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## Why Can't We Be Friends? Examining the Benefits and Challenges of Maintaining Your Friends of the Library

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# Why Can't We Be Friends? Examining the Benefits and Challenges of Maintaining Your Friends of the Library

## **Cover Page Footnote**

Maureen Rust and Julia Stringfellow Maureen Rust is the Student Engagement and Community Outreach Librarian at the James E. Brooks Library of Central Washington University, where she is responsible for developing and promoting library outreach programming for the student, campus, and greater Ellensburg community. Rust received her bachelor's degree in liberal arts from the University of Alaska Southeast, and her master's in library and information studies degree from the University of Rhode Island. Prior to joining the Brooks faculty, Rust was a school librarian at a 6-12 grade secondary school in southeastern Connecticut and served on her public library's Friends of the Library board. Julia Stringfellow is the University Archivist and Library Department Chair in the James. E. Brooks Library at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, WA. Before coming to CWU in 2015, she served in the role of archivist/librarian at Boise State University. Stringfellow received a Master of Library and Information Science degree and a Master of Arts in History degree from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee in 2002 and became a Certified Archivist in 2011.

*Peer Reviewed Article*

## Why Can't We Be Friends? Examining the Benefits and Challenges of Maintaining Your Friends of the Library

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### Abstract

One of the most fruitful collaborative relationships a library can have is with its Friends of the Library organization, providing that group is vibrant and progressive. This article provides insight into the history of the Friends of the Library group at a regional comprehensive university since its founding in 1962 to nearly becoming defunct in 2015. The steps taken in the transformation of the Friends of the Library since then from an inactive group with no clear direction, to a robust organization with an active board who have identified goals and strategies for successful library advocacy are described. The work done to successfully revitalize the group brought up the question, "Is a Friends of the Library group beneficial enough to the academic library it serves to actually have one?" This question is addressed in the article. A literature review of other publications on academic libraries and Friends of the Library groups is included.

Keywords: library, libraries, Friends of the Library, adult services, advocacy, community engagement, Friends groups, fundraising, marketing, networking, outreach services, public programs, public relations, public services, support groups, transforming libraries

### Introduction

Traditionally Friends of the Library (FOL) groups are formed by a group of devoted library stakeholders who are willing to make a commitment of their time for the benefit of the library and the community it serves. In terms of library advocacy, it can be one of the most fruitful collaborative partnerships the library engages with. Newly formed FOL groups are full of energy

and ideas that ideally enhance the library collection and programming without requiring additional time or resources from library administration. However, it is not unusual, and almost likely, that the initial group of devoted volunteers will eventually age out, burn out, or move on, leaving a less than vibrant organization with lack of direction and leadership. During this moribund stage the library must assess what benefits it is deriving from the Friend's group, and if the group is in fact becoming a library



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detriment. When this occurs, how does the library decide if it is willing to put time and resources into reviving the FOL, or let it die its natural death? This article examines the experiences of the James E. Brooks Library and its Friends of the Library group. The Brooks Library is located at Central Washington University, a medium-sized, public, regional comprehensive university in Ellensburg, Washington. When the once active FOL receded into dormancy, the library dean had to decide whether to support its revitalization or recommend the disbanding of the group.

### Literature Review

This article joins the abundance of previous literature written on the creation and growth of Friends of the Library (FOL) groups that has been written since the first FOL group was created at Harvard University in 1925.<sup>1</sup> These articles and books, specifically those on FOL groups at academic libraries, discuss the various activities these groups do to raise support and funding for the library and the long legacy of partnerships with the university and local communities, as well as other libraries that are vital to spreading the word about the work of their group. In the 2011 article "Academic Libraries and Friends Groups: Asset or Liability?" the authors explore the relationship and importance of FOL groups and library administrations and staff communicating and working together rather than as two separate entities. The need for patience and a time commitment to openly communicate is necessary to work together. Fundraising for the library and enhancing the collection is a task that Friends groups undertake as part of their mission. To successfully do this, there must be open partnerships not just between the Friends and library administration and staff but also the Development/Foundation unit of the university. Placing a library staff member in a position on the FOL board to oversee events, as well as the library dean/director communicating with the group the expectations

