

# OLA Quarterly



## Rural Libraries: The Strength of Community

Rural Sustainability Workshops

Alsea Community Library:

Serving a Rural Population From Within a Larger System

Even Small Libraries Can Have Special Collections

PACs Against the Wall?

Reasonably Affordable for Everyone

Photo Essay:

The Many Faces of Oregon's Rural Libraries

Little Steps Lead to Big Success

Estacada's New Library:

The Heart of the Community

Fundraising and Building a Sense of Ownership

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# OLAQ

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**Upcoming  
Issue**

Winter 2007

*Sustainability*

# Rural Libraries: The Strength of Community

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| Vol./No.                     | Theme                                   | Deadline         | Pub. Date         | Guest Editor                               |
|------------------------------|---|------------------|-------------------|--|
| Vol 13 • No 4<br>Winter 2007 | <i>Sustainability</i>                   | October 15, 2007 | December 15, 2007 | Diane Sotak<br>UP                          |
| Vol 14 • No 1<br>Spring 2008 | <i>Libraries in<br/>Popular Media</i>   | January 15, 2008 | March 15, 2008    | Maureen Cole<br>Eugene Public Library      |
| Vol 14 • No 2<br>Summer 2008 | <i>President's<br/>Conference Issue</i> | April 15, 2008   | June 15, 2008     | Sarah Beasley<br>Portland State University |



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# Rural Libraries: The Strength of Community

Driving home last night, thinking about this *OLA Quarterly* issue on rural libraries, I heard an Oregon Public Broadcasting story on the Jackson County proposal to reopen the libraries before the end of 2007. An article in today's Mail Tribune indicates that among the recommendations is one to outsource the management to LSSI (Library Systems and Services LLC). The Jackson County Library system closure on April 6, 2007 shook me and I know many of us in the Oregon library community. It gained national attention as possibly one of the largest library shutdowns in U.S. history. That closure was one of the things that piqued my interest in putting together this issue. The closure and the failed Jackson County election levy for temporary funding in May point toward the need for sustainable funding and building community support.

One hundred and thirty-two Oregon public libraries deliver services to the estimated 839,000 Oregonians living in the rural areas of the state. Eighty-five percent of the libraries serve populations under 30,000. How to attract funding to deliver basic services to their communities, keep up with new technologies, support staff development, and maintain collections and buildings are daily challenges facing these libraries.

In this issue of *OLA Quarterly*, *Rural Libraries: The Strength of Community*, the authors discuss how they manage to survive and thrive in this current environment.

Valery King treats us with a photo essay of Oregon rural libraries, from

the historic and quaint to the new and spacious. Photographed and captioned by the people who work in them, these images show the variety of spaces that Oregonians envision when they think "library." They are the kinds of places where many of us who have gone on to join the profession first discovered our love of libraries, and where dedicated people continue to strive to provide that experience to Oregonians of all ages, regardless of the size of their community.

Building community refers as well to library-to-library interactions. Jim Schepke, the State Librarian, provides us with a history about two strong, resourceful women who set the foundation for our present library systems. As early as 1905, Mary Frances Isom and Cornelia Marvin understood the benefits of providing centralized services. Then Mary Rounds describes what it means to be a branch library in the Corvallis Benton County Public library system. Through the services they provide, Alsea is able to better meet the needs of its citizens.

Jolyn Wynn and Sandra Crittenden provide practical advice on establishing and sustaining an important local collection. Their Harney County Claire McGill Luce Western History Room represents only some of the special collection gems tucked away in rural libraries.

Technology support issues can be especially challenging in rural settings. Wayne Guidry details how to make technology administration sustainable in multiple libraries with little technical support.

Articles from Alsea and Estacada discuss how these libraries relied on community support to build new buildings. In Cornelius, strong supporters and the library consortia staved off the closure of the library. These stories demonstrate how communities can rally to support an institution that means so much to them. They also celebrate the commitment of volunteers and donors in making their communities' dreams come true. But as Alsea realized, just as Jackson County did, after the building is finished the need to identify sustainable funding for ongoing maintenance and service is critical.

I don't know which option Jackson County will pursue to bring back library service, but I do know that having some service is important to their community and to Oregon's future. Mary Rounds' statement perhaps says it best: "A local library is a place that encourages community identity and awareness, catalyzes local action, and can be a forum for ideas promoting self-sufficiency and sustainability both for individuals and for the village."

We hope you enjoy the issue.

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# Rural Sustainability Workshops

by **Ruth Vondracek**  
Head of Research Consulting &  
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This spring, the Oregon State Library sponsored two full-day Rural Library Sustainability workshops in conjunction with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and WebJunction. Darci Henning from the Oregon State Library organized the meetings. Corvallis-Benton County Public Library hosted the April 18, 2007 workshop as a pre-conference event to OLA. To ensure that Central and Eastern Oregon librarians could participate, the same workshop was held in Pendleton on May 5, 2007 as a post-conference event to EOLA.




