



F·R·I·E·N·D·S

OF NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Supporting Friends of the Library Statewide

F * R * I * E * N * D * S TALK

June 2026

Dear Friends,

"There should be a word for that feeling when you're loving a book so much that you're sad it's going to end soon, but you desperately need to find out what happens, yet you don't actually want it to be over - and you still can't stop reading." (MACANUDO Liniers; Winston-Salem Journal, Sunday, May 10, 2026)

The comic strip I stole that quote from describes my tardiness in getting to this important communication with you, our most important readers and members of the Friends of NC Public Libraries. Some of you may be reading it, have read it, or are planning to read it, so I won't go into detail. It's Viola Davis' Judge Stone with James Patterson set in small town Alabama. I'm not done yet, so don't tell me the ending - please. I really couldn't put it down on Monday, Memorial Day. There were lots of other things I needed to do, and I had to give myself permission to just keep reading. So, I did!

Friends would like to welcome two new members to your board. They both bring skills that will enhance the work we do for you. Karen Schrader is from Lexington and has served in a number of leadership positions in their chapter. She has agreed to take responsibility for our Grants and Awards programs and is already working with a chapter. David Goldstone is treasurer of the Friends of the

Watauga County Public Library. He brings strong computer skills and has his own Zoom account. We will put his skills to work too.

I want to thank the Friends of the Booneville Public Library for inviting me to a meeting of their Friends. They also included members of other Friends groups and library staff from our region. There were lots of good questions and discussions. It confirmed to me that each group has its own personality, issues, questions, projects, etc. I'm certain I learned more from them than they learned from me.



Yours in Friendship,

Joyce Speas, President

June PRIDE by Karen Robbins

On June 28, 1969, NYPD raided the Stonewall Bar, a gay bar in Manhattan. Some patrons fought back, leading to six days of violence and fighting. However, after that, the gay rights movement was finally covered by mainstream media .

A year later, on June 28, 1970, the anniversary of the Stonewall Riot, the first Gay Pride parade was held. Since then Bill Clinton declared June to be Gay Pride Month in 2000, and Barack Obama renamed it Lesbian, Bi, Gay, Transgender, and Queer (or questioning) (LGBTQ+) Month in 2009. Pride events have been held around the world.

For this reason many libraries have Pride displays during the month of June. The displays intend to highlight literature by and about LGBTQ+ people, thus giving people in the community who haven't always recognized themselves in books a chance to find themselves in literature, while families, allies and loved ones of LGBTQ+ individuals can celebrate them too.

Challenges based on religion or concerns about "sex" are most common, however, books by and about LGBTQ people are about community, family, love, and acceptance. Be aware of possible roadblocks as your library decides how to celebrate Pride Month this June. ***The FOL's job is to be informed and to support the library.***

House Resolution 7661— This bill would implement a nationwide ban on "sexually oriented" material, including "gender dysphoria or transgenderism" or "lewd" or "lascivious dancing" in schools receiving federal funding. Advocates and Friends of the Library should be people aware of legislative attempts to silence people in the community. Stay

informed. What affects the schools, affects all of us.

Correlation—Between attacks on libraries and disappearance of Pride displays, intimidation is intentional and attempts to remove or hide books about LGBTQ+ individuals and issues. Libraries struggle with whether to put up Pride displays at all, sometimes censoring themselves. Know how to speak to patrons and stand up for freedom to read.

Safe Space—If you have library staff who are not "out," be sure to create respect and safety within the library, meeting the needs of all people who serve the public.

Literary Activism— If you want to know more, and to become a voice against censorship, check out the Literary Activism archives. Kelly Jensen has plenty of lists of book censorship and in what states it is occurring. She is a strong advocate for LGBTQ+ rights.

Sources:

"Pride month in US Libraries: How to prepare and Help Track Targeted Attacks in 2026, Book Censorship News". Kelly Jensen. *Literary Activism*, May 8 2026.

"Defend LGBTQ Stories", *National Coalition Against Censorship*, May, 2026.

"LGBTQ Right to Read Resource Guide," *National Coalition Against Censorship*, May 2026.

"April 2026: Under Assault—The fight to keep LGBTQ+ inclusive education alive." Molly Sprayregen, April 29, 2026, *LGBTQ Nation*.

