library to conduct fundraising activities. A library Friends group or a library foundation is appropriate for this. Donors who make larger gifts like the separation from a government agency.
2. Be certain that only one group exists for fundraising for the library. All fundraising efforts should be centralized to avoid confusion in the general public. The library, The Friends, and a library foundation all have the potential to raise private funds. Develop an agreement about who does what.
3. Recruit the very best and most influential members of the community to serve on the Board of Directors of the fundraising organization. Don't recruit "book lovers."
4. Focus your fundraising activities on individuals, not on corporations or foundations. More than 80% of philanthropic dollars come from individuals each year. These funds also typically have the fewest restrictions.
5. If you have a membership organization such as a Friends group doing your fundraising, conduct the membership campaign in mid-year (May or June) so an additional solicitation can be conducted in November or December.
6. Personalize your solicitation of individuals by having people who know them ask for a contribution rather than just sending a letter requesting a gift.

SOURCES OF PRIVATE SUPPORT FOR YOUR LIBRARY

1. The library board of trustees and the board of the organization conducting the fundraising need to be the first donors to any fundraising effort.
2. Other insiders, like key staff and Friends' members.
3. The entire membership of the Friends of the Library should be making annual contributions over and above their dues which should be paid at a separate time of the year.
4. Library users (local policies sometimes dictate whether library cardholder addresses can be used for solicitations).
5. The broader contacts of your board members, Friends, and key staff.
6. Local businesses.
7. Small family foundations, typically found in bank trust departments.
8. Corporate foundations, which are typically found mostly in larger metropolitan areas.
9. Community foundations.
10. Large foundations that are not linked to a corporation in which philanthropy is their business (national or regional).
11. Government grants (city, county, state, and federal).
12. Corporate sponsorships which involve the receipt of money from a corporation's marketing dollars in exchange for recognition within the library for a particular program, service or collection.
13. Library vendors.

WHAT TYPES OF LIBRARY SERVICES ARE APPROPRIATE FOR PRIVATE FUNDING?

The appropriateness of private funding to support a variety of library services and projects is very specific to each community. In some communities, private funds are prohibited from supporting what would be considered basic services. In other communities, private funds are never used as part of a building campaign. The decision on appropriate services for private funding is one that needs to be resolved prior to the beginning of any fundraising effort. Key people in addressing this issue need to be the library board of trustees, the library director, a Friends' group, and a library foundation. The following considerations should be taken into account when deciding locally what should receive private funding support.

1. Basic services are typically not appropriate for public funding. A definition of basic services needs to be developed locally.
2. Collections are often considered one of the appropriate purchases with private funds, in that a library's collection can never be too large. Specialty collections are of particular interest when it comes to private funding, such as ESL materials, adult new reader materials, large print materials, books-on-cassette, and materials in non-English languages.
3. Outreach to underserved communities to extend the reach of the library is a very appropriate service for private funding. This type of service typically redefines the library as a community outreach organization or one which deals with job readiness, literacy, and ESL.
4. Children's programs are a prime source for private support. Programs such as a summer reading program are particularly important venues for sponsorship and corporate support.
5. Adult cultural programs are another library service for which an argument can easily be made to use private funding. Logical sources of funding for these programs include the state humanities commission, state or regional arts board, the National Endowment for the Humanities, as well as corporate sponsors.
6. Technology is another area which is considered appropriate for private funding because of the constant need for updating and expansion of new technologies.
7. Building campaigns involving a public/private split are ideal prospects for expansion of private funding efforts for a public library.

MAKING FUNDRAISING A YEAR-ROUND PRIORITY

THE ANNUAL FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES OF THE FRIENDS OF THE SAINT PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY

JANUARY

- Submit grant proposals and sponsorship requests for Summer Reading Program
- Finalize list of special projects for which Library wants us to raise private funds

MARCH

- Distribute annual report of previous year's accomplishments which includes a solicitation and reply card requesting financial support of our work
- Send full membership planned giving materials

APRIL

- Send full membership a honor/memorial brochure to receive contributions for the Book Endowment Fund

MAY-JUNE

- Conduct annual membership campaign - direct mail only

JULY-AUGUST

- Send annual letters to small family foundations and businesses for general support

OCTOBER

- Recognition lunch for all top level donors (\$1,000 or over) at which a local author reads and signs a copy of his/her newest book for those in attendance
- Annual fundraising event with 4-5 nationally recognized authors at sit-down dinner

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

- End of year solicitation of all members and donors requesting financial support of a special project or collection—this solicitation is done with a large group of volunteers who make personal contact with the top 200-300 donors while other donors receive a direct mail piece
- Broad mailing of sponsorship opportunities available in following year

ALL YEAR

- Honor/memorial contributions received for the Book Endowment Fund
- Planned giving activities
- Grant proposals are written for library special projects
- Corporate sponsorship opportunities explored for various library programs
- Membership promotion at programs and in the library

BOARD OF TRUSTEES JOB DESCRIPTION

EXAMPLE FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE SAINT PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Board of Trustees of The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library is a volunteer unpaid group of individuals who assume fiscal oversight and policy direction for the organization. Generally, the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees include: hiring and evaluating the performance of the president; setting policies for the operation of the organization (not day to day management of the business); approving the organization's operating budget and overseeing its implementation; assisting the organization with its fundraising responsibilities through personal contributions at a level consistent with ability and through providing fundraising contacts to outside funding sources; and serving as an advocate and spokesperson for The Friends and the Library.

