

Affiliate *Link*



AN INFORMATIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR AFFILIATE GROUPS OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CENTER

Going Green and Saving Green: E-Options for Affiliate Groups

“Going green” is a term we are hearing more and more frequently. For affiliate groups, going green might be an important goal or even part of your mission. Fortunately, there are many green options offered by the Affiliate Group Services Program (AGSP), and others available for little or no cost online, that can assist in this important task. These “virtual” options leave the paper and postage behind, but are still an effective means of communicating with your members, which is a key component to running a successful organization. Try one of the options below for a sustainable and cost-effective way to keep your members updated on the achievements and activities of your organization.

Meeting notices are particularly well suited to e-mail distribution.

Use **E-Mail:** Did you know that your membership database probably already contains current e-mail addresses for the majority of your members? By communicating through e-mail you can provide important information to your members quickly and efficiently, without the environmental and financial costs associated with a traditional mailing. Meeting notices are particularly well-suited to e-mail distribution. Your members can contact LGC directly by clicking a hyperlink from the electronic version of the notice, and the announcement can be resent at any time as a reminder of an upcoming event. To make sure all members are reached, we can also mail a paper copy to anyone without an e-mail address on file. For an e-mail list of your members or other information, please contact Christian Pearsall, program administrator, at 800.852.3358, ext. 104.

Start a Discussion Group: Although not an AGSP service, another option for increased communication is to establish a

web-based discussion group or listserv through a service like *Google Groups* or *Yahoo Groups*. These services can be tailored to fit the needs of your organization and enable your members to communicate with each other at no cost to your organization. Contact Christian Pearsall for an e-mail list of your members or other information.

Launch an E-Newsletter: Newsletters are a great way to keep your members informed and connected, and they can serve as a marketing tool to attract new members and supporters. Regular communication through traditional print newsletters is a common practice for many LGC affiliate groups; even though the design work is done at no cost, printing and postage costs for each issue can be substantial. An e-newsletter can be created in a format that can be easily e-mailed, such as a PDF, and it can be posted on your organization’s website. Not only are postage and printing costs saved, but e-newsletters can include color pictures and graphics, as well as hyperlinks to additional online resources. For more information on how to start a newsletter or change your format from print to e-newsletter, contact Stacy Koscielniak, graphic design coordinator, at 800.852.3358, ext. 144.

Create a Website: A website offers a platform to announce time-sensitive information, post meeting dates, agendas and minutes, and share other information like membership lists and resource links that can be helpful to your members. In short, a website provides a place for your members to



Continued on page 3

Did You Know?

We can send out your organization’s annual dues invoices electronically. It’s one more way to help your group save money and “go green.” Contact Christian Pearsall at cpearsall@nhlgc.org to learn more.

Affiliate Link Has Gone Green!

This edition of *Affiliate Link* marks a transformation from print publication to electronic newsletter. With this change, we’ll save money and trees, while continuing to bring you valuable information. You can find this edition and previous editions of *Affiliate Link* archived at the LGC website at www.nhlgc.org.

Spotlight on New Hampshire Library Trustees Association

The library is often considered the heart of the community. It is times like these that communities most need places to come together, and what better meeting place than the library. In 2008, as the economic situation began to impact citizens, libraries began to notice a marked increase in attendance. In fact, at a session at LGC's Annual Conference last fall, New Hampshire Library Trustees Association past-President Lil Edelmann reported that some libraries were experiencing three to four times the number of users as a direct result of the economy.

The rise of the Internet created competition for libraries, as people "Googled" their way to information instead of heading to the library. Times are changing yet again, as residents return to the library for free access to Internet and newspapers, cancelling personal subscriptions in an effort to cut costs. Noted Lil, "People are signing out magazines. It's unheard of!"

Many communities have outgrown their small libraries, but struggle to find the funds for basic improvements, not to mention the vast sums required to rebuild. Library trustees often face an uphill climb in convincing local leaders—and voters—to appropriate the funds required.

To address the challenge of communication, the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association hosted a 2008 conference panel

discussion focused on the importance of working together. Among the session attendees was Hudson Town Planner John Cashell, who shared numerous examples of his experience with library trustees and local officials working effectively together. Prior to coming to Hudson, Cashell served for many years as planning director for Woburn, MA. During that time, he worked closely with local officials and library trustees as they steadfastly pursued their respective goals. Over the years, the Woburn trustees transformed the library into a major cultural institution and cultivated an organization that everyone wanted to join—and to support. Cashell points to the positive, collaborative working relationship between local officials and library trustees as the key to the organization's success.

