

Friends Day at KLA - in-person & virtual

FoKL Luncheon speaker a big success

Just as it took our speaker, Annika Wooton more than one try to become Miss Kansas, it took the Friends of Kansas Libraries board more than one try to showcase her in person. Persistence paid off on both counts. She spoke before an audience of about 80 Friends Members, Library Directors and Staff, Regional System Staff and FoKL Board Members.

Annika shares her story

She began her presentation by asking the audience to guess how many times it took to win her title. No one guessed correctly, so Annika talked about what it took to succeed. Switching from singing to painting and focusing on her goal of promoting the arts, she “expanded her boundaries.” The word “journey” is repeated numerous times in articles about her effort to become Miss Kansas, which took seven years. In a July 4, 2020 *Topeka Capital-Journal* article she said, “I told the judges

in my interview that I was there to help others through the visibility of my platform of promoting the arts, especially creating pathways for children to see that they could have careers in art someday.” She felt her intent was more important than winning the title. In their Summer 2020 article *Kansas Magazine* reported, “On June 8, 2019, at 25 years of age, in her last year of eligibility, Wooton won the crown in the 78th Miss Kansas competition.

The article also shared, during her two-year reign (lengthened by the pandemic), Wooton traveled across Kansas, creating her speed paintings and sharing her message. She worked with both the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism and the Kansas



Annika's story, cont'd. on Page 2

Friends of Kansas Libraries is a statewide organization of groups and individual members committed to helping libraries meet the need and expectations of their communities. It can provide startup grants to communities establishing new Friends groups or having unique program needs and provides technical assistance to local groups upon request. *FoKL Point* is the official publication of Friends of Kansas Libraries.

For more information or to submit newsletter articles, please contact: Wendy Morlan, editor, Pleasanton Lincoln Library, P.O. Box 101, Pleasanton, KS 66075, pleasinlib@ckt.net



Annika's story, cont'd.

Department of Transportation, and served as ambassador for Children's Mercy Network (CMN) Hospitals, providing "hope and healing" and expanding on the tens of thousands of dollars she had already raised over the past four years. The magazine's writer went on to share, ... when Wooton hands over her Miss Kansas title this summer, she will be passing on a title with a new meaning. Over the past years, Miss Kansas has evolved to reflect female empowerment, social impact and inclusion. Both the state and national competition have formally rejected the label of "pageant" and rebranded as the "Miss Kansas Organization" and "Miss America 2.0."

Annika's story held the audiences' rapt attention but when she began her speed-painting, the atmosphere became electric. All were fascinated as the blank green canvas became a lively array of bright-colored sunflowers, in keeping with the 2021 KLA conference logo. The painting was purchased prior to the event, and will hang in the Hamilton County Library in Syracuse, Kansas, in a place of honor.

Seamon accepts award

This year's in-person KLA conference in Wichita allowed us to present our esteemed Duane Johnson Award to George Seamon. George is director of the NorthWest Kansas Library System in Norton, and has tirelessly served in numerous capacities to help make our KLA conferences successful.

Did you know? ... George obtained a Bachelor of Arts in history from Kent State University in 2004, and a Masters in Library Science in 2007 from Clarion University of Pennsylvania.

Getting to Know You (Again - After COVID)

FoKL's Pre-Conference Session was not only fascinating, but fun as well. Our speaker, Patricia (Pat) Brune, is a FoKL board member serving as secretary of the organization. After her introduction that included impressive credentials, she led the audience through a variety of exercises titled "True Colors." Her program helped attendees understand their learning styles, strengths and abilities. More "colorful" than the Myers-Briggs Personality Test, these exercises offered tools to help us understand our strengths and collaborate with others in our work and personal lives.



Friends of Kansas Libraries President Amy Brucker presents the Duane Johnson Award to NorthWest Kansas Library System Director George Seamon during the FoKL Luncheon at KLA.

FoKL at KLA, cont'd. on Page 3

Pat has graciously offered to guide Friends groups through the True Colors process. Her contact information can be found on the board page at the end of this newsletter.

Book Sales and Beyond

FoKL board member Judy Burgess moderated a discussion about how Friends groups dealt with fund-raising during the pandemic. Her introduction emphasized that, “Libraries need people” to survive. Three speakers shared how each of their groups survived and even thrived. Angela Hyde from the Lawrence Public Library Foundation said while their book sales shop was closed for three-to-four months, they were able to connect with buyers through Facebook online sales. Those purchases were delivered curbside.

The Johnson County Friends reported their drive-up windows came back first, and later donations were accepted and shop-by-appointment was instituted. A big problem, according to Tim DeWeiss, was that the pandemic affected people’s mental health as well. While staff returned, volunteers did not. So staff learned to step up, cross-training to provide assistance for Saturday morning donation drop-offs at the Friends headquarters and pickups at 14 branches. Teen volunteers were also instrumental in this process.

