

The Friends of New Glarus Library, a non-profit group organized in 1983, exists because, simply, the New Glarus Library has been very good to our community--and friends help friends out. FNGL does a variety of things to improve library services and facilities that are beyond the regular library staff and budget.

One thing that the FNGL supports is welcoming future readers with New Baby Packages that contain board books and a "born to read" bib for each community newborn. The group sponsors programs and prizes for Children's Summer Library Program, Teen Read Week, Traveling Lantern, and National Library Week, as well as a movie license for youth programs. FNGL helps purchase children's books, large-print books. For adults, the FNGL sponsors a book discussion group and craft programs, including an heirloom seed catalog for local gardeners. Staff appreciation gestures near the holidays convey the group's gratitude to the hard working library staff. And the FNGL contributes to the new library fund.

The funding for these and similar services comes primarily from the annual book sale Labor Day weekend. Books and audio-visual materials donated throughout the year by library patrons are sold to delighted families, community members, and visitors to New Glarus. Donated baked goods sweeten the day, as well as popcorn from a machine purchased by the FNGL for youth activities. Another newer fundraiser is a winter Trivia Fest, pitting competitive, enthusiastic teams against each other, providing a night of fun competition. In the past, there have been holiday crafts for sale or a holiday gift tree. In addition, there are canvas book bags for sale.

The most crucial funding source is membership renewals sent out to current members near the Labor Day sale. Students, families, businesses, individuals, and patrons can join annually and make additional tax exempt contributions. As well, you learn of chances to contribute time and talents. The Board of FNGL always welcomes new members who would like to help organize fund raising activities and have a say in determining how the funds will be used to help the library. We often meet via email instead of face to face, though semi-monthly meetings are a good way to meet current board members and our new librarian. We always need books donated, and are grateful to the Swiss Center of North America for storing the countless boxes of your donated books for which the current facility has no space.

It comes back to friendship. There is enjoyment to be gained from joining FNGL or becoming a member of the Board of FNGL. There is satisfaction in donating books, knowing their sale means new options for the library. Often the New Glarus Library is the first stop when community newcomers settle into their new homes and make new friends. So, be a friend to a very good friend, the New Glarus Library. Pick up a membership form at the library and join us.

Submitted by the New Glarus Library Capital Campaign