



Friends News and Notes

Friends of Libraries Section — A Network of Library Advocates in New York State

www.NYLA.org/Friends

Volume 11, #3 -- May 2025

Please Vote in the FLS Election

The FLS Executive Board approved the following slate of candidates to be placed on the FLS ballot. In addition, the Board recommends ratification of amendments to the FLS By-Laws by the FLS membership. The election will be held online from June 1 through June 15 in conjunction with NYLA's annual election. Don't miss your chance to vote in both the FLS and NYLA elections. **Please note:** In order to vote in these elections you will need to be registered with NYLA for the 2025-2026 membership year by May 31. Renew your NYLA/FLS membership or join now! <https://www.nyla.org/membership>

The 2025 candidates are:

First Vice President/President-Elect

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick - Delmar | Term Expires November 2028

Secretary

Circe McKenney - Oneonta[†] | Term Expires November 2027

Members At Large (vote for four) | Term Expires November 2027

Elaine Dunne - Messina

James Foster* - Amsterdam[†]

Erica Freudenberger* - Catskill[†]

Mary Giardini* - Olean

(denotes: * incumbent; [†] residence)

Candidate profiles and position statements are on page 3 - 6 of this newsletter. Watch for email notifications from NYLA about voting beginning on June 1.

A mark-up of the amendments to the FLS By-Laws, along with the rationale for the changes, are included at the end of this newsletter on page 12.

The FLS Board thanks these candidates for their willingness to serve the Section by sharing their time, talent, and expertise.

FLS in 2025 Events and Dates

- ✓ Application and Nomination packets for the [FLS Randall Enos Conference Scholarship](#) and the [FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award](#) are online now. Time is running out to apply for this \$1000 scholarship to attend the 2025 NYLA Conference, or to nominate a deserving individual or organization for exceptional service to the library community. The submission deadline is June 1. See pages 7 and 8 for more information.
- ✓ The FLS Friends Group Meet-up is scheduled for June 12 at the Henrietta Public Library. See the article on page 2. This is a great opportunity for Friends to get together to talk shop and share ideas. Networking is how we learn from each other.
- ✓ National Friends of Libraries Week is October 19-25, 2025. It's not too soon to think about celebrations, activities, or a membership drive during that week. There's an article on page 8.
- ✓ Mark your calendars now for #NYLA2025. The annual conference is November 5 - 8 at the Saratoga Springs City Center.
- ✓ FLS will hold its annual membership meeting Wednesday, November 19 at 7:00 pm via Zoom.
- ✓ FLS Connections!, conversations offered via Zoom, will return in 2025. Stay tuned for upcoming topics and registration details.

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FLS creates a network to connect and inspire Friends groups in all types of libraries to support the New York library community.

FLS, a unit of NYLA, embraces and promotes diversity and inclusion in all their forms.



A Message from FLS President Chris Lund

Welcome to another great issue of Friends News and Notes. This month I'd like to especially encourage all of you to review our slate of nominees and our proposed By-Laws updates and to make sure you all vote in June's

election. The positions on the ballot this year are Vice President/President-Elect, Secretary, and four Members At Large.

I'm particularly grateful to everybody who agreed to run for these offices and take on these responsibilities. I'm consistently impressed by the hard work and dedication of all of our volunteers. I have served on many different boards for many different types of organizations, and I can say from experience that not many boards are this consistently reliable. And on top of that, it truly is filled with "Friends." Between board members, committee reps, and project coordinators, our group numbers around 20 people, all from different backgrounds and varied professional histories. With a group like that, it would be very easy to let personal preferences and differences of opinion quickly lead to argument and inaction, but I've never once experienced this. Even when we don't all share the same views, we somehow always manage to reach an amicable resolution. It is a truly "friendly" group. And again, this is certainly not always the case. To emphasize that point, in one of the other professional organizations I'm involved with, a long-standing board member just recently announced a resignation, citing

a toxic environment at board meetings that was contributing to their declining mental and physical health. Stories like that truly make me appreciate what I've got with this great group.

In addition to the board positions, we also have some updates to our By-Laws on the ballot. I know By-Laws are far from the most exciting thing in the world (unless you're a recovering lawyer like me, who can't get enough of them), but they're critical to making sure any organization is able to function effectively and efficiently, and they are a great way to get a good understanding of how an organization works. I'm not one to make change for change's sake, so I can assure you that all of the proposed changes were carefully thought out and discussed by our By-Laws subcommittee and by our Board, and all of the proposed changes are intended to allow us the flexibility we'll need to continue being an active and productive unit. We've tried our best to explain the reasoning behind all of these changes, but if any of you have any questions or comments as to why we made the choices we did, please do not hesitate to reach out and I'm happy to discuss them further.

Lastly, if you haven't done so already, please make sure you renew your FLS membership no later than May 31st. Under NYLA's new fixed membership year system, all memberships will expire on May 31st, and renewal will be necessary to maintain access to all NYLA and FLS resources, and also to vote in the upcoming election. To renew, and for all renewal related questions, visit the NYLA website at <https://www.nyla.org/member-renewal-faqs>.

It's time to Register! Friends Groups Meet-up on June 12

FLS President Christopher Lund, the FLS Board, and the Friends Council of the Monroe County Library System (MCLS) invite you to an in-person meet-up, hosted at the beautiful Henrietta Public Library, on **Thursday, June 12 from 2:30 until 4:30 p.m.** Come enjoy some Friendly conversation with members of the FLS Executive Board!

All Friends are welcome; this event is open at no charge to FLS/NYLA members and non-members alike. However, **advanced registration is required.** No walk-ins, please. Send a message to FLSregister@yahoo.com. Put Henrietta in the subject line. In the body, include the names, their library affiliation, positions (e.g., Friends officer, Staff Liaison to the Friends, library trustee, Friends committee chair, book sale coordinator), and email addresses for all who plan to participate. Please register by Friday, June 6. You will receive an email with directions prior to the meeting.

If there is a specific topic you'd like to discuss with the other Friends groups, please provide that information in your registration message. In the past, we've had conversations about new fundraising ideas, best practices for book sales, growing your Friends membership, volunteer recognition, and community partnerships. Tell us what topic your group would like to learn more about.