for goals and objectives is vital for a successful partnership.<sup>2</sup>

The 1975 "Friends of the Library" article shares the findings of a report prepared the previous year for the Tulane University Library that resulted from a survey of public and academic libraries.<sup>3</sup> Questionnaire results indicated that libraries believe Friends groups exist overall to enrich the library and successfully bring in community support for it. Issues that occurred with Friends groups over forty years ago are consistent with current issues of Friends groups. Many Friends groups were created after 1970 when libraries were experiencing budget cuts and looking for ways to supplement their finances.<sup>4</sup> Academic libraries surveyed indicated active support particularly from faculty and alumni. Following those groups for FOL membership were "community professional people, civic leaders, and book collectors."<sup>5</sup> The survey suggested three objectives of Friends groups: fundraise, advocate for the library, and advise the library administration.<sup>6</sup> The survey results also indicated that Friends groups thrived due to the large support they received from their library, and from the partnership and active communication between the two groups.

It is beneficial for Friends of the Library groups to establish external partnerships and reach out beyond their library, as is the case with the Friends of the Gerald R. Sherratt Library at Southern Utah University. In the article "Establishing a Friends of the Library Advisory Board," the authors describe the newly formed FOL group working to increase outreach efforts across the university and community, reinforcing the library's role in the capital campaign of the university, and working with the Foundation office to strengthen that partnership.<sup>7</sup> The article also describes the importance of having support from experienced development staff, specifically a development officer with experience in fundraising, for a successful FOL group. The partnership between the library, the FOL



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group, and the university's development office is critical.

"It's Hard to Make New Friends: What to Think About in Creating a Friends of the Library Group" describes the ways Friends groups provide another source of support for libraries. University stakeholders for these groups include library administration and staff, faculty, students, campus administration, and the development office. Libraries need people with strong local contacts who will promote the library and this is true of Friends groups. These groups serve as "roving ambassadors" in the community for the library's strengths and needs.<sup>8</sup>

"Care and Keeping of Friends Groups" explores the ways that Friends groups raise public awareness of the library through the perspectives of the Executive Director of Friends of Libraries U.S.A., co-presidents of a Friends group, a library director, and a branch manager. As shared in the Marshall article, the Friends group should develop a marketing and membership promotional campaign that includes lots of local publicity about its renewed efforts.<sup>9</sup>

Successful promotion is accomplished through partnerships with the local newspaper and radio and television stations. Another effective partnership for a Friends group is with the library board of trustees, meeting together to share ideas and plans. A FOL representative attends board meetings and a trustee attends Friends meetings allowing for a free flow of information between the two groups.<sup>10</sup> The task of raising a Friends group to maturity and recruiting members by a library director and librarians is one that requires a time and effort commitment, but if the group is raised well they will ultimately become independent and conduct activities and fundraising on their own. Recruiting a few key community members who genuinely care about the library is also vital to growing a Friends group.<sup>11</sup>

"Adventures with Friends of the Library" offers the perspective of a Friends member recruited to be part of the group.<sup>12</sup> The new member and his wife were recently retired and chose to volunteer for the group to give back to their community of Silver City, New Mexico. Their work included overseeing the operations of the Friends bookstore and developing partnerships with groups such as the New Mexico State University football team that assisted with packing and moving books for the book sale. The examples of local involvement with the Friends document further the partnerships communities can have with their Friends group.

Reviewing the literature on FOL groups brings out consistent practices that the Brooks Library FOL group is doing. Other FOL groups at academic libraries have a library staff member that attends meetings and is involved with events as is also done with the Brooks Library FOL group. Strong public relations is crucial for the survival of a FOL group and having a newsletter is a way to promote the group and recruit new members.<sup>13</sup> The Brooks Library FOL group has a column in the library's newsletter that is published quarterly. Their articles help to recruit members and share what activities they are working on that advocate the library.