Criteria for Selection of Board Members

1. Individuals who are interested and enthusiastic about libraries.
2. Individuals who are knowledgeable about the Saint Paul Public Library.
3. Individuals who are able to participate in meetings of the Board and committees.
4. Individuals who possess skills in the areas of programming, fundraising, public relations and advocacy.
5. Individuals who represent the City's racial, ethnic, geographic and age diversity.
6. Individuals who are invested in and connected to the city of Saint Paul through employment or residence.

Expectations of Board Members

1. Attend quarterly Board meetings (8 hours per year)
2. Serve on at least one standing committee of the Board (10 hours per year)
3. Review and approve policy recommendations for The Friends through Board action.
4. Provide fundraising advice and contacts to the extent possible.
5. Make a personal financial contribution to the organization annually.
6. Consider making a planned gift to The Friends.
7. Serve as a spokesperson for The Friends and the Library.
8. Attend at least two Friends funded or coordinated cultural programs annually.

THE THREE BIGGEST MYTHS ABOUT LOBBYING

1.

Lobbying is so complicated that it should be left only to professional lobbyists.

2.

Grassroots, citizen-based lobbying efforts aren't effective.

3.

Non-profit organizations like Library Friends' groups aren't allowed to lobby.
It is illegal.

KEYS TO EFFECTIVE LOBBYING FOR LIBRARIES

1. Friends and volunteers are the most effective lobbyists-they have nothing financial to gain from increased library funding.
2. Any citizen lobbying effort must be done under the approval and guidance of the library director. If he/she doesn't want to-it won't work.
3. Lobbying is a year long process-not just at the time of final budget deliberations.
4. Be specific when you ask for funding. Ask for a specific dollar amount for very specific services and put the request in a position paper which can be shared with elected officials, the media and your membership.
5. Whenever possible, use private funds to match requests for new public dollars.
6. When making appointments to see elected officials, have a constituent from their district or ward make the appointment. Include others in the appointment who can carry some of the more detailed information.
7. Lobbying is a long term process. You are building trusting relationships over a period of many years. Look for individuals who can make a multi-year commitment to the process.
8. Send your position paper to the local media. Especially important are the neighborhood newspapers. They are eager to run your story and elected officials read them carefully to keep a pulse on their neighborhood.
9. Use your membership list to request that they write or email their elected officials with support for your position paper. This doesn't need to happen every year-just in years when an extra push is really needed.
10. Results of lobbying efforts are cumulative-money added to this year's budget stays in until specifically removed. It's like a repeating grant to the library.
11. Lobbying is totally legal for non-profit organizations. There are guidelines for lobbying available from the IRS.

AN ANNUAL PROCESS FOR CITIZEN-BASED ADVOCACY

CREATED BY *THE FRIENDS OF THE SAINT PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY*

1. Contact supervisors of all branch libraries in the City and ask branch supervisors to identify individuals at their branch who are library lovers, politically active and well known and respected names in the community.
2. Branch supervisors forward names, addresses and phone numbers of all individuals who meet these criteria to The Friends' office.
3. Friends sends a call to meet to all of the identified individuals citywide (about 30 individuals) to attend an organizational meeting for a citizens grassroots Advocacy Committee.
4. All interested Advocacy Committee members convene for the first time early in the year with the Library Director and the President of The Friends.
5. Committee meets monthly for the first five months of the year.
6. Committee meetings involve discussion between citizens and Library Director regarding concerns for library programs, initiatives and funding for the next fiscal year.
7. Through a process of discussion, the committee arrives at a prioritized list of funding initiatives for which it wishes to lobby the City's elected officials for inclusion in the next year's budget.
8. The platform of funding initiatives is presented to The Friends' Board of Trustees for formal organizational approval.
9. Friends' staff convert advocacy platform into position paper format.
10. Advocacy Committee Chair and Friends' Director present position paper to Mayor in May or June requesting that the funding initiatives be included in the Mayor's proposed library budget for the next fiscal year.
11. Citizen advocates, who are members of the Advocacy Committee, contact their individual City Council representative to schedule an appointment to present the advocacy position paper. Friends' President is present at each of these appointments to assure continuity of the message. These appointments take place through the summer months.
12. Friends issue a press release on the Library advocacy platform. The press release goes to the City's daily papers as well as neighborhood weekly and monthly papers.
13. When the City offers citizens an opportunity for public testimony on the City's budget, the Advocacy Committee shows up and in most years dominates the testimony given to the City Council about funding priorities within the City's budget.
14. City Council ratifies City and Library budget in December.
15. In most years, since 1992, the entire platform of the Advocacy Committee has been included in the approved Library budget in spite of 12 years of no increases to the City's tax levy.
16. Cumulative additions to the Library's budget since advocacy efforts began in 1992 total more than \$12 million.