This session runs for two hours and will not be archived. Videoconferencing is not available to attend this meeting remotely. Minutes are shared with everyone who attends. Questions about this event can be sent to FLS.NYLA@yahoo.com.

This is a great opportunity for Friends from your library to meet with other Friends from around the state, exchange ideas, and make new contacts. We hope you'll join us!

FLS 2025 Slate – Candidate Profiles

Please Vote Online, June 1-15



FLS Vice President/President Elect

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, Director, Bethlehem Public Library, Delmar, NY
Lives in Southern Adirondack Library System

Education:

- MLS SUNY Albany 1998
- B.A. SUNY Albany 1995

Work History:

- 2011-present Director, Bethlehem Public Library
- 2009-2011 Assistant Director, Bethlehem Public Library
- 2000-2001 Department Head, Bethlehem Public Library
- 1999-2000 Head of Readers Services, Albany Public Library

Volunteer Experience:

- NYLA President
- NYLA Civil Service Committee/Task Force
- NYLA/PLS President
- NYLA Membership Committee

Candidate Statement

I am committed to strengthening library Friends organizations through educational opportunities and networking. Celebrating successes and sharing great ideas helps position Friends groups to better serve their communities. I am excited to have the opportunity to work with a dedicated group of library supporters.



FLS Secretary

Circe McKenney, Professional Development Coordinator, Four County Library System, Vestal, NY

Lives in Four County Library System

Education:

- MS, Library Science, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY
- BA, Sociology; Public Policy and Community Service, Emory & Henry College, Emory, VA

Work History:

- Reference & Instruction Librarian (temporary), SUNY Oneonta, 2021-2022
- Reference Librarian, Knox County Public Library, Knoxville, TN, 2014- 2019
- Main Library Manager, Sevier County Public Library System, Sevierville, TN, 2012-2014
- Library Assistant, Sevier County Public Library System, Sevierville, TN, 2011-2012
- Graduate Student Worker, William T. Young Library, University of Kentucky, 2010-2011
- Library Assistant/Associate, Lexington Public Library, Lexington, KY, 2009-2011

Volunteer Experience:

- Northeast Regional Focus Group member, Association for Rural and Small Libraries, 2023- 2024
- President, East Tennessee Library Association, 2014- 2015
- Vice-President, East Tennessee Library Association, 2013- 2014

Candidate Statement

I am excited about the opportunity to serve as the Secretary for the Friends of Libraries Section of the New York Library Association. As the Professional Development Coordinator for the Four County Library System, I am responsible for coordinating continuing education opportunities for the directors and staff at 43 public libraries. My job requires a great deal of attention to detail, time management, and strong communication skills, which I believe would serve me well as Secretary. Many of our member libraries are small with limited staff and budgets in rural communities, so I greatly appreciate the importance and value that Friends groups and volunteers provide to libraries and their communities. The support, networking, and training opportunities provided by the Friends of Libraries Section to Friends groups across New York state is critical, and I would welcome the opportunity to be involved in this valuable organization.

~ Candidate Profiles continued next page ~

FLS 2025 Slate –Candidate Profiles continued



FLS Member at Large

Elaine Dunne, Trustee, Friends of the Massena Public Library, Massena, NY
Lives in North Country Library System

Education:

- MLS, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec
- BA, Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec

Work History:

- Massena Public Library – Director, 2014-2024
- Assistant Director and Youth Services, 2005-2013; Children's Librarian, 1998-2001
- Massena Central High School – Librarian, 2002-2005

Volunteer Experience:

- St. Peter's Outreach – Food bank volunteer
- Massena Housing Authority – Board of Directors, Trustee
- Eugene Nicandri Nature Center – Board of Directors, Trustee
- St. Peter's Parish – Parish Council

Candidate Statement

Over the last several years I believe the role of the Friends groups in our community libraries has expanded from primarily a fundraising entity to an advocacy agency that speaks out and protects library funding, policies, and programming. The alarming uptick of attacks on library budgets, staffing, materials, and programs at library board meetings, town board meetings, and county meetings are being met and defended by organized and knowledgeable community members who form our Friends of the library groups.

Our Friends groups are an essential part of our public libraries. I strongly believe the need for our Friends groups to fundraise and advocate on behalf of our local libraries will only increase, particularly during this time of extreme uncertainty and government overreach. I hope my tenure with FLS will allow me the opportunity to encourage our current Friends groups to work together on advocacy and fundraising challenges that affect all libraries in our area of Northern New York.



FLS Member at Large

James Foster, Assistant Director, Clifton Park Halfmoon Public Library, Clifton Park, NY
FLS Positions: Member At Large 2023-present, Chairperson of Task Force for Developing Friends Councils 2022-present
Lives in Southern Adirondack Library System

Education:

- University at Albany (Albany, NY) – MSIS Masters in Library Science
- Cairn University (Philadelphia, PA) – MS Educational Leadership and Administration
- Cedarville University (Cedarville, OH) – BA English Education

Work History:

- Administrator, Teacher, and Coach at Mekeel Christian Academy (Scotia, NY) 20 years
- Capital District Track & Field Officials organization – Executive Board
- NYS Federation of High School Athletic Associations – Executive Secretary

Volunteer Experience:

- Ballston Center Presbyterian Church
- Schenectady City Mission (NY)

Candidate Statement

My job description includes the title 'Library Liaison to the Friends' a role that I enjoy and find critically important to the success of the Friends, and more importantly the success of our Library and community.

In ten years as Assistant Director of the Clifton Park Halfmoon Public Library, I've found working with the Friends to be one of the most enjoyable and rewarding parts of my job. The Friends of the Library are active, and they play a vital role in promoting the Library. Not only do they provide financial support, but, more importantly, they also represent the Library positively in the community. Being a liaison between two excellent organizations allows me to keep open channels of communication, provide news and information, and help both groups continue working together smoothly. (continued)

~ Candidate Profiles continued next page ~

FLS 2025 Slate – Candidate Profiles continued

Jim Foster, Position Statement (continued)

I seek to continue bringing my positive experiences with our local Library and Friends group to the Friends of Libraries Section, sharing ideas and helping support Friends organizations around the state. I appreciate the opportunity to serve the statewide library community and further the goals of NYLA by working with FLS.