As is recommended in the article "Public Relations in Academic Libraries: A Descriptive Analysis," the B Library FOL has an active website that was updated within the past year. Its membership list, contact information, and meeting schedule are current. A current and well-organized website is vital for library promotion that includes a webpage dedicated to the FOL group and their activities.<sup>14</sup> "The 'Electronic Welcome Mat: The Academic Library Web Site as a Marketing and Public Relations Tool,'" also confirms the importance of the library's website that include a presence for the Friends group to recruit new members and raise awareness of the group's activities.<sup>15</sup> The website is a way of making the campus community knowledgeable



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about the Friends group and building partnerships between the two communities.

Articles on FOL groups also emphasize the significance of reaching out to other libraries and learning how they successfully (or not) have a Friends group. It is most useful to contact another academic library that is similar in size and type (public or private university) and discover what lessons they have learned.<sup>16</sup> The Brooks Library has the advantage of being a member of a 39-member academic library consortium, the Orbis Cascade Alliance, making it easier to contact other peer institutions to compare how their FOL groups operate (<https://www.orbiscascade.org/>). An example is assessing projects the Friends of the Library group at peer institution Washington State University have conducted and reviewing their FOL website to learn more about the group.

Literature reviewed on FOL groups in academic libraries overall agrees that while Friends groups require much time and work to create and sustain, they are very beneficial to the library in terms of promoting it, being strong advocates, and in building partnerships at the university and community level for the Friends group and library it supports.

### History of the Friends of the Brooks Library up to 2015

The Friends of the Brooks Library group started in 1962 when Central Washington University was Central Washington State College. The college was growing in student enrollment and degrees offered and had hired Dr. James E. Brooks as its president the previous year. During his tenure, Dr. Brooks worked to make the library a focal point of a quality education and was instrumental in the concept and design of a new library to accommodate the growing collection. The present library was completed in 1975 and named in honor of Dr. Brooks in 2003.

Throughout its history, the Friends group has been comprised of students, faculty, trustees, alumni, and Kittitas County citizens, helping to bridge the town-gown divide. Having community members on the board led to collaborative projects between the Friends group, the Brooks Library, the Ellensburg Public Library and its Friends group, and the local communities of the Kittitas County. When the group was waning in the mid-1990s, the then retired Dr. Brooks stepped in to revitalize it. By the end of the 1995-1996 academic year there were 50 contributing members of the Friends group. During this time the Friends set fundraising goals to support library acquisitions and to heighten awareness of the library among the greater Ellensburg community. This period also saw the launching of an annual book sale, and establishment of the Friends of the Library endowment to help fund and support library projects and collections.

A retired faculty member took over as chair of the FOL group in 2003. Her actions as chair included making unilateral decisions without the counsel of the FOL board, holding infrequent meetings, and heading up all aspects of board business. She did not communicate with the library dean which added another challenge of non-transparency and was detrimental to the collaborative nature of their relationship. By 2014, the board had once again dwindled to a small group of retired or semi-retired faculty and a few community members. Membership drives were inconsistent, and a comprehensive list of current members had not been maintained. When the chair abruptly stepped down in the winter of 2014, she left a board that was unprepared to step in and keep the organization moving forward and the group nearly died. It was at this point that the library dean got involved by initiating board member recruitment and reorganization.

### Revitalization of the Friends of the Brooks Library





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The departure of the long-time FOL chair created a vacuum among the remaining members who were not used to being called upon to provide leadership or chair independent projects within the group. Recognizing the need for additional FOL board members, the dean of libraries took the initiative by planning an FOL event, inviting all current board members, identifiable FOL members, and library advocates from the community who showed promise as potential board members. This event resulted in the addition of two new board members. The addition of these board members injected a good measure of energy and progressivism into the FOL, but it was clear that strategic planning was needed to maintain the forward momentum. In January 2016 the board held their first half-day retreat to do some long-range planning. They hired a non-profit consultant, an objective professional who brought guidance and structure to the intention of the retreat. The retreat became a turning point for the FOL and the board by providing a plan and by granting each member their own investment and authority in board decisions and actions (Appendix A).