ADVOCACY: THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library Cumulative Lobbying Results 1992-2002

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	TOTAL
Reinstatement of \$100,000 proposed to be cut by Mayor from total \$600,000 proposed cut. Actual cut was reduced to \$500,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,100,000
Reinstatement of cuts proposed by Mayor to Town Square/Saturday hours/materials		120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	1,200,000
CD-ROM hardware and software at branch libraries matched by Friends 1:2			80,000									80,000
Self-checking machines and 2 additional evenings of service at all branches				220,000	170,000	170,000	170,000	170,000	170,000	170,000	170,000	1,410,000
Increase in materials budget (CDBG funding)					50,000							50,000
Restore Saturday summer hrs. - \$15,541 Restore summer evening hrs. - \$56,786 Pilot 2 branches open Friday evenings - \$23,658 New materials money - \$100,000							(Friday eve. hrs. dropped) 172,327	172,327	172,327	172,327	172,327	1,057,620
Expanded hours - mornings at small branches/extend Saturday at large branches - \$255,000							255,000	255,000	255,000	255,000	255,000	1,275,000
New materials, training staff, staff for community outreach at small branches, science technology staff specialist, and a survey of users.								227,540	102,540 (mat'ls & user survey not funded)	102,540	102,540	535,160
Reinstate \$100,000 for materials which was a one time allocation in 1999; reinstate branch hours which Mayor's budget cut for \$209,122									309,122	209,122	209,122	727,366
Addition of \$300,000 for materials (one yr. only) matched by \$200,000 from The Friends										300,000		300,000
Addition of \$300,000 for materials (one yr. only) matched by \$200,000 from The Friends; restore branch hours equal to \$160,320; add \$10,000 to the print budget matched by \$10,000 from The Friends											470,320	470,320
												\$8,205,466

CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF ALL ADVOCACY EFFORTS 1992-2002

EVERYONE HAS A ROLE IN LOBBYING

What role should each of the following groups play in implementing a library lobbying campaign for their community?

Library Trustees

The Library Director

The Friends of the Library

The Other Library Staff

A Library Foundation

The Community-at-Large

PR & FUNDRAISING: CHALLENGES FOR THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

1. Public libraries want to be all things to all people. Fundraising, and the accompanying PR, focuses on narrow, targeted audiences.
2. Fundraising messages are also targeted, and do not attempt to convey the full range of library services.
3. Public relations and communications plans for fundraising ideally are designed to project positive, dynamic, innovative, growing images all year long. Library service needs or crises can often conflict with the fundraising PR needs.
4. PR, communications, and promotions for library fundraising require a significant commitment of resources, particularly in funding and staffing. Many aspects of fundraising PR and promotion, such as full-color print materials, market research or advertising, have substantial costs. It takes money to make money.
5. Effective public relations for fundraising requires a year-round approach. This translates into dedicated staffing for this function.
6. The brand and identity of the organization doing the fundraising is important. Often, a public library's identity may match up well for providing services but not private fundraising.
7. PR needs for fundraising become magnified during capital campaigns. The need for "prestige" materials, case statements, and public awareness efforts intensifies.
8. Many of the PR functions for large-scale fundraising activities may be better handled by an foundation or Friends group, rather than the library itself.

TARGET AUDIENCES: DIFFERENT FOR SERVICES, FUNDRAISING & ADVOCACY

A fundamental principle of public relations and marketing is to identifying target audiences. As the PR or marketing plan unfolds, this allows for the creation of effective messages and conservation of valuable resources. In a typical public library setting, the target audiences for library services versus private fundraising and advocacy campaigns are likely quite different. Here is a chart showing how a typical target audience profile might differ for these areas:

	SERVICES	FUNDRAISING	ADVOCACY
Age	4-90, w/focus on children & families	45-65	35-75
Gender	Female	Male	Both
Educational Attainment	High School Diploma or less	College Educated	College Educated
Household Income	<\$50,000	>\$75,000	>\$50,000
Length of Residence	<5 years	>20 years	>10 years
Home Owners	No	Yes	Yes
No. of Children in Household	2 to 4	0	2
Community Background	Underserved & Newer Community Groups	Established Community Groups	Mix & Diverse Range of Community Groups
Frequency of Annual Library Visits	>20 X per year	>6 X per year	>2 X per year
Computer Access at Home or Work	>50% no	>80% yes	>70% yes

COMMUNICATION PRIORITIES FOR LIBRARY SERVICES, FUNDRAISING & ADVOCACY

Communication functions often fall into three categories: public relations, promotion, and marketing. These basic communication functions or categories can be defined simply as follows:

Public Relations (PR) - Promoting understanding or goodwill of or toward a product, service or person.

