2016 Annual Meeting
Friends Fair: A Fine Fit for FOTL

FOTL President Don Reynolds, left, welcomed distinguished guests Riley Darnell, former Tennessee Secretary of State, center, and Tre Hargett, current Secretary of State, to the annual meeting.

Features of the 2016 Annual Meeting were a perfect mix:
- Gracious hospitality extended by the Friends of the Clarksville-Montgomery County Public Library
- Excellent accommodations, delectable food, and amazing door prizes
- Distinguished guests
- An engaged audience
- Profiles of successful projects from the Friends network to take back home. See pages 4-5 for more details.

Plans are already underway for next year’s Annual Meeting, to be hosted by the Friends of the Sevier County Public Library at the King Family Public Library in Sevierville on March 25.

Three Win Grants
FOTL has given $300 grants to each of three Friends groups to promote advocacy, membership, and fundraising. Page 11

Four Recognized
FOTL has recognized a group and three individuals for their outstanding service. Read about the Knox County Public Library Foundation, Denise Robertson of Blount County Friends; Mary Ellen Smethells, volunteer at Webb School’s central library; and Denise Wells of Kodak Friends. Pages 8-9
The FOTL Outlook

By Donald B. Reynolds, President

Well, Dear Friends, surprise, surprise—after writing my farewell in the last newsletter, here I am again. I have agreed to serve another year as FOTL president as we search for a president nominee. If you know a Friend who would be a good FOTL president, please let us know: don.reynolds2030@gmail.com.

Another April has come and gone. April is the busiest month on the FOTL calendar: it brings the two big FOTL membership events to celebrate our work, renew our spirits, and provide helpful new information to be of service to our Friends groups.

In this issue of the newsletter, you will read about our Annual Tennessee Library Association Trustees/Friends Section luncheon in Kingsport, where we presented the joint TLA/FOTL Friend of the Year Award to Julie Webb of Knoxville (p. 3).

At that lunch, we also heard from ALA United for Libraries President-elect Susan Schmidt how trustees, Friends, and librarians “are all in this together” (p. 7). After lunch Susan also led a small group session on “Fundraising for Libraries” that included lots of good ideas, including how to develop an elevator speech and an advocacy calendar.

In addition, to recognize their support for public library services, FOTL presented a special commendation:

Friend of Libraries Recognition to Food City
In appreciation for the support of community public library services through the Food Club cereal box promotion, “Read any Good Books Lately?” (p. 10)

Our Annual Meeting was hosted by the Clarksville-Montgomery County Public Library Friends and was A Friends Fair of programs being offered by Friends groups throughout the state (pp. 4-5). We have prepared a compilation booklet of the presentations which will be posted on our website: http://www.friendstnlibraries.org/resources/.

Also at our Annual Meeting, we were pleased to surprise and recognize former Secretary of State Riley Darnell for his service, 1993-2009. We were much appreciative of current Secretary of State Tre Hargett, who helped us celebrate Secretary Darnell’s contributions to the growth and development of library services in Tennessee (p.6).

We were very excited that our Facebook Page has just acquired over 1,000 Likes. A high point on the page was to introduce our newest Friend reader (on the left). He is the grandson and great-grandson of our FOTL Board members Susie Ries and Julie Webb, respectively.

Welcome to the wonderful world of books, George.

At our next FOTL Board Meeting in July, we will be developing our work plan for the 2016-17 program year. Please let us know if you have any suggestions don.reynolds2030@gmail.com.

Thank you again for being a FOTL member; we’re in this together, and we’re glad you’re with us.
Julie Webb: 2015 Friend of the Year

Julie Webb has been a Friend of the Library for decades. Friends of Tennessee Libraries considers her to be its Founding Mother. Instrumental in creating the organization in the 1990s, she was its second president. She continues to share her wisdom on the organization’s advisory board and has influenced many Tennessee leaders to serve on the FOTL board.

