

FRIENDS

– ADDING VALUE TO YOUR LIBRARY –

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Why Should Your Library Have a Friends Group?

- Your Library already has people who believe in what you do for your community, why not capitalize on their love of books, their love of the library, and help them feel valued and needed?
- Every library can use champions, especially during times when community champions are needed to advocate, to raise much needed funds, or to highlight the library's importance in the community.



Why Should Your Library Have a Friends Group?

- Your Friends, whether they are a large group of individuals or a smaller one, can be ready to help out at short notice.
- Friends, whether they have an informal or formal structure, enjoy getting together, making friends, or socializing while they are actively assisting the Library.
- The promotion of library services and programs happens naturally with the assistance of your Friends.



Why Should Your Library Have a Friends Group?

- Your Friends can be your presence in the community in subtle ways:
 - You can request that the Friends be the Library's presence in the community at an event, when appropriate, to free up staff to do other tasks
 - They can talk to their friends or family about the benefits of volunteering for the Library, either as a Friend or in other ways
 - Friends can make invaluable connections with the local media



Why Should Your Library Have a Friends Group?

- Your Friends can be your presence in the community in subtle ways:
 - Friends can take advantage of their own connections with other community groups; this may lead to shared events or public awareness opportunities
 - While holding Friends events, they can easily promote the Library
 - Friends can speak knowledgeably about how much they enjoy library programs



The Value of Friends

- Raising funds
 - Most Friends groups raise funds the Library can use beyond the basic Operating Budget
 - Funds are generally donated by the Friends to the Library, based on a “Wish List” created by the library staff

Even Friends groups in small communities can raise significant funds



The Value of Friends

Fundraising activities:



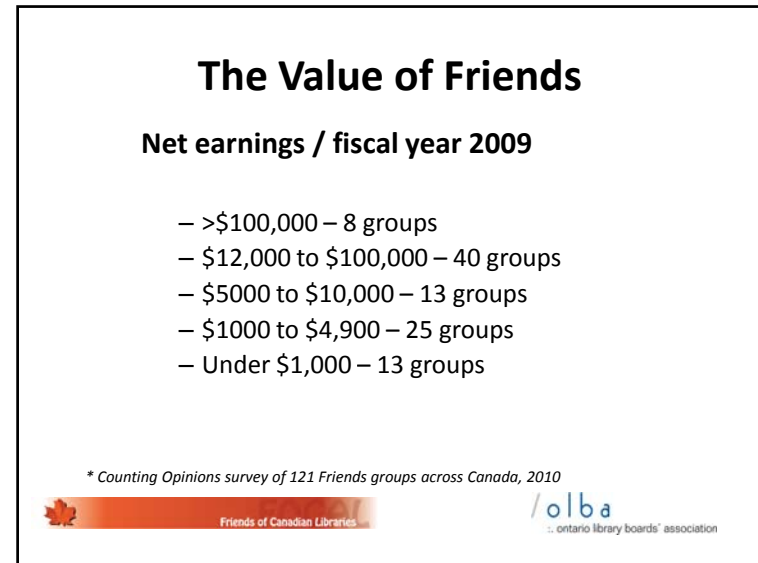
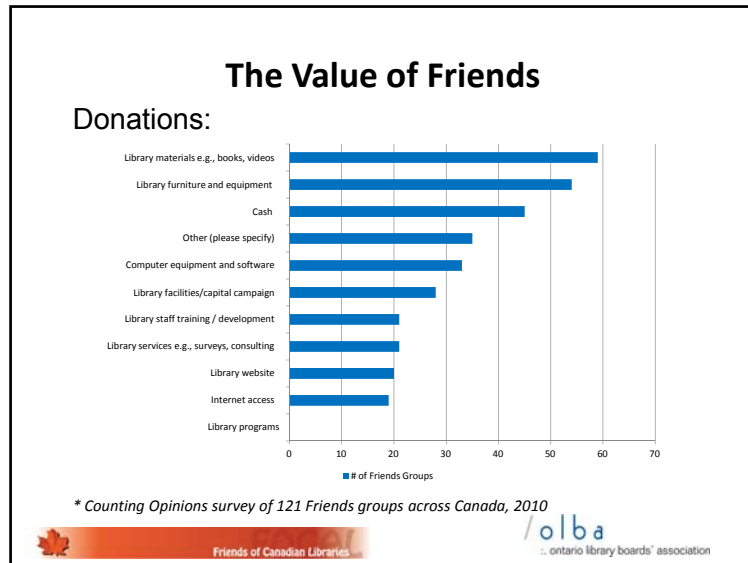
* Counting Opinions survey of 121 Friends groups across Canada, 2010



The Value of Friends

- How do Friends enhance your library’s programs and services:
 - Sponsor special programs such as author series, film nights etc.
 - Host special events (signature events)
 - Fund equipment, furnishings or landscaping
 - Contribute to capital campaigns





- ### The Value of Friends
- **Public Relations**
 - Friends can be very effective, informal promoters of the library and the programs offered
 - At Friends events
 - Through Friends newsletters or notices
 - Through personal contacts or networking opportunities
 - In some libraries, Friends volunteer by delivering books to new parents or to those who can't get out to the library
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- ### The Value of Friends
- **Volunteer Base**
 - Friends very often contribute volunteer hours to their library in other ways – staffing a small coffee kiosk, assisting with library draws or fundraisers, or providing refreshments for library events
 - Friends can encourage others to become involved with the library as Friends volunteers or in other ways
 - Friends can assist with capital campaigns
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The Value of Friends

- Advocacy
 - With direction from the Library Board and staff, the Friends can form the basis of the library's advocates in the community
 - Friends can be mobilized quickly, as there is already a contact list of people who care passionately about the library, along with their friends and family members (e.g. Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Association)



The Value of Friends

- Advocacy
 - Friends can present the needs of the library to the public in a positive and meaningful way by:
 - Writing letters to the editor
 - Organizing online or paper petitions
 - Contacting Councillors by phone or e-mail
 - Attending Council meetings
 - Speaking to the media about the importance of the library in their lives and to the community, with the support and direction of the Library Board



The Value of Friends

- Other Ways Friends Add Value to Your Library
 - The presence of a Friends organization in a community indicates the commitment of a dedicated group of volunteers who have chosen to support your library and not some other charity or Service Club.
 - The presence of Friends in your Library demonstrates to library patrons that there are visible and practical ways of helping the library.



The Value of Friends

- Other Ways Friends Add Value to Your Library
 - The visibility of Friends at library events in the library and outside of the library increases public awareness of the library
 - Friends can be instrumental in finding new opportunities for the library to partner with other organizations or to be involved in new initiatives
 - Friends can optimize media contacts for the library and the Friends



The Value of Friends

- Other Ways Friends Add Value to Your Library
 - Fund or assist with literacy events
 - Fund or promote author events or book signings
 - The Friends demonstrate the library's involvement in book recycling – selling discarded library books and library donations which can't be used for the library's collection to the public at a reasonable price



The Value of Friends

- Friends are valuable to your library because they raise funds, raise the profile of the library in the community and can be advocates when you need them.
- Your Friends generate interest in the library, in literacy, and reflect enthusiasm for the library's programs and services.
- They are your passionate champions!



Resources and Support

- Friends of Canadian Libraries exist to provide resources and support to Friends groups and libraries across Canada.
- Our website is: friendsoflibraries.ca
- You can reach us at focal@accessola.com
- Or reach Dorothy Macnaughton (President, FOCAL) at rmacnaug@bell.net

