

**FORT VANCOUVER REGIONAL LIBRARY DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Public Meeting**

***November 10, 2008***

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Karen Peterson called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. at Vancouver Community Library and moved the meeting immediately into an executive session to discuss the topics of real estate and personnel. Executive session concluded at 1:35 p.m. with no action taken. Peterson convened the regular meeting at 2:05 p.m.

**2. PRESENT**

Chair Karen Peterson presiding. Other Board members: Jack Burkman, Merle Koplan, Bonnie Reynolds, Rose Smith and Bill Yee. Administrative Team members attending included: Bruce Ziegman, Executive Director; Patty Duitman, Operations Director; Mary Devlin, Community Libraries Director; Melinda Chesbro, Content Management Director; Kwang Kye, Technology Director; Doreen Turpen, Special Projects Director; Sue Vanlaanen, Communications Director; and Karin Ford, Vancouver Community Librarian. Becky Pettigrew, recording.

Other staff and citizens attending: Alan Dickerson, Ann O'Reilly, Anna Cross, Ashlee Stewart, Barbra Meisenheimer, Bonnie L'Amoreaux, Brenda Cameron, Brent Campbell, Carl Sofie, Carla Shealy, Carol Johnsen, Caroline Ketman, Caryn Sipos, Celeste Cast, Colleen Lindsay, Cyndy Volk, Cynthia Ernst, Dave Jeulieus, Debbie Bocian, Dennis Johnson, Donna Jones, Eddie Rosen, Erma Patterson, Gen Brown, Glendyne Reinmiller, Greg Bergman, Greg Flakus, Heather A. St. Hilaire, Howard Buck, Jacquelyn Keith, Jan Johnston, Jane Prenguber, Janette Johnston, Jeanean Burgon, Jenine WhiteCastle, Jennifer Studebaker, Jewell Foederer, Joe Bond, Joe Toscano, Johanna Bateman, June Fick, June McKellar, Kathleen Lawrence, Larry Patterson, Laveda Altenhofer, Lee-Anne Flandreau, Lisa Way, Lynne Minnick, Megan Dugan, Michael McClafferty, Michele Taylor, Mike Jansen, Nancy Dodge, Robin Konionen, Ruth Shafer, Sara Howe, Sherry Braga, Sue Barrows, Tricia & Nicole Dunn, Valentina Ladolfi, Wayne L'Amoreaux and Zubaida Ula.

**3. AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as presented.

**4. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Oct. 20 and Oct. 28, 2008 meetings were approved as presented.

**5. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Peterson explained the structure of the budget hearing, which included background information provided by Ziegman and a citizen comment period.

**6. PUBLIC HEARING ON 2009 BUDGET**

Peterson moved the meeting into a public hearing on the 2009 budget at 2:09 p.m. Ziegman provided a written report that summarized the budget situation and outlined some options for 2009 cuts. He said FVRL has a difficult budget situation already underway in 2008; it will be more difficult in 2009 and likely for the following few years, too. This

was brought about by drastic reductions in revenue. Timber tax revenue is \$300,000 lower than budgeted this year and Ziegman said he has applied the same reduction to next year. An additional factor is that we've seen a sharp decrease in the staff vacancy rate (the district had anticipated a 5% vacancy rate but is currently at 2% and expects it will go even lower). He said he is presenting a balanced 2009 budget to the board.

Ziegman explained anticipated 2009 revenue in greater detail. FVRL's projected revenue for 2009 is only \$177,906 more than 2008. This is an increase of about 1%. Initiative 747 limits our tax revenue to a 1% increase plus new construction; before that we used to be able to request an increase of as much as a 6% in revenue based on need. Typically, when you factor in the amount we receive from new construction, we have usually received a total of about 3-4% more in total revenue from one year to the next. The decline in our new construction revenue and other factors has brought that percent down. Investment interest was reduced by \$50,000 because with a low cash balance we won't have as much invested and also interest rates are low. We are applying \$126,000 from the VLCFA to reimburse the district partially for the cost of building project positions.

There are some decisions to make that relate to expenses. This is because the personnel portion of the budget has been presented at 93.9% of full funding; with less attrition we expect to be at nearly 100% expended in this area -- so changes are needed to close that gap. To achieve the 93.9%, we must reduce our current personnel by \$750,000 to meet the balanced budget presented. Ziegman said no across-the-board (cost of living) increases were included in the budget. The substitute support budget has already been reduced by over \$221,000. On the non-personnel side, Ziegman said he worked with staff to cut as much as they could rationally cut. Cuts were made in supplies, small equipment, and communications (this includes telecommunications and postage; we are assuming we would derive a \$250,000 reduction in whatever we do to the books-by-mail service). Ziegman noted that the cost of postage and telecommunications will go up some. Employee travel and training has been significantly reduced, as have building improvements. We will not replace vehicles that were on the schedule for replacement next year. There will be increases in insurance, utilities, and rentals and leases for next year. All of the cuts mentioned account for \$1.2 million in reductions, leaving a gap of \$750,000 still to close.

Ziegman said staff identified as many reductions as possible that don't involve library closures. The directive of the board was to provide options that would get us a little higher than needed, primarily to provide needed staffing for opening the new Cascade Park library and to provide some transitional staffing for the new Battle Ground library.

The last page of Ziegman's report listed some options. The first option was to eliminate 11 positions (8.5 FTE); three of the positions were from direct public service and five were from support services. Eliminating these positions does not require a closure or reduction in hours. Three of the positions are currently filled and the others are vacant positions that were frozen in 2008. The next option on the list is to eliminate anniversary step increases for non-union staff (the steps are essentially 2.5% longevity pay increases for applicable staff). It includes an equivalent pay cut for Ziegman and Duitman. Ziegman said that since he is not eligible for anniversary step increases and since Duitman is at the top of the scale, they both felt it was right to take some sort of hit and they agreed they wanted a cut at that level.

Next on the list were library closures. Closing Vancouver Community Library (the Main library) one day per week would save \$230,000 and would result in a reduction of about 5 FTE. Closing four branches (all currently open six days per week) one day per week would save \$260,000. Included in this would be a reduction in the Mall library's hours and modest staff reductions at some other branches. Ziegman said the Cascade Park library was not included in this option because it seemed more practical to retain its current level of staffing, as we'll have to add staff to that branch when it opens in its new building late next year. Regarding the Mall library, Mall management is not going to allow the branch to close a full day each week. However, Ziegman said they will allow us to reduce its hours (assuming we stay there); this would allow us to save enough money to make it equitable with the other branches.