FLS Member at Large

Erica Freudenberger, Library Development Specialist 1, NYSL Division of Library Development, Albany, NY

FLS Positions: Member At Large 2020-present; Nominating Committee Chair 2025

Lives in Mid-Hudson Library System

Education:

- MLIS San Jose State University

Work History:

- Outreach, Engagement & Marketing, Southern Adirondack Library System
- Director, Red Hook Public Library
- Director, Staatsburg Public Library

Volunteer Experience:

- Public Library Association, Board Member
- ALA Council, Member-at-Large
- ALA Committee on Professional Ethics, Committee Member
- ALA Leadership Development, Committee Member 7/1/25–6/30/27
- ALA Public & Cultural Programs Advisory, Committee Member 7/1/25–6/30/27

Candidate Statement

I am honored to have the opportunity to continue to serve the Friends of Libraries Section (FLS), and to work with my incredible colleagues to help spread the word about the important work Friends do on behalf of public libraries every day, and providing support to Friends groups across the country.

My experience with FLS has been one of tremendous satisfaction. As a volunteer unit, it manages to produce a regular newsletter, offers a consistent and vital schedule of continuing education, and continually challenges itself to keep up to date on what's happening in the library world.

At my former position, I had the pleasure of hosting an educational session, "Getting Started: Creating and Supporting a Friends Group for Your Library," with Lisa Wemett, Joyce Laiosa, and Terry Mulee, and was blown away by the depth and breadth of knowledge they shared. In my time as a Member At Large, I have learned a tremendous amount about the care, feeding, and formation of Friends groups.



FLS Member at Large

Mary Giardini, Senior Advancement and Communications Coordinator at Mt. Irenaeus, a non-profit religious organization in WNY

FLS Positions: Member at Large 2022-present, FLS representative to the NYLA

Membership Committee 2024-present

Friends Group: Secretary and Special Events Chair, Friends of the Library of Olean, NY

Lives in Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System

Education:

- BS in Elementary Education and Spanish, St. Bonaventure University
- MS in Literacy, Birth-Grade 6, St. Bonaventure University

Work History:

- Previously at Cattaraugus Allegany BOCES as the High School Equivalency Test Coordinator
- Previously an elementary education teacher for 8 years and taught middle/high school Spanish for 5 years

Volunteer Experience:

- Allegany Engine Company Auxiliary
- St. Bonaventure University Campus Ministries

~ Candidate Profiles continued next page ~

FLS 2025 Slate –Candidate Profiles continued

Mary Giardini **Position Statement**

For the past three years, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with some of the most passionate people in FLS/NYLA; they have challenged me to take on new roles and responsibilities. I served on the FLS Randall Enos Scholarship Committee where I took an active role and used my considerable years of professional fundraising experience to help the committee establish solicitation guidelines. I was appointed the FLS Representative to the NYLA Membership Committee in 2025.

I have presented twice at NYLA Conferences about Fundraising Beyond the Book Sale, sharing my ideas and helping others who need a little inspiration. I was also able to meet so many people with the same interests as I have – a love for libraries and all a library should stand for. I would love to continue bringing my passion for reading to others with the help of local libraries. I feel that Friends are there to support the library and all the very important services (and fun!) that they supply to their patrons.

FLS has a broad goal to connect and inspire others to become active participants in their library. It is my goal to continue working with libraries using my experience with communications to connect with others and, most especially, in fundraising and organization to help fund a variety of programs to meet the ever-changing needs of our society.

What's All the Buzz About? Membership!

Many Friends groups lament that they need more active members, "more worker bees," to sustain their various activities and fundraisers. But the Friends of the Marcellus Free Library went one better, making bees their marketing symbol for their membership drive in October 2024, leading into National Friends of Libraries Week. Some bees were labeled "worker bee," but there were also bees labeled "Drone" and "Queen Bee."

One sign focused the campaign: "We're looking to fill our hive with 200 members" – it's good to have a goal to work toward. Although the Friends have always celebrated National Friends of Libraries Week, its only in the past few years that they have tied a membership drive to this week.



A very happy stuffed Teddy bear surrounded by honeybees wore a sign, "Bee-come a Friends member today!" A cleverly constructed beehive buzzed with activity, each bee sporting a new member's first name on its wing. The bees were so numerous, they surrounded the door jam and side

lights of the library's entrance door.

Friends Membership Chair Michele Merwarth came up with the theme. "It was fun to do and it garnered a lot of attention from the patrons, including the youngest ones who would check on the number of bees in the hive each time they visited the library," said Michele.

Clever adages swarmed the walls of the lobby, a bit like "Dad jokes," expanding on the theme: "Mem-bears need honey"; "The more bees we have, the more honey (\$\$) we can make"; "The hive is swarming"; "Bee happy – Bee a Friends mem-bear."



With spring in the air and our growing emphasis on native plants and pollinators, now's the time to consider this campaign for YOUR hive! It's a natural! We're sure it will get your patrons buzzing about the Friends and all they do to support the library.

Bee-cause we are always talking membership, below you will find some other clever ideas that came from our discussions at past FLS meet-ups. And at the end of this article, you'll find lots of "membership-raising" ideas from the Monroe County Library System's Friends Council discussion. See pages 9 and 10. Good luck growing your beehive!

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Book Club for One!

In both the December issue of their e-newsletter and in an early January Facebook post, the Penfield Public Library encouraged their adult patrons to "Stay warm and cozy this January with your custom-designed ceramic mug, tea, cookies, and bookmark, courtesy of the Friends of PPL." Any patron checking out materials at the library could request a free Book Club for One kit on a first-come-first-served basis. Nearly 400 mugs flew out the door in a week!