The gradual metamorphosis of the FOL board as new board members joined brought new ideas and initiatives to the surface. To confirm endowment proceeds were being distributed properly, the newly elected vice-chair/treasurer worked with the library dean, administrative specialist, and foundation representative to educate herself on the terms of the endowment and the history of annual allocations to the library dean's discretionary fund. Simultaneously the board reached out to explore potential partnerships and promotional avenues with campus athletics, publicity, university advancement, and the campus leadership and civic engagement office.

The board also addressed its goal to improve the FOL communication platform by instituting a new logo (Appendix B), creating a new membership brochure, and launching a more user-friendly, contemporary website ([www.Brooks-FOL.org](http://www.Brooks-FOL.org)).

An amendment to the FOL Constitution allowed for the successful expansion of the board to as many as 15 board members (<https://www.brooksfol.org/aboutfriends/>). Recruiting started back up in earnest, again through word of mouth, but also by placing notices on the university's electronic bulletin board, *Central Today* (Appendix C) and in the local newspaper. As a result, five new board members were added at the June 2017 Annual Meeting. The new members consisted of university staff (continuing education, residence life, conference center) and faculty (Physics, Geography). Simultaneous to the addition of four board members, two more long-term board members stepped down. These changes heralded a complete turnover of the Friends board since 2014. The FOL board members now numbered eleven, with four seats available to fill.

2017 was also the year the board fully took back organization of the annual book sale. Members took on a variety of roles (organization, promoting, staffing), giving them a better sense of the event and its required components. Working with the library coffee shop manager, they also created a year-round book sale in the library coffee shop, with one board member donating wood, and another creating a special book shelf just for that purpose.



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Figure 1. *Friends of the Library materials* (Maureen Rust, 2018, Photograph)



Figure 2. *Friends of the Library bookshelf* (Maureen Rust, 2018, Photograph)





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National Friends of the Library Week of October, 2017 provided the back-drop for the new FOL membership drive, consisting of a mass mailing of the new membership brochure, an announcement in the quarterly newsletter, an FOL display at the library, and notices posted on *Central Today* and the local newspapers. The FOL worked with the library circulation department to arrange for library benefits for new members joining at a certain level. All new members were added to the FOL database and the University Advancement database used to create library mailing lists, increasing the FOL and library reach.

At the June 2018 Annual Meeting, the board welcomed four new members bringing the board up to a fifteen-member board. In a three-year period, the board had gone from a dwindling membership of five long-term members, to a 15-member board of proven library advocates, increasing board membership by 300%.

### How library collaboration revitalized the Friends group

Traditionally, the library dean holds an ex-officio seat on the FOL board, attends the meetings to provide current information about library developments, field questions the FOL board has, and presents funding requests. It is understood that the dean administers the library, not the FOL, and that the FOL is a separate, autonomous body, running parallel to the library, rather than intertwined. However, in an effort to resuscitate the failing FOL, the library dean made the decision to assigned library faculty members to a variety of aspects involved.

During the period between the resignation of the long-term Chair and the recruitment of the new board members, the Student Engagement and Community Outreach (SECO) librarian took on tasks that often crossed the line between library administration and FOL management.

This included creating meeting agendas, taking notes, and recruiting new board members, a time commitment of roughly fifteen hours per month. While it was understood that this was more involvement than library personnel should have in FOL board administration, it was also recognized that this level of attention was temporarily needed to resuscitate the organization. As the board started to fill with new members, the SECO librarian was able to step back into a more traditional liaison role, still providing some clerical and communication support, but not to the extent that had been previously necessary. The time now spent assisting with FOL tasks has been cut back to a maximum of two hours per month, an 87% reduction in time and responsibility.

