

**TLA Annual Conference  
April 14-17, 2020 San Antonio**

**Filtering Chaos: From Information to Knowledge**

Attended by Paula Highfill, President and  
Steve Standefer, City Library Director

Wednesday Afternoon Session:

**You've Got A Friend: Friends Groups that Work!**

Presented by Mary Beth Harrington,  
Texas Association of Non-Profit Organizations  
and Michael Bacon & Marion Lee non-profit consultants.

This session was in Power Point slide show format. Copies of the presentation are available for you to view in the President's notebook.

Ms. Harrington spoke on the differences between Friends and Foundations, their requirements and starting up. She offered tips on recruiting members, using their talents and keeping them motivated.

Mr. Bacon addressed more of the fundamentals of Friends groups. Their structure re: mission, purpose, practices & obstacles. Our group fared well in comparison with strengths he cited. Cautioned against 1.) giving money to library before city budget sessions (due to reliance on such gifts in the future planning), 2.) Mission drift, 3.) loss of leadership (need succession planning).

**All-Conference Welcome Party @ Institute of Texan Cultures**

Thursday sessions:

**General Session I with Scott Simon from NPR**

**Dynamic Friends Groups @Your Public Library**

This session was a presentation based on ALTAFF toolkit #1 – Revitalizing Your Friends Group. Top Ten List included: Promote your mission consistently, Develop an action plan, Host a Party, Publicity, Reevaluate goals, Reorganize Board, Review benefits of membership (this was of particular interest, since we don't really have any "perks"), Reexamine

communications with members (also of particular interest), Recruit, and Show appreciation.

**Volunteer at LIFTA luncheon set-up & entry.**

**LIFTA luncheon – Opening Author Session with Elizabeth Berg, Katherine Center, Ingrid Law**

**Building Community Partnerships: 25 Profitable Ideas**

Presented by Kathy Dempsey

Ms. Dempsey has excellent credentials – see [linkedin.com/kathydempsey](https://www.linkedin.com/kathydempsey).

This session was one of the best I've been to as far as practical ideas. Most of them were a little "bigger" than our group, but do-able. She listed 25 things, but also spoke about defining what you have to offer & how to approach people. Reprint of handout available from President's notes.

**Advocating from the Library Frontlines: Whose Job is it Anyway?**

Presented by Camila Alire, ALA President & Dr. Julie Todaro, MaryJo Venetis

This session was geared toward library employees, the "frontlines", but was helpful in offering ingredients for success & advocacy tips. Dr. Todaro also produced a tool kit "52 Ways to Make a Difference" which is a new idea each week. Available at [www.camilaalire.com](http://www.camilaalire.com).

**Dinner with Mansfield Library Director Steve Standefer**

Friday Sessions:

**Cultivating Donors in Times of Financial Stress**

Presented by Chantel Dunham, director of library development, University of Georgia

Since Ms. Dunham is involved at a high level of donor recruitment, most of this session did not apply to our group. It was interesting though, to hear tales of trying to plan for receiving someone's estate and courting wealthy donors!

### **Visit Exhibitions**

Of particular interest, deanan gourmet popcorn. Great idea for fundraiser. Will send sample.

### **One Book Projects Create Community-Wide Partnerships**

Representatives from Irving Public Library and Irving ISD spoke of their participation in the national project The Big Read. Edgar Allen Poe – included talk of visit from our Reads! author Matthew Pearl!

Allen Friends Chairman & Allen ISD rep discussed their program, based on music this year.

Richardson Director of Library Services discussed his program.

It was inspiring to hear about other Reads! programs. I was able to participate somewhat in the discussions after the presentation. Made some new contacts and requested a copy of the Power Point presentation. I hope to be able to also obtain the oral recording of this session through the TLA DVD sales site. I would like to replay this entire session at one of our Friends meetings. It was a great session.

### **In Summary:**

Once again the TLA Conference was an awesome experience. All of my notes and handouts are available if anyone would like further info on a particular session. I would also be happy to discuss any session I attended. I hope to be able to present the One Book Session to our entire group.