Workshop Participants in Corvallis

Designed by WebJunction with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, these workshops are being held across the country. The goal of the workshops is to support the efforts of rural and small

libraries—those serving 25,000 or fewer patrons—to develop and implement community-specific action plans for sustaining public access computing, including technology maintenance and planning, community outreach, advocacy and promotion, securing on-going funding, and training and support. Libraries were encouraged to send the director or other staff member and a library trustee or board member, which the majority of libraries succeeded in doing. Turnout for the workshops was substantial with 27 people attending in Pendleton and 34 in Corvallis.

Each workshop focused on the issues and challenges that library staff identified as obstacles in sustaining public access computing. The workshop format aided in bringing individuals together to discuss specific areas of concern. At the end of the day participants were able to return to their libraries with ideas, information, resources, and concrete action plans.

In addition to learning about developing action plans, participants were introduced to other resources. They learned how to use WebJunction as a way to continue their discussions and to engage with other rural librarians in online forums. Darci demonstrated the use of Plinkit (Public Library INterface KIT). This is a Web authoring tool that enables libraries to create their own professional looking Web sites. The State Library hosts the tool and the Web sites for no charge.

All in all the workshops were a success. The skills learned, although focused on sustainability for technology, will also be useful for libraries building support for other services. 



# Alsea Community Library:

## Serving a Rural Population From Within a Larger System

by **Mary Rounds**  
Library Worker,  
Alsea Community Library

**A**lsea is a tiny unincorporated town in a remote corner of Benton County and is the service area hub for folks living up to 20 miles in any direction. Traveling east to Corvallis through the hairpin curves of the Coast Range takes 45 minutes when it's not foggy or icy on the pass near Mary's Peak. Alsea is extremely fortunate to have a thriving town library—a branch of the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library.




A local library is a place that encourages community identity and awareness, catalyzes local action, and can be a forum for ideas promoting self-sufficiency and sustainability both for individuals and for the village.

Since the 1960s the Corvallis Library has provided at least minimal outreach to several Benton County locations. First Alsea had a rotating collection of self-check-out books on a shelf in a local store, then we graduated to Book Wagon service, then upgraded to a real library in 1975, using an old bank building owned by Alsea School District. Over the next 30 years interaction between Corvallis and Alsea Libraries exploded. A Benton County Library District was created which formalized the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library funding partnership. At the same time, technology blossomed, increasing communication and information delivery. No longer was the only connection with the “Big Library” a weekly volunteer trip to Corvallis by the Alsea clerk toting one small box of books

and clutching a handful of written requests from patrons. Fax machines, computers, and online catalogs unveiled the excellent collection of the Corvallis-Benton County main library to Alsea patrons—and they fell upon it with relish.

Three courier trips a week in a large van now shuttle materials between Monroe, Philomath, Corvallis, and Alsea's beautiful two year old facility built and owned by a local Alsea nonprofit. Rural patrons get huge returns from the County Library District taxes they pay. For the price of approximately four hardback books or two tanks of gas per year, taxpayers have access to computers, printers, wireless Internet, reference assistance, and thousands of books plus audio and visual materials—without going over the mountain to get them. Our new facility has space for cultural events and library programs held in each rural branch.

The first time I worked as a substitute for Alsea Library's sole elderly clerk, she told me, “Now, we can't hang our shingle out, but what we're really here for is to listen to people's problems.” I laughed. Then. Now I understand how important a community library is for providing a safe, non-judgmental space where people can meet, discuss those problems, which often are community-wide problems, and find the tools to move toward solutions. A local library is a place that encourages community identity and awareness, catalyzes local action, and can be a forum for ideas promoting self-sufficiency and sustainability both for individuals and for the village. The asset of shared resources from a larger system allows Alsea to have a library with outstanding access to tools that bring our community together for entertainment, information, and problem-solving. We couldn't do it alone. 



# Even Small Libraries Can Have Special Collections

by **Jolyn Wynn**  
Director,  
Harney County Library  
and

**Sandra Crittenden**  
Archivist,  
Claire McGill Luce  
Western History Room

Special collections can be one of the crowning jewels of a small library, but not without a price. Harney County Library felt honored when two prominent men thought enough of the community to bequeath their valuable personal libraries so anyone could visit and access the material. With this gift came responsibilities we had never contemplated, including the extra staff required to make it happen.

The theme for a special collection is determined from the majority of the material received. Our benefactors, both serious Northwest historians, placed in our care approximately 1,500 volumes of rare and first edition books covering Indian history, exploration, fur trade, immigration, and development of the Northwest. In addition the collection included copious research notes for four published books on Eastern Oregon history, along with clippings, maps, pictures, and much more.

It was a natural step to include the 465 local oral histories started in 1970, the Harney County newspaper collection starting with 1886, a complete set of the *Oregon Historical Quarterlies*, and historical pictures dating from the 1870's.

At this point the Claire McGill Luce Western History Room took on a life of its own and began to demand space, staffing, equipment and all the planning for it. Our small library staff had no idea how to go about this process, so holding on to each other for support, we began to plan, re-plan and plan again. Perhaps the following guidelines will help other small libraries contemplating a special collection.

## **Guidelines for Getting Started**

### **Get people excited about the prospect of adding a special collection**

Meet with county commissioners if yours is a county library. They will need to okay the project and finances.

