

SECTION 13. PROGRAMS

An important part of the FOL mission is to enhance the MCPL programs at each branch. Programs should always be planned to accord with the needs and interests of each chapter's local community.

The first step in planning a successful program at a library branch is communication with the branch manager. Once a chapter decides on a program idea, it should present a program proposal to the branch manager. See Appendix 13-A for a sample Program Proposal. All branch programs, regardless of the funding source, must be approved by MCPL. The branch manager will first consider whether or not the event can be accommodated within the branch work plan. If it can, the branch manager will then submit the proposal to MCPL for approval. Please see Appendix 13-B for more details regarding procedures for FOL-sponsored programs.

Types of Programs

Discussion Clubs

Discussion clubs on assorted topics usually meet on a weekly or monthly basis. These can include book discussion groups, English conversation clubs, and/or other language or discussion groups—such as the Jefferson Café. These groups may not be facilitated by the library staff; they must be facilitated by others. The FOL chapter can decide to seek volunteers to lead these clubs, or they may hire an individual or group to manage the club.

Major Events

Each branch may hold one major event per year. These events generally include multiple activities over the course of the day. Planning for the event should be in conjunction with the branch manager, and staffing may be a combination of volunteers and library staff. Many branches have a traditional event already in place. They can share their experiences in planning and executing the event. Some examples of successful major events have been the “Aspen Hill Community Festival,” “Chicago Days” at Bethesda, “Family Fun Day” at Chevy Chase, “Damascus Train Day,” “Germantown Oktoberfest,” Library Anniversary Celebrations” at Little Falls and Twinbrook, Potomac “Community Day,” “Poolesville Day,” Quince Orchard “Community Day,” and “BookFest” at Silver Spring. The activities at these events have included magic shows, puppet shows, petting zoos, balloon animals, book sales, author talks, panel discussions/speakers, as well as food. Usually the major event encompasses a collection of different individual programs.

Individual Programs

Individual programs generally occur on a one-time-only basis and last anywhere from 45 minutes to several hours. In most cases, an outside performer or group is involved. Funding for these programs may be provided by MCPL, FOLMC, or FOL chapters. The two main categories of individual programs are author talks and performances. When engaging an author or performer, please use a Program Contract (Appendix 13-C) to ensure that questions and important details can be assessed before the actual event.

Author Talks

There are many local authors who are willing to come to the library to speak about their work. See Appendix 13-D for tips on “Planning a Book and Author Event” (from United for Libraries—formerly ALTAFF). The format for these talks depends on the author and may include readings from the authors’ works, descriptions of their writing process, or question-and-answer sessions.

Sometimes there is the opportunity to purchase a copy of the author’s book or to have a copy of the book signed by the author. Copies of the book may be obtained from a local bookstore or from the author’s publisher and sold during the event. Authors are often willing to donate a portion of book sales to the FOL chapter. FOL chapter volunteers must handle all book sales as library staff are not permitted to do so. Payment can be accepted by cash, personal check, or credit card. Credit card sales can be processed by the FOLMC office after the information is forwarded there. Arrangements should be made in advance with the FOLMC office to ensure that the proper information is collected and the correct procedures are followed for transferring the information. Some authors might prefer to handle the book sales themselves, so this should be discussed before the event.

Performances

Performances in the library can range from the musical to the theatrical to the intellectual and can be intended for an audience of children or adults. The performers can include jazz groups, string quartets, puppet shows, storytellers, sports figures, or others. Moderated panel discussions or presentations by individuals on topics of interest are other options.

Program Planning Process

It is important to understand what is required before committing to sponsor a program and ensuring that there is adequate volunteers and planning time. The following steps are suggested to complete a successful program.