Her contributions to her local Friends of the Knox County Public Library continue unabated; she serves on the nominating committee and is a member of the Knox County Library Foundation Board. Leader, mentor, and supporter, Julie Webb has taught and continues to teach Tennesseans how to advocate for public libraries.

In the photo on the left, Joan Van Sickle Sloan, Blount County Public Library, congratulates Mrs. Webb at the Trustees and Friends Luncheon of the Tennessee Library Association’s conference on April 8 in Kingsport; on the right, Chuck Sherrill, state librarian and archivist, adds his good wishes. The Friend of the Year Award is co-sponsored annually by FOTL and the Tennessee Library Association.

In the photo on the left, Joan Van Sickle Sloan, Blount County Public Library, congratulates Mrs. Webb at the Trustees and Friends Luncheon of the Tennessee Library Association’s conference on April 8 in Kingsport; on the right, Chuck Sherrill, state librarian and archivist, adds his good wishes. The Friend of the Year Award is co-sponsored annually by FOTL and the Tennessee Library Association.

Presented to Mrs. Webb on April 8 at the TLA Trustees and Friends Luncheon, the award reads, “In appreciation for outstanding accomplishments, dedication, and commitment to excellence in the advancement of library services and education in Tennessee.”

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Jack and Patricia Watson, left, traveled from Knoxville to congratulate Mrs. Webb on the Friend of the Year Award. Mrs. Watson was director of the Knox County Public Library in the early 1990s when she suggested to Mrs. Webb that Tennessee needed a statewide organization linking library advocates. Thus Mrs. Webb worked to establish FOTL, of which Susie Webb Ries, right, is past president.

Charlie Daniel, cartoonist for the Knoxville News Sentinel and a loyal Friend of the Knox County Public Library, created this caricature of Mrs. Webb as 2015 Friend of the Year. On April 20, Mr. Daniel presented Mrs. Webb an award from Scenic Knoxville, this time for her dedication and service to the cause of preserving the natural beauty of the Knoxville area.
For 2016 Annual Meeting

Clarksville Unrolls the Welcome Mat

On Friday evening Gerald Beavers led the way into the elegant Emerald Hill Mansion for a dessert reception sponsored by Friends of the Clarksville-Montgomery County Library and the Felix Woodward Library of Austin Peay State University.

Cora Willis-King and Zach Sheets traveled from LaFollette for the meeting. Following Saturday’s election, Cora took her seat on the FOTL board as a representative from East Tennessee.

Gerald Beavers’ team defined hospitality. Seated, Linda Nichols; standing from left, Jacqueline Crouch, Gerald Beavers, Kate Smith, Heather Mendoza, President of the Friends of the CMC Library Anne Black, and Jan Hodgson. The team assembled so many door prizes that many people carried home two gifts.

Delectable food at Friday’s reception was but a prelude to a delicious breakfast and lunch served on Saturday at the FOTL Annual Meeting. Kate Smith’s talented and charming children, below, entertained and welcomed guests to the reception.

Kathleen Bradley of Collierville, elected to FOTL’s board from West Tennessee on Saturday, chatted with Julie Webb at the reception on Friday.

(Not pictured) Library Director Martha Hendricks, Montgomery County Mayor Jim Durrett, and State General Assembly Representative Joe Pitts added their welcomes as well.
At Friends Fair
Speakers Share Their Success Stories

Andrea Batson on Putnam County Friends' Coffee with an Author and Kroger Rewards

Diane Johnson on Sevier Country Friends' historic calendar and King Family Friends' Lifelong Learning program

Jacque Jenkins on Memphis Friends' used book store and online book sales

Tess McNeely, teen volunteer, on her creation of a Christmas tree from books donated to her library in Lewis County

Ava Ploeckelman, teen volunteer, on her Girl Scout project to buy furniture for CMC Library

Sharon Wilson on Houston County Friends' Youth and Creative Writing Contest

Library Director Dolores Greenwald, left, and Friends President Debbie Eads on Williamson County's book publishing project

Kate Smith of the Red River Region on R.E.A.D.S.

