



# Friends CONNECT

[www.FriendsKyLibraries.org](http://www.FriendsKyLibraries.org)

**FRIENDS  
OF KENTUCKY  
LIBRARIES, INC**

**P O BOX 537  
FRANKFORT  
KENTUCKY**

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Friends of the Paul Sawyer Public Library

## Our Mission

- to advocate for public libraries on the local, state, and national level
- to provide support for the formation and success of local Friends chapters.

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Winter 2014

## FKL @ LIBRARY LEGISLATIVE DAY

March 6, 2014 not only brought a welcome of sunshine to Frankfort but the halls and offices of our legislators were filled with library supporters wearing their traditional yellow clothing.

Author George Ella Lyon brought an inspiring message to librarians and supporters at the annual rally held at noon in the Capitol Rotunda.



Lisa Rice, Speaker George Ella Lyon, Mary Lynn Collins



Librarians and friends gathered on March 5th for legislative orientation.



Supporters are all ages!

## Power in Numbers!

Six public library directors from Region 3 joined together to visit their legislator.

Left to right: Julia Turpin, Taylor Co., Anne Garner, Wayne Co., Lee Ann Jessee, Adair Co., Sen. Sara Beth Gregory, Kay Morrow, McCreary Co., Lindsay Westerfield, Russell Co. and Charlotte Keeney, Pulaski Co.





## FROM THE PRESIDENT Mary Lynn Collins

**Advocate, Advocate, Advocate . . .** That is my mantra, and I hope it will be yours as well. Unfortunately, libraries have been under attack recently in this state. Pulaski County Public Library fought off a challenge not too long ago; five of our public libraries in Kenton, Campbell, Montgomery, Anderson, and Boone Counties have been sued concerning the way tax rates are set; in another case, the creation of a taxing district for the McLean County Public Library has been challenged.

In at least the last three sessions of the General Assembly, we have seen legislation proposed that has been deemed detrimental to libraries. So far we have been able to successfully fight off these legislative challenges because of your advocacy efforts. And we are hopeful that when the 2014 General Assembly completes work on the state's biennial budget, we will, as a result of advocacy, have funding for new library construction projects for the first time in years.

Clearly libraries need Friends actively advocating for them. If your library does not have a Friends group, I encourage you to think about starting one. And Friends of Kentucky Libraries will help you.

If you are a member of an existing Friends chapter, I challenge you to inventory your advocacy efforts for libraries and to make a commitment to increase them. Most Friends chapters have a committee for book sales or a book sale chair. Why not do the same for advocacy? Establish an advocacy committee or appoint a board member to plan and facilitate local advocacy efforts and to disseminate information received from the advocacy committees of the Friends of Kentucky Libraries and the Kentucky Public Library Association.

I challenge all of you as individuals—whether you are a friend, patron, trustee, or library professional—to hone an “elevator” speech about your library that you can use whenever you see legislators or local officials. Pull together a few statistics and marry those with stories of how you, your family, and others use the library. Be on the lookout for heartwarming stories that demonstrate how libraries improve lives. Every library has those stories. In the coming months, many of us will have candidates for office knocking at our doors asking for support, and those will be important times to share “elevator” speeches.

If you want assistance with forming a Friends group or suggestions on how to create an advocacy committee, please let us know. You can contact Friends of Kentucky Libraries by e-mailing [info@FriendsKyLibraries.org](mailto:info@FriendsKyLibraries.org). As I write this, I am leaving for the Public Library Association conference in Indianapolis and plan to sit in on a session about developing elevator speeches. I hope to bring back some tips to share with you.

**Advocate, Advocate, Advocate.**

## THANKS TO FKL LIFETIME MEMBERS

Jerry and Linda Bruckheimer, Bloomfield  
 Joe Graviss McDonald's Restaurants, Versailles  
 Margaret Q. Travis, Frankfort  
 Lowry Rush Watkins, Jr, Louisville

## Update on Lawsuits

One of the most important advocacy efforts we have made as the Friends of Kentucky Libraries since we were re-established five years ago concerns the lawsuits against the Kenton County Public Library and the Campbell County Public Library. At issue is the way the libraries set tax rates. Unfortunately, the lower courts issued rulings against the libraries who then appealed the decisions.

FKL hired legal counsel to work with the Kentucky Library Association's lawyer on preparation of an Amicus Brief and we asked the General Federation of Women's Clubs Kentucky to join us in this effort. On November 25, the Amicus Brief was filed in the Court of Appeals on behalf of the Kentucky Library Association, Kentucky Public Library Association, the Friends of Kentucky Public Libraries, the General Federation, and the American Library Association.

We are pleased with the brief filed on behalf of the library community. It points to certain errors in conclusions reached by the Circuit Courts involved in the two cases and illustrates the effect the Circuit Court decisions will have on 99 of our public libraries which could be required to roll back their tax rates to 1979 or to the date of their last petition. There is more information on the potential impact on our web site [FriendsKyLibraries.org](http://FriendsKyLibraries.org). A ruling is expected this summer, and we are hopeful it will be positive for libraries.