Director Rhonda Rossman brought the idea from her former library, West Nyack Free Library in Rockland County. With the pandemic restricting any in-person gatherings, the West Nyack staff packaged up some coffee mugs, Twinings tea bags, and a Pepperidge Farm cookie packet to give to patrons. Children received a hot chocolate packet. A form asked patrons to report back on their reading, but very few comments came back – it was all about that cozy feeling from a mug full of warmth! West Nyack had the program for two years. Now with generosity of the Penfield Friends, Rhonda has now been able to offer these creative "Book Club for One" kits twice.



Editorial note: If your organization has their 501(c)(3), think about applying for a one by one® grant from 4imprint (<https://onebyone.4imprint.com/application>). Nonprofits, schools, and religious organizations can secure \$500 toward promotional products like mugs with the Friends logo. See page 6 of the September 2024 issue of "Friends News and Notes" for details on this marketing grant.

Calling FLS Members Who Are Thinking About Attending the NYLA Conference...

Apply now for the FLS Randall Enos Conference Scholarship.

Are you a Friends of Libraries Section member who is thinking about attending the NYLA Conference this November in Saratoga Springs? FLS has good news for you. You may be eligible to apply for the FLS Randall Enos Conference Scholarship (RECS). Are you a member of a Friends of the library group? Do you serve as the Staff Liaison to your library's Friends group? Do you have a stellar Friends group at your library? Could you or one of the Friends volunteers benefit from a professional development opportunity at the NYLA Annual Conference?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, please consider applying for the RECS to attend the 2025 NYLA Annual Conference. The award pays up to \$1,000 for an individual to attend the conference. Reimbursements may include registration, tickets for events and meal functions, lodging, and travel expenses.

Randy is quoted as saying, "Some people are drawn to bars, some to church groups, I was drawn to the library!" To learn more about Randy, why this award is named for him, and how to apply, visit the [FLS RECS](#) page.

Here's a little about the last two RECS Recipients.

In 2021 the recipient was Christopher Lund. He grew up on Long Island and was a regular visitor to his local library where his mother was a part-time employee. He was not drawn to information studies as a young person, but

instead pursued a degree in philosophy followed by attaining a law degree from Cornell University. Chris realized that his true interest was law research and ultimately became a Law Librarian. Professionally, Chris has the goal of building and expanding relationships between public libraries and public access legal libraries.

"Keeping it alive and lively" was Chris' motto when he volunteered as President of the Friends of Cortland Free Library. His interest in attending the NYLA Conference was to meet Friends from small and rural libraries and learn how they developed their membership structure. Chris was elected to the FLS Executive Board in 2021 as a Member At Large and in April 2024, Chris became President of the Friends of Libraries Section.



Theresa Schommer, our most recent recipient, was a trustee for the Monroe Free Library. Terry is attempting to re-establish and energize the library's Friends in her role as Trustee Liaison. She noted how attending the 2023 NYLA Annual

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Last Call for Nominations: FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award



Daniel W. Casey
courtesy ALA Archives

Would you like an opportunity to honor an active library supporter, a community volunteer, or a Friends of the Library organization? FLS offers the FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award to honor the efforts of a volunteer member or group within the library community who have contributed to the growth of libraries or Friends of the Library organizations. 2025 is the 30th anniversary of this prestigious award.

With this award, FLS annually acknowledges not simply good work on behalf of libraries but recognizes the people who go above and beyond what is asked of them. These library civic leaders see a need, focus on a challenge, share goals, and commit to exceptional community service. Recent recipients have included the Friends of the Fairport Public Library and Kris Macdonald, Friends of the Beekman Public Library, in 2021; Jane Harkinson, Friends of the Cornwall Public Library in 2022; Marjorie L. Gascon, Friends of the Webster Public Library in 2023; and in 2024, Paulette Quinn, Friends of the Marcellus Free Library.

The recipient receives a plaque and the Friends of the Library group with which the individual or group is associated will be given a one-year organizational membership in FLS/NYLA. FLS will work with the nominator to hold a reception for the award recipient at their local library. The award recipient will also be announced at the FLS Annual Membership Meeting in November 2025.

To nominate a group or individual, use the nomination packet for the FLS Daniel W. Casey Library Advocacy Award posted on www.nyla.org/friends under "Our Awards and Scholarships." Nominations must be submitted electronically and received by 5 p.m. on Sunday, June 1, 2025, at FLS.NYLA@yahoo.com. Questions concerning the award process can also be submitted to Lisa C. Wemett, FLS Coordinator for the Casey Award, at this email address.

Super-Charge Your NFOLW Celebration!

We the Friends of the Library.

NATIONAL Friends OF Libraries WEEK

OCTOBER 19-25, 2025

AN INITIATIVE OF UNITED FOR LIBRARIES

The activities Friends groups choose to carry out during National Friends of Libraries Week (October 19-25, 2025) may prove to take on even greater importance than ever given the unprecedented changes and challenges now facing libraries. Creating more awareness of the Friends and recruiting more library users to become members will assist future fundraising efforts and enlist more much-needed voices to advocate for libraries.

With those consequential results in mind, it is time to begin to think about how to put on a super-charged 2025 National Friends of Libraries Week at your library. For inspiration check out the latest winners of the National Friends of Libraries Week Awards on the United for Libraries: Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations website

<https://united.ala.org/2024-nfolw-award-winners/>.

As you brainstorm, keep in mind the criteria that most impressed the contest judges: creativity and innovation, engagement of Friends, library staff, and Trustees, and recognition/promotion of each Friends group. Use those criteria to invigorate your planning.

Be your own judge and compete against your own past efforts and results. Your thoughtfully planned effort will be a win for your Friends group and a win for your library.

The FLS Friends Meet-up in Henrietta on June 12 (see page 2) will be an opportunity to share tried and true successes as well as new and different, creative and innovative ideas. See you there!