Promotion - Furthering growth or development of a service, person or product. The result of promotion involves increased use or attention, but not the exchange of money or funds.

Marketing - Getting people or organizations to buy or sell a product or service. The end result of marketing involves funds or resources changing hands.

In public libraries, the need for these different kinds of communication strategies can vary considerably. In particular, the strategies for further development or growth in library services versus private fundraising or advocacy is significantly different. The following chart summarizes how a typical public library might use these different communication strategies to address the different functions:

Typical Level of Need for Various Communication Strategies

		<i>FUNCTIONS</i>		
		LIBRARY SERVICES	FUNDRAISING	ADVOCACY
STRATEGIES	PUBLIC RELATIONS	High	High	High
	PROMOTION	Medium and often only for specific projects	Medium	High
	MARKETING	Low, or in some cases, never	High	Low

KEY ELEMENTS IN LIBRARY PROGRAMMING FOR ADULTS

1. **Define a Primary Purpose for Your Programming Activities.**
Is it to reach underserved audiences? Or, to help publicize the library? Or, to have activities for Friends members? Or, to promote private fundraising? Or, to celebrate a recent building or lobbying campaign? Or, ??
2. **Plan, Plan, Plan**
3. **Set Goals**
4. **Commit Resources**
Resources include funding, staffing, facilities, equipment, etc. By committing internal resources, it will be easier to secure external resources, including additional outside funding.
5. **Identify Target Audiences**
You can't attract all of the people all of the time. Focus on a few specific audiences for each program or series.
6. **Seek Additional Funding and Support**
7. **Develop Community Partnerships**
8. **Create a Successful, Welcoming Event**
Some of the aspects of building a successful event include: booking quality presenters or performers; making a comfortable environment; having good, working AV equipment; scheduling an appropriate time and location for your target audience; having refreshments or other amenities; and preparing a gracious and welcoming introduction. The easiest way to build audiences is to have people return for the next event.
9. **Publicize, Promote and then Publicize and Promote Some More**
For most adult programs, the target audiences need to know about an event and then be attracted to it. Adults are busy, so you need to sell the event as something they can't afford to miss. Focus your message, promote to target audiences, and use multiple media (newspaper articles, ads, library flyers, postcard mailers, event calendars, radio PSAs, etc., etc.). If your public relations and promotions are successful, hundreds more people will hear about both your event and the library than will actually attend the program.
10. **Evaluate Your Successes & Failures**
11. **Do It All Over Again**
Your programming will improve over time, especially if you take to heart the lessons learned from the evaluation of your events. Remember to include an evaluation of your PR/promotions. Don't be afraid to try something new or different, especially if your first efforts were less than successful.

REASONS TO CONDUCT LITERARY & CULTURAL PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

1. Positions the library/Friends/foundation as a more active institution in your community
2. It is easy and simple, particularly if you do it regularly
3. Effectively conducted or coordinated by a Friends group or Foundation
4. Supports local authors & publishers
5. Meshes with readers' advisory functions
6. Helps reach the 30-40% of households that, on average, do not have children present in the household
7. Garneres great publicity and promotion for your library, in a cost-effective manner
8. Connects the library to your community's cultural and arts world
9. Is an effective outreach tool, especially if focused on diverse community groups
10. Connects community partners, such as schools, universities, community centers or groups, businesses, etc.
11. Rewards and reinvigorates Library staff through connections to authors and stimulating events
12. Often funded through grants or other outside support
13. Involves community members, committee or group in an active project
14. Assists with promotion of Friends membership or fundraising activities
15. Promotes advocacy—many adults attending are active voters
16. Programming is engaging, educational, but most of all, fun!

EXTEND YOUR CULTURAL PROGRAMMING THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Partnering with various community partners for your library programs helps boost attendance and promotes library services in general. In addition to promoting the program and the library, community partners often provide additional assistance such as funding, refreshments, volunteers, connections to presenters, or event planning.

