

## Strengthening Libraries in Oklahoma through Friends of Libraries

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### Public Library Survey

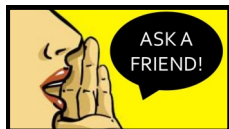
The EveryLibrary Institute released in October the *Public Library Survey Data: Some Answers, Many Questions* by Jill Hurst-Wahl, presenting a thoughtful discussion of the Institute of Museum and Library Services survey data from 2017.

The U.S. had 17,542 public libraries. (That's more than Starbucks or McDonald's.) Oklahoma has over 200 central, branch or bookmobile outlets.

Having paid staff with a high level of skills and able to teach new skills is essential. Oklahoma had 937 full-time equivalent librarians (CA had 4,434 and AK had 106). Oklahoma had 2,122 registered borrowers per librarian (VT and CN had 1,400).

The report suggested further questions:

- ▶ Are public libraries where we need them?
- ▶ How do we determine if staff members understand the community?
- ▶ How many public library staff are needed to improve the community's service and infrastructure needs (workforce development, innovation, connectivity, leadership, community engagement)?



**Question:** Our Friends group only has so many active participants. How can we stretch our efforts, time and resources?

**Answer:** What a challenge! Make sure that everything you are trying to do is part of the long-range plan, not just what you've always done. Getting the buy-in of other organizations and community agencies can spread the workload.



At the meeting of the Public Library Division of the Oklahoma Library Association in October, the discussion centered around successful partnerships. Friends members have a great sphere of influence and may assist libraries in reaching out to community businesses and agencies to become potential partners.

Participating libraries had successfully partnered with chambers of commerce, Rotary, preschools, Masons, state parks, health departments, city organizations, schools, community businesses, culinary schools, Alzheimer's Association, hospitals, local experts, OSU Extension and summer camps.

Todd Gibson, Moore (OK) Chief of Police, has served on the Pioneer Library System (PLS) Library Board and spoke at the meeting. He was so very enthusiastic and invigorating, encouraging each attendee to expand his/her circle of influence and build relationships one at a time.

PLS and other nonprofit groups offer services to jails – education, literacy, job opportunities, etc. They focus on one person at a time. There's a ripple effect. Teaching people to read leads to employment or better employment and housing. The illiteracy and poverty cycles are very real.

He says we can “enhance the community by making positive impacts on individuals.” He trains police to reach out to individuals and to leverage partnerships to create a higher quality of life.

Gibson continued, “When we synergize, 1+1=3.” Education is a great equalizer. Libraries help bridge the at-home and school system gap and bring about connectivity and synergy. He encouraged participants, “If you care about your community, provide leadership to make progress and find partners.”

Change agents face rejection sometimes. You must cooperate and work as a team toward a common goal. Put egos and rivalries aside to reach the goals. Continue to push forward. Trying to make positive changes in the community is sometimes discouraging and frustrating, but leveraging groups together will make a great impact to better your community.

See “Partnerships That Work” on p. 5.

## From the President. . .



I just finished drafting the Christmas letter that we send to family and friends. It reaches the same conclusion that many others have expressed: 2020 has proved to be a memorable year, but not for the reasons we had hoped.

That's certainly true for FOLIO and for Oklahoma's libraries. I don't need to elaborate on the details. Perhaps the most sobering note of all is that, this late in the year, there is no sign that the pandemic will wind down until one or more vaccines are in

really wide use. That could easily be sometime in the second half of 2021.

But that brings me to one really good thing that happened recently. FOLIO's highlight of National Friends of Libraries Week was the virtual town hall meeting of Oklahoma Friends, "Friends of Libraries in a Pandemic World", which took place via Zoom on October 20, with Friends from diverse communities across the state participating. Their reports on what their groups and libraries have been doing this year showed that imagination and dedication can accomplish good things, even in really bad situations.

