

Friends of the Dexter District Library
Minutes
March 12, 2008

Our Mission: Helping the Library fulfill its role in the community by fund-raising, promotion, and support.

Present: Kantha Gardner, Mary Westhoff, Carolyn Tyson, Margaret Steptoe, Dan Chapman, Linda Hosford, Marty Davis, Christy Shensky, Mary Robinson, Cindy Evans, Guests Jennifer Kundak and Sharon Pignanelli

Minutes from the Feb13, 2008 meeting were approved with no changes.

President's report:

Mary Higgins is unable to attend meetings for an indefinite time period so her work on the printed material will need to go to someone else. Marty will look into signs for the book sales. Signs In A Day on Jackson Road have good prices and fast turn around. Adair Printing is also a good source. There was discussion regarding coordination of our printed material and the use of our logo on everything we print. Linda will talk to Alison Brueckner regarding the brochure she made for the Friends and report back. A motion was made and approved to reimburse Kantha for expenses incurred for the annual meeting in Nov. 07.

Guest speakers Jennifer Kundak and Sharon Pignanelli from the Friends of McKune Memorial Library:

The Friends of Mckune Library went through some difficult times a few years ago. It was a solid group with a rich history that was aging. The transitional period was wrought with politics and conflict that split the group. Because they were first and foremost dedicated to the library, they stuck with it, and have again become a cohesive, effective group.

They have grown in membership because of personal, one on one, direct contact, "friend of somebody", "twisted arm" approach. The demands on their time are great. The Friends realized that to get more people actively involved, volunteers needed to feel like they were making a real contribution. A big change happened when the library moved from its temporary home at the old Chelsea High school to the new library building. The book sales had been discontinued during the construction. A small group was motivated to get the sales started again. There were logistical difficulties with the new location because all the donated books go to the lower, unfinished level (which they hope to finish in the future, with another millage.) 23 rolling carts were constructed by a crew of volunteers. The materials were donated by Polly's (old shopping carts). They had a number of different crews for other jobs such as rebuilding shelves. The use of the carts not only helped facilitate the transport of books, they helped foster a sense of involvement. Different volunteers "own" their cart. Donated books go directly to a sorting table then to the various carts - fiction, sci-fi, murder mystery, etc. This happens 3 times a week on an ongoing basis. Each cart has a sorting crew of 3 - 6 people including a leader. Only the owner of the cart is allowed to "shelve" the books. The volunteer/owner becomes a "specialist" in their designated area. The book tubs are cleaned everyday. There is 1 six sided cart of premium, "giftable" quality books which sell for double. These can generate up to \$300 a month. Prices

are \$1/hard cover, .50/paperback, \$1/DVD,CD, .50/VHS, .50 per inch/kids books, .25/tapes and games. They are trying a “vintage” book cart with sales improving but it hasn’t really caught on yet.

8 volunteers are staffed to set up the book sales which are open from 10a.m. to 3 p.m. There are always 6 to 8 people working a 3 hour shifts. The president use to spend approximately 60 hours a month communicating with volunteers, now it is around 30. Mostly via e-mail, one person by phone. They have 6000 - 7000 books in inventory and average \$1000 per sale. The first few sales in the new building generated \$1200 - \$1300 which started March 07.

Books are culled after 3 sales and moved to a culled table. They get \$1/box and are picked up by a local bookstore owner. Volunteers take books to recycle. Hardcover are boxed. Washtenaw recycling will pick up to 20 boxes.

All volunteers sign in and once they accrue 10 hours they receive a \$5 coupon.

Whenever it is appropriate, they use both the Chelsea Library’s logo along with the Friends logo.

They print 400 bookmarks every 2 months and give them out at the book sales. Bookmarks are placed at the coat racks on an ongoing basis. They also give bookmarks to the Chelsea school libraries, and local shops. Designs for the bookmarks are made on PC software (Publisher) and Chelsea Graphics prints and cuts them. 100 sheets cost \$37. Subject for the bookmarks have included the Friends and local people of note.

Friends of McKune library include paying members and honorary members. Honorary membership is based on active volunteer involvement. The paying members can vote and their contributions are tax deductible; \$10/individual, \$25/family, \$50/supporting. They are fully incorporated and a 501c3 organization. They collect sales tax which is included in their pricing.

Friends of McKune Library totally fund Books for Babies. They pick projects to support from the libraries wish list, both large and small. They have funded such things as a music series, an electronic piano and picnic table. They wrote a grant and received \$2500 towards the total cost of \$8000 for a microphone reader printer. They post big signs at the book sales identifying what things they are planning to fund. They have connections with other groups such as the Garden Club, which totally maintains the planting areas. There are urns with individuals names on them and signs recognizing people who take care of the area.

They had a successful cookbook fund raiser titled Key Ingredients with recipes from Chelsea fair winners and local business owners. It coincided with a Smithsonian exhibit, All About Food. They sold 200 copies and netted \$1000. It was a lot of work. They are currently working on a fund raiser selling prints of a local artist’s (Ben Bower) pen and ink drawings of the old library.

There was a 5 month delay in book sales after the grand opening for the new library. They had a “soft opening”, meaning an informal opening. There was a lot of worry and “crunch time” associated with making the date. Some things weren’t ready. Jennifer spoke of a different library that used a human chain to carry books from old library to new. It was symbolic - “passing the books”. They received great news coverage from it. McKune has been really lucky with good press. One freelance writer wrote an in-depth article on the evolution of the book sales.

