



**Washington County**  
**Cooperative Library Services**

## 2014-2015 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

This partnership we call the Washington County Cooperative Library Services (WCCLS) is a unique way to provide public library service. Made up of the County, nine cities and two non-profit organizations (with additional participation by two special libraries that share materials) WCCLS has served the residents of Washington County for nearly 40 years. 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. This 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 the library walls.

Fiscal Year 2014-2015 was a year of planning for the future. Librarians from across the Cooperative researched and prioritized future services and what we need to do to support library patrons in the coming years. This preparation was rolled into a levy proposal that was unanimously endorsed by the County Board of Commissioners in June 2015 for the November ballot. The levy included a rate increase of five cents per thousand to support continuation of quality services through 2021. In addition, several member libraries were planning for expansion of local library services including new or expanded buildings or the addition of branches to serve growing populations and a developing library, the Aloha Community Library, was included in the levy plans. The levy will provide operating funds to support the addition of our 13th member library in 2016.

Library service could not be provided without the cooperation and support of local governments, able staff who open and operate libraries each day, 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 tried to highlight key elements of the plan and summarize statistics in an interesting manner. 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 12 member libraries **offer flexible, multi-use spaces** to accommodate community performances, learning opportunities, discussions and meetings. Many provide space for one-on-one tutoring, for emerging local businesses to host client presentations, as well as offering space to receive AARP tax preparation assistance.

To meet local needs, **libraries continue to evaluate their physical spaces**. Beaverton expanded the Murray Scholls branch to provide more room for children's programming; Banks and Cornelius are in the midst of capital campaigns to fund building expansion plans.

Member libraries provide opportunities to **expand global viewpoints and explore cultures**. Last year nearly 1,500 residents attended the Art of the Story – WCCLS Storytelling Festival which is designed for adults. Storytelling provides a foundation for literacy and the appreciation of life-long learning. Our goal is to highlight the role that the oral storytelling tradition plays within families, communities and cultures.

Libraries provide residents with an abundance of **opportunities to gather together**. The 7th annual One Book One Community series, presented by the North Plains Library, highlighted Naomi Benaron's novel, *Running the Rift*.

Littlest residents were introduced to the creative nuances of music. Sherwood Library hosted members of the Oregon Symphony for a Symphony Storytime, giving toddlers hands-on experience with classical music.

Enjoying award winning films and lively discussions is a favorite monthly date for film aficionados with the Foreign Film Nights at the Garden Home and Hillsboro libraries and the Beaverton and Cedar Mill libraries Film Clubs.

## TECHNOLOGY: connecting people & resources

"I appreciate that computer and internet access is available for people that need it – please keep that priority! Though I don't need it, I know many others do and in a world that has become so reliant on technology it really leaves people behind."



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** on our web presence. Tigard Library installed an Automated Materials Handling system in June 2015. The new system can check in over 1,000 items per hour, and staff is excited to **get materials into patrons' hands faster** than ever.

WCCLS updated the method of accessing Wi-Fi at the member libraries, removing the need to type one's barcode and pin, and making the Wi-Fi usage agreement page fully mobile-friendly.

In the spring of 2015, WCCLS ran a survey of county residents asking about technology use. Of the 4,478 patrons completing the survey, highlights included: 21% of public technology users at WCCLS use the library's internet connection for employment purposes, and 23% use library technology for educational purposes, such as taking an online class or doing research.

"I'm a teacher and I'm always telling my families to use the **WONDERFUL** resources for **FREE** at our public libraries. My own family spends much time at the library. My niece refers to it as her 'natural habitat'."