One thing we heard repeatedly was that it is still possible for Friends to conduct used book sales. They just have to be done somewhat differently. People still have lots of books they want to donate, and libraries have books to discard. Instead of turning them away because you have neither the time nor the space nor the number of volunteers to sort donated and discarded books in the usual way, you still have options. You can step up the sale of books from a designated sale area in the library, keeping the shelves freshly stocked as items are sold and taking a little time to remove the duds that haven't sold, sending them for recycling. Or you can set up sacks or boxes marked by category (mysteries, romances, thrillers, sci-fi, teen, westerns, history, cookbooks, crafts, jigsaw puzzles, etc.) and then sell the sacks or boxes at a set price once they are full. You can even arrange curbside delivery. This moves the books, makes money, and saves time and space. You can also stick a Friends newsletter or ad or a library flyer in with the books.

You can still do programs, too. They just have to be virtual. In fact, they can sometimes be even better that way. Getting an author to come and speak usually involves mileage expenses and often an honorarium, but particularly a good amount of valuable travel time. If the author will agree to speak via Zoom (or another online service), they can save the travel time and you can save the expense of the travel. You can solicit donations from people and you can even arrange for the sale of autographed copies of the author's books.

Whatever services your Friends group is providing, remember to let the community know about them.

And let the community know that new Friends are welcome and that there is work to be done.

Your holidays may be different this year. You can still make them special. It will just take some of the same imagination and dedication that will make your Friends group special even in this unusual time.

I wish you, then, a Happy Holiday Season and Great Reading in the year to come.

*Wayne Hanway, President*

### FOLIO Board Actions

At the October 2020 FOLIO Board discussion:

- Confirmed plans for the FOLIO Annual Meeting, held in conjunction with the Oklahoma Library Association Conference, now scheduled March 10-12, 2021 at the Embassy Suites in Norman with some programs available online.
- Reviewed all of the ongoing activities, i.e., Ambassador contacts, Facebook activity, membership, Endowment fundraising and upcoming Awards.
- Discussed the successful "Friends of Libraries in a Pandemic World" online session held Oct. 20. Watch for plans for another "Let's Talk" session.

## Robert J. Conley Literary Landmark

Author Robert J. Conley was honored with a Literary Landmark, housed at the Cushing Public Library, on November 7. The Landmark was sponsored by the Friends of the Cushing Public Library, Cushing Public Library, FOLIO, and nationally United for Libraries.

Dr. Karen Neurohr, FOLIO past president and board member, served as the master of ceremonies, highlighting the state's legacy of Literary Landmarks. Drama students from the Cushing High School shared a dramatic reading from one of Conley's books.

The keynote speaker was Dr. C. Blue Clark, author and instructor of US History and Native American Legal Issues and Religion at Oklahoma City University. His works include *Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock: Treaty Rights and Indian Law at the End of the 19th Century* and *Indian Tribes of Oklahoma*. Evelyn Conley has been carrying on the legacy of her late husband, focusing on completing some of his projects and archiving his research and materials. Mrs. Conley unveiled the Literary Landmark plaque. "Thank you" to all who assisted in making this special recognition possible, including FOLIO's Literary Landmark Committee chair Judy Haught.



## Friends of the Library in a Pandemic World

FOLIO and the Oklahoma Department of Libraries sponsored a discussion with Friends and library staff about Friends challenges, opportunities and activities in 2020 on October 20. Twenty-six registered for this great event.



The Friends of the Metropolitan Library System held their annual meeting in August virtually.

Many of the Friends do not use email; so they are finding technology as a big obstacle of communication and information-sharing. Heather Zeoli, Director of Development and Volunteer Services for Metro, reported that their number one goal is to keep the Friends safe; so they have strict guidelines at their book sorting site. (They are not officially taking book donations, although some come in the book drops.) The Friends group has ad hoc committees for specific tasks and use safety measures in performing tasks.

The Metro Friends' big book sale for next year is cancelled, and they are considering having a by-the-box genre sale. Volunteers are listing and selling books on Amazon with \$9,000-\$10,000 gross each month. After mailing costs about one-half is profit.

The South OKC Library Friends provides funds mainly for programming, special projects and staff training. The library book sales are currently open on shelves in the library and ongoing, shared Friend Sharon Saulmon. The Friends raise as much money from these sales as from their major book sales, temporarily on hold.

