



# Freedom Friends Newsletter

February 2018

## President's Greetings

When Freedom Public Library opened in 2000, it was constructed so that it could be expanded as the population of the surrounding community increased. The Friends hoped that this expansion would take place in 2010 if not sooner.

This hope never materialized, in good part because of the 2008 recession and its financially constricting aftermath, and because other county services were always judged more pressing than library expansion. Through 2016, no real discussion of Freedom expansion took place and Friends hopes continued to plummet to the jagged edges of cynicism.

Then in 2017, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) issued an unfunded Capital Improvement Project Detail Sheet that estimated cost of the expansion at \$6,250,000 and made clear that the expansion when undertaken would triple the footprint of the Freedom Public Library. Some Friends saw this as hopeful, some, however, saw it as just more of the same—after all, no funding was approved.

At the BCC's January 23, 2018 5-year Strategic Planning Workshop, another expansion tantalizer surfaced. County administrator Bouyounes—the person who recommends projects to the BCC that *could* be funded, then oversees spending on those projects if the BCC funds them—stated that based on the library's growing number of patrons, its materials circulation and its community services, Freedom expansion *should have number one funding priority of the three library projects on the horizon* (Freedom, Marion Oaks, Silver Spring Shores.) Then, Commissioner David Moore heartily endorsed the expansion.

Again, there is no expansion funding and endorsements are not funded plans. But the Freedom expansion project is on the table. So let's back off from cynicism and do two things to move expansion forward: tell our friends and neighbors to encourage the BCC to approve it, and continue financially supporting the outstanding programs and services that our Freedom Public Library provides to our community.

Florence Pritchard

## Focus on Freedom

We have a new Branch Supervisor at Freedom Public Library and her name is Ellie Bushhousen! Many of us were fortunate to meet her at the Freedom Friends annual meeting which she attended briefly. After she was introduced, she expressed warm enthusiasm for the job and especially for working with the Friends. She then hurried back to her work at System (MCPLS) Headquarters.

Ellie earned a bachelor of arts degree in Psychology from Aurora University and a master of science degree in Library and Information Studies from Florida State University. Not only does she have an educational background that suits her for library work in the digital age, Ellie knows our Marion County Public Library System firsthand. She has served as a highly regarded Public Services Librarian III in the Information Services Division of the MCPLS for the past three years.

Prior to coming to Marion County, Ellie served as an academic librarian in the Health Sciences Center Libraries at the University of Florida for eight years. During her tenure with UF, she wrote many articles published in the *Medical Reference Services Quarterly*, the *Journal of Hospital Librarianship* and the *Journal of Electronic Resources in Medical Libraries*. Ellie has been a member of the editorial board for the *Journal of Hospital Librarianship* and the technology column editor for the same publication. Additionally, she is a past president of the Florida Health Science Library Association.

As many know, our library system has developed a very high-standard orientation program for new branch supervisors, and Ellie will participate in that program before coming full time to Freedom in four to six weeks. Part of that program will bring her here from time to time and many more of us will have the opportunity to meet and greet her. We are so fortunate to have Ellie as Freedom Library's new manager. We send her a resounding



## On the Horizon

Here we are into February already. In addition to Ground Hog Day, Lincoln and Washington's birthdays and Valentine's Day, a major event has special significance for the friends of the Freedom Public Library. Working with me as continuing president are four new officers elected at our annual meeting of January 27. These new leaders will set us on a path for success as a group of friends and as a Friends Group.

Our newly elected officers for 2018 are Vice President Jo Ann Guillory; Treasurer Susan Sullivan; Assistant Treasurer Milli Costantini; and Secretary Susanne "Sanni" Schlemmer. These officers' backgrounds and experience will enable them to do outstanding work in their positions.

Jo Ann comes to us from a career as an elementary school teacher. Who could have more skills for planning, foreseeing and preventing obstacles and encouraging Friends creativity while at the same time guiding thoughtful approaches to problem solving?

Susan comes to us from a career as a university chief financial officer and a current online accounting teacher. Clearly she knows about money and how to handle it from budgeting to setting up accounts, to financial accountability. As our resources grow this year we will be in good hands!

Milli, a reading supervisor, served for many years as treasurer of the Knights of Columbiettes, in Belleview. She will monitor collection, depositing and reimbursing of funds on a day-to-day basis. This will contribute substantially to smooth operations for the Friends—operations that are becoming increasingly numerous and complex.

Susanne has taken a speed writing course, frequently transcribed recorded information in her past work, and is highly competent at computer word processing and graphic design.

With officers like these, we can move forward in 2018 with energy, enthusiasm and confidence. Are we a lucky bunch, or what?