

# **FRIENDS OF CANADIAN LIBRARIES**

## **HOW TO REVITALIZE YOUR FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY GROUP**

### **Increasing Membership**

#### **Who to recruit**

Recruit younger volunteers. Many potential volunteers are between the ages of 35 and 45. If these individuals are parents, they generally support their children's activities. Find a connection with children's activities where you can promote the Friends organization.

Target retirees. Put up notices in Seniors' Centres.

#### **How to Make Your Friends Organization A Good Group With Whom to Volunteer**

- 1) Make sure there is a welcoming atmosphere at your meetings and your activities and events. Make sure your Friends group is inclusive.
- 2) Have a well-organized structure with smaller committees, such as a membership committee or a media committee to directly involve more people.
- 3) Recruit more voting members to your Board. Encourage your current Friends to promote membership and involvement in the organization with friends and family, "each one, reach one".
- 4) Plan for succession in all aspects of Friends administration, book sale coordination, book store coordination. This is critical to the future health of your organization. Recruit people who have the skills you're looking for, give them tasks they enjoy doing and encourage them, over time, to become more involved.
- 5) Just ask!! Library volunteers and patrons are the easiest people to start asking.
- 6) Create job descriptions for Committee Chairs so they will understand what their responsibilities are. Use Co-Chairs so the Chair won't feel they have to do the job alone.  
Volunteers need to know what skills the organization needs and the time commitment required. Some jobs may require 2 hours a year, others may require 2 hours a month.
- 7) Get people involved in the future planning of the organization.
- 8) Make reminder phone calls about meetings or make a call to someone who you think would possibly be interested in coming who isn't yet involved.
- 9) Advertise volunteer opportunities in your newsletter or brochures.
- 10) Have a Committee or Board member follow up QUICKLY with new Friends members so they feel important to the organization. Call them

regularly and encourage them to become more involved.

- 11) Have frequent programs, at least every other month involving fundraising events, book sales, literacy or arts events.
- 12) When upcoming events or projects are discussed, promote them as the opportunity to be involved.
- 13) If you are advocating for increased funding for your Library or to prevent Library closures, this can lead to an increased interest in support for the Library. Capitalize on this opportunity to recruit new members.
- 14) Advertise volunteer opportunities in the media. Some volunteers who start out doing smaller jobs will become more active later on.
- 15) Break down tasks to manageable sized jobs so volunteers aren't overwhelmed.
- 16) HAVE FUN!!! Other people will want to be involved if they hear your group enjoys what they do.