Tulsa Helmerich Library Friends has two storage units, and they're receiving gift books, said Friends member Candace Baird. However, they are not currently permitted to work on sorting in the library. They are thinking about having their major sale in the spring or summer 2021, possibly using an outdoor tent.

The Claremore Public Library currently only allows 10 people in the library at a time. They are quarantining books. The Friends have given gift cards to the library to purchase items for craft kits that are very popular. Friends helped with summer reading. Friends Sharon Douthitt and Paula Smith said that they have held their membership and board meetings at the Will Rogers Memorial outdoors.

The Friends of the Elk City Carnegie Library are having regular meetings, reported Linda Stineman. Their library has not closed. The library staff sanitizes the books, as they are returned. Treat bags are available for Halloween. The Friends mail a regular newsletter. They are looking into getting authors to read in a virtual setting for schools. (They have sponsored very successful author events in the past.) The Friends gave books to the school lunch participants this summer.

The Lawton Public Library and Friends have had challenges and opportunities during the pandemic, said Library Director Kristin Hall. The pandemic gave them the opportunity to do things they had wanted to do but had not accomplished, i.e., online card applications and curbside

service. The Friends had a book sale at the mall in a closed restaurant. The Friends have continued meeting in July and October. They serve individually wrapped foods. Lunch is \$2. The Friends cover the difference in cost. The Friends are painting a mural on the outside of the Library. The Friends assisted with summer reading and helped the Library get Beanstack to track reading. It will be used for other reading programs.

Librarian Lindee DeRoin reported that the Hominy Public Library has been keeping services going and keeping the online presence up-to-date. Friends of the Tulsa City-County Libraries are funded through memberships and donations, said Friends member Diane Pennington. Tulsa Friends are continuing their "Books Sandwiched In" series and their regular "Creative Writing Contest" virtually. The Sapulpa Friends had a book sale in August with sanitizer, gloves and masks, commented Librarian Martha Stalker.

The Yukon Friends have a dedicated building for their book sale, explained Librarian Sara Schieman. They are receiving book donations and putting them in a meeting room. The Friends keep 11 Free Little Libraries stocked in the community. They mail boxes of books to the prison. On a workday one or two Friends members work together with social distancing. Friends have meetings in the large library meeting room.

Seeing everyone was great! Watch for future "Let's Talk" sessions. Let us know in what topics you would be interested by emailing [okfriendsmembers@gmail.com](mailto:okfriendsmembers@gmail.com).

FOLIO so appreciates the assistance of Cathy Van Hoy, Library Consultant at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries (ODL), for her technical support and moderation assistance. "Thank you" to FOLIO President Wayne Hanway for being emcee, ODL Director Melody Kellogg for co-sponsoring this program and to Oklahoma Library Association President Cathy Blackman for her support.

### eBay Team Created to Sell Books Online

As Friends search for alternative ways to raise monies, the Friends of the Blount County (TN) Public Library created an eBay Team. The group had recognized that 1,000-2,000 books donated weekly were worth more than \$1 or \$2, the usual book sale price. The team researched, priced, posted for sale, and then carefully packaged and mailed books to the buyers.

The team has gone from four to 20 volunteers sharing the work. In 2019 they moved from listing 1,000 titles to 3,000 books. Sales have increased by 56% over 2018.

The Friends' eBay team works quietly and efficiently to contribute to the Friends mission of supporting the library financially. Friends activities made it possible to fund \$70,000 annually for library programs. They have also purchased much-needed furniture. The eBay team is well on its way to surpassing the community book sales in revenue, contributing to the library's programs, activities, and overall success.

During the spring library shut down, the eBay team was the only functioning group of volunteers, continuing to ship out books. They were named the Friends of the Year by the Friends of the Tennessee Libraries.

*The Voice for America's Libraries*, 21.2 (July 2020): 9.

## News from Friends Groups Around the State

### Trunk-or-Treat is Big Hit in Ardmore



Trunk-or-Treat was hosted by the Friends of the Champion Public Library on October 24. Guests participated in games, a raffle, trick or treating and a costume parade. A special Halloween-themed family movie followed. Participants were encouraged to wear their costumes to the outdoor event.