Ziegman said he did not include a reduction to the bookmobiles at this time. In order to take action in reducing or terminating bookmobile service, staff needs more time to review it. This is especially true if we are reducing the books-by-mail service. He suggested that staff examine the bookmobile service more closely in 2009. Ziegman said he also did not propose cuts in the materials (books, CDs, etc.) budget because FVRL is already relatively low on funding in this area. Cuts were not proposed to the technology/computer replacement cycle either, as Ziegman said it is important that we keep our infrastructure intact.

The last item on the options list was closure of the Mall library. Recent articles from *The Columbian* were noted by Ziegman, including what he said was an excellent editorial on Nov. 9 and a front-page article on Nov. 10 – both related to the Mall library. Mall management very recently made some concessions: they have agreed to put off discussion of a library remodel (which would have cost FVRL about \$500,000) until the end of 2009, at which time they've indicated they will be more flexible about the extent of it. As mentioned before, they have also agreed to allow FVRL to reduce its open hours there. We could not close for a full day; however, they appear to be flexible in the option to close enough hours each week to realize adequate savings. Ziegman said we may still end up in the same position at the end of 2009, but we'll have tried everything we can and it will have given us more time. He recommended to the Board that they not close the Mall library at this time. He said he hoped it never has to close, but we will likely have to discuss this again next year when the lease negotiations continue. Mall management is hearing the same kinds of financial concerns from many of its other tenants. Ziegman thanked everyone who wrote letters and made calls, and for the articles in the press. He recommended that the board accept all the cuts listed on the last page of his report, except for the one to close the Mall library. Accepting the top four options would result in reductions of about \$300,000 more than what is required to balance the budget, which would provide the ability to better staff the new Cascade Park library when it opens and also provide some transitional staffing for the new Battle Ground library.

Peterson asked if Board members had questions. Yee asked for clarification about the proposal; he said it sounds like the weekly schedules would change so that the Main library is open 6 days and four of the branches currently open 6 days would go to a 5-day schedule. Ziegman confirmed that this is correct. In addition, Ziegman said the Mall library would remain open 7 days but with reduced hours. The day of the week that libraries would close has not been identified as it would be discussed with each branch to

determine the best ways to accommodate it. Ziegman said he is not proposing reducing the hours for the branches that are currently open 5 days per week; he said that 5 days would serve as a baseline.

Burkman said the Mall management has shown enough flexibility that we now have something to work with. Reducing open hours shares the pain across the district. He said this proposal honors what the Board directed staff to do: bring a balanced budget that provides some reserve in case the economy becomes worse. Ziegman agreed. Burkman said you are cutting about \$2.25 million out of an approx. \$17 million budget, which is about a 13% decrease.

Burkman asked Ziegman if he had a sense for how many written comments had been received regarding the budget. Ziegman said there were about 50 emails and at least that many comment forms sent in by the public. He expressed how much he appreciated the thoughtful comments that were sent in. Ziegman said he also received about 50-60 emails from staff, and that he couldn't be more proud of the staff for the way they've handled this very difficult time. Peterson noted that the board has received the emails from the public as well. Smith said that she had 16 sheets of comments in hand that were turned in today regarding the Mall library. In addition, about 20 posters with sentiments regarding the Mall library (requesting that it remain open) were sent in by children at a nearby elementary school. The posters were displayed on a table in the meeting room.

There were no other questions from the Board and so Peterson invited citizen comments.

June McKellar said she is President of the Friends of Vancouver Mall Community Library and she is very pleased with Ziegman's recommendation. She said the Mall library is a unique opportunity in the library system. There are three large retirement communities nearby and the library is an important resource for these seniors. Many of these seniors would not be able to get to another library. She's heard lots of comments from people wanting to keep it open and said she thinks we need to put pressure on the Mall management to get them to make concessions next year too. McKellar said the Friends group is willing to help in any way it can.

Colleen Lindsay said she worked for the library district for 13 years and last summer pursued a different career opportunity in community building. She works at Lauren Middle School helping new Americans speak English. She said she is pleased in looking at the budget and the things you've put into it to cut. She is glad that the proposal is to keep the Mall library open as it's a branch she uses often for its convenience. She is also pleased to see the proposal to make cuts in the books-by-mail program. Lindsay said she thought closing most locations one extra day per week was prudent and normal at a time like this. There are some people that can only get to the library on Sundays. Lindsay suggested not eliminating any direct public service employees in the first option, where it said 11 positions (8.5 FTE) would be eliminated. She worked at the Cascade Park branch and she said that while they weren't short staffed due to the budget (it was due to the crowding – they couldn't fit more staff), she was concerned that it would be better to look at cuts in administration instead. She said she estimated there were 90 administrative/support staff, and 140 front-line staff which she said was a ratio of 1:3. She said this ratio seemed high to her.

Greg Flakus said he knows it's been a difficult time for the library, as it is for any public agency or business looking at the realities of the economy right now. He said he's a proud "owner" of the Three Creeks library, since that's near where he lives and he helps to pay for its LCFA bonds. He said that rather than closing the libraries an extra day, consider looking at reduced or half-day hours on one or more days instead. He has observed high usage at the Three Creeks library, especially by young mothers with children. Flakus said he supports the proposal for reductions to the books-by-mail service. He also said it would be good to examine the ratio of administrative versus front-line staff. Flakus commended the board and staff for the openness of its budget process.

Carol Johnsen said she thinks the library district has done a good job. She was concerned about the Mall library closing, as she uses and loves that branch. She asked if the library was a non-profit agency and if fundraising might be possible. Peterson noted that there is a foundation that supports the library and Duitman noted that the library can also accept tax-deductible contributions. Johnsen suggested offering different contribution levels and including something like a free t-shirt when people give a certain amount. Ziegman noted the support of the FVRL Foundation and mentioned that their annual fundraising dinner was that very evening. The FVRL Foundation contributes about \$100,000 annually in support of library programs. Johnsen said maybe the Foundation could organize something that the community could become involved in.

Eddie Rosen said he is with Washington Public Employees Association (WPEA) and he is heartened to see the considerations that show a lot of hard work has been done here. He said that any reduction in Union anniversary step increases would require membership approval. On options for closing a day at the Main library and four branches, Rosen asked if those were considered packages. He also asked if a percent pay reduction was determined for Ziegman and Duitman. Ziegman agreed that dropping the anniversary step increases for 2009 is something that can be done for non-union staff. For the union staff, the increase was included in the union contract and so it would be up to the union membership to decide if they want to participate or not. As for whether the options for closing a day at the libraries was a package, Ziegman said they are not necessarily. If the board were to vote to close the Mall, then they would still need to select from the remaining options to get us to the dollar amount needed. Alternatively, if the board were to select the top four options (which was everything except the closure of the Mall), it would get us to where we need to be. Finally, Ziegman explained that the pay cut proposed for he and Duitman was the equivalent of an anniversary pay step: 2.5%.