Erin Loree on Tennessee Electronic Library

In addition the following ballot was approved at the 2016 Annual Meeting:
President Don Reynolds, Talbott; Past President Susie Webb Ries, Nashville
President-Elect William Sundquist, Chattanooga
Treasurer Marjorie Kaup Haines, Brentwood
Metro Representatives Martha Gill, Knox; William Sundquist, Chattanooga; Larry Price, Nashville; Jacque Jenkins, Memphis
Regional Representatives East: Cora Willis-King, LaFollette; Whitney Kimball Coe, Athens; Middle: Wanda Graham, Brentwood; Kris and Mike Dodd, Fayetteville; Chelsea Gifford, Cookeville; West: Janis Perry, Jackson; Kathleen Bradley, Collierville

Martha Gill, FOTL editor and representative from Knox County Friends, on Facebook as FOTL Secretary Dwight Shepherd listens

Friends of Tennessee Libraries newsletter
Summer 2016
Riley Darnell Honored for Service As Secretary of State (1993-2009)

The award read, “In recognition and appreciation for outstanding accomplishments, dedication and commitment to excellence in the advancement of library services and education in Tennessee.”

At the 2016 Annual Meeting in Clarksville this tribute was conveyed by the Friends of Tennessee Libraries to Riley Darnell, former Secretary of State in Tennessee (1993-2009), in recognition of Mr. Darnell’s championship of “library and archives programs which updated and propelled the Tennessee State Library & Archives into the 21st Century,” said FOTL President Don Reynolds. Among a “Baker’s Dozen” of credits are these:

- initiation of the TSLA email account and rudimentary Internet, originally through TSU
- recognition of the importance of computers in every library by putting together the tech support group to install and continue the maintenance of computers in libraries and promoting in the state legislature the importance of computers in every library
- support of ALA Legislative Day
- support of the Regional Library program
- support of financing the change-over to digital formats of materials in the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
- support for the creation of the Tennessee Electronic Library
- support of the digitization of archives materials and the education outreach program

Current Secretary of State Tre Hargett is welcomed to the meeting by Anne Black, president of CMCL Friends.
United for Libraries President-Elect Speaks at TLA
‘We’re All in This Together’: Susan Schmidt

FOTL President Don Reynolds, Friend of the Year Julie Webb, Janis Perry of the FOTL Board, TLA President Susan Jennings, library trustees like Joe Albrecht, and foundations are “all in this together” because of our devotion to public libraries, says Susan Schmidt, president-elect of United for Libraries and featured speaker at TLA’s Trustees and Friends luncheon on Friday, April 8, in Kingsport.

After lunch she continued to develop that theme of unity of purpose in her presentation on “Fundraising for Library Programs.” Of particular interest to Friends was her recommendation that “all of us together” should memorize the same “elevator speech” touting two aspects of the libraries we support. She also proposed that every Friends group should keep an up-to-date advocacy calendar so that “all of us together” are aware of events and themes related to advocacy month by month.
Knox County Public Library Foundation
An outgrowth of Friends of the Knox County Public Library, the Knox County Public Library Foundation has marshaled financial support for digitizing the local newspaper, the *Knoxville News Sentinel*, as a resource for the Knox County Public Library. To reach its goal of $600,000 for the Papers to Pixels campaign, the Foundation raised funds from corporations, other foundations, businesses like the *Knoxville News* Sentinel, and individuals to create for the library a “fully searchable online resource” covering editions of the newspaper from 1920 until 1990. Once the digitized resource is activated, government officials, community groups, commercial interests, attorneys, genealogists, historians, and citizens with library cards will be able to access Knoxville history through the articles and reports in the city’s newspaper. Sam Venable, local newspaper columnist and beloved humorist, was honorary chair of the campaign, and Ginna Mashburn served as president of the Foundation.