- Present the proposed project at community meetings e.g., Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis, Lions, etc. for community buy-in.
- Stress that this project will encourage economic development by bringing researchers to the area.

### **Do your homework**

If you don't already have a library foundation in place, start one. This is necessary when asking for and receiving grant monies.

- Visit other libraries with special collections and ask lots of questions.
- If you already have the collection, get it appraised for insurance purposes. The value of the collection may help as "in-kind" contributions in seeking grants.

### **Plan the room**

Find money for planning—at least \$5,000. Harney County Library's came from a grant from the Oregon State Legislature in 2001.

- Hire an engineer or architect to do the initial planning with lots of input from library staff.



## Fundraising & grant writing


Make friends with the local media. In some way the library should be in the news every week—exposure is very important now.

- Decide on the type of fundraising most likely to take off in your community. Harney County Library had a dinner with county commissioners serving, and a silent auction of “author baskets” sponsored by individuals, organizations, schools and businesses throughout the county.
- Local fundraising is essential BEFORE grant writing. Charitable foundations want community buy-in before they will contribute to the project.
- If you can afford it, hire a grant writer. If you can't, do it yourself. Think of it as “other duties as assigned...”
- Be patient and persistent. It took Harney County Library over three years to get enough grant funds to proceed with the Western History Room.

## Hire an architect & contractors

Library staff should work as a team with the architect—when he/she is long gone, you'll still be working there.

- Advertise for construction bids (the architect usually does this).
- Prepare for six months to a year of mess (if a renovation).
- Speak up while they are still around if something doesn't seem right.
- Move in, say “Thank You” and have a party!

The Western History Room is a research area only. This was a new concept to the patrons who are used to a circulating library. We are fortunate our county government has provided staffing to make this material available every day the library is open and support its continuing growth. A special collection needs protection, care, and knowledgeable staff to make it accessible. By meeting this mission, the community can rely on a safe repository for its history while the collection continues to grow through donations and support of community members. 

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# PACs Against the Wall?

## Wade Guidry

Systems Manager,  
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Library patrons rely on Public Access Computers (PACs) for popular services like Web browsing, word processing, and e-mail. But PACs require regular maintenance. And many PACs in use including Gates foundation computers are nearing their end-of-life. How best can libraries in rural communities replace, improve, and expand PAC resources for patrons?

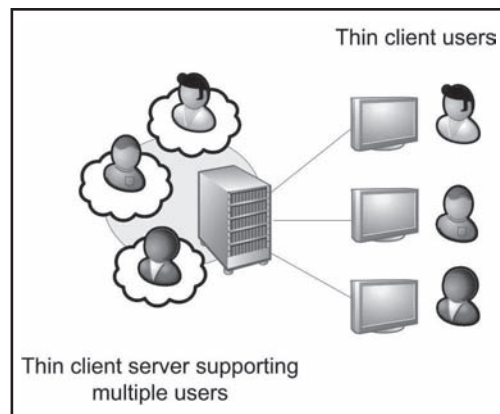
Here at Coastal Resource Sharing Network (CRSN) we have begun implementing thin client technology. Of the 120 PACs in our consortium, 47 are now thin clients, serving patrons in five libraries. The switch to thin clients has helped reduce the maintenance workload associated with PACs, and has provided patrons with a consistent, always up-to-date user experience. The graphic shows a typical thin client at CRSN.

### What is it?

Simply put, thin client technology consists of two components: a central server, and a thin client workstation. A central server runs the patron applications, such as Web browsers, word processing, and spreadsheet software, and implements security policies. On the patron side, a small appliance called a thin client provides a screen, keyboard, and mouse, as well as connectivity to the server. A patron uses a thin client just as she would a traditional PAC, the difference being that the computing work actually occurs on the server, rather than the workstation. A single server can support many simultaneous users.

### Easing the maintenance workload

PACs require a lot of regular maintenance and attention. Operating systems need to be updated. Application patches need to be applied. New software needs to be installed.



Not to mention, security programs for detecting spyware and viruses need to be maintained. Beyond all that, PACs need to be “locked down” to prevent accidental or malicious system changes. And that’s just the software. PAC hardware also breaks down occasionally, and needs to be serviced.

In a thin client environment, the guts of the system reside on the server, allowing central and remote management of the entire PAC environment. For example, without leaving my desk in Tillamook, I can manage a PAC environment that extends over 100 miles and five libraries. Previously, staff spent hours manually updating 47 different PACs every time a change was needed. Now, I can make the needed changes centrally, in just a few minutes.

Thin client workstations are simple network appliances with no moving parts, which can be easily replaced, removed, or added to as needs change. If a remote library has a problem with a thin client which I can’t fix remotely, I can have them courier the failing unit to me. In return, I send them a pre-configured replacement unit, all ready to be plugged in for immediate patron use.

### Consistent, up-to-date user experience

Over time, traditional PACs “drift away”



from each other in terms of applications, versions, and desktop icons. In contrast, thin clients provide a uniform, consistent, desktop experience for users. Thanks to centralized management, patrons see and experience the same desktop and set of applications, regardless of which workstation they use. You can also build configurations specific to a library or a workstation type. At CRSN, I have two main profiles configured for thin clients: a full PAC with Web browsing, MS Office, and so on, and a catalog-only PAC with Web access limited to our online catalog. I can reconfigure remote thin clients from one profile to another, without leaving my desk. Thin clients also give patrons more immediate access to new or updated applications. If we decide to make a new application publicly available, I can publish the software for patron use at any thin client in a matter of minutes.