Jannette Johnston said she hasn't lived here long, but she came to today's meeting because of the value of keeping our libraries open and is particularly interested in the Mall library. She said the Mall library does an incredible job in their cramped quarters and they have a great staff. She reads a lot from their selection and said their selection changes. Johnston said she appreciates the Mall library's location as it's in the center of Vancouver and also a location that a large number of people go to from all areas. It attracts more people than it otherwise would due to the multiple opportunities available to people in a mall location. She said to please say something to the Mall management about how many customers the library brings in – these are customers that the Mall would otherwise not have. Johnston noted that the Mall has lost many stores that she and her daughter used to like. The library provides many opportunities to families and helps children with their reading skills.

Johnston also said she had tried to donate books to the library but was told they give them to the Friends rather than adding them to the collection. She wondered why the library couldn't keep the donated books. Ziegman explained that some of the donated books are kept. However, the difficulty with it is that donated books must go through processing and also have a record created online. The library district gets bestsellers at a steep discount from its vendors, and in addition the Friends make money from selling the books. Ziegman said he himself buys books and after reading them donates them to the Friends so they can be sold. Chesbro added that many bestsellers are brought in through a leasing program at a very low cost. Her division (Content Management) sends 90,000 new books to the branches each year and they have a very tight process to make that happen. To stop what they are doing and match up a book with a record is costly in staff time. In some cases a branch will choose to add something directly to their browsing collection or will send something to Content Management asking that it to be added to the Catalog. Assistant Community Librarian Mike Jansen spoke about the value these donated books provide to the Friends, which then goes back into the library. Each branch and Friends group handles the money that is made from the book sales differently; the funds allow them some specialization that the Branch Manager and Friends group would like, which can be harder to work out just through the budget. He said it's a great reason to donate books to the Friends.

Michael McClafferty said it sounds like the Mall library would be kept open for at least one more year, which he said is great. Many people use it, such as seniors who walk the mall in the morning and then go into the library to use the internet computers if they don't have internet access at home. It provides services that are essential to those in a lower socio-economic background; many of these people wouldn't have otherwise gone to the library except that they found it in the mall. There are also families using it because they appreciate the mall location that saves them time – they can combine multiple activities into one trip. McClafferty said from a purely “Economist / Wall Street Journal” view, these cuts sound great. This country has had 30 recessions and so far 29 recoveries; if we can hang in there for another year there's a good chance we'll have a 30<sup>th</sup> recovery. His wife is a teacher with Vancouver School District. Regarding the bookmobile, he thought that certain school districts pay into it; however, it comes to his wife's school once a year and they can't get a library card out of it. Schools already have libraries. He said cutting bookmobiles might be a way to save money. McClafferty asked if charging overdue fines has been considered. Peterson said the issue of fines had been talked about previously. McClafferty said he also found the ratio mentioned earlier interesting. Then, his young son Elliot shared his own comments: “Please don't close the library.”

Peterson thanked all those who had spoken. There were no other citizen comments, and so Peterson closed the public hearing at 2:52 p.m.

Yee asked about the 1:3 ratio – was that a correct calculation? Ziegman and Duitman said they didn't think it considered many positions, but would need to look into it. Burkman said there are some positions that would be unclear where they fall, such as web development. As we're shifting more to resources, he's not sure how to count some of the positions. There may be some examples to look at. The ratio mentioned earlier could be an old measure of who is on the floor versus who is behind-the-scenes. That doesn't mean the person behind-the-scenes isn't doing something that has a big impact on public services. Koplán said an example of this is those who process new books. It's a very

important job but the person is not facing the public. She said she couldn't see why this type of position would be excluded from the "public service" part of that ratio.

Yee asked about the flexibility of the options. Could some of the libraries be closed half-days instead of a full day? Ziegman said yes, if that's the direction the board gives to staff. However, a dollar amount needs to be achieved and so staff would need to consider if it's possible to achieve that with partial-day closures. Turning off the lights does not save enough money – the real savings is in the staffing reductions. Employee work shifts also need to be realistic and manageable. Burkman said that we could approve the first four options in "theme" that would provide some flexibility to staff as they work out the new branch schedules.

**MOTION: Jack Burkman moved and Bill Yee seconded approval of Resolution 2008-14 (Budget Resolution #09-01), adopting the 2009 budget for Fort Vancouver Regional Library District, with the following direction: implement the themes identified in the first four options of Ziegman's staff report, which were: 1) eliminate 11 positions (8.5 FTE) that do not require closures; 2) eliminate the anniversary pay step for non-union employees plus an equivalent pay cut for Ziegman and Duitman; 3) close Vancouver Community Library one day per week; 4) close 4 branches (all currently open 6 days per week) one day per week, plus an equivalent hours reduction at Vancouver Mall library and modest staff reductions in some other branches.**

Peterson asked if board members had other questions. There were none. She called for a vote:

**VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.**

Koplan thanked the Finance Committee for their hard work. Smith thanked *The Columbian* for their articles that helped to generate a very good public response. Burkman said he has served on many boards and it's always hard when making decisions like this. He said this was a good process that included a massive outpouring of community support; the public told us they don't want to have cuts but understand how difficult these times are. Koplan thanked the public for their positive suggestions and ideas. There were some ideas that we couldn't by law or according to union contract implement, but the board was appreciative just the same that people were thinking hard about how to make this work.

Peterson thanked WPEA for their support and said she appreciates their collaborative efforts and willingness to give thought to this. She also thanked Ziegman and Duitman for their dedication; she said it's rare you get executives that are willing to take pay cuts. Peterson said that Ziegman and Duitman put forth 60+ hours per week and she appreciates them for their high level of commitment.

## **7. BUSINESS**

### **A. FVRL Expenditure Approval**

**MOTION: Merle Koplan moved and Rose Smith seconded approval of the accounts payable, payroll and payroll payables as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

B. Vancouver Library Capital Facility Area Expenditure Approval

**MOTION:** Merle Koplman moved and Bill Yee seconded approval of the Vancouver Library Capital Facility Area expenditures. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Battle Ground Fund Expenditure Approval

**MOTION:** Merle Koplman moved and Rose Smith seconded approval of the Battle Ground fund expenditures. The motion passed unanimously.

