

Q: “Who are Marie Goss and Evy Nordley, anyway?”

A: Marie Goss and Evy Nordley co-founded The Minnesota Association of Library Friends (MALF) in 1979. Together with other MALF officers, they guided the establishment of over one hundred Friends organizations from 1979 to 1994 by providing support including start-up grants, by-laws and non profit models, guidelines, newsletters, workshops, speakers, and certificates of merit recognizing Friends activities that increased awareness and support for libraries.

A long-time library supporter, **Marie Goss** was a member of the Minneapolis Public Library Board from 1971 to 1977, serving as Board President from 1974 to 1977. She also served as President of the MELSA Board from 1977 to 1980. She was a highly effective advocate for libraries in the Minnesota Legislature, lobbying in support of increased state aid funds for public library services and adequate operating funds for the state library agency. In 1981 she was selected “Trustee of the Year” by the American Library Association.

Marie was active with The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library for twenty years and served as President of The Friends Board from 1969 to 1971. In 1985, members of the MALF Board and more than sixty others established The Marie Goss Endowment Fund (later renamed the Marie Goss/Evy Nordley Fund) in her honor. Marie Goss lived in Minneapolis until her death in October 1999.

Evy Nordley led numerous state and national efforts to create greater awareness and support of libraries. As president of the Washington County Friends of the library, she increased membership from 20 to 200 library supporters. While serving on the MALF Board, she presented workshops and advocated for library issues in the Minnesota Legislature. Her most successful initiative was the very popular Minnesota Chautauqua program series funded by The Minnesota Humanities Commission. Through Chautauqua, Friends of the Library groups hosted free humanities programs in libraries followed by lively discussion with actors and scholars. Ely served on the board of Friends of Libraries USA and received the FOLUSA Merit Award. She also received the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Minnesota Library Association. Evy passed away in May 1997. In 1998, MALF created The Evy Nordley Award for Best Project by Friends in her honor.