### Product landscape

Thin client technology exists for both the Windows and Linux platforms. Microsoft includes Terminal Services and Group Policy as part of Windows Server 2003, which together provide a solid thin client solution. Citrix offers the Citrix Presentation Server for Windows Server 2003. The open source Linux Terminal Server Project (LTSP) delivers a thin client solution popular in school environments. Canadian-based Useful offers the DiscoverStation, another thin client variation that runs on Linux. Vendors of thin client workstation hardware include Wyse and Neoware, among others.

Because of my pre-existing knowledge of Microsoft server technology and price breaks available through TechSoup, I implemented a Microsoft-based solution at CRSN, coupled with Neoware and Wyse thin clients. I highly recommend a white paper from Microsoft called *Implementing Common Desktop Management Scenarios*

*with the Group Policy Management Console*, listed under Resources. I used this white paper, and its accompanying files, as the basis for my implementation.

### At what price?

At CRSN, our servers including the software have averaged about \$3,000, and thin clients about \$350. So, a typical one server, 20 thin client install would cost \$9,000, or about \$500 per patron workstation, very cost-competitive with traditional PACs. Thin clients also offer potential savings on your power bill, because of their reduced power consumption. I haven't yet tried to measure these savings, but Neoware has published some data on their units (see Neoware <http://www.neoware.com> under References).

### Look before you leap

As with any new technology, "look before you leap." First, visit a library already using thin clients, just to get a feel for it. Public schools also frequently use thin clients. Next, build a simple test environment. I started by using an old Gates Foundation server, and reconfigured it with Microsoft Terminal Services and Group Policy. For thin clients, I simply retrofitted a few old PCs, using an open source project called PXES. PXES allows you to create bootable CDs that can be used to boot up a standard PC as a thin client. After that, you can demo your project with staff, and even put your prototype out for public use.

### Staffing

Implementing thin client technology may require skills that your existing staff does not already possess. This fact should not deter you, though, from pursuing the technology. For independent learners, the references section provides a good place to start the learning process. If you are in-



terested in implementing thin clients in a Microsoft environment and wish to pursue formal training, look for courses about Active Directory and Group Policy. As an alternative to growing talent from within, consider partnering with a public school system or community college that already has the necessary staff skills in place. 🌿

### You can do it!

I've given you a very brief introduction to thin client technology. You still have a lot of work to do before you're fully "up to speed." But, as a thin client convert, I encourage you to explore further to see if your library might also benefit by going "PAC to the future."

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# THIN CLIENTS IN RURAL LIBRARIES

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## Advantages

- 1) Centralized management lowers PAC support staff requirements.
- 2) Remote management allows leveraging of staff skills across broader geographic areas.
- 3) Policy-based rules enforcement reduces the need for additional security layers, such as CenturionGuard, Fortres Grand Fortres 101, and Faronics WinSelect.
- 4) Shared configurations across thin clients provide “look-and-feel” consistency and ease-of-use for patrons.
- 5) Shared configurations across thin clients also allow the rapid rollout of new applications and features to all PACs.
- 6) The smaller stature and lower power draw of thin clients reduces both space and power consumption.

## Disadvantages

- 1) If a thin client server goes down, all thin clients attached to the server become unusable.
- 2) Video performance of browser plugins such as QuickTime and Flash is not as good on thin clients as on traditional PCs. The implementation of thin clients may require staff to learn new skills.
- 3) The economies-of-scale inherent in thin clients benefit rural consortia and multi-library systems more than stand-alone libraries.
- 4) For patrons to use floppy diskettes or CD-ROMs on thin clients, the library must purchase and provide external, USB-based drives.



# Reasonably Affordable for Everyone

by **Jim Scheppke**  
*Oregon State Librarian*

**I**n 2007, Oregon has a total of 132 public libraries. But if the State Library had had its way, there would be only 36.

It's not that the State Library does not want every Oregonian and every Oregon community of any size to have a public library. That was the mission we were given at our founding in 1905, and that's still our mission today. It's not that we want fewer library facilities, bookmobiles, and other service outlets. What we want is fewer administrative entities providing public library service, and that has been our firmly-held desire for over a century.

in 1902 when it began. The Multnomah County Library could have easily been the Portland Public Library, a city-operated library, the prevailing governance model of the time. But Isom rejected the notion that reading was only for city folk, and that if you were a farming family in the country, you had no need of books.

Isom insisted that this was not the case. She personally lobbied the Legislature in 1903 to amend the public library law, passed in 1901, that only allowed for city-operated libraries. Isom wanted the law to also allow for county libraries. Unfortunately, in the con-



Cornelia Marvin Pierce  
courtesy Oregon State Library

Since 1905, the State Library has been a champion for county libraries. When you look at our history, it is easy to see how this came to be. The “founding mothers” of the Oregon State Library were Mary Frances Isom and Cornelia Marvin. Isom was the first director of the Multnomah County Library, the first public library in Oregon and only the fourth county library in the U.S.