THE NUMBERS



9 out of 10 LGBTQ students regularly confront teasing, bullying and sometimes violence.

LGBTQ students are **140x** more likely than heterosexual students to miss school due to safety concerns.



1 out of 3 LGBTQ youth attempt suicide or have suicidal thoughts. Youth in schools with pro-LGBTQ policies report fewer thoughts of suicide.

Source: Center for Disease Control, (2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey)

Why are LGBTQ+ Books So Important?

Reading books about people with “diverse sexual and gender identities can validate and empower all youth, especially those who may identify as LGBTQ+”— NCAC.org

“The censorship of LGBTQ+ themed texts affects everyone, young people who are questioning their sexuality, kids with gay or lesbian parents, adults who visit public libraries, and anyone who has met, or is likely to see an LGBTQ person also have the right to read stories that don’t come from a ‘straight’ standpoint.” — NCAC.org



Using AI Tools & Analytics to Review FOL Bylaws by Cindy Shipley

Regularly reviewing the Friends of the Library bylaws is essential to ensuring the organization remains effective, legally sound, and aligned with its evolving mission. Bylaws serve as the foundational governing document for the Friends group, outlining the structure, roles, and responsibilities of its members and officers — and over time, outdated provisions can create confusion, hinder decision-making, or even expose the organization to legal risk. Periodic review allows the group to reflect changes in membership needs, library priorities, and nonprofit regulations, ensuring that procedures for elections, meetings, and financial oversight remain transparent and fair. It also provides an opportunity to strengthen accountability, clarify ambiguous language, and incorporate best practices that keep the organization running smoothly. Ultimately, well-maintained bylaws signal to members, donors, and the broader community that the Friends of the Library is a thoughtful, well-governed organization committed to its mission of supporting the library for years to come.

Here is a practical guide for using AI tools to review bylaws for a Library Friends group:

Preparing Your Bylaws for Review

Gather your documents first:

- Current bylaws (PDF or Word format works best)
- Your state's nonprofit laws (most state AG websites have these)
- IRS requirements if you're a 501(c)(3) or seeking that status
- Any amendments made since original adoption

What to Ask AI Tools to Check

1. **Legal Compliance** Ask the AI to flag provisions that may conflict with your state's nonprofit statutes — things like quorum requirements, notice periods for meetings, and officer duties often have legal minimums **(type in "compliance with NC General Statutes 55A")**
 2. **Internal Consistency** Bylaws often accumulate contradictions over time. Ask the AI to find conflicting clauses (e.g., one section says the board has 7 members, another says 5-9).
 3. **Common Gaps** Ask it to identify missing provisions your bylaws should have:
 - Conflict of interest policy
 - Amendment procedure
 - Dissolution clause (required for 501(c)(3))
 - Indemnification of officers/directors
- Process for removing officers or members

Continued on next page

4. Clarity & Ambiguity Ask the AI to flag vague language that could cause disputes — things like "a majority" (of what? members present? total membership?) or undefined terms.

5. Best Practices Alignment Ask it to compare your bylaws against standard nonprofit best practices from sources like [Nonprofit Board Resources | BoardSource](#) or your state's nonprofit association.

Practical Workflow

Step 1 — Upload and summarize Paste or upload your bylaws and ask: *"Summarize the key governance provisions of these bylaws — board structure, membership, meetings, and amendment process."* This confirms the AI understood the document correctly.

Step 2 — Section-by-section review Go section by section: *"Review Article III (Membership) and identify any ambiguities, missing provisions, or potential legal issues."*

Step 3 — Compliance check Ask: *"What provisions are typically required for a 501(c)(3) library friends group that may be missing here?"*

Step 4 — Red-flag summary At the end ask: *"Give me a prioritized list of issues to fix — critical (legal risk), important (operational clarity), and minor (style/cleanup)."*

Step 5 — Draft revisions For problem sections, ask: *"Draft revised language for Article V, Section 2 that clarifies the quorum requirement and aligns with standard nonprofit practice."*

Prompts That Work Well

- *"Act as a nonprofit governance consultant. Review these bylaws for a small Friends of the Library group and identify the top 5 issues."*
- *"What language is ambiguous or could be interpreted multiple ways in these bylaws?"*
- *"Does this dissolution clause meet IRS requirements for a public charity?"*
- *"Compare our officer removal process to standard best practices."*

Important Caveats

- **AI is a drafting assistant, not a lawyer.** For anything that touches legal liability, tax status, or formal adoption, have a local attorney (many do pro bono work for nonprofits) do a final review.