Membership! continued from [page 6](#)

- ✓ If you operate a bookstore, every customer should be asked if they are a Friend. As part of their membership, every Friend should receive a standard discount on each purchase. Make certain folks can join on the spot at the store.
- ✓ Invest in a good database system to track membership, record donor contributions, generate renewal notices, etc. Excel and other spreadsheets are free, but donor management software will give you many more features such as communications for email marketing, data reports, and receipts. Some suggestions were MailerLite, Little Green Light, and Bloomerang.
- ✓ The Friends should be visible on every program flier (if they underwrite programs), acknowledged in introductions at program sessions, and with signage ("This program brought to you by the Friends"). Membership literature should be prominently displayed at all events.
- ✓ Recognize your members/donors: handwritten thank you notes to new and renewing members; host an event (e.g., breakfast, luncheon, annual meeting) to highlight volunteers and other supporters.
- ✓ Have a membership table at each book sale, but also out in the community at festivals, farmers' markets, senior health fairs, etc. Engage people with a well scripted "elevator pitch" to explain who the Friends are and what they do.
- ✓ Play up the social aspect of volunteering and Friends projects – "We put the FUN in fundraising." Host a tea, soup supper, or ice cream social so volunteers can connect with one another and learn more about their fellow library supporters. Encourage current members to bring a guest to introduce them to the Friends.

MCLS Membership-Raising Ideas

This compilation of ideas was gathered during the fall 2024 Monroe County Library System's Friends Council meeting. The groups who indicated that they used this "best practice" are indicated after the idea. It is evident certain ideas are used successfully by many groups. The task proposed was how to attract members (a.k.a., donors, supporters) to the Friends organization.

Some basics:

- A Membership Chair and the Membership Committee members should be **upbeat, friendly folks**. They should be able to engage patrons and potential volunteers, with the ability to clearly explain the Friends, how the group makes a difference, and why it is important to support the library through membership in the organization. (Gates)
- If you are sitting a table at a community event, **have a way to pull people in**: free candy, a drawing for a free book (or even a membership), just by putting down your name and email address. (Use the slips later to build

your Friends mailing list for an electronic newsletter or messages to recruit folks to help at a Friends event.)

Book Sales

Everyone equates book sales (or the bookstore corner of the library) with the Friends. Take advantage of these events to promote Friends membership.

- Encourage the Friends team members to **have a good time together working the sale**. Invite rank-and-file members to give two hours of their time to help at the sale. Reach out and involve folks; next year, they might be your "day captains"! (Chili)
- **Friends Preview Night** (the first night of the sale with access to the best of the sales stock) not only is a perk for all members, but can also bring in new members when you sell memberships at the door for that "first night" privilege. (Ogden, Greece, Pittsford)
- Offer **"Member Days"** at the sale. (Brighton)
- **Coupons!** Drive business to your sale by distributing a coupon via USPS to your members or include a coupon that can be clipped out of your Friends newsletter. As part of the registration process for a new library card, **distribute a coupon to the bookstore to new card holders**. (Brighton, Greece)
- It goes without saying, **have a Friends membership table at all days of your book sale event**. The Greece Friends gained 24 new members at their sidewalk sale!

Membership Drives

- Make it **fun and memorable!** "Bee-come a Friend" was just one punny slogan for the Friends of the Marcellus Free Library's membership drive in October. They were looking for "worker bees" (a.k.a. active volunteers) and put together a display in the lobby complete with a teddy bear, jar of honey, model of a beehive, and cute bee cut-outs, where new members signed their first name, and which were then posted up on the wall. The whole lobby was buzzing! It was easy to see at a glance that the library was a hive of activity when the Friends became involved.
- Strive to reach new residents of your community. The Friends organization may be a really good fit for their skills and energy!

Marketing and Outreach

- Start with an **eye-catching brochure** outlining your levels of membership. You might want to give the levels fun names like "Novelists" or "Good Friends" (leading up to Lifetime memberships, "Best Friends Forever"). **Review your membership rates**. It is one of your primary funding streams. Maybe single memberships should be \$10 versus \$5.

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Membership-Raising continued from previous page

- Reach out to potential members with a **personal touch**; you gain members by asking directly if the person would like to support the organization.
- **Utilize the support of the library staff** members: they can tell about the Friends "good works." ("Oh, you got one of the new books from the 'Rapid Reads' collection. Did you know the Friends just provided funds to double the number of books in that collection?") Keep the staff informed of your initiatives and projects, not just the fundraisers.
- Books to People, Chili's **outreach service for people** unable to come to the library: marketing the service can encourage other patrons to take advantage of the service, with the added benefit of informing them of yet another way the Friends and volunteers expand the services of the library.
- If the Friends underwrite library programs, have a **Friends "Ambassador" introduce the program** and provide Friends membership literature to the audience members. Have a table display showing what the Friends do. (Ogden)
- Distribute bookmarks about joining the Friends to the bookstore customers. (Greece)
- Hold an **annual meeting of the Friends**, introduce the officers and committee members, recognize volunteer efforts, and present an annual report (a.k.a. **impact report**) highlighting the year's projects and extras the Friends provided for the library. (Marcellus)
- **Personalized bricks** can immortalize a person or family while enhancing the library's landscape. Recognizing the past president of the Friends led to retooling the brick brochure to encourage more purchases by community members and elicited media coverage of the unveiling. (Mendon)

Events other than a book sale that gets lots of volunteers involved (e.g., social gatherings for members)

- Have a **"tabling team"**—folks that are willing to sit a booth at a community event, like Canal Days, the town's fall festival at the firehall, or church sales. The crowd might not expect to see the library with a "vendor" table there, so you'll get noticed! (Ogden, Mendon)
- **Love Your Library** event at Greece with a raffle basket drawing gave the Friends the opportunity to direct patrons to the new bookstore location in the building and created awareness about the organization in general.
- **A trivia night fundraiser** by the Friends of the Drake Library at SUNY Brockport helped earn some revenue, but also led to **media coverage of the event** and the group. (The Friends primarily recruit the university's faculty and staff, but community members and alumnae are also encouraged to support the library.) They are planning a **miniature golf tournament in the stacks** over the winter.

