

## Strengthening Libraries in Oklahoma through Friends of Libraries

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### Libraries Meet Local Needs

Oklahoma's over 200 public libraries are serving their patrons, assessing their

communities' needs, allocating resources, and providing desired services and information.

**Libraries provide a variety of resources for all ages:** books, audio-books, magazines, music, movies, and electronic versions as well as reading challenges, internet access, computers and reference librarians.

**Libraries assist parents and teachers in preparation for school and home-school** with open houses, homeschool assistance, and resources.

**Preschoolers** have special programs and materials to enhance their pre-literacy skills.

**School age children** are offered fun and educational programs, summer reading programs, materials, appropriate databases, online tutors, educational games, computers and more.

**Teens** are involved in advisory boards and have book/writing clubs, programs, materials, databases, online tutors, teen clubs, gaming groups and assistance.

**Businesses and job hunters** utilize specialized resources, job fairs, training, practice interviews, résumé assistance, practice tests, business databases, company information, federal business opportunities, job searching info, legal info, along with regional and small business information.

**General public and seniors** may access these resources and a myriad of other programs and services. Some libraries have tool libraries, book clubs, home delivery, adult literacy, makerspace, book discussion kits, author talks, genealogy, seed library, and so much more.

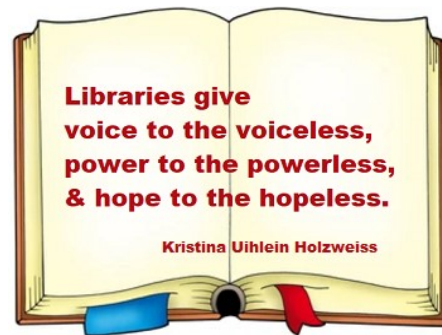
Libraries are the foundations of democracy with free access to information for the community.



**Q - With the upcoming election what should Friends of the Library be doing to be proactive for libraries?**

**A - You are a Friend** after every librarian's heart! Friends can do much to let people know about libraries and their services, the need for consistent funding, and can provide information to make candidates aware of library priorities.

**Get inspired.** Find out about your library and its services. Explore what community needs are being met by the library. Examples: The new StoryWalk® is inspiring family literacy, health and use of the library. The online tutors are assisting students in being successful in school. The workforce development program is helping people improve their skills for upward mobility in employment.



**Be informed.** Find out about library policies - Library Bill of Rights ([www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill)), the importance of the access to information ([www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/access](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/access)), library policies on the selection and reconsideration of materials. The freedom to read is essential to our democracy.

**Engage.** Word-of-mouth is one of the best ways to share your enthusiasm for the library. Talk to everyone about the library - in the grocery line, at a civic group meeting, or wherever you are. In this election season, now is the time to reach out to politicians and let them know the value of the library to the community. Get to know them personally and attempt to influence their views of the library and its role in the community.

(continued on p.2)

## From the President. . .



As I write this message while sitting in my air-conditioned house, the temperature outside hovers around 100° - down from 103°. My thoughts turn toward cool activities like visiting my local library or settling back with a good book. I'm reminded of how reading can take our minds away from adverse situations, whether it is scorching

temperatures or something as life altering as serious illness. A former librarian here in Elk City used to say, "You are not sick when you read a good book." I can personally attest to that tidbit of literary wisdom. A few years ago when I was suffering the side effects of chemo therapy, reading was my lifeline. I carried a book to each treatment and sat in my recliner reading while I recovered from that treatment. The library was my salvation.

Beyond the escapist benefits of reading, we all know the necessity of literacy in a free society. Former slave Frederick Douglass said, "When you learn to read, you will be forever free." That is why as members of FOLIO we do what we do. Whether it is helping with Summer Reading at our local libraries or advocating, we understand the absolute necessity of libraries and reading. Libraries, after all, are bastions of democracy, places where all are equal and knowledge is free for the taking.

