



Washington County
Cooperative Library Services

2015-2016 YEAR IN REVIEW





LETTER FROM THE WCCLS DIRECTOR

The libraries in Washington County work together in a spirit of cooperation that extends beyond local boundaries in order to provide excellent countywide library service to all residents. – WCCLS Mission Statement

2016 marks the 40th anniversary of this partnership we call the Cooperative Library Services. This is a unique structure for the provision of public library service, composed of the County, nine cities and two non-profit organizations (with additional participation by two special libraries that share materials). Funding for public library operations comes primarily from Washington County, but is supplemented by local resources. Additionally, the County provides support services that link member libraries together such as technology, electronic subscriptions and courier deliveries, and provides outreach to special populations. That allows member libraries to focus on providing direct patron service. As a group, our goal is to provide consistent, quality library experiences for residents of all ages through free access to collections, programs that educate, entertain and inform, services that meet diverse needs, and electronic resources that provide wherever/whenever access beyond library walls.

In November 2015 Washington County voters approved increased funding for WCCLS with the passage of local option levy 34-235. The levy passed with 64% approval and the 5¢ rate increase will support countywide library services from 2016-2017 through 2020-2021. Levy funding augments County General Fund support and approximately 75% of WCCLS expenditures are distributed to member libraries to support their local operations. The remaining funds are used to provide central support services to the member libraries with a small percent for direct service to special populations.

With this level of taxpayer support member libraries will continue to offer quality services through 2021. Several member libraries are also planning for expansion of local library services including new or expanded buildings or the addition of branches to serve growing populations. And, a new member library, the Aloha Community Library, will open as a full-service member library in 2017.

Library service could not be provided without the cooperation and support of local governments, able staff who open and operate libraries almost every day of the year, the legion of volunteers who donate their time to assist in this endeavor, and the thousands of patrons who visit our member libraries day in and day out. I am thankful for the dedication and inspiration I see every day. It is an honor to be part of this unique organization.

The following document is divided into topic areas from the WCCLS Long Range Plan. We've highlighted key elements of the plan and summarized statistics. Happy reading!

Eva Calcagno, Director





LIBRARY AS PLACE: gathering together

WCCLS wants residents to think of libraries as the first place to go for reading, lifelong learning, community events, business support and civic dialog. Our libraries offer a full calendar of services to educate, entertain and inform residents of all ages.

Our 13 member libraries **offer flexible, multi-use spaces** to accommodate community performances, learning opportunities, discussions and meetings. Several provide “maker spaces” for hands-on science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) learning experiences, as well as offering computer labs and workshops designed to assist patrons with their personal computers and e-book devices.

To meet local needs, **libraries continue to evaluate their physical spaces**. Several libraries utilize transitional wall space to showcase local artist works. North Plains Library featured Patricia Cochran’s painting exhibition of Hawaiian quilt patterns. Filled with popular materials, the Hillsboro Libraries launched a 24/7 automated self-serve Book-O-Mat service on their Civic Center Plaza. Aloha, Banks and Cornelius are in the midst of capital campaigns to fund building expansions and capital equipment needs.

Member libraries provide opportunities to **expand global viewpoints and explore cultures**. Lectures and programs designed for adults ranged from a discussion led by holocaust survivor Alter Weiner – sharing his remarkable life-story, an enriching recitation of Japanese Poetry by Leah Stenson at the Forest Grove Library and an evening of folk and bluegrass music by the River City Ramblers at the West Slope Library.

Libraries provide residents with an abundance of **opportunities to gather together**. From traditional Mexican celebrations such as Day of the Dead to International Game nights for all ages, a community-wide Family Resource Fair, and workshops on the Basics of Going Solar or Seismic Retrofitting – the WCCLS member libraries offered 292,435 residents with 8,787 life-enriching programs throughout fiscal year 2015-16.

TECHNOLOGY: connecting people & resources



“[The website] looks cleaner and less cluttered than before - I like it!”

WCCLS is committed to making sure all residents have access to information technology, as well as increasing efficiency and improving access to materials, and **providing a quality online experience** through our web presence.

In September 2015, WCCLS unveiled a website redesign. The new design is **based on extensive usability testing with patrons and staff**, and features a clean, fresh look while

adapting on the fly for mobile devices. Our mobile visitors have increased from 29% to 34% over the last fiscal year, and the new design makes the online experience much more enjoyable and user friendly.

The Cooperative added the **Print from Anywhere** service in the spring of 2016. This service allows people to send a print job to the library of their choice from home, a mobile device, or a laptop in the library.

WCCLS staff also upgraded and replaced network equipment over the course of the past year. It is behind-the-scenes work, and absolutely necessary to **keep things current, robust and secure!**

“Learning that the library allows coffee inside has completely changed my ‘working from home’ strategy.”