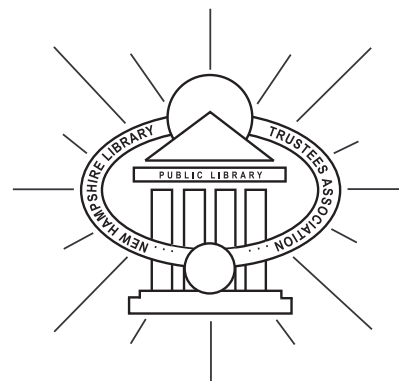
The story of the new Hudson library is somewhat of a fairy tale. According to Cashell, Hudson's library trustees toiled for 30 years, tirelessly advocating for funds to construct a new library. They participated in the budget process each year, only to be defeated at each consecutive town meeting. However, "the wheels were in motion," said Cashell, for success in 2008, when two local philanthropists donated funds to make the dream a reality. Hudson's new library was designed to serve as the heart of the community. In fact, the architects included an all-purpose public meeting room near the main entrance, so that residents can access the space during hours when the library itself is closed. And, of course, the new library is fully wired for the electronic age.

In Hudson and Woburn, collaboration and communication between library trustees, citizens and local officials were the keys to revitalizing not only the physical structure of the library, but the spirit as well. These successes represent a few of the many concepts that the members of the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association—now 1000 members strong—strive to promote through their pledge to "offer the best possible library service to each community." Visit your local library soon. It just might surprise you.

For more information, visit the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association online at www.nhlta.com.

Calling for Annual Conference Session Proposals!

With the arrival of spring, it's time to start brainstorming ideas for annual conference session proposals. LGC's 2009 Annual Conference will be held November 18-20 at the Radisson Hotel Manchester. Affiliate Group presidents should have received an April 6 e-mail update from LGC Event Planner Erin Batstone containing the 2009 submission form and related information. (The proposal submission deadline is June 15.) Questions? Contact Erin by e-mail at ebatstone@nhlgc.org.



New Hampshire Local Government Center Affiliate Groups

Association of New Hampshire Public Employer
Human Resource Administrators

Fire Instructors and Officers Association of NH

Granite State Rural Water Association

Municipal and Governmental Law Section of the
NH Bar Association

NH Association of Assessing Officials

NH Association of Conservation Commissions

NH Association of Emergency Medical Technicians

NH Association of Fire Chiefs

NH Association of Housing Authorities

NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions

NH Association of School Business Officials

NH Building Officials Association

NH Cemetery Association

NH City and Town Clerks' Association

NH Coalition for Community Media

NH Economic Development Association

NH Excellence in Education

NH Fire Prevention Society

NH Government Finance Officers Association

NH Health Officers Association

NH Library Association

NH Library Trustees Association

NH Local Government Information Network

NH Local Welfare Administrators Association

NH Municipal Management Association

NH Municipal Secretaries Association

NH Planners Association

NH Public Works Association

NH Public Works Mutual Aid Program

NH Public Works Standards and Training Council

NH Recreation and Park Association

NH Road Agents Association

NH State Firemen's Association

NH Tax Collectors' Association

NH Water Pollution Control Association

Northeast Resource Recovery Association

Tri-State Association of School Business Officials

Working Dog Foundation

*Organizations listed in red indicate participation in the
Affiliate Group Services Program.*

Going Green, *continued from front page*

go to access information that is important to them. LGC offers several options to help affiliate groups maintain a presence on the web at little or no cost to your organization. To view some examples, visit www.nhboa.net or www.nhplanners.org. For more information about creating or maintaining your group's website, contact Audrey Bentley, communications data specialist, at 800.852.3358, ext. 117.

Survey Your Members: Are you wondering what is on the mind of your membership? Do you need to gather information pertinent to a legislative position? A web-based survey is an ideal tool for gathering information. Available products offer a wide array of question formats, survey templates and methods of analyzing survey results, as well as options to share the results with your membership after the responses have been collected. Although this is not a service offered through AGSP, companies such as SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com) and PollDaddy (www.polldaddy.com) offer free, user-friendly options that would fit the needs of most LGC affiliate groups.

We look forward to helping our affiliate groups achieve their environmental goals, while reducing costs and improving communication and service to their members. Please don't hesitate to contact us with questions about any of these online options that will help your organization go green while saving green.

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Our Mission: To provide programs and services that strengthen the quality of member governments and the ability of their officials and employees to serve the public by being a catalyst for dialogue and action, an advisor on problems, a provider of benefits and risk-management services, an educator/trainer in skills and a resource for information.

Affiliate Link is a quarterly publication of the New Hampshire Local Government Center (LGC) for board members participating in the Affiliate Group Services Program (AGSP). For more information about AGSP, contact either Director of Communications Eleanor Baron by phone at 800.852.3358, ext. 137 (e-mail at ebaron@nhlgc.org) or Communications Manager Jeni Eldridge at ext. 118 (e-mail at jeldridge@nhlgc.org). For more information about LGC, visit us online at www.nhlgc.org.