Mary Frances Isom  
courtesy Multnomah County Library

servative way that legislatures often operate, they chose to amend the law so that the 1903 amendment only applied to Multnomah County. The other 35 counties in Oregon would have to make do with the 1901 law that only provided for city-operated libraries.



Isom was not done with her legislative activism. In the next session, in 1905, she was back again, this time with a bill she drafted to create the Oregon Library Commission (renamed the Oregon State Library in 1913). The year before, she had made the long rail journey to Wisconsin to study the Wisconsin Free Library Commission, which would be the model for the Oregon Library Commission. There she met a young and dynamic librarian named Cornelia Marvin. Isom, who must have had a good eye for talent, saw in Marvin a kindred spirit and someone who shared her beliefs about public library service for everyone. A correspondence ensued, and about a year later Marvin had come to Oregon to lead the new Commission.

Cornelia Marvin was described by a contemporary as “a human dynamo with a mind that works like harnessed lightning.” (Brisley, 1968) Today, we might say she was “in your face.” She didn’t mince words. Here is how she expressed the philosophy she shared with Isom that public library service was not just for city folk, but for everyone:

The librarian must assume that every person, not actually in a state of coma or idiocy, has some interest or need which requires the intelligent use of books. (Marvin, 1921)

Marvin also had the strong belief that not only was public library service for everyone, but that experience had shown that it was almost impossible for a small town to devote the resources necessary to having a really good public library. Yet another reason to organize a library on a larger scale with a main library and branch libraries.

I can’t resist quoting Marvin again on the short-comings of small town libraries:

The small library has poor service, few books, requires a large rate of tax levy and accumulates a dead stock which duplicates the dead stock on the shelves of all the neighboring towns.

(Marvin, 1919)

Sadly, Marvin and Isom would never achieve their vision of county libraries for all of Oregon. The cause of this was the 1901 state law that only allowed for city libraries, with the exception (in 1903) of Multnomah County. Under that law, in the first decade of the 20th century, city libraries began to spring up everywhere in Oregon. Fueling this development were women’s clubs in many communities that made library development their top priority, and Andrew Carnegie, then at the height of his philanthropy, who would eventually fund the construction of 33 public libraries in Oregon. By 1911 there were 23 city libraries established in Oregon, along with the one county library in Multnomah County. The 23 city libraries were established in 17 Oregon counties: Baker, Clackamas, Clatsop, Coos, Deschutes, Jackson, Lake, Lane, Linn, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, Wasco, Washington, Umatilla, Union, and Yamhill.

In 1911, the Legislature was finally persuaded to amend the public library law once again to enable any Oregon county to establish a county library, but by then it was too late. Nearly half of Oregon’s counties already had seen at least one city library established, and, as a practical matter, all it took was one city library to diminish or remove the possibility of establishing a county library.

To their credit, some of the 17 counties that had seen the establishment of city libraries in the first decade of public library development in Oregon did even-



tually form county libraries, usually with great effort. ‘Consolidation’ can be a bad word, but consolidation did eventually occur in Baker, Deschutes, Jackson, Lake, and Tillamook Counties.

One hundred and two years after the founding of the State Library, Oregon has 85 city libraries, still the predominant form of public library governance. Some, like the Eugene Public Library and the Lake Oswego Public Library, rank among the best libraries in the state. But many of our city libraries are too small to ever hope to be able to deliver top quality public library services.


To look on the bright side, Oregon does have 16 consolidated county libraries serving an entire county population, and among them are perhaps the three best public libraries in Oregon: Multnomah County Library, Corvallis-Benton County Public Library, and Deschutes Public Library. And efforts to form more county libraries in Oregon are continuing. In 2008 we hope to see elections in Linn County and in Union County to form county library districts.

There is an interesting footnote to this story of county libraries in Oregon. The tragic closure of the Jackson County Library and the efforts to reestablish service there has reconfirmed the assertion made by Cornelia Marvin decades ago that a small city library requires “a large rate of tax levy” as compared to a county library.

Interim library director Ted Stark determined that for six of the smallest towns in Jackson County to restore their branch library services all by themselves would require a city tax levy of well over \$1 per

\$1,000 of assessed valuation. Compare that to the \$0.66 per \$1,000 that would have preserved quality service county-wide that Jackson County voters have now rejected twice. The startling difference made a believer out of the editorial writer of the Medford *Mail Tribune*, who wrote about Stark’s analysis:

For those who wondered why we had a countywide library system, there is the answer. Spreading the cost over the entire county makes libraries reasonably affordable for everyone. (Mail Tribune, July 5, 2007)

Cornelia would concur. 

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*Mail Tribune*, July 5, 2007: 3B.

*In 1929, after her retirement from the State Library, Cornelia Marvin married and became Cornelia Marvin Pierce.*



# Photo Essay:

## The Many Faces of Oregon's Rural Libraries

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**by Valery King**  
*Social Sciences &  
Government Documents Librarian,  
Oregon State University*

Cottages, storefronts, schools, trailers, and bookmobiles, residents of Oregon's small towns can find their libraries in a wide variety of locations. But however small, the librarians, paraprofessionals, and volunteers are just as dedicated to providing quality service as their counterparts in larger cities and towns.