Melissa Wilson indicated the connection with volunteers was important, and provided weekly emails to stay in touch. When able, reopening their bookstore brought a welcome sense of normalcy. In the summer of 2021 they offered appointments to shop at the bookstore, which now has an open door without appointments. They do not have in-person book sales yet, but provide online sales of \$10.00 per bag of genre sales. This allows 30-35 books per bag of paperbacks or hardcover books. In March of 2021, 150 bags were provided.

The Friends of the Salina Public Library have held three book sales this year. One was bagged sacks of books at \$5.00 a bag; one sale was children’s books, games, electronic books; the latest was the annual Fall Book Sale, with a select-your-bag for \$5.00. Baldwin City Library Friends held their first book sale in June 2021, after retrieving books a local business had stored for them. Another attendee mentioned the convenience of using Better World Books to dispose of unneeded books. The company sends shipping boxes and label. During nice weather, Mulvane Friends held a Flash Book Sale.



Sunflowers abundant in FoKL’s KLAEF donation

This year, the Friends of Kansas Libraries board members expanded our boundaries by upgrading from a basket to a big metal tub with handles. The tub contained a bevy of sunflower-related items, including a bottle of wine enhanced by a sunflower label.

The winner of the drawing for our entry was Barbara Luck from the Morton County Library in the Southwest Library System. Congratulations!

First Friday with Friends continues

First Friday with Friends is a monthly gathering of Friends Groups, Members, Librarians, and those who love libraries. It is held on the First Friday of the month at 9 a.m. central time (8 a.m. mountain time) via Zoom.

Beginning in March 2021, and continuing each month since then, the program has provided participants a forum to share helpful information, ask questions and receive feedback from the FoKL board and others on the Zoom call.

Since the Spring issue of *FoKL Point* our First Friday topics included the following topics:

July 2 *“Going for the Gold: Be a Library Champion”* Helpful tips from attendees include: holding an outdoor event like Jazz at the Lake, offering scholarships to high school seniors and staff, promoting your event through photos, hold a Sip & Shop (wine and books), holding a Friends Tea, having a community plant sale, and many more.

Aug. 6 *“Who’s on Fire? Preventing Burnout”* A variety of ideas to help library staff and volunteers includes: holding a Staff Appreciation Week with a free lunch, goodie cart, Friends book store discount, or holiday dinner. More ideas mentioned were: a pizza party, gift baskets for staff, donated tea with honey sticks donated from a local business, gift cards to a local bakery for book store volunteers, and little perks throughout the year.

Sept. 3 *“Let’s Talk Friends, Foundations, and Libraries”*

Oct. 1 *“National Friends of Libraries Week”*

Nov. 5 *“Open Mic: Bring Your Questions”*

You can access videos of these meetings at www.fokl.net/firstfriday

To receive reminder First Friday with Friends emails and follow-up materials, email FoKL President Amy Brucker at director@syracuselibrary.info.



Membership Report

At the October Annual Board Meeting, Membership Chair Janet Schmidt reported FoKL includes 90 total memberships. By category, they are: 6 Best Friends, 2 Bookworms, 41 Groups, 28 Individuals, 10 Libraries, 3 Library systems. The breakdown by region is as follows: CKLS 6, NCKLS 12, NEKLS 35, NWKL 5, SCKLS 11, SEKLS 13, and SWKLS 8.

FoKL BOARD MEMBERS

We call on you to be part of FoKL

Serving on the Board of Friends of Kansas Libraries offers “priceless” rewards. Our board members meet with enthusiastic and creative Friends throughout the state. Though volunteering takes time, it offers much satisfaction. Can you be a library advocate? Are you enthusiastic in your volunteer efforts? Are you willing to be part of a creative team that shapes the future of a statewide organization? Please note vacancies on the list below.

Officers:

President, Amy Brucker, Syracuse, director@syracuselibrary.info
Vice-president/Governance Chair, Barb Mathews, Eudora, j54b55@gmail.com
Secretary/ Newsletter Editor, Wendy Morlan, Pleasanton, pleaslinlib@ckt.net
Treasurer/Finance Chair, Laura Carroll, Basehor, lcarroll@basehorlibrary.org
Immediate Past-president, Judy Burgess, Manhattan, jl6468@icloud.com

Regional Trustees:

Northeast: Laura Carroll, Basehor, lcarroll@basehorlibrary.org
North Central: open for nominations
Northwest: open for nominations
Central: Janet Schmidt, Membership, Salina, janfraser@usa.net
Southeast: Marilyn VonSoosten, Girard, von_farm@ckt.net
South Central: open for nominations
Southwest: open for nominations

Trustees at Large

#1 Carolyn Little, Topeka, little.carolyn67@gmail.com
#2 Brenda Hough, Lawrence, bckhough@gmail.com
#3 Pat Brune, Wyandotte, plbrune@gmail.com
#4 open for nominations
#5 Cathy Newland, Silver Lake, newland.cathy@gmail.com
#6 open for nominations

Special Board Members:

United for Libraries Liaison: vacant; Kansas Library Association contact: Amy Brucker; Kansas Library Trustee Association (KLTA) Liaison: vacant; FoKL Website Administrator: Pat Brune

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