- **State law varies.** Always verify against your specific state's nonprofit corporation act.

The board must adopt changes. Any revisions need to go through your formal amendment process before they're official.

FOL Bylaws Review Toolkit by Cindy Shipley

How to Use This Toolkit

This document contains ready-to-use prompts for reviewing your Friends of the Library bylaws with an AI assistant such as Claude. Each prompt is designed to be copied and pasted directly into an AI chat — no legal background required.

Recommended workflow:

- Open an AI chat (e.g., claude.ai)
- Paste or upload your bylaws at the start of the conversation
- Work through the prompts in order, stage by stage
- Save the AI's responses — they form your review record
- Bring findings to your board for discussion and vote

TIP Run all prompts in a single conversation session. The AI retains context, making later responses more accurate and tailored to your specific bylaws.

Important caution:

AI is a drafting assistant, not a lawyer. Any changes to your bylaws should be reviewed by an attorney before formal adoption — many nonprofits can access free legal help through your state bar's pro bono program or a local law school clinic.

STAGE 1 — Initial Orientation

Start here. These prompts confirm the AI has correctly understood your bylaws before you dive into detailed review.

Prompt 1A — Document Summary

You are a nonprofit governance expert. I'm sharing the bylaws of a Friends of the Library group, which is a small volunteer-run nonprofit. Please read the entire document and provide:

1. A structured summary of all major provisions (membership, board, officers, meetings, finances, amendments)
2. The overall governance model (member-driven vs. board-driven)

3. Any immediate red flags you notice on first read

Prompt 1B — Confirm Understanding

Based on the bylaws you just reviewed, answer these questions to confirm you understood the document correctly:

- How many board members does this organization have?
- Who is eligible for membership?
- How are officers elected and for how long?
- What vote is required to amend the bylaws?
- Is there a quorum requirement, and if so, what is it?

STAGE 2 — Legal Compliance

These prompts check your bylaws against IRS requirements and general nonprofit law standards. Always verify findings against your specific state statute.

Prompt 2A — 501(c)(3) Requirements

Review these bylaws specifically for IRS 501(c)(3) compliance. Check for:

1. A clear statement of nonprofit/tax-exempt purpose
2. A prohibition on private inurement (no profits to members/officers)
3. Restrictions on political activity and lobbying
4. A qualifying dissolution clause directing assets to another 501(c)(3) or government entity
5. Any language that could jeopardize tax-exempt status

Flag each item as:

PRESENT AND ADEQUATE / PRESENT BUT WEAK / MISSING

Prompt 2B — State Nonprofit Law

These bylaws govern a nonprofit in [YOUR STATE]. Based on general nonprofit corporation law principles, flag any provisions that commonly conflict with state law, including:

- Minimum or maximum board size requirements
- Required notice periods for membership or board meetings
- Quorum minimums
- Required officer positions
- Restrictions on how bylaws can be amended
- Member voting rights

Note: I will verify your findings against our specific state statute.

Prompt 2C — Financial Controls

Review the financial provisions in these bylaws and flag any gaps or weaknesses, including:

1. Who has authority to sign checks or contracts, and is a dual-signature requirement present?
2. Is there a spending limit requiring board approval?
3. Are audit or financial review requirements specified?
4. Is the fiscal year defined?
5. Are there rules about accepting restricted gifts or grants?

Rate each area: STRONG / ADEQUATE / NEEDS IMPROVEMENT / MISSING

STAGE 3 — Internal Consistency

Bylaws often accumulate contradictions over years of amendments. These prompts surface hidden conflicts before they cause real disputes.

Prompt 3A — Contradiction Check

Carefully read through these bylaws and identify any internal contradictions – places where one section conflicts with or undermines another. Look especially for:

- Inconsistent numbers (board size, quorum, vote thresholds)
- Conflicting authority (who has power to do the same thing in different sections)
- Procedures described differently in different places
- Terms used inconsistently (e.g., "member," "director," "trustee" used interchangeably)

List each contradiction with the specific section numbers involved.

