

**Friends of WMRLS Annual Meeting  
October 3, 2008  
Wendell Free Library**

**Minutes**

**Call to order:** Chair Sara Woodbury called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. She thanked Rosie Heidkamp, director of the Wendell Free Library, and the library staff for hosting this annual meeting.

**Minutes** of the August meeting were read and approved.

**Regional Report:** Mary King reported on the news from WMRLS, noting that the Board of Library Commissioners and John Ramsay had toured the new Wendell Free Library recently and had a good and informative visit. Mary thanked the Friends of WMRLS for their efforts with the legislative breakfasts this year and their donations. She described some of the problems encountered by the bookmobile, the need for a new or used vehicle, the reduction in the vehicle's schedule, and changes in procedures. Fifty-seven libraries will be visited starting in October again. In other news: the 6 regions have combined resources to help afford the databases, each contributing \$18,000; MLTA –MFOL joint conference is coming up in November; and The American Institute for Economic Research in Great Barrington is holding its annual meeting at WMRLS headquarters on November 13. Jan Resnick added her comment that WMRLS very much appreciates the work of our Friends group in helping to make WMRLS' work more visible.

**President's Report:** Sara Woodbury reported on the following accomplishments this year: Friends of WMRLS have donated \$10,000 this year to WMRLS; various other library friends' groups have also made donations; and our stationery has been re-designed. She noted that Lisa Downing will be leaving the Board after several years of dedicated service; she thanked her for her contribution. Sara invited the attendees at this meeting to join in the work of the Board by volunteering for committees.

**Treasurer's Report:** Dick Floyd reported that in this fiscal year (Oct. '07 – Sept. '08) we started with a beginning balance of \$6797.68 and ended with a balance of \$10,448.53. Total deposits were \$16,288.12 and expenses (including the \$10K donation) amounted to \$12,637.27. A proposed budget and anticipated expenses for FY09 was presented. It was noted that most of the host libraries for the legislative breakfasts this year assumed the costs themselves, although we have money in the budget to help pay for the breakfasts as needed. There is also some money in the new budget for any special programs or projects we might initiate. The treasurer's report was accepted and approved.

**Election of Officers:** The following proposed slate of officers was accepted: President: Toni Golinski-Foisy; Vice president: Sue Crowther; Treasurer: Dick Floyd; and Secretary/Clerk: Louise Kanus.

**Calendar:** A calendar of our activities and events proposed for this year was distributed. The breakfasts should be held in February this year, it was suggested. The calendar was approved and adopted.

**Membership Committee:** Lisa Downing reported on behalf of the committee chair, Sue Crowther. There are currently 180 members; 192 members have not yet renewed membership. The dues account for the majority of our budget. Mailings included a renewal mailing early in

the year and a reminder postcard in the summer. A final renewal mailing is planned for the end of the year. We continued to solicit new members through cards placed in bookmobile items and distribution of Friends of WMRLS brochures and newsletters. Two radio ads were placed on public radio station WAMC (Albany) on the Saturday game show “Wait, Wait ...Don’t Tell Me” in order to attract new members in the Berkshire region.

Lisa concluded by thanking everyone for their support and saying it had been a pleasure for her to serve on the Board for the past five years. She welcomed new Board members and wished them “much success in carrying the torch for this important volunteer organization whose mission is as critical as ever.”

**Advocacy Committee:** Lynn Coakley and Toni Golinski-Foisy reported that there were 5 legislative breakfasts this year, with 300 attendees. Also, for Legislative Day in Boston, they urged members to take advantage of the bus provided – lots of fun and an opportunity to talk to legislators about the Region and its important work. Jan Resnick added that there is a very positive impact on people at the State House when that busload of enthusiastic library supporters arrives. Question #1 on the November ballot regarding potential elimination of the state income tax was briefly discussed. The lead article in the Wrapper was distributed outlining the negative impact likely if the question should pass. Linda Wentworth of the Wendell friends group added that libraries must be careful about involvement in ballot issues and election of candidates. She noted that her friends group had spoken with a lawyer about the do’s and don’ts of such activity. Friends can publicly support issues. It was moved, seconded and approved that Friends of WMRLS go on record as opposing Question 1 on the grounds that it would have an adverse effect on library programs. There were two abstentions.

**Fundraising Committee:** Louise Kanus and Lisa Wenner reported on the “Honor Someone Special” bookmobile project conducted this year. The focus was on children’s books primarily. The general public was invited to donate money to buy one or more books in honor of individuals they chose. Bookplates were placed in each book noting the honoree and the donor. To date, \$5,145 has been collected, representing 119 donations from 51 Western Mass. Communities and 10 donations from out-of-state. The Bank of Western Mass. made a donation and hosted project displays in 3 of their branches. We renewed efforts this past summer to target summer residents and visitors in the Berkshire Region. A paid display ad was placed in the Berkshire Eagle. All in all, the year-long project has been quite successful.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 and followed by a program presented by Becky Marconi, coordinator of the “Together We Thrive” grant project for small libraries.

Respectfully submitted,  
Louise A. Kanus, secretary/clerk