The Library Faculty Chair and University Archivist also played a key role in the revitalization by attending the meetings to advocate not only for Archives and Special Collections, but also on behalf of library administration. As University Archivist, it was important to attend the meetings and receive and retain copies of meeting materials and correspondence to document the history of the FOL in the Central Washington University (CWU) Archives. Another reason to attend the FOL meetings and stay in communication with the group was to keep them apprised of events, activities, and grant projects the Archives was conducting so that they could spread the word in the community, promote the Archives, and attend the events. A board member's connection at the local newspaper resulted in the newspaper interviewing the University Archivist regarding an upcoming event the Archives was hosting. By knowing about the Archives, the FOL group has also offered financial support for collections and preservation tools. The relationship between the two has been highly beneficial: the FOL group knows the importance of having their materials preserved



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permanently in the CWU Archives, and the Archives in turn has a university and community group that knows about and supports their work.

The User Experience Librarian was instrumental in the rebranding of the Friends of the Library. Working with the FOL board, she applied her graphic design skills to create a new logo, color palette and font recommendations (Appendix B), and designed and launched the new website, now maintained by an FOL board member. From October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018, the revamped website has experienced 581 unique visits and 1,189 page views. Because the previous FOL website was hosted on a former university platform and static in nature, usage statistics are not available, although it seems safe to assume it did not enjoy the usage of the current website.

When asked how she decided to devote the time and resources necessary to revive the FOL, Patricia Cutright, the dean involved in the revitalization said that she was inspired by the advocacy she had seen other successful FOL groups bring to their host libraries (Cutright, interview, August 27, 2018). She noted that successful FOL groups not only enhance library fundraising efforts, but just as importantly provide powerful library advocacy and facilitate community involvement and support, which is especially crucial in spanning any perceived town and gown divide. Cutright maintains the strength of any library is its broad-based support, support that goes beyond its traditional patronage to involve the entire community. According to Cutright, "Engaging community members with gravitas to get key people involved gets you halfway there." For instance, she reached out to a local history museum director to join the board, expanding library outreach and advocacy to his constituents. She also recruited family members of retired faculty who had played a key role at the library (former President Brooks, and a former library dean), adding a complimentary

layer of familiarity and knowledge to the board. Cutright sees a lot of untapped potential for leveraging significant milestones and anniversaries to bring contributions to the FOL library endowment to new heights. But her interests are not solely monetary. She sees the library as a community safe-haven and a place for culture and learning for all, a message the FOL board and members help to spread.

### Recommendations

In a perfect world, both the library administration and the Friends of the Library board are running smoothly, side-by-side, in a mutually beneficial relationship with common goals. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. As shared in the D'andraia, Fitzpatrick, and Oliver article<sup>17</sup>, their research on the literature and surveys conducted with academic library staff display a "problematic history" of FOL groups and their libraries. Luckily there are resources and strategies for getting an FOL back on track.

#### *Where to start*

United for Libraries is the division of the American Library Association specific to Friends of the Libraries groups. Their website ([www.ala.org/united/](http://www.ala.org/united/)) provides a wide variety of resources for established FOL groups, emerging FOL groups, and host libraries. Sally Gardner Reed's book *The Good, The Great, and The Unfriendly* is an essential guide for libraries working with Friends groups.<sup>18</sup>

#### *Clarify the mission and objectives of the Friends of the Library*

Meet with the chair of the FOL to review the intention of the group and to assess how well they are meeting their own goals and objectives. Encourage the Chair to consider scheduling an annual retreat moderated by a professional non-profit advisor, someone who is far enough from the library and the FOL to provide objective structure and guidance in line with the goals



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and objectives of the group. It is ideal for the library dean/director to meet with the FOL at the start of each year to go over the goals and objectives for the year to ensure everyone is on the same page regarding what the group will work on for that year.

*Designate a library liaison to the FOL*

The liaison provides a communications bridge between the library administration and the FOL. The liaison can assist in clarifying institutional policies and procedures, something the Chair may not be familiar with. The liaison can also keep the Dean apprised of developments when she/he is unable to attend the FOL meeting. Be very clear defining and communicating the liaison's involvement and responsibilities with the FOL.

