



Freedom Friends Newsletter

February, 2019

President's Greetings

The year 2019 will be one in which the Freedom Friends take on the responsibility for significant fundraising—for a digital sign, renovation of the library staff's workspace and preparations for celebration of our Freedom Public Library's twentieth anniversary celebration. As I have pondered and researched ways to accomplish this fundraising two principles have surfaced as critical to our fundraising efforts. They are that *people donate to people*, and *tell your group's "story" in ways that make people want to help fund it*.

The people-donate-to-people principle was clearly proved to several of us when we went to a neighborhood discussion group late last year and showed them our Power Point presentation and our three Friends marketing videos. Friends who attended knew many people in this group and could relate to them on a person-to-person basis. They gave us excellent feedback on our presentation and work as Freedom Friends.

As for the Freedom Friends "story," I had tried to come up with its narrative for some time without any real success. But my efforts were unnecessary because by creating our Power Point presentation, Pat Mac has shaped our story. That is the story of how a group of library lovers—starting with just eight of them before Freedom Public Library even opened, created a mission of generosity to the library. They kept to that mission as their membership grew, through good times and bad and now in the digital age are taking on new challenges that help the library fulfill its mission to provide all forms of information to the community it serves.

The result of talking to people we know and telling our story were donations of over \$1000. I have become convinced that we Freedom Friends have the tools and skills to use these two principles for 2019 fund raising. We are ready and able to contact groups with members we personally know and bring our story to them. When they recognize us as their neighbors and see our story of a commitment to generous support for the Freedom Public Library, they will join with us and donate what we need.

Florence Pritchard

Focus on Freedom

The Freedom Friends ongoing books sales take place in a small but very productive physical space in the Freedom Public Library lobby on the left side of the lobby as patrons enter. That space is approximately 6 by 12 feet in area, and the lobby book sales chair, co-chairs and volunteers are using that space with astonishing efficiency. They plan to use it even more efficiently beginning this year.

Efficiency actions already underway include "half shelves" on six of the bookcase shelves to double the books that can be displayed on these shelves. Wooden risers at the back of each shelf make it possible to display an upper back row of books and a front lower row of books. In order to look at a back row book, one must remove two or three of the front row books to get the desired back row book. But the more books on display, the more we sell. Also, both carts have been moved against the windows and this makes the overall area appear far less crowded. The cart nearest the sliding door will be kept free of book displays so that donated books can be placed on that cart and not on the floor. Happily, the "Free" material box no longer clutters the floor beneath the black table.

Among new activities to increase efficiency, is redecorating the top of the book shelves. The existing display is several years old, and as we approach 2020, the display can clearly reflect our mission and accomplishments. Also, a new, locking and somewhat larger cash box for patrons who purchase books will be installed just beneath the plaques on the end of the right angle book case. It will be clearly labeled for patrons, and to increase security our assistant treasurer will pick up money weekly before the library opens.

Perhaps the biggest change in the area will be redesigning the black table as the book bundle table. Minor modifications to the table will be necessary so it will be out of use for a short period of time.

Thanks to all who are assisting in this "tightening up" of our lobby books sale area. Yes, we'll need to get used to these changes, but let's see if they help sell more books!

On the Horizon

Based on the fact that the effort to mount a three-day book sale exceeds its cash return, the Freedom Friends have decided to conduct only one three-day book sale each year. That sale will take place in April for this year. While to some this might seem sad, it can be an opportunity for increased fundraising through the remarkable creativity of the Friends. Sanni Schlemmer who chairs this activity will be calling on all to think of ways to augment the sale that will delight and encourage buyers.

The renovation of the library staff work area also shimmers on the horizon. When complete, each staff member will have a desk workspace, sometimes shared, but conducive to safe and productive work. The renovation process will take time and Supervisor Ellie is carefully planning for relocation of staff and activities while the workspace is redone.

The digital sign the Friends want to provide to the library has the potential for becoming part of a system that may be put in place at Freedom. Headquarters plans to develop a grant proposal that would place digital information boards in the lobby and near the circulation desk to provide patrons with information about library activities, programs and events. It seems likely that the proposed outdoor digital sign could be networked with these indoor boards. The Friends intend to raise funds for the sign in partnership with the community and has plans for that effort.

Planning is also beginning for ways to celebrate the library's and the Friends twentieth anniversary in 2020. The hope is to develop a series of activities that increase support and advocacy for the library through affiliation with the Friends. Freedom Public Library is a vital community center and resource. The library confronts near-explosive growth in its service area and in the information it seeks to make available to patrons. The Friends are proud to help the staff respond to these forces in 2019 and beyond.