D. 2009 Meeting Dates

**MOTION:** Jack Burkman moved and Merle Koplman seconded approval of the 2009 meeting dates as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Nominating Committee for 2009 Officers

The nominating committee consists of Reynolds (Chair), Yee and King, with Peterson serving as alternate. The nominations for 2009 officers were deferred to next month.

**8. REPORTS**

A. Financial Report

Duitman provided a financial tracking report for October 2008 expenditures.

B. Building Project Updates

**Battle Ground**

Building Projects Manager Rita Levesque said that Paul Burgess from the Facilities Department has been assigned to the project management team as job superintendent. The infrastructure for the electrical and plumbing is done, and the trenches are covered in. The City inspectors have approved it all and so we are scheduling the pouring of the concrete slab next. While the slab is curing we can assign contract work for the interior – this includes such work as the framing and insulation.

**Cascade Park**

Levesque said the concrete slab is being poured tomorrow. Weekly on-site meetings are held with the owners, architect and contractors. Everything is on schedule.

Burkman said he was out at the Firstenburg Community Center yesterday and noted that the degree of change at the library site is huge with each visit he's made. He said you can see how the building will have a lot of nooks and crannies as it jogs around all the trees. Levesque noted that there is a higher cost involved as it means there is more hand-digging to make this possible, but it's worth it. Burkman agreed and said it takes advantage of a beautiful site.

**New Main Library**

Ziegman said that the district is in negotiations with the City and the developer regarding interim library surface parking during the developer's delay on the project. These negotiations are going well and Ziegman expects we will stay on target with our overall project timeline.

C. Other Reports

Reports from several FVRL departments were provided to the board and have been attached.

D. FVRL Foundation Update

Foundation Board member Joe Toscano handed out a written report provided by Foundation Director Rick Smithrud, who was unable to attend. Toscano went over the details included in the report, and also handed out several items:

- Auction catalog for the Authors & Illustrators dinner
- An invitation to the Ben Franklin dinner event, a fundraiser hosted by the Friends of Battle Ground Community Library
- Flyer for a Twilight movie showing and costume event in Battle Ground
- Flyer for the “Fabulous Diamond Raffle”

Toscano noted that the flag pole contributed by Lewis River Rotary has been installed at the new Battle Ground library. At 30 feet tall and with controls that allow for automatically raising and lowering the flag, he said it is the “Cadillac” of flag poles.

9. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Ziegman said the district’s biennial audit is underway. In addition to the library district, the auditors are examining the Three Creeks and Vancouver Library Capital Facility Areas.

The Board of Clark County Commissioners have interviewed candidates for the FVRL Board position that will soon be vacant, following Jerry King’s retirement at the end of this year. The Commissioners have selected Jane Higgins; a news release from the County has gone out about it. Her appointment must also be approved by the Skamania and Klickitat County Commissioners. Higgins is the current Chair of the FVRL Foundation Board and President of the Friends of Battle Ground Community Library.

Ziegman expressed his appreciation to the Administrative Team for their work on the budget. He said that it is typical when there isn’t enough money for people to try to defend their “turf.” However, that was not the case with this group; they were all forthcoming about cuts they felt they could make in their areas. This made it easier to get through the discussions with everyone pulling in the same direction.

Yee asked if Board members are usually extended the courtesy of attending the audit’s exit conference and Ziegman said yes. A date is not known yet, however once it is the entire board will be invited.

10. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Lindsay said she wants to address the board once again on the ratio she had mentioned earlier. She said the ratio was something she looked at over time when working in the library. It was based on where the different positions are located. She said someone processing a book is not counted as front-line, but she counted it as front-line based on her experience. Among those not in front-line were managers and those working in communications and technology; she said she wasn’t sure where it broke down. She thought that many of the front-line staff are part time, which she said might change the ratio if it were based on FTE. Ziegman said again that he wanted to examine this more

closely. Staffing hasn't been implemented based on trying to meet a ratio; rather, positions have been created based on need. Burkman said he has been involved in both the business and public sector and knows that this situation can be different depending on the organization. He said that surely some other library or the American Library Association has created a baseline measure we could use to examine this. Ziegman said he would find out.

Gen Brown said she works at the Battle Ground library. She noted that non-union staff would not receive their anniversary step increase according to what has been approved by the board. If the union membership opted to skip their anniversary increases too, she asked how much would be saved. Ziegman said that providing the step increases to all eligible union members will cost about \$55,000 in 2009.

**11. BOARD COMMENTS**

Smith said she thinks we need to express to our Friends of the Library groups how much we'll need their help and support; she encouraged the Community Librarians to do this and said it also might be a good time to recruit new Friends members. Peterson agreed that it is beneficial to increase the number of active Friends members.

**12. NEXT MEETINGS**

The next regular meeting is Monday, Dec. 8 p.m. at Vancouver Community Library.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

***These minutes were approved at the Dec. 8, 2008 meeting***

# Foundation Director's Report

Prepared by Rick Smithrud

November 10, 2008

## **2008 Authors & Illustrators Dinner**

The 2008 Authors & Illustrators Dinner will be held tonight, November 10<sup>th</sup>, at the Hilton Vancouver Washington. The featured speaker is Lisa Jackson. Lisa lives in Vancouver and has written 85 romance and romantic suspense novels. Lisa's books have appeared on the NY Times, USA Today, and Publisher's Weekly bestseller lists. So far in 2008, Lisa has released *Absolute Fear* (3/1/2008), *Lost Souls* (3/25/2008), *Sail Away* (5/1/2008), *High Stakes* (6/1/2008) and *Left to Die* (8/1/2008). Later this year, Lisa will be releasing *Missing* (12/1/2008). Since this is the Foundation's signature fundraiser we have a variety of ways for people to give including a new feature, the Mysterious Wall of Wine, "Get a Clue!" centerpieces, and the sale of Lisa Jackson's books.

## **Fabulous Diamond Raffle**

Michael Nutter Jewelers has donated a .71 carat round brilliant diamond and a certificate for 50% off the custom mounting of your choice to the Foundation. The diamond is G in color and VS1 in Clarity. The Fabulous Diamond Raffle will begin tonight at the Authors & Illustrators Dinner. Raffle tickets are \$1 each. The raffle will continue until February 10<sup>th</sup>, just in time for Valentine's Day. Tickets are always available from Foundation board members or Foundation staff.