*Keep your eyes open for potential FOL members board members*

Just as the FOL can be the library's most powerful and effective community advocate, the library can help by taking note of college partners and community contacts who seem well-suited for addition to membership and/or the FOL board, and pass their information on to the FOL membership team. Consideration should also be given to loosening control and throwing a wider net by placing recruiting notices on the FOL and library websites, social media outlets, library newsletter, and the local newspaper. The people who step forward, ready to commit to joining the board and advocating for the library may be surprising. Ensuring that the FOL board is a balanced representation of campus and non-campus community members increases library outreach and advocacy throughout the community.

*Ultimately the library is in control*

More than likely, the FOL mission, goals, and objectives are to support and enhance the library's resources for the benefit of the wider community. It is important to remember that if

the FOL consistently fails to meet their objectives to the point of being a detriment to the library, library administration can recommend its disbanding, allowing for the formation of a more functional FOL.<sup>19</sup>

**Conclusion**

Successfully revitalizing the Brooks Library Friends of the Library group has been a two-stage process. Initially it required an administrative directive and a considerable amount of time and staff efforts. Secondarily it required the involvement of campus and community members suitably inspired to commit their time to serve on the FOL board and to take on the responsibilities inherent in that role. Benefits to the library include ongoing funding for collection materials, effective community outreach, financial assistance in producing the quarterly newsletter, and advocating for the library on campus and out in the community. As they progress the FOL board have streamlined successful management methods such as setting sustainable goals, setting a yearly schedule early for addition to member calendars, planning annual events, continuing to hold their annual retreat, and delegating responsibilities such as book sale preparation, website management, contributing to the quarterly newsletter, and meeting with library administration and campus Foundation. Quantifiable benefits of this collaboration between the library and its Friends group include a 300% increase in board members, an 87% decrease in the amount of time library staff now devote to FOL matters, and an 11.43% increase in the Friends of the Library endowment.

This case study demonstrates how an academic library Friends of the Library group was brought back to life by a combined effort between the library administration and community citizens who believed in the value and worth of the organization. Sustaining and supporting a Friends of the Library group can return the investment of administrative time and



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resources not only monetarily, but in valuable in library advocacy, strengthening its presence in the wider community, and bringing the library onto the playing field for other initiatives that will require backing.

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<sup>1</sup> D'andraia, *Academic Libraries*, 221-30.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.

<sup>3</sup> Gwyn, *Friends*, 272-82.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 272.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 275.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>7</sup> Eye, *Establishing*, 25.

<sup>8</sup> Taylor, *It's Hard*, 604.

<sup>9</sup> Hill, *The Care*, 21.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>12</sup> Parotti, *Adventures*, 570.

<sup>13</sup> Brownlee and Ney, *Alice B. Toklas*, 42.

<sup>14</sup> Marshall, *Public Relations*, 116.

<sup>15</sup> Welch, *The Electronic*, 226.

<sup>16</sup> Houck, *Practical*, 21.

<sup>17</sup> D'andraia, *Academic Libraries*, 22.

<sup>18</sup> Reed, *The Good*, 1-157.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.





## Appendix A: Retreat agenda

- *Set 2016 goals*
  1. *Recruit and elect board chair*
  2. *Elect additional board officers*
  3. *Increase endowment*
  4. *Create endowment spending policies*
  5. *Increase book and journal collections*
  6. *Increase FOL membership (annual appeal)*
  7. *Gain financial clarity (how funds are managed)*
  8. *Improve communications platform (rebranding)*
- *Review mission of the FOL*
- *Define desired FOL chair traits*
- *Set 2016 meeting calendar*
- *Set agendas for upcoming meetings*