"Halloween is such a fun time of the year for kids," said Emily Stinson, Southern



Okl. Library System Marketing and Public Relations Specialist. "We were excited to host this community event and to partner with other organizations." The community event was free and open to the public.

Partners included Ardmore Literacy Leadership, Girls on the Run, Michelle Stoddard, Sabrina Reeder, Ashley Moore, Martha Collings, Crafty Mom Creations, Good Shepherd Community Clinic, Gotta Love it, Ardmore Beautification Council, and Edward Jones. Such fun!

### SPLFS Finishing 2020 Strong

This year of 2020 has made it difficult to meet and accomplish what library friends groups normally do. However, the Executive Board of Stilwell Public Library Friends Society (SPLFS) were determined to move ahead, as much as possible, to meet the earlier goals they had set. They met on Oct. 26 at the old Stilwell Kansas City Southern Depot, where they socially distanced, and discussed activities for the remainder of the year as well as for 2021.



The Executive Board of the Stilwell Public Library Friends Society recently met to make plans for 2021.

They will have a yard sale in November outside the library and the volunteer appreciation dinner in December. Library Branch Manager Kathleen Connelly-Brown met with the Board to discuss how the library staff is adjusting programs to keep everyone safe during the time of COVID. The next general membership meeting will be in January with quarterly Executive Board meetings planned for 2021.

— Regina McLemore, Secretary, Stillwell PLFS

### "Thank You, Newkirk Friends"

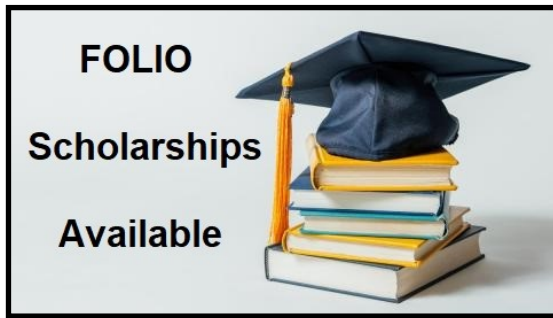
The Newkirk Friends of the Library has purchased a 27-inch laminator for the Newkirk Public Library. The purchase is to help seal the book pages for the Newkirk Book Walk. The Library staff will be happy to laminate cards, newspaper articles, and posters for the public at a cost of a dollar per foot. The Library staff is thankful to the Friends for having this new service available to the public. They will hold their annual meeting on the first Tuesday in April.

Board members of the Newkirk Friends of the Library are Roy Chaney, Chairman; Gerri Harris, Secretary; Mary Austin, Treasurer; Sue Roy; and Rachel Schneeberger.

—Marcina Overman, Librarian, Newkirk PL



Library Board members admire the new laminator purchased by the Newkirk Friends of the Library. Front row: Sue Roy, Nancy Chaney, Marcina Overman, librarian, Holly Clinel. Back row: Bernita Wathor, Roy Chaney, Chair of the Friends, Angela Kahle-Mendoza, Caralee Boswell.

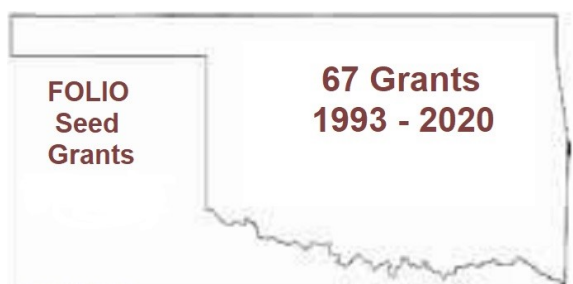


FOLIO grants four \$600 scholarships in the spring. Applications are due January 15, 2021. Information is available at [okfriends.net/scholarshipshtml.html](http://okfriends.net/scholarshipshtml.html)

The Lillian Born Norberg and Mary Lou Atkinson Staff Support Scholarships are offered to full- or part-time employees of a public, academic, or special library in Oklahoma in the process of furthering their education. Scholarship awards will be presented at the annual FOLIO meeting, held next spring on March 12 at the Embassy Suites in Norman. FOLIO has awarded scholarships since 1997.