Consider the following organizations or groups for partnerships:

- Bookstores
- Schools, including public, private and charter schools
- Colleges and universities, including different departments within each college or university
- Related businesses or corporations, especially vendors used by the Library or Friends/Foundation (a printer, for example)
- Labor unions or union councils
- Churches, synagogues, mosques and other religious organizations
- Social service agencies
- Arts and cultural groups, such as dance groups, symphony orchestras, writer's organizations, or theater companies
- Local publishers
- Community centers
- Senior citizen organizations
- Historical societies and humanities councils
- Newspapers and radio or TV stations
- Sports teams
- Restaurants
- Chambers of commerce
- Community service organizations, such as the Jaycees, Kiwanis, Rotary, or Junior League
- Local chapters of professional organizations
- Foundations or other philanthropic groups
- Nonprofit organizations with a mission related to the program topic (for example, a local chapter of the Sierra Club might co-sponsor an event on an environmental topic)
- Other libraries - public, regional systems, colleges, schools, etc.
- Parks and recreation departments
- Government agencies (for example, a state department of agriculture might co-sponsor a series on food and farming)

TYPES OF LIBRARY CULTURAL PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

Adult cultural programming in public libraries is often stereotyped as only consisting of author readings or other literary events. Indeed, these types of events can—and even should—form the basis for adult programming in public libraries. Author events have a natural connection to library collections and serve to reinforce many of the most positive perceptions of the public library. However, public libraries can play a broader role, through programming, as a cultural and community center for adults, as well as families and children. Toward that goal, cultural programs for adults should be diversified to include a broad range of types of programs across many genres. Examples include:

- Author readings
- Panel discussions by writers
- Poetry slams or spoken word performances
- Writing workshops
- Book discussions
- Series on topics of current interest
- Community discussions using videos or packaged discussion programs
- ESL or adult new reader discussion groups
- Musical performances
- Music history or appreciation talks
- Theater and dance performances
- Discussions on local theater productions, perhaps featuring the director or local actor
- Series on particular topics, such as the Civil War, labor history, or healthcare, that include a mix of presentations and discussions
- Film series and follow-up discussions (remember to get approval or pay for the right to publicly show a film)
- Traveling or local exhibitions, and related opening events or talks
- Book or community festivals
- Walking or bus tours
- Gardening
- Food or cooking programs
- Cultural connections: highlighting and learning about various cultures in your community
- Book sharing events: what have you read lately? - Recommended reads
- “Summer (or winter) Reading Program for Adults”
- Travel shows or presentations
- Morning book chats for seniors
- Knitting, textiles, quilting
- Art discussions/architectural history or historic preservations topics

Library Friends and Foundations: Time for a Merged Model?

By Peter D. Pearson, with Stewart J. Wilson

THE SITUATION

In recent decades, the library world has been in flux. Whether it has been the ups and downs of the economy, or the tremendous changes brought by computers and technology, today's public libraries are very different than those of only twenty or thirty years ago.

A major, but perhaps less well-known, area of change for libraries is the growth of private support organizations. As public dollars have diminished, many library Friends organizations have emerged to provide more support for libraries, and in many larger cities, library foundations have now been created specifically to increase private funding for public libraries. Yet, for many libraries, the roles and functions of these private support groups remain unclear, ill-defined, or even at odds with each other. In some library systems there are both a Friends group and a foundation. In these cases, the organizational roles are even more blurred, often resulting in a lack of effectiveness, duplication of effort, mismatched missions and messages, or even conflict.

Is there a better way? Can Friends groups and foundations contribute more to their libraries and function more effectively? These are difficult questions to answer. However, this paper examines an alternative Friends/foundation model, based on more than twelve years of practical experience at The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library (FSPPL). One of the oldest Friends groups in Minnesota, FSPPL underwent a significant change in the early 1990s when it shifted from an all volunteer organization to a staffed institution. Today, FSPPL looks neither like a traditional Friends group, nor is it solely a foundation. Yet, the results are very successful - raising millions of dollars, advocating strongly for increased public funding, and winning national awards for cultural programming, public relations and outreach activities - all in support of the Saint Paul Public Library.

This examination of a Friends/foundation merged model will be of most interest to public libraries currently looking at one of three scenarios:

- **Merging a currently existing Friends group and foundation into a single organization,**
- **Creating a library foundation where a Friends group already exists, or**
- **Expanding an existing Friends group to include major fundraising activities, such as planned giving, donor development, or capital campaigns.**

This brief look at the merged model will explore the following topics:

- **The history and traditional roles of Friends groups and library foundations**
- **A description of the merged Friends/foundation model**
- **The advantages of a merged model**
- **Local factors to be considered in creating a merged organization**
- **Cautionary notes and lessons learned**
- **Steps toward the merged model**

THE HISTORY AND TRADITIONAL ROLES OF FRIENDS VERSUS FOUNDATIONS

Library Friends organizations have a long, successful history, dating back at least 100 years. Library Friends were originally organized as non-profit organizations to provide grassroots support, and this is one of their main functions today. Sometimes the impetus for creation of a Friends group originated in the surrounding community, and sometimes it came from the library itself. Leaders and members of Friends groups are usually very attached to the public library and often continue to serve as the library's main corps of volunteers. The majority of Friends organizations are volunteer groups, without paid staff. In addition to volunteers, Friends groups historically have been successful at a number of other activities, including book sales, other small-scale fundraising efforts, author programs, and membership campaigns. In most systems, the library director, public relations officer, or other higher level librarian serves as a liaison to the Friends organization. Typically, Friends organizations have not been asked to conduct large fundraising efforts, such as capital campaigns or major planned giving campaigns.