### Weston Public Library



Weston is a small rural community in Eastern Oregon, population 700. The library has been operating since 1912, and since 1930 in this location. The building was formerly a doctor's office, and is part of an historic downtown area.

### Siletz Public Library Lincoln County Library District



Front view of the new Siletz Public Library. More pictures of the new library can be found [on Flickr] at <http://www.flickr.com/groups/svfol/>.



## Troy Branch Wallowa County Library



The Troy Branch Library resides in a schoolhouse where there is one teacher for children kindergarten through 8th grade. It is quite isolated, with Enterprise, the closest town, an hour and a half away (in good weather). The Troy Branch is part of the Wallowa County Library in Northeastern Oregon which has two branch sites in remote canyons. Along with Troy is the Imnaha branch, which also resides in a one-room schoolhouse serving K–8 students.

## Stayton Public Library



The Stayton Public Library just held their grand opening following a 7,500 square foot expansion.



This shot shows patron Diana Maul checking out books at the circulation counter. Staff are Kris O'Donnell, Library Aide and Nancy Grant, Library Assistant.



## Linn Library League



Photo of the Linn Library League Bookmobile that operates in Linn County (for more information about the Linn Library League please visit [www.linnlibraryleague.org](http://www.linnlibraryleague.org)). It is funded by grants and is independent of any library system. In this photo it is stopped at the town of Cascadia.

## Creswell Library Lane Library District



### Creswell Library Circulation Desk

Library Assistant Yaakov Levine and Volunteer Extraordinaire Lenny Lenard work at the circulation desk on an unusually quiet Friday afternoon.



### Juvenile Fiction at Creswell Library

The library is a remodeled hardware store. This wall divides the children's room from the rest of the library. The "wave window" softens the space and creates a whimsical touch.



## Baker County Library District



### Riverside Branch

The Baker County Library in Baker City is positively picturesque along the Powder River and across from the popular city park.



### Haines Branch

The recently remodeled Haines Branch of the Baker County Library District serves a population of 410. The original library, the historic stone building at right, was integrated into the redesign as a community meeting room.



### Bookmobile

The Baker County Library District donated their former bookmobile, a 1968 Gertenslager, to Hurricane Katrina victims. The current vehicle, a 1999 MSV Thomas, visits isolated Baker County communities twice a month, logging over 500 miles every week.



## Klamath County Library



**Chemult Branch**



**Sprague River Branch**



**Bonanza Branch**



**Chiloquin Branch**

The Klamath County Library system has 10 branches in outlying areas with all linked by their Polaris catalog. They also share materials with Klamath Community College. Branch Support Assistant Heidi Nowak helps Branch Supervisor Nathalie Johnston with collection development, computer troubleshooting, program development, and staffing. 🌿



*Thanks go to the following people who provided these photographs of their libraries for all of us to enjoy:*

Kathleen Schmidtgal, Director, Weston Public Library; Diedre Conkling, Lincoln County Library District (for the Siletz Public Library pictures); Susan Polumsky, Director, Wallowa County Library; Pam Pugsley, Director, Stayton Public Library; Heidi Nowak, Klamath County Library; Sally W. Beesley, Library Director, Jefferson County Library District; Susan Ikeda, Lane Library District/Creswell Library; Perry Stokes, Library Director, Baker County Library District; and Charles Dunham, Linn Library League.





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# Little Steps Lead to Big Success

by **Karen Hill**  
Library Director,  
Cornelius Public Library

The Cornelius Public Library isn't very glamorous, but the citizens care deeply about it. Recently I spent five minutes listening to a citizen recall the special treat of walking with her family to the library over 50 years ago and I had tears in my eyes.

I started my position as Library Director in October 2006, after taking a side route while on vacation from my home in Ashland. I had never heard of Cornelius and honestly considered pretty much everything north of Salem to be "Portland." I now know how distinct the little towns are in the area.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the current population of Cornelius is 11,260 with almost 40 percent Hispanic. Cornelius, whose motto is the "Oregon's Family Town," was renamed in 1871 from Free Orchards. It is located 25 miles west of Portland and 10 miles east of the Coast Range in the fertile Tualatin River Valley. Hillsboro and Forest Grove, with their high-tech industries and farmland, border either side of Cornelius. The City of Cornelius is designated an economically distressed community and has the highest poverty rate in the region with an average per capita income of \$15,290.

The Library occupies a 3,025 square foot area inside the City Hall and has a collection of approximately 21,500 items. The Cornelius Public Library is a city li-



Cornelius Public Library

brary within the Washington County Co-operative Library System (WCCLS) that shares collections, electronic and central resources and some funding. I was hired as the Director after a difficult period in the City's history when funding issues threatened to close the library. The library was operating with a \$103,000 budget (no city funding), 24 open hours per week and no Director. Thank goodness the new City Manager had a vision for a library in "Oregon's Family Town."

