

## President's Greetings

"There was something I wanted to say, but it went right out of my mind." How many times have we heard this said or said it ourselves, and how many times have we sensed the spectre of dementia lurking behind such a confession? Are we unable to remember because we are getting old?

Perhaps forgetting is a function of age, but it strikes me that there is another cause for the flitting of thoughts from our minds. We may in good part lose ideas before we can share them--in relationships, at meetings, while scheduling upcoming tasks--because of information overload.

Human beings can handle only so much information at once, and when we are flooded with too much information, we make poor decisions--if we are able to decide at all. Distracted, we jump from one information source to another, lose focus and have difficulty holding our responses to the information in mind, let alone sharing our thoughts with others. And these days, we are awash in information from radio, television, newspapers, books, the internet, product labels, pamphlets, brochures and so much more.

Library information science experts are well aware of this information inundation and are researching ways to counter it. Librarians as *the* professionals who seek to address this problem for the patrons they serve, are seeking ways to provide information to patrons that help them focus, not flounder.

We as Friends, family and, community group members and citizens may help ourselves reduce the negative effects of information overload by taking just a few moments before meeting with an individual or group to 1) list the topics we want to mentally wrangle with *later* and put the list away, 2) mindfully breath in, then out, ten times and, 3) frame a personal objective for the upcoming meeting in a simple sentence. For example: "I want to understand my niece Gina's plans after graduation," or "I want to propose that the quilting club makes quilts for veterans."

Try these steps, control information overload and chase that dementia ghost out of mind!

Florence Pritchard

## Focus on Freedom

In addition to new supervisor Elli Goodwin, there are four brand new staff members and three who are relatively new at Freedom Public Library. None of these delightful people have been introduced in this column yet, so for the remainder of this year, we'll present them to our readers.

Let's begin with Mary Thompson, Public Services Librarian II who had been at Freedom Public Library for just over two weeks when she was interviewed for this column. In spite of being on board for such a short period of time, Mary projects the kind of competence and friendliness that we have come to appreciate so much from Freedom staff. She even helped the author of this piece figure out how to use a new smart phone to take Mary's picture.



Mary Thompson, Librarian II

After teaching middle school—math, English and reading—in Georgia and Florida, Mary worked in an academic library and decided that being a librarian is her *métier*. She loves the variety of the work and the opportunities she has to respond to patron's needs. She is committed to the Freedom ethos of creating the library as a place where people feel comfortable asking questions. She is proud, too, to be a part of the response by libraries across the country as they step up to the challenges of the digital age and use its equipment—computers, E-books, databases and more to reach out to patrons who come to the library as well as those who may not be able to come

As readers know, the Friends encourage library staff to look through books donated in the lobby to find any that might be added to the library's collection. Mary has taken responsibility for this task and we hope she finds many volumes for Freedom.

**Welcome, Mary Thompson!**



## On the Horizon

At the April monthly meeting, our active membership decided to focus on increasing community awareness of the Friends' mission and of the creative and personally fulfilling ways that our work helps us accomplish that mission. To do this, we plan to make personal contacts with developers and homeowners associations in the Freedom Public Library service area and through them schedule presentations to their residents about the Friends mission and work.

Key to these presentations will be marketing materials about the Friends. Fortunately, we have already developed many of these materials including our new logo, annual reports, application forms, Facebook page and website. Also fortunately, last year, Kerri King, CEO of local cable company Fibervision, offered to help us create a video about the Friends work and to air it without cost on her company's Public Service Bulletin Board.

This May, a group of Friends interested in this project met with Fibervision affiliates Joe Vee, Steve Corun, and Richard Auerbach to begin planning our video. Together, the group explored the purpose of the video, options for its development and use, and the range of costs involved. We learned from Steve that the video may get extra exposure through Fibervision's practice of airing such nonprofit messages in unfilled spots on the bulletin board. We learned from Richard about the role of stock photos, music and professional narration in polishing our video while keeping costs down.

The meeting concluded with Joe's distribution of a Friends marketing questionnaire to those at the meeting and eventually to our Executive Board. Joe will use questionnaire responses to develop a sample storyboard for a Friends video. Meeting attendees, Board members and any other interested Friends will critique the storyboard and plan next steps in this project on Thursday, June 7, at 2:00 pm at the State Route 200 Sheriff's Community Room.