In contrast, most library foundations have come into existence only in the last 15 to 20 years. Usually organized by the library or library board, these institutions were created with the express purpose of engaging in large, private fundraising efforts to provide enhancements, create endowments or conduct capital campaigns for the library. Directors of foundation boards are recruited specifically to support fundraising activities, and thus usually reflect local business, corporate or philanthropic interests rather than the community as a whole. Some library foundations are independent, private, non-profit organizations, with the library director serving ex-officio on the board of directors. Others are library departments with the lead staff person reporting to the library director. In either case, library foundations typically are staffed by fundraising professionals. In focusing on higher end donors, most foundations are not membership organizations. Led by local "movers and shakers," library foundations sometimes suffer from being detached from the broader community, the average library patron and library volunteers.

THE SAINT PAUL MODEL OF A MERGED FRIENDS/FOUNDATION

Library Friends and foundations are traditionally quite distinct. They both exist to support the library, but do so in very different ways, with very different missions and constituencies. What then, would a merger of these two distinct types of organizations look like?

The answer to the above question may vary slightly depending on the local community, but based on Saint Paul's experience, an organization combining the functions and missions of traditional library Friends and foundations would do the following:

1. Organize itself as an independent **501(c)(3) NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION**, with a **PAID STAFF**, overseen by a community-based board of directors.
2. Conduct **MAJOR FUNDRAISING** efforts, including annual solicitation of major individual donors, corporate and foundation grantwriting for special library projects, planned giving, and capital campaigns.
3. Have a **MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM** to enable a larger cross-section of the community to participate in supporting the library.
4. Coordinate **AUTHOR READINGS OR OTHER SPECIAL CULTURAL EVENTS**, both for donor/members, but also potentially for the broader community.
5. Continue to conduct or support library **BOOK SALES OR VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS**, depending on previous local success with these activities.
6. Build an **ADVOCACY** program, to broaden the scope of activity for sustaining or increasing public support of the library.

WHY CHANGE?

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE MERGED MODEL

Friends organizations and foundations have long-standing traditions and missions. Why should any library consider a new model? Clearly one will need to look at the particular library, support organization(s) and community to consider whether a merged model is right. In the following sections, some of the local factors to consider and some possible downsides to the merged model will be addressed. However, our experience at FSPPL indicates that the merged model presents numerous advantages over the separate Friends and foundation patterns of organization.

The most significant advantages of the merged model are:

- **Eliminates confusion** of having two separate support organizations.
- **Maximizes private financial support** across the whole community.
- **Improves accountability** to the library due to professional staffing of key organizational positions.
- **Streamlines communication** between the support organization, library administration and library board.
- **Decreases competition** for strong, active board members.
- **Lessens the need for library staff involvement**, but increases the effectiveness, focus and professionalism of staff interactions.
- **Broadens the range of community participants** - individuals, donors, media, politicians, businesses, etc. - available to support the library.
- **Increases the flexibility and responsiveness of the support organization.**
An organization with a multi-faceted mission can shift more quickly and effectively to address the library's most pressing needs.
- **Enhances visibility and credibility** in the community.
- **Expands potential advocacy efforts**, which are often problematic for both Friends groups and foundations due to their more focused missions.

LOCAL FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Is the merged model right for your library? Here are some additional points to consider as you examine the possibilities of the merged model for your library:

The need for larger amounts of private funding is forecast

Many Friends organizations are not well structured for major fundraising, due to lack of staff, board members and experience. A capital campaign or other major push for outside funding may lead you to explore the merged model, or create a foundation. But, if your future needs are small or incremental, a new organization may in fact create added burdens.

Competition exists between the foundation and Friends group

If you currently have two library support organizations, you should examine how well they work together in support of the library. For instance, do both organizations regularly share member and donor lists? Is one group less effective than the other, tending to negatively affect the reputation of the better functioning organization? Again, if everything is working well there probably is no reason for a merger, but if there is conflict or competition, it may be time to explore alternatives.

Public funding is eroding and strong advocacy efforts have not materialized

Friends groups often shy away from advocacy as being too political, while foundations worry that large donors won't contribute to an advocacy organization. A new organization based on a merged model may be able to tackle advocacy as a core mission area, and be multi-faceted enough to alleviate concerns about involvement in the political process. On the other hand, if public funding is secure, an alternative structure may be unnecessary.

The reputation of the existing Friends group

Many Friends organizations are very well connected in the local community. If so, you need to assess the potential "political" impact of trying to make the Friends organization assume new roles, and whether or not a change will have negative fallout on the library. A new approach may be in order, however, if your Friends group has little standing in your locale.