Prompt 3B — Undefined Terms

Identify every term used in these bylaws that is either undefined or used ambiguously. For each one, explain what interpretation problem it could cause and suggest a clarifying definition or revision.

Pay special attention to:

- Voting thresholds ("majority," "two-thirds") majority of what?
- "Active member" or "member in good standing" how is this determined?
- "Written notice" does email count?
- "Special meeting" vs. "emergency meeting"

STAGE 4 — Gap Analysis

Prompt 4A — Missing Provisions

Compare these bylaws against best practices for a small Friends of the Library nonprofit and identify important provisions that are missing or underdeveloped. Check for:

Governance:

- Conflict of interest policy or requirement to adopt one
- Board member removal process
- Process for filling mid-term vacancies
- Executive committee authority (if applicable)

Membership:

- How membership is terminated (voluntary and involuntary)
- Member rights (voting, records access, meetings)
- Dues structure and what happens if dues lapse

Operations:

- Parliamentary authority (e.g., Robert's Rules)
- Record-keeping requirements
- Indemnification of officers and directors
- Anti-discrimination statement

For each gap, rate its importance:

CRITICAL / IMPORTANT / NICE TO HAVE

Prompt 4B — Friends of Library-Specific Issues

This is a Friends of the Library group that supports a public library. Review the bylaws for provisions specific to this type of organization:

1. Is the relationship with the library (or library board/director) defined? Who can commit the Friends group to support projects?
2. Are there rules about how funds raised must be used?
3. Is there a process for approving major gifts on behalf of the library?
4. Are there provisions about what happens if the library relationship changes or ends?
5. Does the purpose clause clearly tie the organization to library support?

STAGE 5 — Clarity & Language

Bylaws are only useful if people can understand them. These prompts identify language that could confuse volunteers or cause disputes.

Prompt 5A — Plain Language Audit

Review these bylaws for language that is unnecessarily complex, archaic, or likely to confuse volunteers who are not lawyers. For each problematic section:

1. Quote the original language
2. Explain why it is unclear
3. Suggest a plain-language rewrite

Focus on sections that officers and board members reference most often: meeting procedures, voting, officer duties, and financial authority.

Prompt 5B — Ambiguity That Could Cause Disputes

Identify language in these bylaws that could lead to a real disagreement between board members or members in a contentious situation. For each example:

- Describe the specific dispute scenario it could cause
- Identify what is ambiguous
- Suggest clarifying language

Think about situations like: a contested election, a member requesting removal, a disagreement about spending authority, or a dispute about whether proper notice was given for a meeting.

STAGE 6 — Drafting Revisions

Once you have identified problems, use these prompts to generate improved language. Always review AI-drafted language carefully before presenting it to your board.

Prompt 6A — Revise a Specific Section

Please draft revised language for [ARTICLE/SECTION NAME AND NUMBER] of our bylaws. The current language reads:

[PASTE CURRENT TEXT HERE]

The problems we identified are: [DESCRIBE ISSUES]

Please write replacement language that:

- Fixes the identified problems
- Uses plain, clear language
- Follows standard nonprofit bylaw style
- Is consistent with the rest of our bylaws
- Includes a brief note explaining what changed and why

Prompt 6B — Draft a Missing Provision

Our bylaws do not include a [CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY / DISSOLUTION CLAUSE / INDEMNIFICATION CLAUSE / other]. Please draft appropriate language for a small Friends of the Library nonprofit that:

- Meets IRS and general nonprofit best practice standards
- Is written in plain language
- Would fit naturally into our existing bylaws
- Includes a suggested placement (which article it should go in)

STAGE 7 — Final Prioritization

Use this prompt after completing all earlier stages to generate a clean action list for your board.

Prompt 7 — Master Issues List

Based on everything we have reviewed, produce a final prioritized action list in this format:

CRITICAL (fix before next use of these bylaws):

- [Issue] | [Section] | [Recommended action]

IMPORTANT (fix at next scheduled review):

- [Issue] | [Section] | [Recommended action]

MINOR (clean up when convenient):

- [Issue] | [Section] | [Recommended action]

Also note:

- Any items that require attorney review before changes are adopted
- Any items that will require a member vote to amend

Quick Reference — What Each Stage Covers

Stage	Focus	Key Question
1	Initial Orientation	Did the AI correctly understand our bylaws?
2	Legal Compliance	Do our bylaws meet IRS and state law requirements?
3	Internal Consistency	Do our bylaws contradict themselves?
4	Gap Analysis	What important provisions are we missing?
5	Clarity & Language	Can our volunteers understand these bylaws?