Incentives or "perks" to join that you offer to members

- **Recognize your members** regularly with a hearty "thank you" for their efforts.
- Host a **reception for your lifetime members**. This level membership often is sold as a "once and done," but keep these members engaged, too. A plaque in the library or even a listing in your newsletter one time a year puts their generosity front and center. (Chili)
- Have a membership level (\$25+) that provides a true perk: **a book sale night for this special level of membership that puts a cap/limit of 10 books per family or dealer**. Everyone receives the same benefit and dealers are not making piles to snatch up all the best book stock. (Brighton)
- **Offer a wide variety of ways to be involved**. Book sales don't speak to every volunteer. How else can someone be active in your organization and contribute to the success of the Friends? (Pittsford)

NYLA Membership Reminders

- ☐ NYLA membership is a fixed year and runs June 1 - May 31
- ☐ Open enrollment begins in mid-April
- ☐ You must join or renew by May 31 to be eligible to vote in the NYLA, FLS, and other Unit elections
- ☐ A Friends Group Organizational Membership includes up to **five** individuals, each with their own login and membership benefits, including voting privileges
 - ☐ If you need help determining whether a Friends Group Organizational Membership or a personal membership is the right choice for you and/or your Friends group, please email FLS.nyla@yahoo.com
- ☐ A Friends Group Organizational Membership is \$150
- ☐ A personal Friend membership is \$60

Helpful webpages:

For information on pricing and types of membership, see

<https://www.nyla.org/membership-categories>

For renewal FAQs, see

<https://www.nyla.org/member-renewal-faqs>

FLS is grateful for your membership in the Section, whether it's your first year, or your 31st year. You are a valuable supporter within the library community. The more Friends of libraries that join in, the more we can do with and for the libraries that we all hold so dear.

"Friends Helping Friends" is the motto that keeps this Section fueled and ready to do the hard work of supporting each other.

Thank you again for your membership in FLS.

FLS Executive Board and Auxiliary Volunteers

Officers

President: Chris Lund
FLS Councilor: Jerrie Grantham
First Vice President: Meg Van Patten
Second Vice President: currently vacant
Secretary: Joyce Maguda
Treasurer: Terry Mulee
Immediate Past President: currently vacant
President Emeritus: Randall Enos

Members At Large

Jen Allen
Matt Corey
Jim Foster
Erica Freudenberger
Mary Giardini
Meg Sgombick
Lisa C. Wemett

NYLA Committee Representatives

Awards Committee: Meghan Lenahan
Communications Committee: Terry Mulee
Conference Ambassador: Meg Van Patten
Continuing Education Committee: Matt Corey
Governance: Chris Lund
Intellectual Freedom Committee: Chris Lund
Legislative Committee: Jean Sheviak
Membership Committee: Mary Giardini
Sponsorship/Fundraising: Terry Mulee

FLS Auxiliary Volunteers

Voting Alternate for FLS Councilor: Chris Lund
FLS Casey Award Coordinator: Lisa C. Wemett
FLS Enos Scholarship Coordinator: Terry Mulee
Coordinator for Professional Development:
Lisa C. Wemett
Coordinator of FLS Trade Show Booth: Jen Allen
Coordinator on Friends Councils: Jim Foster
Marketing Coordinator: Meg Sgombick
Nominating Committee Chair: Erica Freudenberger
NFOLW Coordinator: Paulette Quinn
Regional Workshop Trainers:
Joyce Laiosa,
Lisa C. Wemett

Contact us anytime at FLS.nyla@yahoo.com
Visit the Friends of Libraries Section at
www.NYLA.org/Friends

FLS is not publishing email addresses in an attempt to eliminate phishing scams. Please use the NYLA Membership Directory to find contact information or use the FLS email. Please indicate your email recipient. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Enos Scholarship continued from page 7

Conference "...was a great experience and I learned so much about Friends groups, but also about the library world in general. I came away with many ideas and lots of encouragement for our library's group."

So, what about you? Whether you are a community volunteer or a library staff member, applicants must be a member of FLS/NYLA and involved in a local Friends group at any type of library in New York State. Applications must be received by June 1. Click [here](#) for the application packet.

The application form and supporting documentation should be submitted to FLS.nyla@yahoo.com. Use the same address for any questions. The Scholarship Committee will review all eligible applications and notify applicants of the results in the summer.

Donate to the FLS Enos Conference Scholarship Fund

Please consider a donation to the FLS Randall Enos Conference Scholarship Fund to ensure this worthy scholarship well into the future.

To make a donation, log in to your existing NYLA account (or create one) at <http://www.nyla.org>. Once you have logged in, select "Make a Donation" from the Quick Links. Scroll down that page until you find the FLS Randall Enos Scholarship Fund and enter your donation amount. Then scroll to the bottom and select "next" to complete your donation. To use your credit card, select "Pay Now" and continue with your payment details. To send a check, select "Invoice Me" and complete the page. Once you receive the invoice via email, print it out and mail it to NYLA along with your check.

Thanks for your continued support of FLS and the Friends who help libraries across New York State.

This newsletter is a publication of the
Friends of Libraries Section of the New York Library Association.

Newsletter Editor: Terry Mulee
Proofreader and Contributor: Lisa C. Wemett

The current issue of Friends News and Notes is available on the FLS [Our Newsletter](#) page. Archived issues back to August of 2023 may be accessed by FLS members.

NYLA leads, educates, and advocates for the advancement of the New York library community.

FLS By-Laws Rationale for Changes and Markup
document on next page



Friends of Libraries Section

*FLS creates a network to connect and inspire Friends groups
in all types of libraries to support the New York library community.*

www.NYLA.org/Friends

FLS Vote on Amended By-Laws Rationale for Changes, page 1-2 By-Laws Markup, begins on page 3

The FLS Executive Board has voted to submit amendments to the By-Laws of the Friends of Libraries Section, currently dated June 16, 2023, for approval by the FLS membership. The Executive Board recommends ratification of these amended by-laws which incorporate changes in several governance areas that mirror the Section's current operations and align with NYLA's existing by-laws.

A draft of the full text of the amended by-laws, dated April 2, 2025, begins on page three of this document, after a list of the recommended changes.

Thank you for voting on this question during the online election, June 1-15, 2025. If the proposed changes are ratified by our members, these amended by-laws shall go into effect at the close of the 2025 FLS/NYLA election. Please feel free to reach out to FLS President Christopher Lund at ChristopherLundEsq@gmail.com with any questions.