The Friends group is successful, and is open to expanded roles

If you have a great Friends group, with a good board, a history of productive activities, and an excellent relationship with the library, there may be no need to consider a change. If the current group is up to new challenges and innovative roles you incrementally may be able to make needed changes. Conversely, if your Friends group is unhelpful or unproductive, it may be time for a new structure.

The ready availability of productive board members

Organizations are only as good as their leaders. Two separate organizations require twice as many leaders. If your region has a plethora of talented leaders, having two groups may increase the number of active library supporters. But in many areas, trying to find good board members for just one organization is a struggle. If the latter is the case for you, you may be well advised to stick with only one support group.

CAUTIONARY NOTES

Organizations are dynamic, fluid, organic entities. As such, no organization is ever perfect, and all too often, just when everything is working well, new problems arise to challenge an organization. Thus, a merged Friends/foundation will probably provide new, effective answers to current problems, but simultaneously, it may create additional, unforeseen concerns. Not all of the problems can be predicted, but based on Saint Paul's experience, there are a few areas of caution to watch out for in the move toward a merged model.

FIRST, there is a much stronger need for library staff and the Friends/foundation staff to check-in more regularly to ensure they are performing tasks aligned with library needs and priorities. As the merged organization grows, this may mean additional channels of communication at various staff levels. It most definitely means more time spent on communications and relationship building. While Friends/foundation staff must prioritize the library's needs, increasingly library staff will also need to be cognizant of the support organization's efforts in order for both sides of the equation to work.

SECOND, the staff of the merged organization should be comfortable with a broader, multi-pronged mission, and the nuances of dealing with the whole community. Friends groups and foundations tend to focus on narrower audiences. The merged model forces staff to be less specialized, more adaptable, and more community oriented than might be true in either a traditional Friends or foundation. In short, a merged model creates subtly different staffing patterns than is true for traditional support organizations.

THIRD, a merged organization may be tempted to dabble in library policy. As a multi-faceted organization, a merged Friends/foundation has a greater interdependence on the library and vice versa. This understandably, but

often quite problematically, leads the support organization into more directly trying to influence library policies or decision-making. Clearly understood organizational missions and boundaries are helpful in avoiding this problem.

FOURTH, a merged organization may become very successful and even begin to upstage the library in various arenas. Some members of the community may begin to identify primarily with the Friends/foundation, and conversely, the merged organization may develop stronger ties to certain community circles than the library. While not necessarily a problem, this can put the support organization in the role of seeming to compete directly with the library. Again, communication and joint understanding between the library and Friends/foundation will help avoid this potential hazard.

These cautionary notes are raised, not to discourage exploration of the merged model, but rather to realistically portray the advantages and disadvantages of this kind of organizational structure. As external pressures on libraries continue to mount, it is best to be cautious about dramatic changes in existing structures without thoroughly examining the pros and cons of a prospective new direction. Whether or not a new model is right for your library, I believe that dedication to a strong focused mission, good leadership and staffing, and effective lines of communication between the library and support organization are the keys to overcoming most potential problems.

GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE

A merger of the Friends group and foundation may be on the horizon. Or, the current Friends group is considering growing into an organization that takes on more foundation-like tasks. What are the steps to take to accomplish this changeover? Obviously, the answer is different for every library, but the Saint Paul model provides some idea of the steps ahead.

The beginning of the process will involve extensive study, planning and discussions among your key leaders. In most cases, there will be some driving need which is pushing the library or support organization(s) to new models. In Saint Paul, FSPPL and the library recognized that increased private funding was a necessity in the future. After a few years of examination, the FSPPL board realized that increased private funding could only come through major grant writing, donor solicitation and planned giving, and the decision was made to hire full-time staff to focus on these areas. Simultaneously, the organization also expanded and focused its mission to include three major areas: raising private funds to support and enhance library services; advocating for strong public funding of the library; and raising public awareness and use of the library.

Following these initial steps, FSPPL launched a more full-fledged annual advocacy effort, with staff leading a very active community committee including a number of former local politicians. Following initial fundraising and advocacy successes, a second professional staff person joined the organization. This staff position focused on grant writing, public relations and awareness programs, and began to more fully develop cultural programming activities. In Saint Paul, both the volunteer program and book sales have been coordinated by library staff rather than FSPPL. This organization continued, although FSPPL began substantially increasing financial support for the library's program of volunteer recognition.

The next phase of organizational growth occurred about four years after the initial changeover, with the creation of a capital campaign for the library system. At this juncture, both private fundraising and advocacy became more important than ever, and an additional staff person was added to further develop public relations and cultural programming activities. Organizational growth continued in all of the mission areas throughout the three years of the capital campaign.

FSPPL grew from a very successful, all volunteer organization to the "merged model" of today over the course of 12-13 years. Change was incremental and is ongoing. Nonetheless, some of the changes have been enormous.