The libraries and Friends groups FOLIO serves have greatly benefited from FOLIO's awards, scholarships, continuing education, networking, literary landmarks and statewide initiatives such as Reading Round-up, Let's Talk About It OK materials, financial literacy programming and now Ready2Read@Your Library.

As FOLIO strives to fulfill our mission of strengthening libraries in Oklahoma through Friends of Libraries, we encourage everyone not only to get involved in their local Friends groups but also to join FOLIO. We especially are looking for board members, so if you are interested, please contact us. Go to [www.okfriends.net](http://www.okfriends.net) to see the impressive list of FOLIO activities. We look forward to welcoming you as a new member.

*Judy Haught, President*

### Ask a Friend

*(continued from p. 1)*

**Share your story.** Tell your library story. How has the library personally helped you, a friend or a family member? Examples: My son needed to practice for a job interview, and he used the library's online practice service for a better interview. To provide information for my project's participants, I needed to learn how to use Google docs and scheduled a meeting with a librarian for training. My neighbor attended GED classes at the library to get her high school diploma. My friend needed a 3D printer and found training AND a 3D printer to use at the library.

**Speak out.** Being a library friend is not a quiet affair! Be a voice for your library. Volunteers are much more effective in getting a candidate's attention than library staff. <https://www.ala.org/everyday-advocacy/>

## FOLIO Board Actions

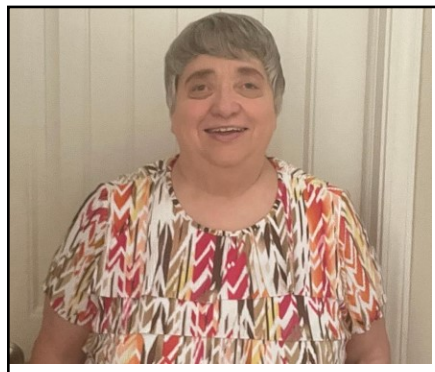
The FOLIO Board met on June 9, 2022.

- Approved the 2022-23 budget to include scholarships, Seed Grants, awards, and travel expenses for the Ready2Read project.
- Bristow Public Library was awarded a Seed Grant to begin a Friends of the Library organization as a 501 (c)3. Congratulations!
- Melody Kellogg, departing Director, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, was commended for her statewide leadership and FOLIO assistance.
- Plans for the FOLIO Retreat at St. Crispin's were finalized.

The FOLIO Board met on August 19-20, 2022.

- Natalie Currie, Interim Director, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, presented a great overview of the department and its services, as well as federal and state legislative issues impacting libraries.
- Approved a Hall of Fame Award to be presented next spring.
- Board members shared what they were reading. (Does your FOLIO group do this? It's a wonderful way to learn about new books and authors.)
- Award and Scholarship deadlines were set for December 30. See [okfriends.net](http://okfriends.net) for applications.

## Karen Alexander Named to FOLIO Board



Karen Alexander was named to the FOLIO Board at the April meeting. Karen is a retired librarian with over 35 years experience. She said, "...it was efforts of my Mom who first introduced me to the transforming power of

books...A favorite activity of working in a library is connecting people with the information that they seek." Karen believes that Friends groups are a great way to "connect with the community."

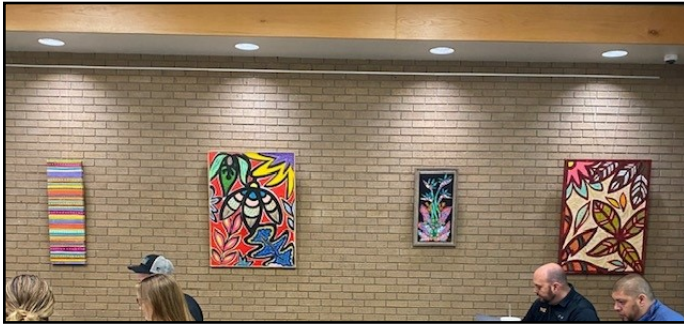
Karen has been Branch Manager of the Delaware County Library in Jay, Director of the Miami Tribal Library, Interlibrary Loan Librarian of the Miami Public Library, and other libraries. She has been active in many professional organizations and was appointed by two Governors to serve on the Oklahoma Historical Records Advisory Board.