1. Present a proposal to your branch manager describing your program idea, meeting the above mentioned guidelines. Once approved, the branch program coordinator should book the meeting room for the date of the performance and enter the program information into Evanced. Make sure to allow substantial time to complete this process before engaging the performer (at minimum, two weeks).
2. Once the FOL chapter has been notified that the program has been approved, the chapter may engage the intended performer for the identified date and time. A Program Contract (Appendix 13-C) should be completed and signed by the performer. A contract and/or invoice for the program should be filed with the chapter treasurer so that payment can be remitted and recorded. Performers are usually paid the day of the event or half upon signing the contract and the remainder once the performance is completed.
3. Identify and recruit volunteers who will help with the program and assign tasks. See Appendix 13-E for a sample Program Assignments worksheet. A copy of this completed form should be shared with the branch program coordinator before the program.

4. Publicity for the program may be a joint responsibility of the FOL chapter and the branch program coordinator. The branch program coordinator is responsible for publicizing the program to community groups as well as to *Patch.com*, the *Gazette*, Twitter, newsletters, local listservs and Facebook. The FOL chapter, as well, may publicize the program on its FOL website and in social media, press releases, and community listservs. Contact FOLMC to add the program to the FOLMC event calendar. FOL may create flyers and other promotional materials for the program. However, regardless of who is sponsoring the program, all materials must follow the MCPL Graphics Standards (please consult the branch manager and program coordinator regarding specifics). If the FOL chapter funds the program, its logo should also be included on the flyer. Drafts for all promotional materials must be approved by the branch manager before finalization and distribution.

5. On the day a program is being put on by an FOL chapter or by FOLMC for which the chapter has agreed to provide support, the FOL chapter volunteers should arrive early enough to complete the necessary room set-up, greet the performer(s), make sure all needed equipment is in place and working properly, introduce the performer, monitor the crowd, thank the performer, provide payment if needed, and break down the room after the performance. FOL chapter volunteers may also be responsible for distributing and collecting survey forms (provided by MCPL) asking for feedback on the program. Please work with the branch manager and program coordinator to ensure that the meeting room, library, and/or other facilities will be open and usable for the required set-up and break-down time.

Program Proposal

| |
|------------------------------|
| Program Title: |
| Date, Time & Location: |
| FOL Chapter Contact & Phone: |
| Performer Contact & Phone: |
| Intended Program Audience: |
| Brief Program Description: |



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

B. Parker Hamilton
Director

MEMORANDUM

September 24, 2012

TO: Ari Brooks, Executive Director
Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc.

FROM: B. Parker Hamilton, Director
Montgomery County Public Libraries 

SUBJECT: Policy Update for Locally Sponsored Friends Chapter Programming

Many local Friends of the Library (FOL) chapters would like to provide programs for their branch library. The planning of these programs is a collaborative effort between the branch manager and the local FOL. Once approved by the branch manager, the program is included in the branch's annual programming plan.

The updated process for this is:

Opportunities to present programs sponsored by the local Friends of the Library (FOL) and the Library Advisory Committee (LAC) as well as the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc. will be considered on an ongoing basis.

- The local FOL proposes a program for the branch.
- The program proposal is sent to the branch manager for consideration. The branch manager evaluates the proposal based on community need and interests, staffing levels; meeting room availability and other branch concerns. The branch manager needs to respond to the local FOL within two (2) weeks of the program proposal submittal.
- The local FOL program proposal to the branch manager needs to include:
 - a. A brief description of the program content and focus.
 - b. Intended audience.
 - c. Date and time of program.

- If the branch manager approves the FOL proposal, the program proposal is sent to Central Administration, submitted via the FOL Funding Request form to the Director, for final review and approval. Program proposals and requests need to be submitted to Central Administration a minimum of two weeks prior to the date program approval is needed.
- If the FOL Funding Request is approved by Central Administration, the local FOL will be informed by the branch manager.
- Branch managers must review FOL publicity before it is released to ensure accuracy and compliance with Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) Graphic Standards.
- The branch manager then sends the FOL- sponsored program information to the branch program coordinator.
- The branch program coordinator is responsible for booking the meeting room; entering the program information in Evanced, and recording program statistics. He/she is also responsible for publicizing the program to community groups as well as Patch.com, the Gazette, Twitter, newsletters, local listservs and Facebook. Branch program coordinators are responsible for meeting all appropriate publicity deadlines.
- Local FOLs can market programs through their website, social media, press releases, community listservs and flyers that follow the MCPL Graphic Standards. The local FOL is also responsible for the meeting room set up and clean up as well as presenter introductions.