FKL thanks the two lawyers who worked on the brief on our behalf: Mark Overstreet, Stites & Harbison, Virginia Snell, Wyatt Tarrant & Combs, as well as legal counsel for the Kentucky Library Association—Sheryl Snyder, Frost Brown Todd LLC. And we want to thank the General Federation of Women's Clubs, who started many of the public libraries in this state, for their willingness to join us in this effort.

And as we go to print, the House and Senate are meeting in a conference committee to iron out differences in the revenue bill. The House adopted language in their version of the revenue bill that would clarify taxing guidelines for libraries. If the Senate agrees in conference with the language, the issue at the heart of the lawsuits would be resolved.

**Thank you** to all of you who have made calls during this session to urge the General Assembly to make the clarification.

## We Asked and We Received



Last summer, we put a call out to local friends chapters inviting them to contribute books about Kentucky or by Kentucky authors to fill the book shelves of a new conference room in the Governor's Mansion. The response was wonderful. We received books from several Kentucky authors and at least one illustrator; we received some very nice books straight out of some of individual Friends' personal collections; and we received tons from our Friends chapters. The Kentucky Book Fair even contributed to the effort. Amazingly, there was little duplication and the collection is a good representation of Kentucky and its regions. We want to thank all of our Friends that contributed to this effort.

## News from the Field submitted by Sharon Roggenkamp

### *Do Libraries Matter?* *From a Quonset Hut to a College Diploma in One Generation* Sharon Roggenkamp/SCPL Media Coordinator

Anne Caudill, the vital and lively 90 year old subject of author Terry Cummins' new memoir – *The Caudills of the Cumberland*s, *Anne's Story of Life with Harry*, recently captivated a room full of Scott County library patrons sharing stories about her life, marriage, and role in her husband's classic book on Appalachia, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*s.

Passionate about literacy and libraries, a visitor questioned her about how the library in Whitesburg, Kentucky came to be. At the same time, Ms. Caudill eloquently answered the question "Do Libraries Matter?"

"I'm addicted to libraries and have been all my life. I was library chairperson of the Whitesburg Women's Club. Kentucky Women's Clubs across the state were dedicated to improving library service and putting a bookmobile into every Kentucky county. Library? In Whitesburg? What library?", she smiled.

"The town's early library just happened to be located in a Quonset hut down a narrow street behind the jail. It was open 2 hours 2 days a week. Books were piled everywhere on the floor- there were no shelves. They were discarded from the one and two-room school-houses abandoned years ago. There was, however, one box from a Newark, New Jersey library. It was a mighty slender beginning."

"You needed a tax if you wanted to build a library, so Harry (her husband) went to work at it. He canvassed every local meeting he could think of – at the union hall, PTA meetings, Rotary, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, asking folks to support the tax." The tax passed and the Women' Club got to work, converting a donated L & N depot waiting room into the new public library.

With the help of the county Jaycees, who turned "fire hoses on the sooty walls and floors to clean it off, we got it spic and span, and painted it. The Women's Club furnished it. We sewed curtains and it was all very cheerful. Then the regional librarians from Frankfort came and stayed for 2 weeks. They weeded out the collection, and the rest of us made dustcovers for the books from discarded wallpaper books from the hardware store." We received a bookmobile and many boxes of beautiful new books from the state library, which were neatly arranged on the new wood shelves.

"I remember when the schoolchildren first came. The schoolchildren loved the books, and carried 6 and 7 books out in bags. I particularly remember one child.....her parents could only sign documents with an X. She later became a schoolteacher."

Here is Anne Caudill's answer to the question "Do Libraries Matter?" and a reminder to all of us the words on a printed page in a book are transformative.

FKL President Mary Lynn Collins attended the program at the Scott County Public Library where Anne Caudill shared her library experiences. From left to right:: Collins, author Terry Cummins, and Caudill



## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

### Friends of the Paul Sawyer Public Library Named 2014 Goodwill Partner of the Year

As those of you who have had book sales well know, one of the most challenging issues of book sales is what to do with the remainders. The Friends of Paul Sawyer Public Library in Frankfort have found a solution that works for them. After the sale, volunteers pull items out to deliver to various organizations like the men and women's shelters and the local jail. They then box up the rest of the remainders and arrange for the Goodwill Industries regional office to pick them up, usually within a week to two weeks of the sale.

This partnership was recently recognized at Goodwill Industries Annual Meeting. The Friends of the Paul Sawyer Library were named the 2014 Goodwill Partner of the Year. This partnership has been one of mutual benefit. The Friends have donated the remainders to Goodwill and Goodwill, in turn, has been very successful in marketing this surplus to their public.



At the ceremony in late February accepting the award are from left to right: Mimi Gosney, President; Russ Wright, Immediate Past President, Judy Stratton, Book Sale Manager, and Cloyd Stratton.

## From the Editor

We want to hear from you! "News from the Field" will highlight Friends' chapters across the state. Please submit articles about what your Friends group is doing to make a difference in your community. It's really ok to "Toot Your Own Horn" while sharing. You could be making a difference in another community by sharing your success through this newsletter.

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For a membership application, visit [www.FriendsKyLibraries.org](http://www.FriendsKyLibraries.org).

Send editorial contributions, articles, and news releases to Earlene H. Arnett, editor, at: [earlene.arnett@gmail.com](mailto:earlene.arnett@gmail.com)