She says, "I believe in a community library's role as one of honoring the past, while empowering the present and planning for the future."

**WELCOME, KAREN!**

## News from Around the State

### Pauls Valley Friends



The Pauls Valley Friends of the Library have begun hanging art done by local artists in the meeting room. Artists may display their artwork for a month at a time and are permitted to sell.

-Donna Love, Publicity, Pauls Valley Friends

### Stilwell Friends' Summer Activities



Stilwell Library Friends have been busy this summer. They began by hosting an appreciation luncheon for the Stilwell Elementary School faculty in May. These teachers, located right across the street from the library, have worked closely with the library and SPLFS throughout the year. The Friends cooked and served lunch on two different days so that all of the faculty members could eat during their lunch breaks.



### Shawnee FOL Has Busy Spring/Summer

A new StoryWalk® in Boy Scout Park was installed and opened with an author visit this spring along with sponsorship of the Shawnee Friends.



Also in the spring Shawnee FOL funded Poetry Awards for elementary and high school students. Friends' funding and volunteers also helped support the extensive summer programming, including programs on book illustration, playing the ukulele, recording and the LEGO Club.

The Friends will have a Book Sale October 6-8. In the photo, Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) students sort books by subject and pack boxes for storage. Volunteers from a variety of university organizations are involved in moving books including honor society, OBU athletes and social clubs. Much appreciation to all!

Dr. Bill Hagen, Member, Shawnee FOL



Later in the summer, SPLFS Treasurer Cathy Unger organized a group of area students to work on library landscaping. They have met several times to plant, weed, and generally care for the grounds. SPLFS appreciates their hard work. --Regina McLemore, SPLFS Secretary

### McCloud Friends Booth

The McCloud Mercantile on Main Street includes a booth sponsored by the McCloud Friends of the Library.

The booth includes a good selection of books, DVDs, and audiobooks. There are also some collectible, vintage and antique selections.



## Tell Your Library's Story



As you think about the Friends' message to share with potential members and donors, community representatives and political leaders, an old-fashioned story is a great communication tool - powerful, memorable and emotive.

The Library is changing lives. Tell a story of individual transformation. Keep the information clear, simple, concrete, focused, and easy to visualize. Clear and constant communication with leaders and donors will give buy-in. Most donations in 2021 given to charitable organizations were given by individuals (67%). Ways to frame the message from Network for Good:

- Your why - The reason the Library exists \_\_\_\_\_
- Your promise - The problem the Library solves \_\_\_\_\_
- Value proposition - Library gives supporters \_\_\_\_\_
- Your personality - Library makes others feel \_\_\_\_\_

Share the message in multiple ways:

- \*social media
- \* emails
- \* web site
- \*Blog
- \* mailers
- \* phone calls

Involve Friends members and supporters in fundraising. Raising money is more fun when you ask people to join in making an impact for your community. Make people feel like their gifts matter. "Because you gave, your donation made a difference." As FOLIO President Judy Haught said, "Our big advantage is that we are asking for assistance for Oklahoma and our local community, not a national organization." Donors can see the difference the Friends and the Library are making in the community.

Give timely and radical gratitude to retain donors and deepen their engagement. Friends can:

- Say thank you in creative, timely ways.
- Make people feel noticed.
- Show that their gift matters.
- Demonstrate the gift's impact.
- Share the feel-good stories.
- Stay in touch. (Once per month is recommended with an update or request for funding, if they haven't given.)

Heart-warming stories can inspire people to give so that the Library and Friends may continue to reach people's needs.

