



Friends of Union County Library (FOUCL)

Friends Communicator

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From the Board of Friends of Union County Library



Unfortunately, it is our duty to inform FOUCL members that we have received and accepted the resignation of Karen Cassity as our president. Karen and her husband Dan have both been a great asset to FOUCL. Here are just a few of their accomplishments: Karen created an attractive and timely FOUCL Facebook presence; encouraged the purchase of the costume and took on the persona of our mascot Owliver; helped produce a graphically pleasing new FOUCL brochure; and initiated our first ever Union County High School Scholarship. Dan has provided IT knowledge and support in countless areas of FOUCL's digital world. We thank them both for your contributions.

Judy Baldwin, past president and current FOUCL Board member, has agreed to step in as Interim President. This was approved by the Board and voted on by the members at the April 16 meeting. Our Vice President, Joy Wilson, who is currently on a medical hiatus, is not ready to take on the responsibilities that come with this office so Judy has agreed to step in on a temporary basis. Our Treasurer Debora Quigley and Secretary Jackie Volk are staying in place, but *new presidential leadership is urgently needed*. We ask you to consider leading FOUCL. Mentoring will gladly be provided by several of our past presidents. FOUCL has some established routines, but we are also looking for fresh perspectives and new ideas. Judy would like to give the presidency over to someone as soon as July of this year. The responsibilities of the president, as stated in our by-laws, can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

Pivoting to fantastic, good news, we are very pleased to announce that Abigail Brown is the winner of FOUCL's first \$500 college scholarship for academic expenses. She was chosen by a committee of FOUCL members who selected her essay, judged blind, as the best received. She plans to attend Clemson University as she prepares to become a teacher. You can read more about her and her essay on page 2 of this newsletter.

Perhaps now, more than ever, supporting our public library is important. Thank you for your continued membership and involvement.

Calendar



May
Quarterly newsletter
emailed to members

May 19
UCHS Awards Night
Abigail Brown receives FOUCL
scholarship

June 2 10am-3pm
Membership Table during
SRP Registration

June 9 10:30am-12:30
Bake Sale during SRP event

July 30 11:30-1:30 pm
FOUCL Picnic and Quarterly
Meeting (bring dish to share)
Choestoe School House

August
Quarterly newsletter emailed to
members

All meetings open to members.
All programs open to the public.

The Friends Communicator is
published 4 times a year, following
the Quarterly Membership Meetings.
The publication dates are February,
May, August, and November.

What's Happening!



FIRST EVER FOUCL UNION COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

Local high school seniors were asked to submit essays of between 750-1,000 words about the impact of books on their lives. These essays were judged by a committee of FOUCL members who selected Abigail Brown as the winner.

Here is a sample of what Abigail wrote:

"Growing up, books have always been an impactful part of my life, and they've shaped me in ways I am still discovering; as a child, I was deemed to be a 'gifted' student, and I quickly developed a love for reading and writing. For me, it wasn't just about school or homework, but it was diving into stories, learning new things and expressing myself in ways that felt right. This love for books has helped to guide me toward my future goal of becoming a teacher because I believe that the power of education changes lives, just as it has done mine."

Congratulations to Abigail Brown for receiving FOUCL's \$500 scholarship and for being honored at Union County High School Awards Night on May 19!

July Lunch and Meeting

Our next quarterly meeting (Wednesday, July 30) will be held at the Choestoe Schoolhouse (1034 Collins Road, Blairsville). We will begin to gather at 11:30am. Lunch will be followed by our regularly scheduled meeting. FOUCL will supply fried chicken and coleslaw.



Members are asked to bring salads, sides, chips, desserts, or drinks. FOUCL will supply plates, napkins, plasticware, and cups. We appreciate a private donor providing this venue to FOUCL at no cost to us.

Summer Bake Sale

In place of our Mother's Day Bake Sale, we will be forming a committee of bakers to supply individually wrapped goodies for kids during the Summer Reading Program event on June 9. Watch for signs or emails requesting cookies, brownies or Rice Krispie treats. Volunteers will be needed from 10:30am-12:30pm.



Library Happenings

There's always something happening at the library.

Events and Programs



Fork & Flavor
Cookbook Club

This spring we hosted a variety of programs! In March we had our first meeting of the Fork & Flavor cookbook club. Those in attendance were enthusiastic as they shared a variety of dishes. We look forward to this being a regular program.