FOLIO presents two awards of \$500 each year to Friends groups that demonstrate exemplary success in support of their local library. To be eligible, the Friends group must have paid membership dues for the year of the award. Further information and criteria are on the application which is available at [okfriends.net/awards.html](http://okfriends.net/awards.html)



**Seed Grants** (up to \$425 each) are offered by FOLIO and may be used to help with the formation, reorganization or revitalization of a Friends group to support a local library. Grants can help with legal expenses of incorporation or the creation and duplication of promotional and communication materials. Applications are found at [okfriends/awards.html](http://okfriends/awards.html) and are due on December 1, March 1, June 1 or September 1.

If you would be interested in receiving this newsletter and other correspondence from FOLIO by email, please send your email address to [okfriendsmembers@gmail.com](mailto:okfriendsmembers@gmail.com)

## Partnerships That Work



Working with community businesses and groups will create a synergy that will strengthen your Friends, Library and community. Here's some partnerships that have worked.

The Buffalo & Erie County (NY) Public Library held "Paws for Love: Read with a Dog Online." The SPCA partnered with the local library to read stories to patrons at home with therapy dogs. A new YouTube video was posted on Facebook each week.

The Champaign (IL) Library held a "Virtual Estate Planning" workshop, part of their Money Matter\$ financial planning series. St. Louis Operations for the Foundation for Financial Education presenter discussed the meaning of "tax-free inheritance" and "lifetime giving exclusions".

D. R. Evans (NY) Library hosted a "Declutter and Get Organized" webinar, presented by Cornell Cooperative of Columbia. The program covered overcoming obstacles, decluttering strategies, storage options, reducing paper overload, and dealing with financial records.

Friends of Queen Anne's County (MD) Library held a fundraiser, "Library Spirit Day at Sweet Frog." Sweet Frog, a frozen yogurt shop, donated a portion of all proceeds from treats sold that day to the Friends. Kids up to age 12 who came in were able to pick out a new book to take home with them to enjoy, compliments of the Friends.

Hennepin County (MN) Library collaborated with Senior Services to present a "Dementia Friends Information" session. Attendees learned what dementia is, how it affects people, and how to make a difference in the lives of people living with dementia, including helpful ways to communicate, interact, and help with everyday tasks.

On the third Friday afternoon of each month the Walnut Creek (CA) Library hosts "Health Services for the Homeless", where patrons experiencing homelessness can stop by. Contra County Health Services gives info on health care, appointments, transportation for medical appointments, insurance, food options, and local resources. Cooperation is received from the Walnut Creek Library Foundation and English as Second Language class.

Friends of Rosindale (MA) Public Library held "Dialogue 2 Action", a facilitated race and equity discussion in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Resilience & Racial Equity.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) Library Foundation held a book club with incarcerated teens at Jail North for four months, in cooperation with the teens' GED English class.

The Friends of the San Francisco (CA) Public Library held a Holiday Special Books & Brews Sale in December. The sale featured thousands of books as well as holiday cards, decorative prints, and art made from books. The bookmobile was there to give library cards and the Museum of Craft and Design brought a popular gift tag making project. Coupons for \$1 off beer were given for those showing their library cards by Fire2Smoke BBQ.

## FOLIO Endowment Honors Library Frontline Workers

In observance of National Friends of the Library Week, FOLIO honored the deserving people who work and volunteer in Oklahoma libraries.

While libraries have been closed, and as they reopen, staff and Friends groups are finding extraordinary ways to continue to serve the public. They are indeed our “frontline workers.”

Friends groups have held book sales with strict protocol in vacant buildings, rather than libraries. Summer reading, book reviews, and storytimes have been held online. Some Friends have gifted books to children with their school lunches during the summer. Bags with “Make and Take” crafts have been distributed for participants to do at home. Deliveries have been made to patrons’ cars. Returned books are quarantined for several days before being shelved. The number of patrons allowed in open libraries is being restricted.

Every effort is being made to safely continue the vital work of allowing people access to information and services that libraries provide.

During FOLIO’s Endowment Fundraiser, Friends and library staff were asked to nominate outstanding library staff or Friends volunteers. The Chandler-Watts Library in Stratford honored their long-time Friend, Tricia Wood, Mrs. Storytime. Tricia was the ultimate volunteer in

Stratford, moving there in 2010. At the library she dressed up for each storytime and shared her love of reading and books with attendees.