New city leadership brought restored city funding to the library. A Washington County library levy passed in November 2006, and although the library technically didn't meet WCCLS performance standards to qualify for more than the 2% funding increase of \$2,055, consortia directors voted to grant the Cornelius Library a one-time additional award of \$12,845. The 2006-07 library budget was almost \$200,000, which allowed the library to increase open hours to 36 per week in October. Staffing increased with my three quarter time position and an additional 10 hours for part-time employees. The library was really primed for success.

In November 2006, I was invited to attend the Ford Family Foundation's Effective Organizations training. This workshop aids nonprofits in rural communities. Besides introducing me to the movers and shakers of the town, it gave me a support system for further training in which both my Board and Friends have participated. Successive sessions really stoked their enthusiasm and built a foundation of support for both policy and fundraising.

December offered the chance to appeal the Ready to Read grant for which we had missed the deadline due to lack of staff. Representatives from neighboring libraries, Cornelius staff and

See Little Steps page 24



# Estacada's New Library:

## The Heart of the Community

by **Barbara Adams**  
Writer for the Estacada News

### *What does it take to build a new library in a small, rural town?*

In Estacada, involving the community was key. It took years of talking while numerous committees formed to take on specific tasks. It took expanding the Estacada Public Library's service district, the financial support of individual donors, grant awards, and the passing of a \$1.9 million bond. But most of all, it took visionaries who recognized that a library, especially in a small town, represents hope for the future.

For nearly 50 years, library patrons visited the cozy, 2,800 square-foot Estacada Library, housed in the 1930s-era City Hall building which is quaint and beautiful, but also dark and too small to hold the thousands of books tucked away in storage.

The library space offered the community eight computer stations, narrow aisles, and a teen section in a closet. The children's area was a small cubby-sized corner, with room for one or two children to play. One restroom with one stall served everyone who visited.

Over the years, the need for more space grew, while the existing space remained unchanged. Serious discussion about building a new library began in 2002. By early 2004, the wheels were in motion to create a special taxing district that would encompass the existing Estacada School District

boundaries. Decisions were also being made to pursue a \$1.9 million bond in the upcoming November election.

Organizers put the cost of building a new, 13,000 square foot library at \$3.5 million. An anonymous donor offered to help purchase a possible building site: a .77-acre piece of property alongside Wade Creek Pond for \$180,000. Volunteers of America donated the pond to the city, and the property around it would later be designated as a future city park.


Members of the community contributed what they could, in unique and innovative ways. Area resident and artist Nancy Cundill donated thousands of her handcrafted pieces of jewelry to sell as a fundraiser for building the new library. People attended town hall meetings to give their input on what they wanted the library to look like—large pond-facing windows, wooden trusses and crossbeams, and a fireplace were among the most desired elements.

The bond passed with a majority 54 percent in favor November 2004. That, combined with grants and donations, put the library's financing at 72 percent of the goal. By February 2005, that number had climbed to 77 percent, with local donations reaching \$641,239.

A citizen's advisory committee was formed to oversee the construction of the new library, and a teen advisory board was formed to visualize and plan the new teen section. All the while, the Estacada Library Foundation, formed in 1998, continued its work on fundraising and keeping the project in the public eye.

On September 12, 2005, Clackamas County Commission Chair Martha Schrader and Estacada Mayor Bob Austin joined the community in a ground breaking celebration. Approximately \$3 million in funds had been secured for the project at that point.

One of the elements included in the design of the building was a 1,020 square



The library truly is the heart of the community, and the outpouring of time, money and volunteering that was required to build this building shows the level of dedication Estacada area residents have committed to their future.

—KATINKA BRYK  
ESTACADA LIBRARY DIRECTOR

foot community room. Due to lack of funds, it had been taken out of the plan. But, in December 2005, an anonymous donor contributed \$150,000 toward the construction of the \$215,000 room.

The building took shape throughout the winter and spring of 2006, as the foundation was poured and the walls erected. By summer library staff and volunteers began the task of moving. Once again, the community was involved. Patrons were asked to check out 50 items from the old library, and return them after the new library officially opened to the public August 6, 2006.

Hundreds of community members attended a party sponsored by the Meyer Memorial Trust, celebrating the opening of the new Estacada Public Library on August 5, 2006.

The first surprise was the roomy slate-floored foyer with 10 two-foot square mosaics, depicting Oregon wildflowers and created by local artist Mimi Near. This beautiful artwork made the foyer floor uniquely Estacada, and achieved part of the One Percent for Art ordinance spearheaded by the Estacada Area Arts Commission. To the left of the foyer, a long hallway leads to the Flora Community Room, and two spacious restrooms. Inside the library high wooden-trussed ceilings bathe in light from huge windows facing Wade Creek Pond. In the middle of the room, comfy chairs surround a majestic two-sided stone fireplace. Art donated by local artists such as Brent Lawrence hang from walls, and 90 Douglas fir bookshelf ends made by an all-volunteer crew with locally donated materials, spread out to the right and left.

At the opening, guests enjoyed live music and dancing outside on the labyrinth patio that was lined with bookshelf-shaped benches surrounded by native shrubs and trees donated by local nurseries. Fine food and wine were served in the Flora Community Room. Public officials and children explored the space. But most of all, there was pride, because the Estacada Library



Catherine Kumlin served on the Percent for Art Committee, and Bruce Whiting is the President of the Estacada Library Board.