## **Twilight Fundraiser**

Battle Ground Cinemas is hosting a fundraiser for the Battle Ground Building Campaign. The movie theater will hold a special midnight showing of **Twilight** on **Friday, November 21<sup>st</sup>**. Tickets are \$9 each. A costume contest will be held before the showing. In addition, anyone 16 and over can earn a free ticket by donating a pint of blood to the Southwest Washington Blood Program on Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at the Bloodmobile parked next to iQ Credit Union in Battle Ground.

## **Adoption Books and Materials**

The Northwest Adoptive Families Association has pledged \$500 per year to the Foundation to enhance FVRL District's collection of books and materials on adoption. NAFA will continue contributing \$500 annually until the District decides it has enough material.

## **La Center Casinos Charitable Fund Grant**

The Foundation has been notified that it will be receiving a grant of \$2,400 to support the Teen and Tween Book Discussion Groups at the La Center Community Library. This grant will cover the cost of purchasing the books used in the book discussion groups so that they can be given to the Teens and Tweens and the end of the program. Giving away the books is seen as an incentive for Teens and Tweens to sign up for the program and will encourage them to start their own personal collection of books or to pass the books on to family and friends.

## **2009 FVRL Bookmark Contest**

Entry forms for the 2009 FVRL Bookmark Contest will be released in January of 2009. So far, the Foundation has secured four sponsors for the contest. The sponsors who have committed to supporting the Bookmark Contest are: iQ Credit Union, McDonald's, Cascade Dental, and The Columbian.

**Date:** November 10, 2008  
**To:** Fort Vancouver Regional Library Board of Trustees  
**From:** Patty Duitman  
**Subject:** Operations Report

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## **ADMINISTRATION**

- Continue to work on the 2008 and 2009 budgets
- Working with Union regarding budget cuts
- Working on Vancouver Mall lease negotiations

## **ACCOUNTING**

- Helping the Washington State Auditors with requested information during their biennial compliance and financial audit
- Submitted federal and state third quarter reports by the October 31 due date

## **FACILITIES**

- Completed (66) work orders and (22) special events
- Cascade Park – cleared landscape around library per City of Vancouver code
- La Center – a successful elevator inspection
- Three Creeks – routine fire department inspection
- Vancouver – installed new boiler room doors; replaced parking lot lighting bulbs and ballasts; routine fire department inspection

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

- Started holding open enrollment meetings throughout the district to inform staff of 2009 health benefit options and provide year-end mandatory notices

## **PURCHASING and MAIL**

- Purchased new mail machines to be installed in December; old machines will not be US Postal Service approved as of December 31, 2008
- Furniture specifications are being review for purchases at the new Battle Ground Library

## **TRAINING**

### **Conference/Workshop Registrations**

- 10 staff attended advanced email training on using WorldClient
- 1 person attended NoveList online training
- 1 person attended “Thorny Employment Issues: Managing Your Workforce without Getting Stuck”
- 2 staff attended Washington Association for the Education of Young Children Conference
- 8 staff attended the WALE Conference

**Substitute Training**

- 1 Asst I substitute and 1 Librarian substitute completed initial training

**Other**

- Staff Development Conference was held on October 8<sup>th</sup>
- Submitted final staff library resource collection orders for 2008

## Community Libraries Report For October 2008

### PROGRAMS

- Jackie Spurlock (Battle Ground) presented her Iran slide show at Battle Ground's Tuesday morning book discussion group. Before the presentation, the group discussed Maria Rosa Menocal's book *Ornament of the World*.
- Cascade Park's October 24 Jeepers Creepers program was fun for all. Staff read a monster book to kick off the program and then helped participants make flubber, quicksand, masks, monsters, and gross jars. Participants also stuck their hands in two mystery boxes to guess what items they held.
- Goldendale hosted a three part series entitled "Refunding: How to stretch your dollars with refunds, coupons, and free offers." A Goldendale community member, working with the Extension Office, offered the series free of charge. Goldendale also held computer classes on genealogy and legal information.
- La Center held its annual fall party on October 31. Various ghouls, dinosaurs, Darth Vaders, pirates, and princesses entered the costume party. People played games, made screaming ghosts and clothes pin bats, bobbed for apples, and did the Monster Mash. Abbie Anderson, Woodland Community Librarian, gave attendees the "shivers" with some gently spooky stories.
- La Center's evening adult book discussion group discussed *Cold Mountain* by Charles Frazier and the morning group discussed *Blood and Thunder* by Hampton Sides.
- The Why Nots trio serenaded Ridgefield visitors during the city's BirdFest and Bluegrass festivities. Library guests made exotic birds from paper, paper clips, markers, and feathers.
- Attendees at Ridgefield's Halloween story time dressed in costumes and paraded through the library and their annual "Talk like a Pirate" program brought out some very enthusiastic brigands.
- Stevenson held its 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Artists of the Gorge Exhibition during October. The opening reception was Thursday, October 2, and featured local pianist Gloria James. Stevenson's Friends provided hors d'oeuvres, beverages, and desserts and sponsored a silent auction. Local curator and digital artist Joan Chase served as art juror. She also hung the show.
- Author Kim Antieau shared parts of her latest young adult novel *Ruby's Imagination* with Stevenson patrons.
- The Wanderers performed at Stevenson, Goldendale, and White Salmon. Their concerts featured folk American music from the 1930s through the 1960s, with a special focus on Woody Guthrie and his history in the Pacific Northwest. The Friends groups of the three libraries sponsored the performances.



- Dawn Prochovnic of SmallTalk Learning gave a fun, interactive introduction to infant/toddler sign language at Three Creeks on October 24. Parents and babies participated and gathered new ideas for communicating with their pre-verbal babies. Vancouver and Van Mall also hosted baby sign language programs.
- Author Margaret Benefiel gave a talk on and signed copies of her books *Soul of a Leader* and *The Soul at Work* on October 7 at Three Creeks.
- Three Creeks' October family movie was *The Spiderwick Chronicles*. Staff are thankful to their Friends for renewing their movie license.

- Many pretty princesses attended Three Creeks' Pretty in Pink Princess Party (see picture at right). The princesses listened to stories, had their fingernails painted, played "Pin the Lips on the Frog" and "Cinderella Says," and made a variety of crafts. At the end of the program they feasted on pink cupcakes that the Three Creeks Friends provided.