Story examples from Maria T. Bucci (Director of Development, Wood Library, New York) show how the Library makes a difference in the community. These stories are featured in the fundraising campaign.

- Shortly after Elaine's mother died, she came to the library looking for information about her family history. "I never knew my grandparents," she shared. "My mother did not like to talk about the past. My whole life I wondered about my family." With the assistance of library staff Elaine learned about Ancestry.com and spent weeks following up on leads. "With free access to Ancestry.com, I was able to connect with my past and my family in a time when I felt it was important to do so."

- Marie no longer visits the Library because of health issues. She recently wrote, "Thank you for the virtual programs and digital services. They are so critically important."

- When George retired and moved to our community, he decided not to purchase a computer. Instead, he visits the library to check his email and learn about things that interest him. "I didn't want to sit at home and look at a computer all day. The Library is a great help to me, plus it is full of good books to read."

- Children's librarian Mary often hears from parents and grandparents who tune in to her weekly story times on Facebook. One mother recently shared that she and her children were watching from Georgia. A grandmother told Mary that she tunes in because she knows her grandchildren are watching, and it's something they can do together even though they are apart.

Tips for a winning story from Network for Good include:

- Keep it conversational. Write the story in your voice.
- Keep your story streamlined and keep your audience wondering what's next.
- Tell your story in a way the audience can relate.
- Make it specific, including details and descriptions that add to your story.
- Make it authentic.
- Make it memorable and shareable. Create a story that is unique, catchy, and personal. Give your donors a way that they can share the story with word-of-mouth, email or social media.
- Aim for the heart. Capture your donors' emotions and imagination.
- Connect with your mission - the driving purpose, the source of your inspiration, and the power behind your call to action.- *Nonprofit Storytelling Mini-Guide, 2021* NetworkforGood

## Fundraising Ideas



### Indoor Golf Tournament

Indoor golf tournaments are becoming popular library fundraisers. Bridgewater (MA) Public Library held an Indoor Golf Tournament in the stacks for one day as participants tried to get a hole-in-one. Dozens of families stopped by in the morning and afternoon for a round or two of golf among the books at \$5 per person. The organizer said, "This was a great way to get them through the whole library to see what's available." The Friends of the Library felt this was a good wintertime activity. In addition to entry fees, local businesses sponsored individual holes.

The Hamburg (NY) Public Library used decorated metal bookends as holes. Pinterest has lots of ideas on what to use for equipment under the heading "Library Golf."

The Chesapeake (VA) Public Library Foundation made sure to tell where the monies would be spent. The funds "will benefit 2,500 literacy-based programs that serve more than 50,000 children each year...Currently one-in-three children will start school without the critical skills needed."

The New Hartford (NY) Public Library advertised for volunteers to create different holes. "Interested in creating a hole for this popular event? Let your creativity and imagination flow!"

The Howe (NH) Library held a virtual golf tournament. Participants created their own golf hole at home, purchased a raffle ticket or donated to the event which raised \$17,000 for the Library's programming.

The Quarryville (PA) Library had high school tech education students build the holes. The whole day had family programming (animals, music, performances), lunch, games, and face painting.

The Schusterman Library-OU in Tulsa (OK) held a contest for campus organizations to decorate the Fairway, to build challenging obstacles, and to showcase their organization with signs. In addition to selling tickets, they also held a silent auction.

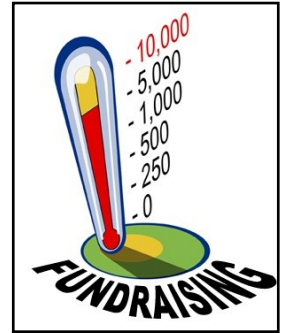
The Wood (NY) Library Friends held a two-day tournament. After hours on Friday a "Fairway Frolic" was held for adults (\$25) with 19th hole libations and a take-home gift.