# FY14-15 AT A GLANCE



## WEBSITE VISITS & VIEWS

**2,133,125**  
visits to [wccls.org](http://wccls.org)

**763,393**  
visitors

**3,495,006**  
web page views

**27%**  
used mobile devices or tablets

The most popular pages on the website were:

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

## BOOKS, MATERIALS & USE

**1,629,422** total collection

**1,290,401**  
books

**188,044**  
video materials

**2,267,294**  
holds placed

**12,240,066**  
total checkouts

## ONLINE RESEARCH & LEARNING TOOLS

**865,670** research sessions

**139,174**  
audio materials

**2,520**  
magazine subscriptions

**9,283**  
other library materials

**Washington County**  
Cooperative Library Services  
Connecting people, books and resources

**34,095**  
checkouts per day

[www.wccls.org](http://www.wccls.org)

## E-BOOKS

**398,818**  
checkouts of e-book titles

**12,362**  
copies of digital titles added to our existing collection

**41,884**  
individual users

**20,426**  
new e-book users

**49%**  
increase in new users

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

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

**1,775**  
programs for adults

**28,708**  
persons attending adult programs

**6,694**  
programs for children and young adults

**248,514**  
persons attending children and young adult programs

**3,309** volunteers

**135,380**  
volunteer hours

**3,764,978**  
library visits  
**10,487**  
per day

**\$2,977,006**  
volunteer salary equivalent (per Independent Sector)

## PEOPLE & PROGRAMS

**BANKS**  
Staff and Friends of the Library embarked on a capital campaign to fund a new multi-use space to increase the library by one-third. Fundraising efforts have been very successful and construction is targeted to begin the summer of 2016.

**BEAVERTON**  
The Murray Scholls branch was expanded in April 2015 to include a new children's room and dedicated teen space. More than 750 people visit the branch every day, up 30% from before the expansion was completed.

**CEDAR MILL**  
Cedar Mill and Bethany celebrated the 40th anniversary of the local library founding, remodeled the main library and the Second Edition Resale Shop and developed and launched a new website.

**CORNELIUS**  
The Library is planning for a new facility (expanding from 3,025 to nearly 14,000 square feet). Oregon Lottery Bonds will fund half the \$4.8 million project and the Friends of the Library are on their way with the rest. Construction is to start March 2017.

**FOREST GROVE**  
Mollie's Garden, a glass and light public art project was installed. The project was funded by the Library Foundation and the Public Arts Commission. The Library Commission and staff conducted the library's first Strategic Plan.

**GARDEN HOME**  
Library staff conducted a strategic plan among users to shape the future of the Garden Home Community Library. All public computers and old children's room furniture were replaced. The Library held 228 programs with 4,717 attendees.

**HILLSBORO**  
The Shute Park Branch began opening on Sundays from noon to 6 p.m. on March 29. The *Library of Things* expanded to include everything from robot kits to ice cream makers to ukuleles available for check out.

**NORTH PLAINS**  
Friends of the Library hosted Robin Cody for their first "An Evening with an Author" series. An index of people featured in the 2008-12 North Plains' *Beacon* newspaper was added to the reference collection. An electronic reader board was donated by Friends members.

**SHERWOOD**  
The Library offered 467 programs with nearly 17,000 attendees—a 29% increase in one year. Staff focused on adding programs for school-aged youth, teens and adults. Lounge furniture, displays, and interactive play elements were added to make the library a more inviting space.

**TIGARD**  
In June the Tigard Library installed an automated returns system, which checks in items immediately and automatically sorts them for shelving. It allows the library to get items off patrons' records quicker and back on the shelves for other patrons to check out. Plus, patrons think it's cool!

**TUALATIN**  
Local residents read 2.95 million minutes during the Summer Reading challenge, and the Library gave 3,000+ free books to youth. Our Teen Librarian Aimee Meuchel was presented the 2015 Oregon Young Adult Network's You're Excellent Award, honoring her contribution to teens in Oregon libraries.

**WEST SLOPE**  
The West Slope Library offered 72 programs throughout the fiscal year with 1,433 patrons attending. The International Game Day was the most popular local program. Staff also started the Library Strategic Plan.