- Vancouver's Forum at the Library program featured a debate between the four candidates for two Clark County Commissioner positions.
- More than 120 people attended Vancouver's Bonkers for Books Harvest Festival program. A local Safeway store donated small pumpkins to give away.
- Vancouver Mall's annual Harvest Festival was well attended. The children listened to harvest stories and made a real scarecrow that greets patrons as they enter the library. The children dressed in costumes and received books that the Friends provided. The scarecrow was a picture spot on Halloween night for many parents and their children.
- Washougal held a Harvest Festival on October 30. The children dressed in costumes and enjoyed cupcakes and juice. Friends member Shirley Greening led the craft activities. Children bobbed for apples, fished for candy, and participated in a pumpkin ring toss.
- Washougal continues to present story times at the East County Family Center on Tuesday mornings. Program attendance is increasing. Every Friday, Washougal presents story times at all three Washougal Head Start classes.
- White Salmon's new knitting group got off to a good start at its first meeting. Some attendees had never before attended a library program.
- Vancouver mystery writer Sheila Simonson discussed with White Salmon patrons the challenges and pleasures of researching actual settings for her mysteries. Her latest book, *Buffalo Bill's Defunct*, is set in the Columbia River Gorge in fictional Latouche County, located between Skamania and Klickitat Counties.

- In collaboration with the White Salmon Friends, Columbia High School students, and White Salmon and Hood River community members, the White Salmon library hosted its first annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration on October 14. Seventy-five people attended the event. The Benavides family of White Salmon sang and played Latin American folk songs, the Arqueros Huichol dance troupe from Hood River performed two very energetic indigenous Mexican folk dances (photo at right), and a Columbia High School student gave a presentation on five different styles of Mexican music.



- A full house of people enjoyed White Salmon's family movie matinee in October. As always the crowd was appreciative, and for the first time every book in the movie-related display was checked out!
- Woodland's October 22 No-Teens Games Day attracted an enthusiastic crowd of younger library users. They experimented with Woodland's PlayStation2 and explored the Eye Toy technology and software. The Eye Toy uses a small video camera to turn the player's body into the game controller.

#### YOUNG ADULTS

- Many Battle Ground YAAB members and Friends dressed in costumes on October 31 to pass out candy on the library's front sidewalk as part of the Chamber's annual Halloween on Main Street celebration. Thousands of local children went trick-or-treating at local businesses (see photo at right).
- YAAB members helped create a scarecrow family that was placed outside Battle Ground's front door on Halloween. The exhibit was created for the Chamber's annual Scarecrow Contest.
- La Center held its first Tween Dance Dance Revolution Party. Thirteen tweens enjoyed playing DDR, Wii, and Mario Kart. Three attendees became Tween book discussion group participants.
- The La Center YA group discussed the vampire novel *Peeps* and the Tween group discussed the graphic novel *Bone: Out from Boneville*.
- Stevenson's Anime Club enjoyed watching an anime movie at its October meeting.
- Twenty teens attended Three Creeks' October 24 Masquerade Ball dressed as their favorite book characters. Costume contest winners chose between a book and a Twilight movie poster for their prizes. The teens also decorated pumpkins and sang karaoke.
- Sixteen teens enjoyed watching the movie *Corpse Bride* on October 11 at Three Creeks.
- Vancouver Mall's Young Adult Book Discussion group read and discussed *Death Note*, a graphic novel about a hero who has the ability to decide who is going to die and how. Teens discussed how they would use the hero's power if they had it.



- White Salmon’s Teen Animanga Group met to discuss a manga selection and view an anime film. White Salmon appreciates the Friends renewing its movie rights license.
- Leslea Bowling (White Salmon) continues the fall ‘Tween Book Discussion Group at Henkle Middle School during the Project Open Door after school program. She incorporates different Latino cultural aspects during the book discussions.

## COORDINATORS

- Eight community sites now have Read and Play programs. Vancouver Community Library presents the program at Fruit Valley Elementary, Battle Ground presents at Yacolt, and Children’s Services staff present at the remaining six sites. Program attendance continues to increase and the principals at the new sites have been very supportive.
- A new distribution of the “Hello, Baby!” bags began in October. Legacy, Southwest Washington Medical Center, and several medical offices are distributing the bags.
- Jacquelyn Keith (Children’s Services Coordinator) worked with Jackie Merzbeck from Minnehaha Elementary School to establish a checkout system for the kits the school created based on the Discovery Kit model.
- Johanna Bateman (Early Learning Specialist) attended the Washington Association for the Education of the Young Child conference in Olympia, WA.
- The library specialist from Colonel Wright Elementary School in The Dalles, OR contacted Jacquelyn Keith about FVRL’s online Tumblebooks resource. They use it from the FVRL website.
- Jacquelyn Keith attended Cascade Park’s staff meeting to discuss story times and other children’s services items.
- Jen Studebaker (YA Coordinator) visited Woodland and Ridgefield’s October YAAB meetings. Woodland’s group discussed future programs and activities and their Fall Writing Contest entries. Ridgefield’s group discussed library programs and participated in a tie-dye project.
- The 10<sup>th</sup> annual Teen Fall Writing Contest was a success. More than 300 entries from throughout the district were submitted. Twelve staff read all the entries and chose the winners. The winning entries will be posted on the teen section of the library’s website and printed in a bound copy that will be cataloged and added to FVRL’s collection. Contest winners were:

### 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Intro: Apple Pie—Nathan Woodruff, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, Discovery Middle School

1<sup>st</sup>: Big City—Carmen Camacho, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, Discovery Middle School

2<sup>nd</sup>: Gummed—Jennifer Ferina, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics

3<sup>rd</sup>: A Girl’s Best Friend—Jessie Carder, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, La Center Middle School

## 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade

Intro: Mr. Poe Comic—Nathan Jenkins, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade, Prairie High School (Battle Ground)

1<sup>st</sup>: The Diary of Devin—Merve Demirbilek, 11<sup>th</sup> Grade, Ridgefield High School

2<sup>nd</sup>: Cereal: The Interview—Andrew Gaines, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade, Columbia River High

3<sup>rd</sup>: Meraiah the Tigress—Jessica Cummings, 11<sup>th</sup> Grade, Bickleton High School

- On October 17, FVRL hosted its first Cosplay in celebration of the Fall Writing Contest winners. Approximately 60 teens attended, most of them in costume. Attendees participated in a costume contest, fake battles, mask making, DDR, and candy sushi making. Teens also watched an anime movie that played throughout the event. The pictures at right show Ryan Ellis (Cascade Park) dressed as Wolverine from X-Men and a teen dressed as a DeathNote character.