Osterhout (NY) Free Library was assisted by the Wilkes-Barre Rotary Club in setting up the library golf tournament to benefit the children's services.

### Why Do Donors Give?

A survey of 3,000 donors identified the most important reasons why donors give (from most important to least important).

- Knows there is a need for the library's mission and that the library does good work.
- Believes the library will use the gift wisely.
- Realizes impact with the library communicating and sharing program outcomes.
- Knows someone who was assisted by the library.
- Wants to be associated with the library.
- Sees the library online or on social media.
- Wants tax deduction.
- Knows someone associated with library.



**Mission and Cause** - Donors need to understand the importance of the library.

**Gifts Used Effectively** - Donors want to make a meaningful impact.

**Impact of Gifts** - Thank you notes are important, but donors want to hear how their gifts are making a difference.

Although these are not surprising, Friends should be mindful to share the library/Friends' missions, library's impact, and how the library is making a difference with donors.

Friends groups have great strengths. With dedication to the library, Friends can communicate clearly and quickly and can have a close relationship with library donors.

### Local Businesses - Great Fundraising Partners

Local businesses may introduce new donors to the library. Friends may also take the opportunity to introduce the library's business services.

**Local businesses** - Visit with local businesses and identify areas of interest - window StoryWalk® or a book shelf in the coffee shop. Let your imagination run wild.

**Local media partnership** (community magazine, newspaper, radio station) may provide free or reduced-cost advertising to promote a specific project.

**Grocery store partnership** may involve check-out giving, asking for promotion on their social media channels, matching gifts, or other identified opportunity.

**Remote Volunteer Day partnership** - Employers often encourage employees to volunteer. If you have an off-site or digital volunteer need, you may gain additional Friends who will share info on their social media.

**Company fundraiser** - Identify local companies whose employees may resonate with the Library. Suggest a company fundraiser, that many times have matching incentives. Get the donors' contact information, follow up with thank-you notes, and add them to your donor database. "Raising More with Less," Network for Good

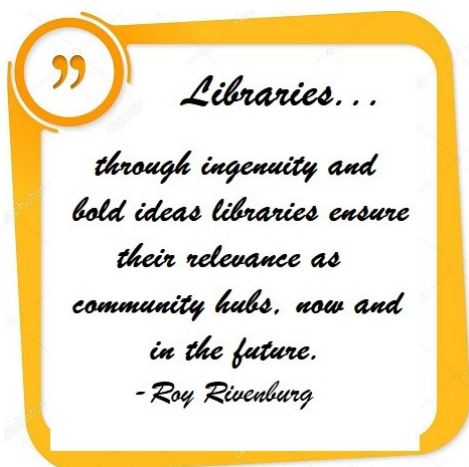
## Libraries Counteract Inflation

One story your library can tell is about the vast array of resources that are available at low or no additional cost. With inflation at a forty-year high and many households needing to cut their budgets, Friends and libraries should remind people that they can help.

The Emmaus Public Library (PA) is advertising their role against inflation. "At a time when budgets are tight," the library has programs and resources to assist. See the article: <https://www.wesa.fm/education/2022-08-20/how-pennsylvania-libraries-can-help-relieve-some-of-the-sting-of-inflation>.

Libraries are offering access to information, computers, internet access, and traditional resources (books, magazines, movies), but have more digital resources available for remote access (eBooks, eMagazines, eAudiobooks, streaming videos, authoritative databases, and much more) as well as programming for all ages.

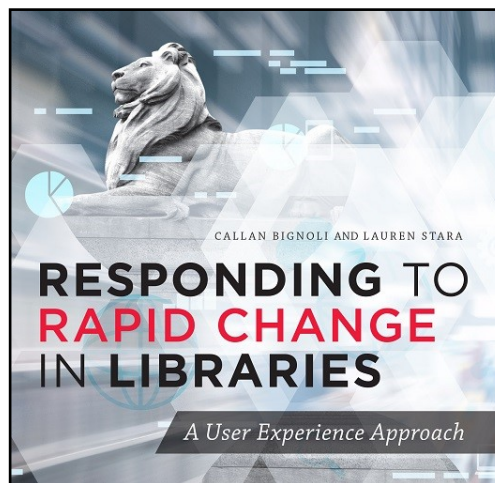
Beyond these "traditional" resources, libraries are also offering more than ever.