6	Drafting Revisions	What should the improved language say?
7	Final Prioritization	What do we fix first, and who needs to approve it?

Next Steps After the AI Review

Once you have completed the review, here is a recommended path forward:

- Compile all AI-identified issues into a single board memo
- Categorize items as: requires attorney review, requires member vote, board can decide
- Schedule a board discussion — don't try to resolve everything in one meeting
- For critical legal issues, consult an attorney before making any changes
- Draft proposed amendments and circulate to board before the vote
- Follow the amendment procedure in your current bylaws exactly
- After adoption, update your official copy and note the amendment date

TIP Many state bar associations have nonprofit law pro bono programs. Your state's Nonprofit Association or library system may also be able to connect you with free legal resources.

NC Writers and Freedom to Read

Novelist Jill McCorkle, who serves on the national Steering Committee of Writers for Democratic Action, and Joseph Bathanti, former North Carolina Poet Laureate, are organizing North Carolina writers to defend Freedom to Read and support libraries across the state. Writers are attending Read-ins and county commission meetings to remind all citizens that our public libraries are essential. Writers are recording personal messages for a public awareness campaign to be distributed via social media and have released the following statement:

As we approach the 250th anniversary of the United States, communities across the country find their freedom to read threatened, censored, and banned. It is absolutely critical that the unalienable right to read, which goes hand in hand with the unalienable right to free speech - protected in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution - remains sacred and cherished.

Books supply wisdom on how to distinguish between right and wrong; how to navigate gracefully the tricky terrain of an often-troubled world; how to engage, through discussion, sensitive ultimately human dilemmas; how to unite and move forward in reconciliation, joint humanity, cooperation and charity rather than in suspicion and intolerance. Books remind us that the human spirit is inextinguishable, that the future of the only planet we have depends upon our threshold to embrace and adapt to difference through shared inquiry. Apart from the pure enjoyment and edification that books impart, they reorder and discipline our instincts in profoundly human and humane ways, provide moral compasses, social consciences, the transformative beauty of the word when wielded judiciously, the limitless possibilities for a fully realized and happy life, and the miraculous power of imagination - which Einstein declared "encircles the world."

Lexington Friends: Authors Event by Karen Schrader

On the afternoon of May 16th, the Friends of the Lexington Library hosted a community event showcasing local authors from Lexington and Davidson County. Twenty authors participated, representing a wide variety of genres and experiences. This event gave the community an opportunity to connect with our talented local authors, talk about their writing process, see old friends and neighbors, and purchase books. Jack Riggs, a local singer-songwriter, provided music. Friends also provided food for the event.

Sheila Killabrew, manager of the Davidson County's five libraries, attended, as well as the library's Bookmobile. Rosa Terry, board president, presided over the afternoon's activities.

Lexington City Council Mayor Pro-Tem, Joe Watkins, kicked off this very successful event. City Councilmen Dr. Keith Curry and Jim Myers, along with Davidson County Commissioner Matt Mizell, also attended.