## MEMBER LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS



## YOUTH SERVICES: growing great readers

“My child stopped eating books and started enjoying reading books!”

WCCLS and our member libraries are active and engaged partners in the Washington County Early Learning Hub. We are delighted to have a seat at the Early Learning table at both the county and local levels. Through the Early Learning Hub, WCCLS has formed and strengthened partnerships across community organizations to **ensure all children in Washington County are ready for kindergarten**. As part of our commitment to early literacy, WCCLS libraries are proud to provide frequent storytimes for our littlest patrons and their caregivers. During storytime, librarians share favorite books, songs, and tips to **help children grow to be the best readers they can**. Even before they can read, exposure to literacy activities helps children in our community thrive. Getting ready to read is a tough job, and is one that children must take on at a very young age. Washington County libraries are equipped to answer the call with programs, services, and resources to secure a bright future for our community.

“We found new favorite books at the library that we will read over and over again.”



## ADULT SERVICES: expanding reading horizons

In September 2014, WCCLS launched the Cloud Library downloadable e-book service, enabling readers to easily obtain **great books anytime or anywhere**; on their phones, tablets, or computers. Users of Cloud Library share that it has made a difference in their lives. “I have a vision problem and need larger print and the Cloud Library makes reading so easy.” “We travel a lot and can order and read wherever we are.”

In summer 2015, WCCLS member libraries collaborated on a reader-focused summer reading program for adults. The goal was to help adult readers **expand their reading horizons** by sending participants emails every two weeks with reading suggestions and fellow readers’ recommendations. From these, 47% of participants felt more motivated to read, and over 1,900 book reviews were submitted by adult readers countywide! Find them all at [reads.wccls.org](http://reads.wccls.org). One reader shared: “Member libraries work to **take the library beyond its walls**, including access to technology.” One example is the Cedar Mill Community Library, which loans Media Maker Kits to patrons, allowing them to record and edit audio and video. Access to this specialized equipment is now available to anyone in the community.



“The online element added a fun sense of community and helped me to find new titles and authors that I might not have chosen or found on my own.”



## ACCESS: beyond the library walls

The WCCLS Outreach program is proud to bring library service to children, families, and homebound residents **beyond the library walls**. Reaching people throughout Washington County who have personal hurdles to accessing their local library services.

The Homebound Books-by-Mail program mailed over 6,600 bags of library materials and answered over 6,200 phone calls in the last fiscal year. Patrons come to depend on a trusted and friendly voice to recommend new authors, entertainment and provide 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.

“I’ve been receiving your service for over 10 years now. As a disabled, fixed-income person, I feel blessed to be part of this wonderful service.” – Marianne



Additionally, the Outreach for Youth and Multicultural Services program met over 1,100 parents and children at local schools, migrant camps, and other community centers to **promote family involvement in child development**. Through the Outreach program, caregivers are empowered with the knowledge that literacy activities they can do at home, like talking and singing, can improve the quality of their lives, as well as prepare their children for school success.

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

## COOPERATIVE VITALITY: excellent countywide library 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. In 2014-2015, WCCLS reviewed current services, researched future trends, and prepared a package of service enhancements that were included in a levy proposal unanimously approved by the Board of County Commissioners for the November 2015 ballot.

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.** To that end we are planning for expanded library operations in under-served areas such as Aloha and Cornelius, and for places

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

where our population is growing such as Bethany and South Hillsboro. We are also shifting resources to increase electronic options to meet the changing needs of our patrons including e-book offerings, social media connections, and interactive services such as online homework and tutoring support.

“Libraries are the best thing about America.”

WCCLS secures community partnerships to support **innovative services** for our patrons. In 2015 over \$1.4 million of in-kind support for the Summer Reading program came from businesses such as Comcast, The Oregonian, El Hispanic News, The Portland Trailblazers and Oaks Amusement Park. These partners enriched the experience for over 30,000 participants.

We also 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**.





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