Many libraries are offering a Library of Things. More than half of America's 9,000 public library districts now lend nontraditional library objects," says Maria McCauley, president of the Public Library Association. These objects and out-of-the-box programming are library innovations and creativity to meet the community's changing needs.

The beyond books trend began back in the 1800s, most notably in Braddock, PA, whose library had a boxing ring, swimming pool, bowling alley, game room, and music hall, according to Roy Rivenburg, "What Can a Library Card Get You?" *Christian Science Monitor* (3 Aug. 2022) <https://www.csmonitor.com/Books/2022/0803/What-can-a-library-card-get-you-Try-a-popcorn-maker-or-ukulele>.

When this article was posted on the FOLIO Facebook page, Idabel (OK) Public Library shared and added, "As you may or may not know, the Southeast Oklahoma Library System, including the Idabel Public Library, offers more than just books, audiobooks and movies. We have a Library of Things from which you can borrow such items as a karaoke machine, a bread maker, an air fryer, an acoustic guitar, etc. If you've ever thought, 'If I could try it before I buy it', now is your chance. Or maybe you simply need to use a particular item one time only...Either way, drop by and look at the items we have on hand to borrow. All you need is your library card." Why not tell everyone?



This new book by Callan Bignoli and Lauren Stara (ALA, 2021) reinforces what we all know - change is constant and inevitable. But in these times, change seems to be accelerating.

"Libraries are responding to changing user needs by shifting their service model to become more nimble and adaptable." While change can be disruptive and unsettling, developing and maintaining a strategy to manage shifts is not only possible but necessary.

With passion, patience, and fortitude, libraries can stride confidently into the future. Planning and strengthening the library to embrace change and be flexible is shared.

The book:

- Explores how to harness rapid change for more responsive library services.
- Addresses the ways in which libraries straddle the physical and digital collections.
- Shows how the concepts of flexibility and sustainability apply to planning for change.

To improve library experiences, Friends can:

- Keep open communication to be aware of the library's strategic plan.
- Provide feedback on community changes and needs.
- Raise funds. Try new ways to reach new donors.
- Support the library's changing needs: summer learning, facilities, make and take crafts, programming, special speakers, landscaping, technology, etc.
- Work toward continual, gradual improvement.
- Be patient, encouraging and supportive.
- Be an advocate with donors and local leaders.



## Need Help?

### Call your FOLIO Ambassador

FOLIO has Outreach Ambassadors who are ready and willing to talk 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.



#### Northeast

- Jon and Sharon Douthitt  
sdouthitt@prodigy.net

#### Northwest

- Dr. Karen Neurohr  
karen.neurohr@okstate.edu
- Linda Pye  
lindapye23@gmail.com

#### Southeast

- Dr. Bill Hagen  
whagen41@gmail.com
- Teresia Jors  
tjors@stratford.k12.ok.us

#### Southwest

- Angie Lewis  
angieslewis@gmail.com
- Bridgette Shelton  
shelton.bridgette@elkcitieschools.com



- **Library Card Sign-Up Month**, September - "The library is where your imagination sings. Get your library card and 'check it out' today," says Cara Mentzel, ALA's honorary co-chair for the month. Find info: <https://www.ala.org/conferenceevents/celebrationweeks/card>
- **Banned Books Week**, Sept. 18-24, 2022 - Info: <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks>
- **National Voter Registration Day**, Sept. 20, 2022 This is a nonpartisan civic holiday to celebrate our democracy. Eligible voters are encouraged to register to vote in the upcoming election. Info: <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/national-voter-registration-day>
- **National Friends of Libraries Week**, Oct. 16-22, 2022. See p. 8.