FY15-16 AT A GLANCE



WEBSITE & CATALOG VISITS & VIEWS*

6,798,435
visits to wccls.org

12,338,688
catalog searches

44,143,582
web page views



34%
used mobile devices or tablets



The most popular pages on the website were:

- Library locations and hours
- E-book information
- Online resources (research information)

*Numbers reflect use of website & catalog outside the library.

BOOKS, MATERIALS & USE

1,657,104 total collection

1,256,715
books



192,086
video materials

131,585
audio materials



2,247
magazine subscriptions

2,198,461
holds placed

11,848,465 =
total checkouts



Washington County
Cooperative Library Services
Connecting people, books and resources

33,004
checkouts per day

www.wccls.org

ONLINE RESEARCH & LEARNING TOOLS

393,118 research sessions



MEMBER LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

ALOHA After passage of the county library levy, library Board and staff designed a new location, launched a capital campaign, and began to work with WCCLS on a transition plan. **BANKS** Staff, Friends of the Library and the community continue to pursue their capital campaign to fund a new multi-use community room. Construction is scheduled to begin in spring of 2017.

BEAVERTON The Library conducted a Strategic Planning process, mapping a course for the next five years and building community awareness of the library role in the community. There were 2,181 programs held, with 82,295 people in attendance.

CEDAR MILL Close partnerships with local schools led to a 28% jump in new library card signups. Architectural design and cost estimates for the expanded Bethany Library were prepared and planning continues.

CORNELIUS The Library hired a fourth full-time staff person to expand volunteer services. The new Library is nearly fully funded. The Housing partner has raised \$13M and library \$3.9M. Construction starts August 2017. **FOREST GROVE** In collaboration with community stakeholders, the Library Commission and staff held the first Strategic Planning Process. Outcomes will focus on Latino Outreach, technology, teens and community. After 35 years with the City, Ann Dondero, Youth Services Librarian Extraordinaire, retired.



E-BOOKS

645,856
checkouts of
e-book titles



16,450
copies of digital titles
added to our existing
collection



2.3
times around the
circumference of the earth
WCCLS courier trucks
travel to deliver
materials to
libraries

50,559
individual users

19,054
new e-book users



62%
increase in
e-books
& e-audio
book
checkouts

A WCCLS member library is open to the public 359 days a year.

1,710
programs for adults



27,207
persons attending
adult programs

7,131
programs for children
and young adults



267,134
persons attending children
and young adult programs

3,194 volunteers

3,928,674
library visits

10,943
per day



\$2,898,728
volunteer salary equivalent
(per Independent Sector)

PEOPLE & PROGRAMS

GARDEN HOME The library's circulation desk and staff area got a refresher with new desks and chairs in the spring. The library added Sunday hours; 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Library staff held 236 total programs with 4,293 attendees. **HILLSBORO** The Book-O-Mat, filled with popular materials, opened in November and now offers 24/7 library service downtown on the Civic Center Plaza. Several storytimes were added and are now offered seven days a week. **NORTH PLAINS** The Library completed its strategic planning process. As a result additional staffing was added including a full time Library Director to keep pace with the considerable growth in the city. **SHERWOOD** With a continued focus on increased programming for school-aged youth, the Library offered more than 300 programs for K-12th graders, with nearly 11,400 in attendance—an increase of 410% from the previous year. **TIGARD** Tomorrowland, the Library's five-year strategic plan developed goals promoting imagination, creativity and informing citizens about current affairs. Lights! Camera! Library! Patrons of all ages endorsed the library in a video with humorous and heartfelt reflections. **TUALATIN** The Library, with several community partners, launched the Tualatin Mobile Makerspace, delivering hands-on science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) learning experiences to students in grades 2-5 at local schools and the library. **WEST SLOPE** The Library expanded its offering of play and interactive learning activities, with "Toy of the Week" in the children's area, a puzzle table, a new collection of Perplexus toys, and an expanded board game collection.



YOUTH SERVICES: growing great readers

“My three-year-old son met his best friend in storytime.”

WCCLS continues to create new opportunities for children and their caregivers throughout our county. In June 2015, **we launched the Books for Kids/Libros para Niños book delivery program** in partnership with Washington County Community Action and the United Way. Books for Kids/Libros para Niños serves in-home child care providers who are located in high-need areas of Washington County. Caregivers are

trained at the library about early literacy best practices to help work with the children in their care. Children at these sites receive a monthly, rotating delivery of 50 books each for 6 months. After the six deliveries are completed, childcare sites receive a tub full of books to keep and early literacy activities to enjoy with the children in their care. Caregivers have reported that the children in their care increased the number of early literacy experiences they had by an average of up to 230% over a six-month period. One participant said, “thanks to the monthly delivery I have a variety of books for all the kids’ interests. It saves me time and I get more ideas for activities to do with the kids.” Washington County libraries are happy to **increase the learning potential of our county’s children** to secure a bright future for our communities.