One of our most popular programs was Taylor's sourdough classes! Every time she does this it draws a crowd. We had a total of 95 patrons between the two classes.

We partnered with Robert Calamari from the Union County Sheriff's Office in January to learn how to spot a scam. Not only was it well attended, but we have had several requests to host this program again.

Patrons flocked to our beginner course on how to start bird watching. We also had life-size examples of different species of fowl in our foyer.



Marlene Cannon
Branch Manager



Kidventure Club

Our children's programs grow steadily with multiple storytimes, twice-a-month book clubs, and kids' clubs each Thursday. The photo on the left is a Kidventure Class where they made a cake in a mug.

Our weekly storytime on Mondays has steadily grown throughout the last three months. All storytimes include an activity for the children. There is also a monthly book club for independent readers called "Bookends." They have chosen selections such as Dogman and Wings of Fire.



Storytime Fun



Getting Out There...

- I was invited to speak at our local Rotary Club meeting and met many community people interested in our library.
- UCPL was represented at the BANFF film festival. Morgan and Brenna did a fantastic job spreading the word on all the great things our local library offers.

- Morgan and I attended Adult Palooza in March. Adult Palooza is a meeting of library staff members from around the state to share ideas on developing, implementing, and promoting adult programs!
- UCPL received a wonderful donation that allowed Union County Master Gardeners to renovate a neglected median in the parking lot. They planted multiple trees and shrubs and replaced mulch. They plan to do a program in the spring and explain why islands are so important in reducing heat.



BANFF Film Festival



Union County Public Library Hours:

9:00 to 5:00 Mon, Wed, Fri

9:00 to 6:00 Tues, Thurs

10:00 to 2:00 Sat

Closed Sunday

UCPL Telephone: 706-745-7491

Friends In Action



FOUCL members (in green vests) presented gifts to the staff on National Library Workers Day. Lauren Burgreen also made a plate of lemon bars for them to enjoy. Left to Right: Lauren Burgreen, Morgan, Breanna, Kylee, Joelle, Linda, Branch Manager Marlene Cannon, Jackie Volk, Judy Baldwin, Robert Harford.

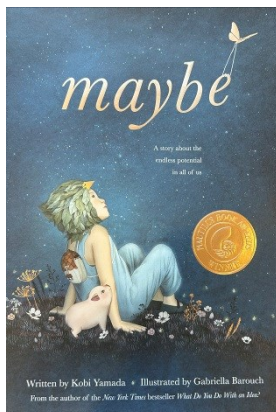


This eye-catching display was set up in the library to bring attention to the Union County Friends of the Library, during the February Membership Drive.



LEFT: On behalf of FOUCL Treasurer Debra Quigley, center, presents a check for \$1,000 to the library to purchase new tech toys. Branch Manager Marlene Cannon, left and Asst. Branch Manager Morgan, right, accept the check.

March 3 is celebrated as Read Across America Day, formerly Dr. Seuss Birthday. In center photo, Vice President Joy Wilson offers a high-five to a young reader.



Owliver was there when Cathy Dalton, on behalf of FOUCL, helped distribute the book, "Maybe", by Kobi Yamada, to the children at the March 3rd story time.



RIGHT: On March 3, Owliver presented the Cat in the Hat Tonie, an interactive toy popular with kids, to the library from FOUCL.



FRIENDly Faces



What We Do

Through your membership and donations, FOUCL's activities support your local library by providing materials and activities not otherwise available through local funding.

Who's Owliver?

Owliver is the Friends of Union County Library Mascot. He was named by Friends members many years ago through a naming contest.

This Wise Old Owl knows ...

Books are where you can find anything.

Books provide entertainment.

Books have the answers to questions.

Books take you places you may never have a chance to visit.

Books open your imagination.

Books make children lifelong learners.

Books challenge us to be better people, develop compassion, and open our minds.

We Need Friends!

Our mission as Friends of Union County Library is to advocate for libraries, literacy, and lifelong learning. To do this, we need Friends. We need you!

There are 3 ways to join or renew your membership.

- Use the website foucl.org,
- Pick up a membership card found outside the Friends Room on the bookcase (and leave it at the circulation counter), or
- email us at foucl.blairsville@gmail.com, so we can mail you one.

When we come together for events and meetings, we connect with fellow book lovers and often make new social contacts.