Authors: Barbra Presnell & Antionette Kerr



Rosa Terry, Annelise Frasier, & Joe Watkins



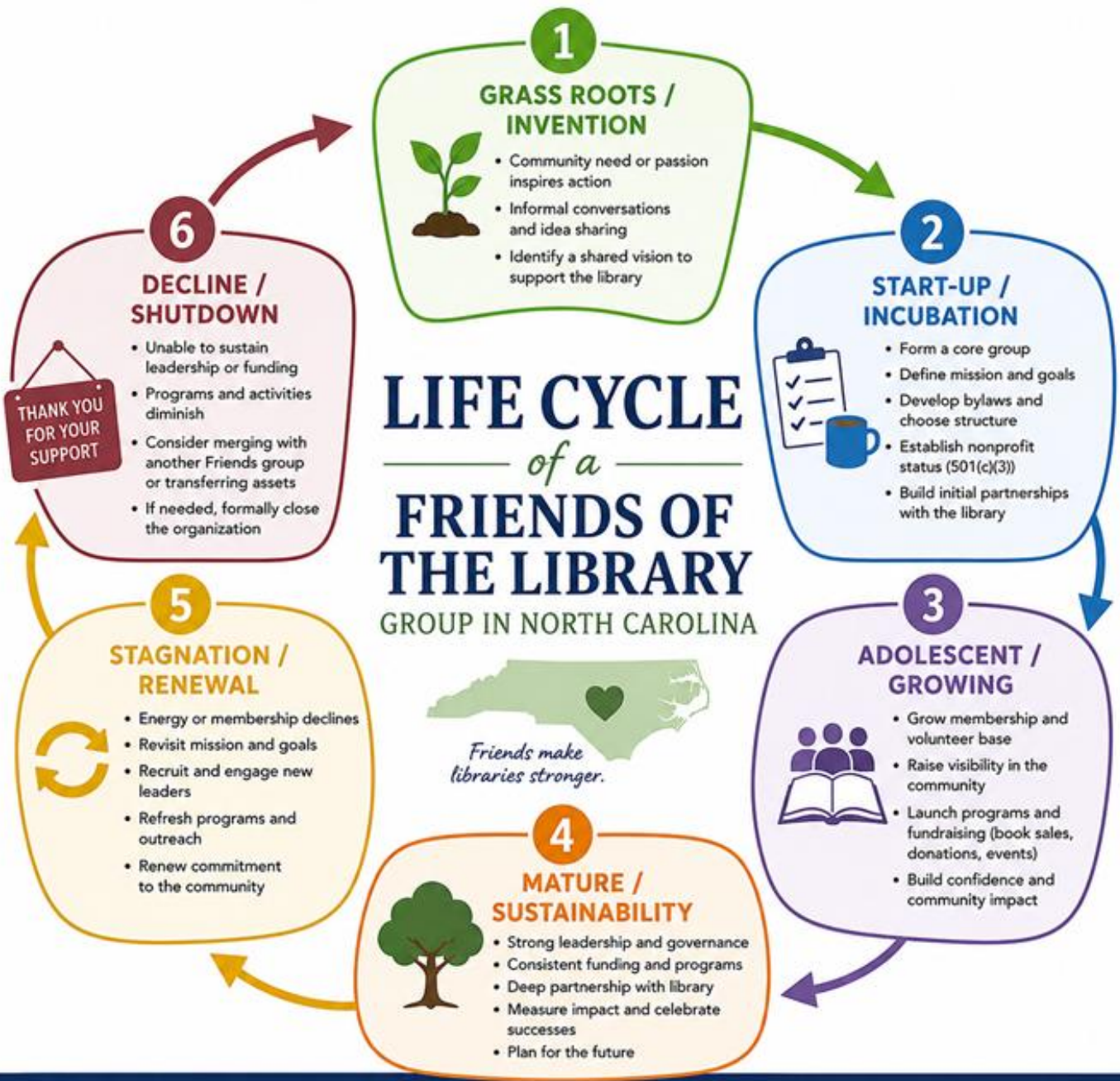
Authors: Rosa Villacorta & Ricsy Sanchez



FLAG DAY JUNE 14th ETIQUETTE

Flag etiquette provides a respectful framework for displaying the United States flag. Key rules include: never letting the flag touch the ground or water, avoiding its use as clothing or decoration, and ensuring proper night illumination.

Life Cycle of a Friends Group



STRONG LIBRARIES. STRONG COMMUNITIES. STRONG NORTH CAROLINA. | SUPPORT ADVOCATE VOLUNTEER CONNECT

Above is an AI generated life cycle of a Friends group. Those who serve on Friends' Boards should periodically assess where in this cycle your group currently aligns. Part of your responsibility as a Board member is to assess the overall health of the organization. Tools like this help you to do that. The longer your group has been in existence, the greater the likelihood that it is in or approaching stage 5. If the signs of stagnation are evident, your Board should at least be acknowledging that and discussing your options. The stagnation stage generally runs 2 to 5 years before the group enters stage 6, where it is less likely that the group can be revitalized.

Online Scheduling Tools

Don't know about your Friends, but our Board members seem to always be on trips out of town or out of the country. In addition, many of them belong to several groups so finding a date to meet can be a real challenge. Going back and forth via email or text message is a hassle and difficult to keep up with. Have you given any thought to using an online scheduling tool? Here are a few for your consideration. All have a basic plan that is free (with limitations). Each has a different way of collecting the data, so you might want to try several until you can find one you like.