She passed away in September. Her obituary said, “She brightened rooms and lifted spirits...She was always very good at making people feel very special...Her magnetic smile and exuberant spirit filled the room, air and environment around her.” The Friends of

CWM Library “will miss her immensely,” related Teresa Harrison, Library Director. What a wonderful Friend to recognize! Thank you for sharing information about this great Friend!



You can still be a part of helping FOLIO give scholarships, recognize Best Friends, award Seed Grants, share Ambassadors’ expertise, conduct programming, send newsletters and other communications, provide networking opportunities and more.

Now, more than ever, libraries and Friends of Libraries need your help. Please help FOLIO be ready to step in to assist by making your tax-deductible contribution to the *FOLIO Endowment Fundraiser 2020* to acknowledge the efforts of a library’s staff, a staff person or a Friends volunteer with your contribution. We will acknowledge that you appreciate them and have honored them. Make donations at [okfriends.net/support.html](http://okfriends.net/support.html) OR mail your gift with the form printed on the next page.



## Advocacy— Supporting Libraries

Advocacy takes all of us working together to keep libraries strong. With the election behind us Friends are still needed to advocate for libraries on the local, state and national levels. Stay vigilant for upcoming budget talks for your local community. Does your Friends group have an Advocacy Committee that can be proactive in working with staff to set priorities for local efforts next fiscal year? What are your local needs and priorities?

At the state level the Oklahoma Department of Libraries has reduced funding and school libraries continue to have needs in professional staffing and materials. Watch for alerts about contacting the State Legislature on FOLIO’s Facebook page and the Oklahoma Library Association’s Advocacy Committee’s web page at [www.oklibs.org/page/AdvocacyComm](http://www.oklibs.org/page/AdvocacyComm) (members only). Now is the time to make sure your representatives know that libraries are a priority.

ALA President Julius Jefferson, Jr. shared recently that the Executive Board affirms unequivocal support for library workers and the broader library community. “All of us have had to pivot to provide services online, and for many of us, with shrinking resources. Library professionals have shown ourselves to be innovative and forward-thinking. Yet, we have been forced to make difficult decisions... Library professionals have proven their tenacity and emerged with renewed vigor from the most challenging times, economically, socially and politically.”

“Libraries are nonpartisan, but they are not indifferent. Libraries are one of the few places where people of diverse backgrounds, beliefs, age groups and socio-economic levels can gather.” Our newly elected officials will play a role “in determining support for America’s libraries,” which “cannot be overemphasized.”

Friends, **YOU** are needed as a steadfast advocate for libraries. Form an Advocacy Committee to stand strong for libraries.

## FOLIO Endowment Challenge



People who work and volunteer in Oklahoma libraries are certainly deserving of blue ribbons for their dedication and faithfulness in providing library services in innovative and creative ways during these Pandemic times. We hope you will join us in honoring them by making a donation to the FOLIO Endowment fund.

Our goal for the 2020 campaign is \$6000 in donations which will be matched by the Kirkpatrick Family Fund. We hope that **YOU** will honor the library "frontline workers" who keep OK libraries and Friends groups strong and active during these difficult times. Tell us what library, what service, which individual, volunteer or Friends group so we can recognize them in this column.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

This gift is made: ( ) In Honor of:  
or ( ) In Memory of:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please send an acknowledgment to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: **FOLIO Treasurer**

**P.O. Box 702585, Tulsa, OK 74170**



The CARES Act, which President Trump signed into law on March 27, 2020, provides increased tax incentives for charitable giving for both individuals and corporations, signifying an intent to stimulate philanthropy throughout America. The CARES Act allows individual tax filers, even if they take the standard deduction, to deduct charitable giving donations up to \$300 for the 2020 federal tax returns. Those filing jointly will get to claim deductions up to \$600. The change is in effect for individual charitable giving through December 31, 2020.

## Need Help?

### Call your FOLIO Ambassador

FOLIO Outreach Ambassadors are ready and willing to talk and/or consult with your Friends' group or your officers. We want to help you be successful and strengthen your library. Let us know how we can assist you.