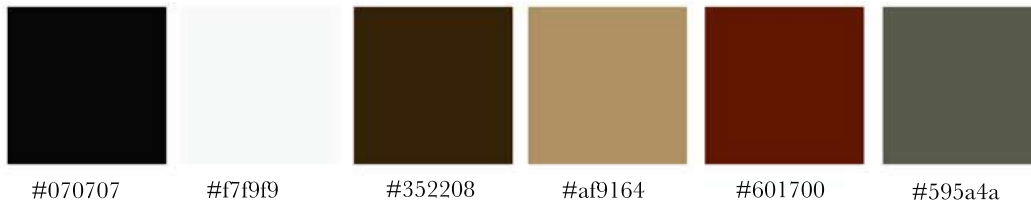


## Appendix B: Friends of the Brooks Library Brand Identity

### Logo



### Color Palette



### Typography

This is a header in Baskerville

This is body text in Baskerville. Baskerville is categorized as a transitional typeface in-between classical typefaces and the high contrast modern faces. Baskerville is an elegant book face, and as proven by John Baskerville's own treatment, it can excel in purely typographic compositions. Today it remains one of the most popular and classic typefaces for print, for its legibility and refined beauty.

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## Appendix C: Sample notice from *Central Today*.

The screenshot displays the Central Washington University (CWU) website. At the top, the text "CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY" is on the left, and navigation links "Apply | Request Info | Make a Gift | MyCWU | News/Events | A-Z Index" are on the right. A red navigation bar contains the CWU logo and menu items: "WELCOME", "ADMISSIONS", "ACADEMICS", "ABOUT", "STUDENT SUCCESS", and "LIFE ON CAMPUS". Below this is a banner for "Campus Notices" with a brick building background. The main content area features a notice titled "The Friends of the Brooks Library Board of Directors are seeking 4 new members". To the left of the notice is a sidebar with links: "Home", "Submit a Notice", "View all Notices", "Help", and "Logout". To the right is a "Navigation" box with links for "Add Content", "Page Search", and "Logout".

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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### The Friends of the Brooks Library Board of Directors are seeking 4 new members

The Friends of the Brooks Library Board of Directors are seeking 4 new members starting June 2018. CWU faculty and staff, and Ellensburg community members are encouraged to apply. Each seat is a 3 year term. Please send a short paragraph explaining your interest and enthusiasm for our vibrant library, and confirm your availability for 4 meetings a year to [BrooksFOL@cwu.edu](mailto:BrooksFOL@cwu.edu). Check us out on the web at [www.BrooksFOL.org](http://www.BrooksFOL.org)  
Come join the fun!

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**Appendix D: Revitalizing your Friends of the Library: WORKSHEET**

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What benefits do your current FOL board provide your library and community?</li> <li>• Does your board possess beneficial and unique characteristics?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name two aspects of your FOL that are in need of revision/resolution.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List three strategies for addressing the weaknesses you've identified.</li> <li>• List three potential campus or community partners who you can explore FOL partnerships with (i.e. Alumni Association? Literacy organizations?)</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>
<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify three obstructions to achieving your identified opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>



## **Appendix E: Revitalizing your Friends of the Library: 10 Helpful Tips**

1. A constitution with the group's purpose and goals is needed, as are bylaws and a manual of policies and procedures. Review these annually and update as needed.
2. An attendance policy for members is necessary to have quorum and get things done at meetings. Be upfront with the policy and enforce it. If a member is not willing to take the time to attend meetings and provide their input and help, they should be replaced.
3. A call for agenda items should be sent out the week before each meeting. The agenda should be sent out no later than 24 hours beforehand. Meeting minutes should be taken at each meeting and sent out to the members within a week following the meeting.
4. A location for meeting materials and other documents should be designated with a person in charge of maintaining and updating it.
5. The library dean/director should serve as ex-officio of the group and attend meetings. A library update should be provided by the dean/director at each meeting.
6. Meetings should not run longer than 90 minutes.
7. Be clear about what the library will provide for the meetings. This includes providing the meeting space, photocopies of materials, and refreshments.
8. Prior to each meeting, make sure all members attending have parking passes if needed and can easily park at the library. Reserve spots for members the day of the meeting if needed.
9. For the FOL's fundraising and financial account, be clear about how they can access it and who their contact is for the account. They should receive regular reports of the balance and contributions made to it.
10. Members of the Friends of the Library are serving as volunteers and because of their love for the library and its services. They reflect the library. Show appreciation for what they do. This includes thank you notes, recognizing them at library events, and keeping them apprised of what's happening at the library and how they can help.