## Yes! I want to join FOLIO and Be a Friend of Oklahoma Libraries!

### Joining FOLIO and being a Friend will. . .

- Provide networking opportunities to make new friends and to share information and ideas about programs, activities, fundraising, legal issues and great books to enjoy,
- Award scholarships to library support staff,
- Recognize outstanding Friends of the Library with awards for annual Best Friends and Friends of Library Week,
- Showcase the work of Oklahoma Friends in the quarterly newsletter and on Facebook,
- Honor esteemed Oklahoma authors through Literary Landmarks,
- Assist Friends groups with incorporation or reactivation,
- Advocate for library support.

Find out more about FOLIO at  
[www.okfriends.net](http://www.okfriends.net)

and

Facebook—@ FOLIOOKFriends

Membership dues and donations are the primary source of funds to support FOLIO's mission which is to strengthen Libraries through Friends of Libraries. It's TIME to pay dues for the 2022-23 fiscal year which is July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

**New members are always welcome.**

#### Basic dues are as follows:

\$20	Individual Membership
\$25	Friends Group Membership
\$30	Library Membership

Contributions above the minimum dues further support FOLIO's mission, are greatly appreciated, and are tax deductible as a charitable contribution.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of Individual, Friends group, Library or Corporate Business)

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

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

**Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

Dues Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Gift Donation enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

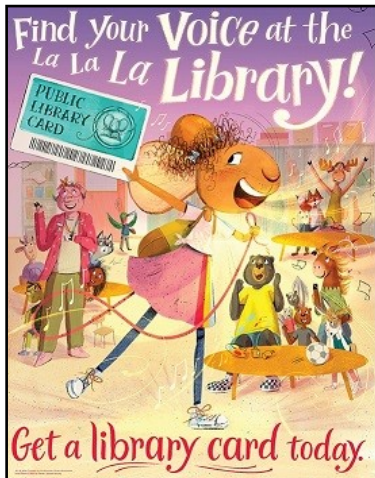


**FOLIO—We are Friends  
helping Friends!**

**Mail to: FOLIO Treasurer  
P.O. Box 702585, Tulsa, OK  
74170**

P. O. Box 702585  
 Tulsa, OK 74170

**Return Service Requested**



Plan your Friends of Libraries (FOL) celebration for the week of October 16-22, 2022. Friends of Libraries Week offers an opportunity to celebrate Friends, to promote your group in the community, to raise awareness, and to promote membership.

FOLIO makes two \$200 awards to recognize local FOL Week activities, one for Friends serving communities under 10,000 population and one for over 10,000 population. An application and instructions are available on the web site ([www.okfriends.net](http://www.okfriends.net)) under Awards. The entry deadline is November 15, 2022, with awards to be presented in December. Friends groups must be FOLIO members to apply for the award.

United for Libraries ([www.ala.org/united](http://www.ala.org/united)) has sample press releases, proclamations, Facebook and Twitter

graphics, public service announcements, and a sample letter to the editor. Other materials, such as buttons and posters, may be ordered.

Some ideas on how to celebrate the week include:

- Plan a special display, membership drive, or bookmark contest.
- Tell your city officials how important the Friends are to the ongoing success of the library.
- Use this opportunity to convey to officials how the Friends raise money, promote the library, and volunteer in many ways.
- Host a mayoral proclamation with special coverage in the local news media.
- Drawing for gift baskets for library customers each day during FOL Week.
- Host an author panel discussion, local author book signing, or book review.
- Feature different library services each day of the week on Facebook.
- Have different programs each day, ending with a Staff Appreciation Dinner.

Other great ideas are at United for Libraries, which also has national FOL Week awards available.

Angie Lewis, FOL Week Awards chair