Some of the most significant changes are illustrated with a simple chart:

Area	1990	2003
Number of Members	300	1,000
Annual Financial Assistance to the Library	\$205,000	\$1.9 million
Value of Endowments	\$5 million	\$11million
Number of annual FSPPL cultural programs	Approx. 10	Approx. 70-75
Number of FSPPL staff	1 - 0.5 FTE	8 - 7.0 FTE
Number of FSPPL board members	17	39

Additionally, in 1990, advocacy was not a mission area of FSPPL, whereas in the last ten years (1992-2002), FSPPL's active advocacy program has increased or restored more than \$10.9 million to the library's budget.

To be sure, many of the changes above are due to growth over time, rather than an organizational change. Yet, there are many support functions that FSPPL provides to the Saint Paul Public Library, such as advocacy and conducting a successful \$5 million capital campaign, which would not have been possible under a traditional Friends structure and mission.

CONCLUSION

It is a large step to contemplate a merger of a library Friends group and a foundation - or a significant change in the direction and function of a Friends group. It is a step worth much study and consideration. In contemplating such a change, involve all of the significant decision-makers across the affected organizations. Consider asking for input from other community members who have knowledge of the current situation. Looking at other library models from across the country, particularly from library systems of a similar size, is always useful and instructive. Revisiting the mission and purpose of the support organization(s), and how you will staff the organization(s) are key questions to answer in the early stages. Finally, as a change moves closer, calling on the resources of a professional strategic planner may be worthwhile. A profound change of this nature necessitates a longer term plan (3 to 5 years) to set realistic, achievable goals for both the library and support organization.

In Saint Paul, the merged model, combining the functions of a foundation and a more traditional Friends organization, continues to work well. In particular, this merged structure has allowed The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library to be unusually effective in advocacy, major fundraising, innovative cultural programming and public awareness efforts for the library. Friends groups and foundations continue as well-grounded, effective organizational structures for many libraries and communities. The merged model simply provides an additional alternative to libraries seeking to improve or maximize the effectiveness of the support organizations in their community.

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IN PRINT: SELECTED PUBLICATIONS ON THE FRIENDS OF THE SAINT PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY

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LEAD STAFF OF *THE FRIENDS OF THE SAINT PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY*

Peter Pearson - President

Peter Pearson has a master's degree in educational administration from the University of Minnesota. He has been a classroom teacher, school principal, and executive director of two non-profit educational programs prior to taking the position as President of The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library in 1992. Peter served for six years on the Board of Directors of Friends of the Libraries USA (FOLUSA) and was the Board Chair of Libraries for the Future (LFF) in New York for three years and still sits on that Board. He has also been Board Chair and Trustee of the Metropolitan Library Service Agency, which is the Twin Cities' regional library system, and a Trustee of Metronet, the Twin Cities' multi-type library system. In June, 2005, Peter was inducted into the American Library Association's Advocacy Honor Role as an outstanding library advocate in Minnesota and the U.S. He is a frequent speaker and presenter at state and national library conferences, and has published articles on library fundraising in *Friends of Library Sourcebook* and *Library Administration and Management* journal. A native of Chicago, Peter has lived in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul area for the last 35 years.

Wendy Moylan - Director of Development & Finance

Wendy Moylan joined the staff of The Friends in 2002, and currently serves as the Director of Development & Finance. In that capacity, she coordinates grant proposals and corporate sponsorships for The Friends and the Library system, and leads the planned giving program for The Friends. Wendy also works closely with Library staff to develop program implementation and evaluation procedures. Wendy has over 10 years of broad fundraising experience including areas of individual giving, planned giving, donor recognition and event planning, in addition to volunteer management, marketing and publications work. She previously worked at the Minneapolis Jewish Day School, Augsburg College, and the National Audubon Society headquarters in New York City. She currently serves on the board of Listening House in Saint Paul, and her neighborhood District Council. She has a bachelor's degree in political science and environmental studies from Macalester College in Saint Paul.

Stu Wilson - Director of Development & Communications

Currently the Director of Development & Communications, Stu Wilson oversees individual giving, membership, public relations, publications and cultural programming activities at The Friends. His work has been recognized with national awards for public relations, programming, and service to the labor community, and he has recently published the first of three articles on Saint Paul's strategic planning efforts in *Library Journal*. Stu has more than 20 years of additional experience working in nonprofit organizations, including positions at a history museum, statewide literacy organization, and a teacher's union. He currently serves on the board of the Minnesota Library Association Foundation and the advisory board of Coffee House Press, and previously served on the board of the Arts & Culture Partnership of Saint Paul and chaired the Minnesota Book Awards advisory board. He has presented at numerous national and state library, museum and history conferences. Stu holds a masters degree in architectural history from the University of Oregon and an undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin - Madison.