**Denise Robertson, Blount County Friends**
A hero to the Blount County Public Library, Denise Robertson is a long-time member of the Friends who devotes numerous hours to the library. For example, she volunteers in the Reference Department and thrives on helping patrons. A helpful, positive, and professional representative of the Friends, she also manages the Free section of the Friends Book Store with the help of her 93-year-old mother, Lorene Oswalt. Denise joined the Friends’ Board three years ago and now serves as vice president. She chairs the Membership Committee and has breathed new life into that job by conducting membership surveys, implementing a tiered membership plan, and soliciting corporate sponsorships. She is also active with the Marketing/Public Relations Committee and serves as liaison to the Library Board of Trustees.

**Mary Ellen Smethells, Webb School Library**
Quiet, modest, hard-working, and a lifetime library supporter, Mary Ellen Smethells is an unsung hero to Tennessee libraries and the Webb School Central Library’s patron saint. A retired school librarian from Michigan, she did not leave her profession behind

Please See Heroes, page 9
her in retirement. When she moved to Tennessee to be near her family, she promptly volunteered at the Webb School’s Central Library. Every Monday afternoon, after having spent the morning sorting books for the Friends of the Knox County Public Library, she shelves books, checks in periodicals, and cheerfully performs every task asked of her. According to School Librarian Tena Litherland, when the library was downsized for a cafeteria renovation, Mary Ellen packed the 752 boxes needed to house the collection during construction. She also physically carried off the nearly 2,200 weeded books that she arranged to go to the Knox County Friends’ book sale. For this work she was offered a modest sum which she quietly donated to the library in a letter to the new incoming president of the school about the value of school libraries.

Bernice Wells, Kodak Friends

When Bernice Wells learned that plans were beginning to be discussed for a new building for the Kodak Branch Library, she knew that the community would have to raise a considerable amount of money to make that happen. In 2015, she offered Friends of Kodak Library a lot she owned in one of the community’s premier subdivisions with an appraised value of $45,000. The group could sell the lot and use all the proceeds for the building fund. This donation would honor her late husband, Dr. G. Ray Wells, who served on the steering committee that established Friends of Kodak Library and on its first Board of Directors. Without being asked for a contribution, she is now in the process of deeding a second piece of property, valued at $25,000, to the group.

It isn’t too unusual to find a donor to make a major contribution when asked to kick off a campaign for a library building project. What is unusual is when a donor steps up to do that when the project is little more than a concept, and the donor has not even been asked to give. This type of unsolicited generosity is truly worthy of recognition.

Are you building a Friends group?

You might need a Toolkit. Use ours, won’t you?
http://tinyurl.com/j55ccfv
Friends of Tennessee Libraries
A Friend of Libraries Recognition
2016
Presented to

Food City
In appreciation for the support of community public library services through the Food Club cereal box promotion, “Read any Good Books Lately?”

Retired Regional Library Director Judy Greeson was having breakfast one morning when, to her surprise, she found that the box from which she had poured her cereal was asking “Read any Good Books Lately?” Pointing out that the public library is “More than a ‘Free Bookstore,’” the back of the box of Essential Choice Vanilla Almond cereal asserted, “Your Public Library Offers Information, Education and Recreation On Site AND Online!”

Judy got in touch with FOTL President Don Reynolds right away. This was exactly the kind of community-based corporate support that advocates of libraries yearn for.

Don went into action. He asked President-elect William Sundquist to contact Food City management, and at the Trustees and Friends Luncheon of the annual conference of the Tennessee Library Association in Kingsport on April 8, FOTL presented a plaque to Food City. It read, “In appreciation for the support of community public library services through the Food Club cereal box promotion, ‘Read any Good Books Lately?’”

Two emissaries from Food City, Mark Hubbard and Tommy Stanley, were lunch guests of FOTL and accepted the plaque on behalf of Food City.