Please share this information with the local FOL chapters, and let me know if you have questions.

c: Carol Legarreta, Public Services Administrator, Branch Operations
Branch Managers

Program Contract

| |
|---|
| Title of performance: |
| Date/Time/Location of performance: |
| Name of performer & contact information: |
| 1. How long will the performance last? |
| 2. What time will you arrive? |
| 3. Do you need extra time to set-up and break-down? |
| 4. What is your fee? |
| 5. What is your preferred payment method? |

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|---|
| 6. Is an additional contract required? |
| 7. How should the room be set up? |
| 8. What equipment is needed? |
| 9. Do you need access to electricity? |
| 10. Do you plan to sell anything? (Note: there may be restrictions.) |
| 11. What is your preferred method of communication? |
| 12. What is your contact information for the date of the performance in case of emergency (power outage, etc.)? |
| 13. What is your policy in case of an emergency? |

14. Is there anything else we should know?

NOTES:

Signature of FOL Chapter Representative

Date

Signature of Performer/Representative

Date

fact sheet #9

for Friends and Foundations

PLANNING A BOOK AND AUTHOR EVENT

A great way to promote reading and provide a fun program for readers is to hold an author event. Authors are often eager to find a venue for promoting their work and readers always enjoy hearing the story behind the writing. It takes a bit of work to organize an author event; however, this can be a great idea if you are looking to bring a large audience into the library or a way to raise funds for the Friends.

1. Talk to your local bookstore to see if there are authors already lined up to do a book signing at their store. See if you can partner with them by hosting the author at a program before or afterward.
2. If working with the local bookstore isn't possible, contact several publishers to see if they have authors who will be touring your area in the near future. Find out what would be required on your end to host a traveling author including fees, expenses, type of venue, whether or not you can charge admission to the program, and whether you'd be willing to sell books. Be realistic. Don't expect Toni Morrison to speak! Contact authors far in advance through their publishers' publicists. Begin planning 6 to 12 months in advance.
3. Consider local authors who would be more likely to come to your library pro-bono and won't have travel expenses.
4. Line up a co-sponsor for the event. A local newspaper, department store, or bookstore are good options for sharing the costs and the promotion.
5. Invite the co-sponsor to introduce the author. Ask them to share costs with in-kind services, such as printing the program, invitations, or free ads in their publications. Make plans for getting advance publicity and follow-up coverage in the media.
6. Ask local merchants to donate cheese, wine, and goodies for a pre-event reception. Be sure to give credit in the program, news releases, and during introductions.
7. Make a fuss. Authors like to be catered to. Offer to entertain at cocktails or dinner, provide a quick tour, etc., if he or she is interested. Many authors enjoy talking to a writing class if time permits.

continued

8. Make sure you invite the county chair, mayor, chancellor, heads of departments, local council representatives – the men and women who make decisions concerning the library. Often this makes an appropriate event to honor someone who has made a special contribution to the library.
9. Remember, most authors are there to sell books. Plan in advance to have copies available for sale and autographing. This is very important. Order more than you expect to sell. You can usually return them, but authors are upset if books run out. This is also a way to earn up to 40 percent of the proceeds, if you order through the library's vendor instead of through a bookstore.
10. Make sure someone is familiar with the author's work and can give an introduction worthy of him or her.
11. For more information on hosting an author event, see *Even More Great Ideas for Libraries and Friends*, available from United for Libraries.

updated 9/12

United for Libraries

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Program Assignments

Program Title: _____

Date/Time/Location: _____

| Task | Person(s) Responsible | Notes |
|---|------------------------------|--------------|
| Contract performer | | |
| Room set-up (time?) | | |
| Equipment | | |
| Introduce performer | | |
| Monitor audience | | |
| Membership table (if applicable) | | |
| Closing – Thank performer, provide payment if needed, distribute/collect survey forms | | |
| Room breakdown & cleanup (time?) | | |
| | | |