



Columbia County
Rural Library District

111 S. 3rd St, PO Box 74
Dayton, WA 99328

Report to the Library Board of Trustees, May 15, 2023

Director's Report by Todd Vandenberg, MLS

Quote of the Month

“In the nonstop tsunami of global information, librarians provide us with floaties and teach us to swim.” – Linton Weeks, national correspondent for Digital News at National Public Radio.

Legislative Update

- The WA legislature continues to fund the Library Capital Improvement Fund. However, to receive grants from this fund, libraries and library districts are required to provide a 50% match, something that small and rural districts simply cannot accomplish. Public Libraries of Washington (PLW) is still trying to get changes made so districts like ours only have to put up a smaller portion of the funds.
- Progress was made on lifting the 1% property tax increase cap but it was defeated by large increases in property tax values in urban and metropolitan areas.
- Special session begins Tuesday, May 16, to deal with the criminalization or decriminalization of drug use. The session will last one month. If an agreement cannot be reached, local governments can then pass laws and regulations on this topic within the two weeks following the end of the special session in mid-June.
- Problem bill: a \$2 per mobile device fee was introduced to support digital equity. Libraries and schools are working to get a “carve-out” exception to paying this fee.

Local Issue

I contacted our attorney seeking answers to a number of questions regarding the petition to dissolve the Library District. I have created a packet detailing counsel's response and guidance, along with relevant documents. Key takeaway points from his report are:

1. The petition must be submitted by August 1 in order to be on the ballot in November.
2. If the petition succeeds, the Library Board would create a resolution submitting the dissolution request to the County Commissioners.
3. If the District is dissolved:
 - a. The building would go back to the City of Dayton.
 - b. All books and other materials become the property of the Washington State Library for distribution to other library districts or disposal as they see fit.

4. The Columbia County Prosecuting Attorney has written to the State Attorney General requesting an informal opinion on whether or not the statutes creating the petition process are unconstitutional.

Staff and Programming

Youth and Families

April attendance at Discovery Kids saw an average of 6 kids and 3 adults per week. Family Story Time had a whopping 14 kids and 8 adults in attendance. Approximately 16 kids enjoyed a music and story hour with Todd at The Club.

Senior Center visits

On Tuesdays, the library drops off copies of the newsletter at the Senior Center for their visitors to read in case any of them do not receive it via email. On the 3rd Thursday of each month, Todd or another staff member will take a wide selection of books to the Center for patrons to check out. About 3-4 people will browse the books, with one or two getting checked out each week. During April's visit, we had two people sign up for library cards.

Gardening Program

A total of nine families have started their garden in our library's greenhouse. People who participated in our gardening events have been very grateful for the hands-on experience and instruction provided by Charlie. I recently gave a tour of the library to some new Dayton residents and they were delighted to see the greenhouse and the plants, something they don't normally see in a library. And as one library staff person said when talking about the joy of having plants downstairs, "It kind of grows on you."

Upcoming Events

- **Dayton Days Parade.** Starting on Monday, May 22nd, the library will provide materials for kids and families to decorate their bikes for the Dayton Days Parade. Kids whose bikes have been decorated can leave them in our downstairs Resource Room until Friday, May 26. The day of the parade, the kids and Todd will lead the parade down Main Street. Thank you to the Friends of the Library for providing funds for the decorations that the kids will use.
- **Summer Reading Program:** The 2023 Summer Reading Program kicks off on Tuesday, June 6, 2023, after school lets out. We will have a table outside with nachos, ice cream, non-dairy

fruit bars, and water. Our theme this year is, “All Together Now” and patrons of all ages are encouraged to sign up and participate. I want to thank the Friends of the Library for providing \$1,800 for food, prizes, and other giveaway items.

- **Juneteenth:** Monday, June 19, 2023, is a federal and state holiday commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. The library will be closed on that day.

Seed Library

As we wrap up this year’s seed library, we are excited to report that nine families started their own gardens through our program. Participants have expressed gratitude for the hands-on experience of getting plants started. I want to give a shout-out to Charlie for leading this successful program and to the Friends of the Library for providing funding for seeds and other materials used in this program.

Request for a Working Group: Delany carpet

The library has blocked out July 31 – August 2, 2023, as a time when new carpet will be installed in the Delany Building. I am requesting that the Library Board create a “working group” to help decide on carpet types, colors, etc., and reviewing quotes to recommend to the Board.