Back to the cereal box. Its rundown of what the library offers will gladden the heart of any library advocate. Without making any reference to Food City’s own corporation, the cereal box details these attributes of the public library:

- reference services
- business services
- Internet access
- books by mail
- interlibrary loan
- literacy services
- a quiet refuge, a great place to hang out
- services for youth

President Reynolds urged library staff and library advocates to “call their local Food City manager and thank ‘em for promoting the community’s library. This surely is an example of what good work a national food chain can do to support local community activities.”

Representatives Mark Hubbard and Tommy Stanley accepted this plaque on behalf of Food City management and took it back to Food City.

FOTL Thanks Food City for Promoting Libraries on the Back of Its Cereal Box
Grants Will Support Friends’ Projects

FOTL has awarded three grants of $300 each to Friends in Putnam County, Jefferson City, and Niota as those groups plan their activities.

**ADVOCACY.** Putnam County Friends will support a new event at the library to celebrate International Games Day on November 19. An innovative, exciting, and intergenerational way to attract patrons to the library, the day has potential for partnerships with Tennessee Tech University, local businesses, and schools. The grant will help defray the costs of publicity, the purchase of games, refreshments, and door prizes.

**FUNDRAISING.** Jefferson City Friends enjoy widespread community support for the annual used book sale but struggle to store the hundreds of donations that pour in each year. The grant will be used to aid in the cost of a storage unit.

**MEMBERSHIP.** Niota Friends promote membership throughout the year but plan a special promotion starting in August. Open houses at the library will increase the public’s awareness of the library and its contributions to the community; the grant will help to pay for publicity and refreshments; books will be given as door prizes.

Delegation Takes Advocacy to Washington

*Janis Perry, William Sundquist Represent FOTL*

Two members of FOTL’s board were among Tennessee advocates for libraries who went to Washington on May 2-3 for National Library Legislative Day. From Friends of Tennessee Libraries, William Sundquist, president-elect, and Janis Perry, representative from West Tennessee, joined the group led by Vivian Wynn.

As the delegation met with legislators from the Volunteer State, they spoke about several issues prioritized by the American Library Association (ALA). The rapid confirmation of Dr. Carla Hayden as Librarian of Congress was at the top of the list. Dr. Hayden is widely recognized as a professional librarian with a firm grasp of what the 21st century library can and should be. *Fortune* magazine recently named Dr. Hayden one of “the World’s 50 Greatest Leaders,” and an editorial in the *Baltimore Sun* (February 25, 2016) said, “If confirmed by the Senate, Ms. Hayden would take on the formidable task to modernizing a Library of Congress that remains sadly behind the times in terms of technology . . . .”

Legislators were also urged to support the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), the only federal funding program for libraries, and to maintain the level of support for the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL).

For a complete list of ALA’s priorities, see <http://tinyurl.com/h4jawf2>.

Vivian Wynn (from row, l to r) led the state’s delegation, which also included Susan Earl, Keenon McClay, (back row) FOTL President-Elect William Sundquist, Beth Frerking, Kent Oliver, and Mary Carpenter.

Delegates included (l to r) Kent Oliver, Nashville Public Library; Pamela Smith, Ingram; Mary Carpenter, Obion River Regional Library; Janis Perry, Hatchie River Regional Library and FOTL; Susan Earl, Brentwood Public Library; Denise Tabscott, Wright Middle Prep School, Nashville; Beth Krerking, Clarksville High School; Susan Jennings, TLA; Chuck Sherrill, State Librarian; Vivian Wynn; Keenon McClay, Memphis Public Library; and, out of camera range, Richard Groves, TLA.
The Friends of Tennessee Libraries is a volunteer organization of individuals and groups dedicated to supporting Tennessee libraries and local Friends of Library groups through

- Establishing and helping Friends of Library groups succeed
- Communicating with libraries and trustees about the value of Friends
- Serving members as a communication network and clearinghouse for information
- Advocating for library funding and legislative support on a local, state, and national basis

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**Membership Application**

**Become a Friend of Tennessee Libraries**

(Membership year is January to December.)

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