[Doodle](#)

[Cal.com](#)

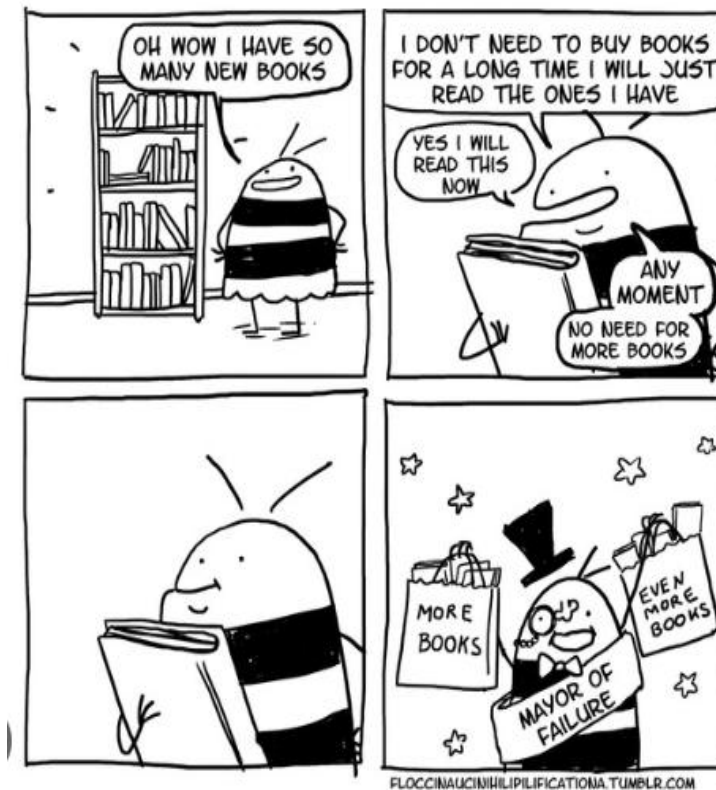
[When2meet](#)

[When Available](#)

[Google Calendar](#)

[Rally](#)

[Calendly](#)



Pender County Breaks Ground on New Hampstead Branch Library

Submitted by Liz Piacenza.

There has been a push for a new library since mid 2000's. It's finally happening. We have the groundbreaking this coming Wednesday. It will be over 2x the size of our current library, which we desperately need. I think it will be transformative since it will be right on Highway 17 that goes through the middle of town between, Wilmington and Topsail Beach. Needless to say, we're very excited.

The new 20,000-square-foot library, designed by Sawyer Sherwood and Associate Architecture in collaboration with library consulting firm ReThinking Libraries, will be constructed by Daniels and Daniels and is scheduled for completion in summer 2027. The facility will provide expanded space, enhanced resources, and modern amenities to meet the needs of

the growing community.

The design was informed by community input gathered through public surveys and in-person sessions. Feedback highlighted children's and teen spaces, programming for all ages, meeting and study rooms, and an outdoor gathering space as top priorities for the new facility.

The **Topsail Township Friends of the Library** are donating \$500,000 towards the new building. The Friends got some seed money a long time ago. That money, having grown from investing, along with our community donations, has put us in a position to participate in a big way.



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Public Libraries**

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CALENDAR

All material for the newsletter is due to editor **Judy Hills** by the 25th of each month.

[Click here](#) for the 2026 Calendar of National Events—use these to plan your activities.

FONCPL Board Zoom Meetings 10 AM quarterly

Here are a few dates of note:

June

6/1 Say Something Nice Day

6/3 World Bicycle Day

6/6 D-Day

6/6 National donut day

6/14 Army Birthday

6/14 Flag Day

6/15 Nature Photography Day

6/15 World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

6/19 Juneteenth

6/20 American Eagle Day

6/21 Summer Solstice

6/21 National Selfie Day

6/21 Father's Day

6/26 Forgiveness Day

6/27 National Bingo Day

6/29 National Camera Day

July

7/1 International Joke Day

7/2 World UFO Day

7/4 Independence Day--250th

7/17 World Emoji Day

7/19 National Ice Cream Day

7/26 Uncle and Aunt Day

7/26 Parents' Day