- Jen Studebaker, Holly Cote (Three Creeks), and Shay Shinall (Foundation) helped create a video about the JDC program that will be shown at the Authors and Illustrators Dinner just before the “ask” portion.
- Megan Dugan (Circulation Coordinator) and Jen Studebaker attended the Washington Association of Library Employees (WALE) conference in Olympia. Jen did a presentation on “Wikis and YAs” and Megan presented two sessions of “Yoga at Work” and one session on RFID and Automated Materials Handling.
- Megan Dugan attended the Pacific Northwest Library Association Leadership Institute in Sandpoint, ID. The institute was a week long immersion in leadership, goal setting, and managing change.
- Circulation continues to trend upward throughout the FVRL service area. Checkouts and renewals are up almost 6% for October and over 7% for the year to date.
- As of September 30, 2008 Unique Management Services has helped FVRL recover a total of \$766,193.01 from referred patrons. The library has recovered books and other materials worth \$673,493.67; cash in the amount of \$75,674.71; and has waived bills in the amount of \$17,024.63. (October’s information is not yet available.)
- Use of the Three Creeks self-check machines continues to increase. Self-check use is now around 47%, which is almost 10% higher than it was before the software upgrade.
- Megan Dugan and Mike Jansen (Assistant Community Libraries Director) are working with Technical Services and branch staff to streamline magazine processing. They are investigating how to handle current magazines less and how to circulate them more quickly. They are also conducting an in-house study to determine which magazines are most popular at each branch.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Mike Gregoire, the governor's husband, toured the new Battle Ground Library on October 7 with Bruce Ziegman, Jane and Don Higgins, Rita Levesque, Sue Vanlaanen, Mayor Mike Ciraulo, City Manager Dennis Osborne, Jackie Spurlock, and several others. The Governor and her husband have taken an interest in the building project and are big supporters.
- Many Battle Ground Friends, YAAB members, and library staff helped behind the counter, at the door, and on the street for the October 21 McLibrary Night at Battle Ground's McDonald's. Shay Shinall (Foundation) coordinated the event. Twenty percent of the evening's proceeds went toward the new Battle Ground Library. The library's final share was a little over \$300.
- Jackie Spurlock attended the grand opening of the new I-5 interchange at 219<sup>th</sup> Street on October 15. Many local, county, and state dignitaries also attended.
- Nikki Blahnik, former Battle Ground employee and the current Amboy Middle School media specialist, and a fellow PSU student who is the media specialist at Frontier Middle School, interviewed Jackie Spurlock about the public library's reference service delivery.
- Battle Ground partnered with four local schools on two LSTA grant applications (three schools are partnering for one grant). Washougal partnered with the high school and two middle schools on another grant application. The grants are to support successful Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs).
- Naomi Fisher met with the Goldendale 4-H coordinator to discuss ways to increase cooperative programming and program promotion.
- Justin Keeler represented the library at La Center Elementary and Middle School's Fallibration Fall Carnival. Justin was on hand with the Wii, reading lists, and library card applications. People lined up to play the Wii while Justin talked to parents about encouraging good reading habits with their children. Almost everyone that Justin spoke with already had library cards and were big library fans.
- Stevenson staff continue to serve residents at Rock Cove Assisted Living by providing new items each week and doing a special reading. Chris Hughey continues to proctor exams and is currently working with a local school district bus driver who is pursuing her teaching degree.
- Barbara Jorgenson gave two Boy Scout troops tours of the Three Creeks library, read them a story, and helped them with their assignments. One troop was eager to do a little service project for the library, so they cleaned picture book covers from two full book carts.
- Katherine Stevens, Library Director at Portland Community College, and two of her staff members visited Three Creeks to observe the AMH and ask questions about its implementation. Megan Dugan assisted with technical questions.
- Lorraine Badurina and Linda Weirather (Vancouver) represented the library at the Non-Profit and Business Connections Fair. They reported that attendance was excellent and that the event was a good investment of time. The Vancouver Friends paid for the booth fee.

- Seven Cub Scout dens, several area schools, some preschools, and a couple of groups of older children toured the Vancouver Community Library during October.
- As an FVRL representative to the Vancouver Coalition for Out-of-School Time, Karin Ford (Vancouver) attended a City Council meeting during which they approved a proclamation recognizing out-of-school programs.
- Karin Ford and Sue Vanlaanen met with representatives of the Clark County Historical Museum to discuss plans to commemorate the centennial of the Carnegie Library building.
- Ruth Shafer (Vancouver) hosted information tables, read books to families, and spoke to parents and educators on the importance of reading with children and what the library has to offer at three events: the Felida PTA Literacy Program, the Vancouver Early Education Center's Literacy event, and Harney Elementary's kindergarten family event.
- Sara Teas (Vancouver) and Jen Studabaker attended the Clark County Librarians' meeting.
- Vancouver Mall staff participated in the annual Trick-or-Treat at the Mall. The Evil Fairy (Kathleen Seligman), the Good Witch (Dana Jenkins) and a Geisha Girl (Daisy Leavitt) handed out summer reading buttons to 1,463 Trick-or-Treaters.
- Rachel Kuerzinger and Sean McGill (Washougal) staffed a table at Riverside School's Apple Festival. They promoted library services, performed readers' advisory, and gave out several library cards.
- Sherry Braga (Volunteer Coordinator) and Sean McGill attended Washougal High School's Volunteer Fair on October 9. They promoted volunteer opportunities at the district and local level and Sean discussed teen services with several teens.
- Leslea Bowling submitted a proposal for a library radio program to the Radio Tierra Board of Directors. The station is listened to by Spanish speakers from Dallesport to Stevenson.
- Jennifer Hull attended the Interagency Meeting in White Salmon. She informed attendees of library services, programs, and special community events. She also attended Mount Adams Chamber of Commerce's annual meeting.
- White Salmon staff participated in the city's community-wide Halloween event. Staff dressed as insects (see photo at right) and manned the library's Haunted Entryway. The library sponsored a pumpkin decorating contest as part of the festivities.
- Woodland staff reestablished visits to Woodland Senior Care Center. Blake Kincaid and Linda Wall make weekly, hour-long visits to bring residents requested titles, do readers advisory, offer a sampling of the collection, and accept returned items. The residents appreciate the visits and several have signed up for new library cards.



- A Lower Columbia College ESL/Family Literacy class toured the Woodland library on October 27. The students enjoyed the opportunity to get acquainted with Woodland's collections and services.
- Classes from St. Philips Preschool and the Preschool Co-op enjoyed story time visits to Woodland.
- Abbie Anderson, with help from Sue Vanlaanen, contributed an article to *The Longview Daily News* entitled "All the Good Stuff @ Your Library." Abbie also helped *Lewis River Review* writer and Woodland Care Center resident complete an article on the Woodland library for the paper, when the writer became too ill to meet her deadline.
- Abbie Anderson was confirmed as the Woodland Chamber of Commerce's 2009 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. She will officially be installed at the January banquet.