How FOUCL Members help our Library:

Volunteers from a variety of personal and professional backgrounds offer valuable expertise, benefiting the whole. FOUCL needs members to ensure our future.

Financial Support:

We raise funds through various means, including fundraising events, donations, and membership dues. This extra funding allows libraries to purchase new books, audiobooks, computers, or even cover staff training expenses, all of which enhance the library's services and materials.

Volunteer Support:

We assist with a variety of tasks, like helping with library programs and serving on committees. Volunteer positions can be short-term or long-term, requiring a few hours, days, or a longer commitment.

Advocacy and Public Relations:

We advocate for the library at the local, state, and even national levels. We raise public awareness about the library's importance, promote its programs, and support funding initiatives.

(See Page 7)

Community Connection:

We connect the library with the community, fostering a sense of ownership and support for the library.

Long-Term Sustainability:

We help ensure the long-term sustainability of the library by providing ongoing financial support, volunteer resources, and advocacy efforts. Did you know next year is the 30th anniversary of FOUCL? We need active members to make sure we build from our successful past.

Add your new insights, share your vision for our future, and contribute your time and talents.

More About...

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FOUCL PRESIDENT

Yes, we need a new president, but can you just pick up a new recruit for that? It may seem odd, but yes, we can. A FOUCL President needs to be: interested in libraries, someone who can manage committees, and can see the big picture. It helps to also be aware of the details. The president mainly oversees the long term goals and short term plans that are identified at the fall planning meeting.



These are the responsibilities of the president, as stated in our by-laws:

1. Call regular or special meetings of the Board of Directors and the membership.
2. Preside at all meetings of the organization and of the Board of Directors.
3. Serve as member ex-officio of all committees.
4. Establish committees and appoint chairpersons with the advice and approval of the other Directors.
5. Exercise general supervision over the other officers of the organization and see that duties are properly performed.
6. Exercise general supervision over the affairs of the organization and perform all duties incidental to the office or which are authorized or required by law.

We have four quarterly membership meetings a year and one meeting/brainstorming session. Board meetings are scheduled as needed.



WANTED: Everything Christmas Coordinator.

Building on the experience of the past few years, many of the plans and procedures are in place, but we need people to carry out the tasks. Two coordinators work best.

Duration: month of October and first weekend in November.

Tasks to coordinate: schedule workers to collect, sort, and price donations 1-2 days a week in October.

Coordinators need to schedule work days, create sign up sheets, communicate needs, and be present during the collection days and the sale. Work with Jackie Volk, Secretary, to publicize the event. Coordinate set-up and clean up. Arrange transportation to a place for left over items to be sent, i.e. thrift stores, or other agency's that take donations.

From Union County Public Library and Mountain Regional Library System Facebook Post
April 10, 2025

Dear Patrons and Library Users,

As you may be aware, an Executive Order issued on March 14 ordered the dismantling and restructuring of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Every year, IMLS provides over five million dollars in support to Georgia libraries.

These funds support critical statewide Georgia programs and resources, including:

- Library circulation software
- PINES statewide interlibrary loan program
- Summer Reading Program
- GALILEO research databases
- Library for the Blind and Print Disabled
- Partnership and marketing grants

These services are provided to every community in Georgia at no additional cost to local taxpayers. Our access to them is fully funded by IMLS. This offers enormous value to local communities thanks to economies of scale.

The Georgia Public Library Service, our state agency, is able to negotiate contracts on behalf of all Georgia libraries that are more economical than if each library system had to negotiate independently. In short, many of the services you know and enjoy from MRLS would not exist without IMLS grant funding. MRLS would have to ask its local funding partners (Fannin, Towns, and Union Counties) to increase contributions to maintain current service levels.

This is not political or partisan hyperbole—loss of funding has already begun for 3 states.

What can you do to help? Contact your federal elected officials to express your support for IMLS. You don't need to attempt to explain the full details of library funding - just ask them to support IMLS.

Congressional offices around the country are reporting that calls are pouring in from library supporters, and we want that to continue.

U.S. Rep. Andrew Clyde - <https://clyde.house.gov/contact/> ; (202) 225-9893; (470) 768-6520

It's quick and simple to call the Washington offices of our representatives and senators with a direct request to protect IMLS and critical library funding for Georgia. You'll speak with a staffer who will log your topic and request.

Thank you!