Below is a summary of the rationale and purpose behind proposed key changes to the 2023 by-laws. In the full text document (beginning on page three), changes and deletions are noted in red text. Changes of wording or new text to be inserted is indicated in blue text.

- Article III. Removed lifetime membership as a category of available membership. Under the new NYLA membership structure, a lifetime membership option is not available.
- Article IV, Section B. Under the current NYLA By-laws, if the FLS Councilor is unable to attend a NYLA Council meeting, the alternate we send to the meeting in their place will not have voting rights unless that alternate attendee is specifically granted voting rights by a vote of the FLS membership. This change will allow the President to serve as a backup FLS Councilor with full voting rights in Council meetings.
- Article IV, Section C. The change in the date on which FLS officers take office has been added to conform with the current rules of the NYLA By-Laws.
- Article V, Section B.
 - Board Advisor: Due to several procedural questions that have arisen in relation to the impact of a resignation of the FLS President, we have restructured the Immediate Past President position into a "Board Advisor" position. Among other things, the primary benefit of this change is that it will allow the Board to fill this position by appointment in the event of a vacancy.
 - Second Vice President: Recent changes to NYLA's membership structure have reduced

the scope of many of the membership duties previously performed by the Second Vice President. In light of these changes, we have elected to eliminate this position and to re-distribute remaining duties to Members at Large.

- Article V, Section E. The quorum for board meetings has been amended to six (6) members, or slightly less than half of the total board, primarily in order to clarify existing ambiguities and difficulties with establishing a quorum in the event of board vacancies.
- Article V, Section G. A new section added to clarify procedures in the event of a resignation of a sitting board member.
- Article V, Section H. This update reflects the fact that NYLA no longer provides FLS Board members with direct access to editing and/or uploading documents on the NYLA website.
- Article VI, Section G. A new section added to clarify procedures for appointing members to represent FLS on NYLA standing committees.



Friends of Libraries Section

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www.NYLA.org/Friends

BY-LAWS FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES SECTION OF THE NEW YORK LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Friends of Libraries Section of the New York Library Association (hereafter "FLS" or "the Section").

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Section, a unit of the New York Library Association (sometimes hereafter "NYLA" or "The Association"), shall be:

- A. To promote cooperative efforts and the exchange of information among individuals active in community Friends groups and others interested in library service in New York State.
- B. To encourage the establishment of Friends groups throughout New York State and to assist in their formation.
- C. To present programs at the NYLA Annual Conference that pertain to and enhance the mission of this Section.
- D. To provide leadership and assistance in advocacy for libraries, library Friends, and library users throughout New York State.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be available to:

~~A. A~~ any person who is an eligible voting member of the New York Library Association as part of a Personal or Organizational membership in the Association.

~~B. Individuals who are recognized by the Section for their outstanding service or support for libraries and are awarded Honorary Lifetime Membership (non-voting).~~

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS OF THE SECTION

A. Officers - The FLS members shall elect the officers of the Section by majority vote. The ~~elected~~ officers of the Section shall be a President, ~~First~~ Vice President/President-

Elect, ~~Second Vice President~~, Board Advisor, Secretary, Treasurer, the FLS Councilor, and seven Members At Large.

B. Duties - The elected officers shall perform the duties pertaining to their respective offices as included in the FLS Leadership Manual and such other duties applicable to the office as approved by the Executive Board. In addition to the foregoing duties, the President is hereby designated to serve as the voting alternate to the FLS Councilor as permitted by Article V, Section 3.3 of the by-laws of the New York Library Association. All officers shall turn over their records in good order to their successors within one month after their term expires.

C. Terms of Office - The President shall serve a term of one year and then, upon completion of a full term, shall serve on the Executive Board as Board Advisor ~~Immediate Past President~~ until succeeded. -The ~~First~~ Vice President/President-Elect shall serve a term of one year and shall become President upon the expiration of the President's term. -The ~~Second Vice President~~, Treasurer, Secretary, and Members At Large shall each serve a term of two years. - The FLS Councilor shall serve a term of three years representing the Section on the NYLA Council. Officers of the Section shall assume office at the same time as other officers of the Association ~~Terms of office shall commence at the close of the New York Library Association Annual Membership Meeting or by November 15 December 1, whichever occurs first.~~ -All officers must be members of the Section throughout their term of office.

D. Limitations – Each person elected shall hold only one office at a time, provided that the President's designation as voting alternate to the FLS Councilor as provided in Section IV(B) above shall not be deemed as holding an additional office.

ARTICLE V. EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Purpose - The Executive Board shall serve as the interim governing body between Annual Membership Meetings. The Executive Board shall report its actions at the Annual Membership Meeting.

B. Membership - The Executive Board shall consist of the President, the ~~First~~ Vice President/President-Elect, the Board Advisor ~~Immediate Past President~~, the FLS Councilor, ~~the Second Vice President~~, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and seven at-large board members as voting members.

C. Meetings and Remote Participation - The Executive Board shall meet at the call of the President or at the request of a majority of the Executive Board. The Executive Board may also conduct business by any virtual communication method approved by the Executive Board allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear and speak to each other provided at least 24 hours notice is given. - Virtual participation shall constitute presence in person at a meeting for all purposes, including quorum and voting. -Resolutions made by email must be voted upon and accepted by unanimous written consent by all members of the Executive Board within the time limitations of the initial resolution. -If the vote is not unanimously in favor, the decision cannot be approved and the business must be brought forth at a subsequent ~~the next regularly~~

~~scheduled~~ meeting of the Executive Board or Executive Committee. -Actions taken by electronic communication shall be recorded by the Secretary, verified, and included in the minutes of the next Executive Board meeting.

D. Absences – If any elected officer ~~or at-large board member~~ fails to attend three consecutive meetings without advance notice to the President, the member shall be considered as having resigned. -The vacant position shall be filled as provided for in this Article.

E. Quorum - ~~A majority of the~~ Six (6) members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum.

F. Vacancies – The President-Elect will assume the Presidency if a vacancy occurs in the elected President's position and then assume a full term as President. -Other vacancies in the Executive Board may be filled after a recommendation by the President and approval by the Executive Board for the remainder of that year. -The position(s) will be filled by election at the next regular election to complete the term(s).