Ambassadors are available for each quadrant of the State.



#### Northeast

- Jon and Sharon Douthitt  
douthittsharon60@gmail.com

#### Northwest

- Karen Neurohr  
karen.neurohr@okstate.edu

#### Southeast

- Dr. Bill Hagen  
whagen41@gmail.com
- Teresia Harrison  
teresiamharrison@gmail.com

#### Southwest

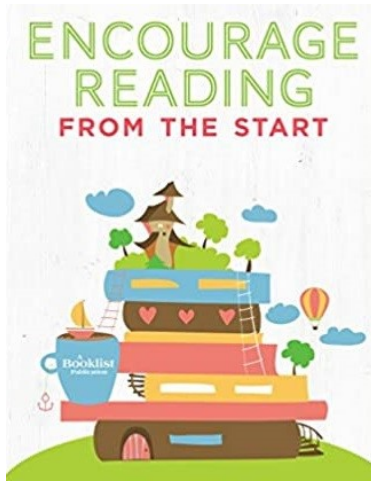
- Judy Haught  
haughtjc@gmail.com
- Carla Garrison  
cgarrison@cableone.net



- Picture Book Month - November
- Giving Tuesday - Dec. 1  
Capitalize on this national campaign -  
givingtuesday.org
- FOLIO Board Meeting via Zoom - Jan. 8
- FOLIO Scholarship Awards Deadline - Jan. 15
- FOLIO Best Friends Awards Deadline - Jan. 15
- FOLIO Annual Meeting - March 12
- Okla. Library Association Conference - Mar. 10-12

P. O. Box 702585  
Tulsa, OK 74170

**Return Service Requested**



### ***Encourage Reading from the Start: Essays, Articles, and Interviews from the Field***

Pat Scales' collection (ALA Editions, 2018) of 36 editorials, feature articles, and author interviews, selected from the American Library Association's [Book Links](#) magazine, is an excellent resource for Friends to encourage reading "from the start." Since 1990, Scales, a past-president of the Association for Library Service to Children, has advocated democracy, privacy, and diversity in children and young adults' reading as the author of *Book Links* "Book Strategies" column. This slim, well-organized volume, provides details about contemporary works organized into five major themes: "How Reading Shapes Us," "What History Tells Us," "Where Science Leads Us," "Where Art Inspires Us," and "How Freedom to Read Defines Us." Full bibliographic details of fiction and nonfiction titles are accompanied by commentaries, ideas, and opinions from some of the most creative and thoughtful authors of books that appeal to today's youth.

*Encouraging Reading from the Start* looks like a reference text, but it is very readable and engaging. Scales' wise commentary and expert annotations, accompanied by author interviews, give readers an insider's view of the creation and motivation behind the writing. This intimate knowledge is invaluable when recommending titles to parents, grandparents, caregivers, and youth. Presented throughout are activities initially designed for use in the classroom but are easily adaptable for use by Friends'

programs like "1000 Books Before Kindergarten" and "Read Aloud."

Scales has removed all grade level distinctions from the originals to empower the reader to unbiasedly choose books that align with each child's unique reading ability and diverse interests. Scales' storied career as a middle and high school librarian includes chairing the Newbery, Caldecott, and Wilder Award Committees; however, it is her passion for children and young adults' freedom to read what they choose, that shines through in this compilation. The assembled pieces challenge conventional ideals by discussing books about complicated and thorny issues from divorce and single/same sex parentage, to war, poverty and racism. The enthusiasm is exemplified from the beginning when Scales introduces us to a collage of books that broaden the definition of family including Patricia Polacco's *In Our Mothers' House* and help children deal with grief like *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson.

What Scales has successfully achieved in this compilation is to bring together works for 21<sup>st</sup> century youth where the "writers get down in the trenches of what a child thinks and how she expresses herself." After reading this book, Friends will want to keep an eye out for Pat Scales' future writings in *Book Links* magazine and the [School Library Journal](#), both of which are available online via ODL's [Digital Prairie](#).

--Dr. Cecelia Brown, FOLIO Board