“I love that my children feel at home at the library.”



Books for Kids/Libros para Niños was created through a generous Ready to Read grant from the Oregon State Library.

ADULT SERVICES: expanding reading horizons

In summer 2016, WCCLS’ member libraries collaborated to deliver a **fun and engaging program for adult readers**, designed to expand their reading horizons. Nearly 6,000 Washington County readers participated. WCCLS sent emails to adult summer readers with book suggestions every two weeks, and these were received enthusiastically, with 40% of participants saying the **emails were the best way to learn about new books** last summer. 80% of participants said they read more than in previous years, discovered a new author, series or genre, or felt more motivated to read because they participated.

“I now can access books and poetry without going to the library and my materials can automatically be returned conveniently without fines or any inconvenience on my part! It has been absolutely wonderful!”

WCCLS continued to **invest in our e-content collections**, adding more titles as checkouts continue to rise. The ability to access digital library books from home makes a big difference in Washington County residents’ lives. One digital reader shared with us that “[e-content] got me back into the library system. Being disabled I can’t get to the library.” The **convenience of digital library books** also means that many library users are reading more: “[because of e-books] I have read more books in the past few years than I had in the previous 20 years added together.”



Comment in response to question “what did you enjoy about participating in Adult Summer Reading Program 2016?”

“Loved that it motivated me. I hadn’t read for a few years because of young kids and exhaustion. It made me aware I was neglecting a love of mine and I could fix that.”

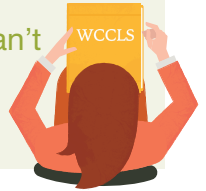


ACCESS: beyond the library walls

Many people in Washington County do not have direct access to their local library services. The WCCLS Outreach program is proud to bring library service to children, families, and homebound residents **beyond the library walls**.

In the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the Homebound Books-by-Mail program mailed nearly 6,400 bags of library materials and answered 5,800 questions. Homebound patrons are always greeted with trusted and friendly voices that make great book, movie, and music recommendations. Staff also provides a listening ear and agency referrals. Patrons say the library items help to ease their pain and keep them in touch with the rest of the world. They are **grateful for the improved quality of life that the library system provides them**.

"I got my first library card at age 9, and I'm now 91 and can't physically get to a library. Thank you Books-by-Mail!"



During the FY 2015-2016, the Outreach for Latino and Youth Services Program has worked with around 1,100 parents and children at local schools, migrant camps, and other community centers to promote family involvement in child development. During this fiscal year, outreach has started offering presentations about early literacy to refugee families from Iraq and Somalia. WCCLS is committed to connecting all communities of different ethnic backgrounds providing them appropriate collections, as well as services and programs. WCCLS has been committed to the acquisition of quality books in Spanish by sending county librarians to the Feria Internacional del Libro (FIL –International Book Fair) in Guadalajara, Mexico.

As the population of Washington County continues to grow, we are delighted to connect an increasing number of diverse communities to their WCCLS libraries.

COOPERATIVE VITALITY: excellent countywide service

Ensuring that every Washington County resident continues to have access to and receive **excellent countywide library service is a foundational goal** of WCCLS and its member libraries. WCCLS was pleased and honored that in November 2015, 64% of voters not only voted to continue tax support for WCCLS, but to increase funding for the next five years.

As a Cooperative we understand that public perceptions of libraries are changing and that the services we offer, as well as the means through which they are offered, are evolving. **To remain vital public institutions, our libraries are evolving**. We are positioning our member libraries to meet the needs of an increasing diverse population and directing services to support operations in underserved areas and places where population is expanding. In 2015-2016 we began preparations to add a new member library, Aloha Community Library. We continue to shift resources to increase electronic options to meet the changing reading needs of our patrons including e-book offerings, social media connections, and interactive services such as online homework and tutoring support.

514 teens built leadership skills through service at their local WCCLS library this year.

WCCLS secures community partnerships to support innovative services for our patrons. In 2016 over \$1.4 million of in-kind support for the Summer Reading program came from businesses such as Comcast, the Oregonian, El Hispanic News to The Portland Trailblazers and Oaks Amusement Park. These partners enriched the experience for over 30,000 participants.

We continue to look for ways to streamline service delivery, move materials between libraries more efficiently, and **get books into the hands of readers more quickly**. The WCCLS Policy Group (directors of the member libraries) embarked on a process to prioritize levy funded projects, develop action plans, and improve communications among the members. We strive to connect people with the books and resources they need and want.



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