

Communications/Publicity Ad Hoc Committee

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By Darin McCann

Our first point of order was to identify our current climate, outline where we hope to get and then come out with ideas on how to get there.

We reached conclusion on one overriding item:

- Everybody we encounter who is familiar with the library, loves it. But we've been relatively surprised knowing how many people are not aware of all that the library does offer. Yes, there are books. Lots and lots of books. But South Coastal Library is much more. We have to reach more people in a more efficient manner. That requires, print, digital and the sharing of information by the masses.

How to reach more people:

- The print newsletter is still important. We have a demographic that often still favors print (at least I tell myself that every day at the paper), and we're doing a disservice if we do not continue to have a physical newsletter. Our thought is to shorten it to maybe four pages, and to study different paper stocks to lower our costs. This would be fact-heavy, with maybe an eye-catching graphic on each page to maintain eye contact on our product and to hopefully cast a longer memory in the reader's head. We can lower some expenses without sacrificing our information campaign.
- The second print component would in fact be in the Coastal Point. We would start a section called "Library's Corner," that would run quarterly, and we would also make this available to the Frankford and Selbyville Libraries. We can use this to discuss what FOSCL is up to, as well as fundraising efforts, new features at the library or simply a note from the librarian. We could generate thoughts from the board as to what to include each meeting, or through a group email. This would be written by Helen, or Sue or whoever would like to take it on.
- The next part is our email blast, which is the first part of our digital campaign. Again, more information and, again, more graphics to catch the eye. We know that most mass email gets deleted upon arrival or redirected into Spam folders. That's ok. If even a small percentage of these emails get read and we pick up a new donor or ten, or more traffic to the library, we helped in some capacity.
- Social media is going to play a big part in a digital campaign. Probably the most important part in terms of reaching fresh eyes. We can use small, informational pieces with graphics or in memes to get out either events or "Did You Know"-type items about the library or FOSCL. There is a hugely popular local Facebook page called "Beach Kids" where parents of young children share things to do in the area. If we can simply produce posts that gets shared by that group and some percentage of its members, we will hit brand new eyes. Their membership continues to get refreshed each year as new kids come of age and new families move in. Not only is this great for the young families in the area (a number which is growing exponentially since Covid illuminated the ability to work from wherever), but it's good for people who live here who are visited by grandkids and want something to do that is fun and pretty darn educational.

Last thought:

I'd love if this ad hoc group could become a full-time unit going forward focused on communications. We could help each of FOSCL's committees spread information in a coordinated way, and provide a clear and organized plan to share what we want to share. We have a remarkable product in the library, and a dream staff there to make it function as well as a library can operate.