### **EXHIBITS & DISPLAYS**

- Battle Ground's display case featured a display by the 4-H of Clark County.
- The Goldendale 4-H created a display for Goldendale's central display case.
- White Salmon artist, Diane Gadway, displayed her "Day of the Dead" art in White Salmon's front display case. The display featured a wide variety of hand crafted traditional Calaveras inspired by her travels in Mexico.

### **Staff**

- Jackie Spurlock attended Talk Time training in Library Hall on October 4. A trainer from Tacoma Community House led the four-hour session that was intended to help English Conversation Circle leaders improve their skills in working with English-language learners. The training covered cultural differences, techniques/games, lesson planning, and collaborations with other trainees. The Battle Ground Friends contributed toward the event's refreshments.
- In an effort to make room for the anticipated rise in pick up holds, Ryan Ellis weeded another section of Cascade Park's reference books to expand the pick up holds area.
- Mike Jansen attended White Salmon's Latino Celebration. During October he and Meg Zaleski (Collection Management) met with Jennifer Hull and Tove Stocks from White Salmon and Chris Hughey from Stevenson to plan for RFID implementation. Mike met with Jackie Spurlock (Battle Ground) to discuss moving activities and also with several branches to figure out the best placement for their self-check machines. He attended Goldendale's staff meeting to discuss customer service. Mike also provided library information at the Vancouver School District's Community Fair.
- With Collection Development's help, Marshall Shapiro and Chris Hughey (Stevenson) completed the North Bonneville RFID tagging project.
- Marshall Shapiro served on the WALE conference planning committee as the program coordinator.

- Bruce met with Stevenson and White Salmon staff during their October staff meetings and discussed the budget concerns. Staff members appreciated the opportunity to ask questions and give input.
- Gwen Scott-Miller (Three Creeks) attended a Portals/DIRG meeting at Mt. Hood Community College.
- Vancouver staff began RFID tagging its collection. Circulation staff tagged the audiovisual collections and began tagging the large print books.
- Sam Wallin (Vancouver) made a presentation on the One-Minute Critic videos at the WLMA/OLMA joint conference. He also attended the Internet Librarian Conference.
- Erin Hall, Marlene Congdon (Vancouver), Cynthia Ernst, Michele Taylor (Vancouver Mall), and Blake Kincaid attended the WALE conference. Michele presented a session on Baby Story Times and Early Literacy.
- White Salmon completed its RFID tagging project during October.
- All FVRL staff attended the day-long Staff Development Conference with library futurists Joan Frye Williams and George Needham.

#### **BOOKMOBILES**

- Susan Kerwin and Judy Bane (Goldendale) presented Jessica Cummings, a Bickleton High School student and bookmobile patron, with a third place award from the Teen Fall Writing Contest. Susan and Judy made the presentation in her classroom in front of her teacher and friends.

#### **FRIENDS**

- Cascade Park's Friends elected new officers at their October meeting.
- Goldendale's Friends held a special planning meeting to define their direction and focus for the next few years. The Friends decided their top priorities are to extend membership in outlying communities; involve younger members in Friends activities; and more actively promote library programs by distributing posters, making personal invitations, and funding promotions on the downtown reader-board.
- La Center's Friends are preparing for their December centerpiece making program. The Friends gave \$150.00 to support the Halloween costume party and several members also helped with the party.
- Stevenson's Friends provided refreshments and a silent auction for the Artists of the Gorge reception. The Friends president arranged for the area Toastmasters' groups to have their final speech contest in Stevenson's gallery so they could enjoy the art exhibit.
- Three Creeks' Friends raised nearly \$4,000 at their October 18 book sale. They also celebrated Volunteer Appreciation Week by serving lunch to 20 volunteers who assisted with the book sale.

## DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS

- Norma Horton, a Ridgefield Stitchery Group member, sewed curtains to put on the doors of Ridgefield's Community Center's small room when showing a movie. Norma's daughter donated the fabric. The curtains help block out light from the windows so movies show up better when projected on the wall.
- A Vancouver Mall patron was so thrilled that Cynthia Ernst was able to find the information he'd asked for that he made a sizeable donation to the library and gave her a hug. A couple visiting Vancouver Mall, who recently moved to Washington, needed information on transferring a nursing license. Cynthia was able to get the information for them and they too made a donation.

## TIDBITS

- Excerpt from a Patron Comment Form about the Battle Ground Library:  
"This library system is wonderful! We actively used the system for the 15 years we lived here, and really miss the selection of books, availability of books on tape, and the wonderful people in Battle Ground! There is not another system we are aware of that offers what the Fort Vancouver system offers! Keep up the good work!"
- A Vancouver Mall story time attendee drove her two grandchildren to a La Center story time because they miss seeing Justin Keeler since his move from Vancouver Mall to La Center.
- A regular elderly Vancouver patron, who is Russian-born, frequently complains about the noise coming from Vancouver's YS department. During one Tuesday morning story time Ruth Shafer noticed the man listening to the story and grinning widely. The story being told was the *Enormous Turnips*, an old Russian folktale. Ruth asked him if he knew the story and he said his mother or grandmother used to tell it to him when he was a boy. After listening to the entire story, he thanked Ruth and walked away. The next week he appeared in the YS section looking for story time, but when he found it was over he waved and smiled at Ruth. Since hearing the Russian folktale being told he has not complained about the noise. He must have a better understanding of the importance of the noise.
- A Woodland patron wrote the following message on a patron comment form.  
"I would like to express the nice manners and helpful knowledge of this library. In all the libraries that I have been in, and I have been in large libraries, this one still beats them all. Thank you, Woodland Library."
- A childcare mom at the Hazel Dell Read and Play site said she had a child who did not seem ready to start kindergarten in the fall. She brought the child and two others to the Read and Play in hopes that the group interaction, socialization, and pre-reading skills would help prepare the children. She credits the child's success and kindergarten readiness with the months they attended the Read and Play.
- A Woodland book group read Pauls Toutonghi's *Red Weather*. Abbie Anderson, reading the afterward, discovered that they attended the same high school in Seattle. Abbie posted a comment on Toutonghi's blog which led to a conversation with the author, now teaching at Lewis & Clark College in Portland. And this led to Toutonghi's offer to come to Woodland free of charge! They are currently working on possible dates.