G. Resignation - The effectiveness of the resignation of the FLS Councilor shall be governed by the terms of the by-laws of the New York Library Association. Resignations of any other officers shall be deemed effective three (3) calendar days following the date on which the resigning officer delivers a written notice to the Executive Committee (as defined below), provided that the resigning officer does not withdraw their resignation notice prior the expiration of such three (3) day period.

~~G~~H. FLS Leadership Manual of Policies and Procedures – -The FLS Leadership Manual is to be maintained by the Executive Board, who shall use reasonable efforts to post the most current version of such Leadership Manual on a publicly available~~the Section's~~ webpage. -The Manual shall consist of a record of policies adopted by the Executive Board, with date of approval, and guidelines for duties and procedures to be followed by elected officers. -The President or the President's designee shall be responsible for reviewing the Manual annually and keeping materials up-to-date.

ARTICLE VI. COMMITTEES, AD HOC COMMITTEES, AND TASK FORCES

A. Committees of the Board – Committees of the board are comprised of officers of the Section. -A minimum of three officers serve on each committee of the board and can act on behalf of the entire Board.

The Executive Committee is comprised of the President, the ~~First~~ Vice President/President-Elect, the Board Advisor~~Immediate Past President, the Second Vice President,~~ the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the FLS Councilor. -This committee is empowered to transact all business of the Section in between Executive Board and Annual Membership Meetings. -A vote of this committee may be taken in person, by telephone, by mail, or by electronic communications. -A complete record of these transactions taken by the Secretary must be presented in writing at the next Executive Board meeting.

B. Committees of the Section - The Executive Board may create such committees of the Section and ad hoc committees as it deems necessary and may determine their size. The Executive Board shall establish the charge to each committee and shall annually review the need to continue or discharge a committee. -The President shall be an ex officio member of any committee. -The President-Elect shall recommend for appointment Committee Chairpersons and their membership for the coming year by the end of the FLS Annual Membership Meeting.

C. Vacancies in committees may be filled for the remainder of the vacancy's term after a recommendation by the President and approval by the Executive Board.

D. The President, with approval of the Executive Board, may appoint task forces to carry out detailed tasks for specified periods of time.

E. Chairs of committees of the Section and task forces who are not members of the Executive Board and who attend meetings of the Executive Board shall not have voting privileges at these meetings.

F. All chairs of committees and task forces shall submit a written report annually to the Executive Board one month prior to the Annual Membership Meeting or by November 1, whichever occurs first.

G. The Section President selects individuals to be recommended for appointment by the President of NYLA to standing committees of the Association, providing the Section with representation on these committees. These recommendations shall be approved by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

A. The Nominating Committee is chaired by the Board Advisor~~Immediate Past President~~. The Board Advisor~~Immediate Past President~~ shall recommend two additional Section members who are approved by the President to serve on the committee.

B. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of candidates for office.- Candidates for the office of ~~First~~-Vice President/President-Elect shall be nominated each year. Candidates for the offices of ~~The Second Vice President,~~ Treasurer, and three Members At Large shall be nominated in even-numbered years.- Candidates for the offices of Secretary and four Members At Large shall be nominated in odd-numbered years. Candidates for the position of FLS Councilor shall be nominated every three years.- The committee shall present the slate to the Executive Board for its approval by April 30. The slate shall then be submitted to the members. -All candidates must be members of the Section at the time of nomination and throughout their terms of office.

C. Additional nominations may be added from the Section membership by petition signed by ten members submitted to the Nominating Committee no less than 6 weeks prior to the scheduled issuing of the ballot.

D. The ballot that includes petition candidates shall be issued by the most efficient and comprehensive means to all members of the Section in accordance with the coordinated ballot timeline for elections fixed by the by-laws of the New York Library Association.

E. The members shall be informed of the results of the election prior to the Annual Membership Meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS

A. Annual Meeting - The Annual Membership Meeting shall take place during the NYLA Annual Conference or in an in-person, virtual, or hybrid mode at a time and place established by the Executive Board. -Members shall be notified no less than one month before the meeting date.

B. Special Meetings - Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Board or they may be convened by 10% of the voting members who may, in writing, demand the call of a special meeting specifying the date and place. -The special meeting shall be held not less than two nor more than three months from the date of such written demand. -The membership is to be given advance notice of at least 30 days before such meeting. -The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call and no other business shall be transacted.

C. Quorum - Those members present and voting shall constitute a quorum at the Annual Membership Meeting. -In addition, at least three members of the Executive Board must be present at this meeting.

D. Voting - A simple majority of the members present and voting shall be sufficient for action on matters coming before the general membership except on amendments to the by-laws, which shall be governed by the terms of Article X below.

ARTICLE IX. FINANCES

A. The fiscal year of the Section shall be concurrent with that of the New York Library Association and a budget request for the fiscal year shall be approved by the Executive Board prior to the deadline set by the Association in line with its budgeting process ~~year's commencement~~.

B. No officer, committee, task force, or individual member shall incur any expenses on behalf of the Section unless duly authorized by the Executive Board.

C. The official financial records of the Section shall be maintained at the NYLA office. ~~The Section accounts~~ and are subject to the audit practices of the New York Library Association.

D. The Treasurer shall present a financial status report and a budget status report at each Executive Board meeting.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these by-laws may be initiated by the Executive Board or by a petition from ten members. - The Executive Board is required to submit all proposed amendments with recommendation for ratification by members voting either at the Annual Membership Meeting or through procedures authorized by Article VIII. -A two-thirds majority of the members participating is required for passage. -A copy of all proposed amendments must be provided to all members at least 30 days in advance of the vote. -By-law amendments may be voted upon by mail, through [the](#) NYLA's online voting system, or at the Section's Annual Membership Meeting.

ARTICLE XI. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, shall be the parliamentary authority in all matters not specifically covered by these by-laws.

Adopted, March 30, 2015

Amended, June 16, 2022

Amended, June 16, 2023