New books, magazines and fireplace seating at the Estacada Public Library.

didn't just happen—it was a happening.

The party celebrating the new library was only the beginning. Within six months after opening 823 people applied for new library cards, 259,411 items were checked out—38,371 more than the year before—and 9,000 items that had been stored in insulated storage units had been added to the shelves. Use of the 23 new public computers rose to 78 percent.

“The library truly is the heart of the community, and the outpouring of time,

See Estacada's New Library page 24



# Fundraising and Building a Sense of Ownership

by **Mary Rounds**  
*Alsea Community Library  
worker since 1977*

The town of Alsea, being unincorporated, has no government: no mayor, no police, no city manager, no money. Alsea is a town “in transition” from a former timber-dependent community to, well, something else. In 1995 a committed group of area residents decided that what they didn’t want was to transition into nonexistence as a viable service center or to lose their sense of community.

They formed a nonprofit community development corporation, Alsea Community Effort (ACE), and began prioritizing town improvement projects. High on the list was a new or relocated library. This was necessary because the old building was decrepit and totally inadequate for the continual growth in demand from Alsea patrons on their branch of the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library for materials and online computer use.

State Librarian Jim Scheppke crafted a building plan identifying Alsea’s needs, and architect Richard Turi completed preliminary drawings. Both of these were created through a series of public meetings. A large Library Support Group was formed, complete with bright red T-shirts proclaiming “Great Communities need Great Libraries” on the front and “So many books, so little space” on the back. At that point we had what we needed to start looking for funds: documented community input and visible support (bright red), plus a very attractive picture of our future library and a clearly designed plan.

ACE’s funding strategy realized that local folks who had just lost their timber industry jobs or retired from them were not likely to back any increase in their property taxes. ACE approached private foundations, the state, and federal government for grants. ACE asked Benton County Commissioners to apply for a federal Community Develop-

ment Block Grant, and ACE added a dozen other state, federal, and private foundation potential donors to the mix.

This makes it all sound easy: it wasn’t. Some potential funders sent our grant applications back to the drawing board, but were quite helpful in advising us how to adjust our requests. Some foundations were experiencing losses in the post-2001 economic downturn and offered us a fraction of what we asked for. Some told us to ask for more than our original request. Some just turned us down. One generous timber company sent us a check without even being asked. Local donors who pledged to purchase the future library property had to invest and tie up their money because the project dragged on and on.

In the very early days of beginning to write grants, ACE was challenged first at the County level, then at the State Land Use Board of Appeals about our request for a Conditional Use Permit to build on the corner of a farm field right next to Alsea School. This held up the whole project for about two years while the appeal process continued, with the final outcome to our benefit. Legal costs for the appeal ran to \$12,000, and ACE had a local fundraising campaign just for these expenses. Although costly and time-consuming, the issue rallied the library users of the community to fight with a dogged determination for their new building on the chosen location. Now the library supporters truly owned the project.

By 2003, ACE had raised \$700,000. Building costs had increased over the intervening years and a \$20,000 clerestory window array above the library service desk was removed from the design. In spring 2004 the CDBG funds were released. The land was purchased and groundbreaking began in August. Our Alsea Community Center Library was completed in February 2005.





The Alsea Community Center Library

Hooray! Oops, that's not the end of this story. Now ACE, a local nonprofit whose board of directors is made up of volunteers, farmers, local small business owners, artists, teachers, and retirees, owns a lovely 4400 sq. ft. building. ACE has an Inter-Governmental Agreement with Benton County and the City of Corvallis for operation of the branch of the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library in the building, so those privileges and responsibilities are clearly delineated. Like any homeowner, ACE will be doing repairs, paying insurance, replacing light fixtures, repainting, and other maintenance, for the entire (hopefully long) life of the building. There is currently a small maintenance fund, but not an amount that will generate enough interest to pay for upkeep. If ACE (ah, hindsight!) had built a small percentage of the building cost for future maintenance into the overall amount requested from all construction grants, we would be closer to having a solid long-term maintenance nest egg. Currently we are soliciting funds in the form of yearly pledges that we can count on from "Champions of the Alsea Library." So far, the response has

been excellent, but the reality of the septic tank pump that failed a month past the one year warranty expiration date still haunts us. Then the HVAC fan fried, just past the one year warranty, and the ballasts in the fluorescent lights that only last a year, and it goes on.

The library project turned out to be more than just erecting a lovely and usable facility for the Alsea community. ACE formed some wonderful partnerships with funders who now have an interest in the Alsea community. Our town discovered what staunch supporters our County Commissioners are and how hard our County Development Department works for us. We found out how much the Corvallis Library was willing to give us (lots). Our community can reflect on the Alsea Community Center Library project and its ups and downs and congratulate itself on stepping up to the challenges of being "in transition." In other words, we've gained some community identity. We are the ones who stuck with the project and built that cool, new Alsea Library. 🌿



## Little Steps

Continued from page 19

Friends turned out in support. Although the successful \$1,690 award seems pretty small, it insured the continuation of the one ever-surviving Cornelius Library program: children's English and Spanish language storytimes.

A volunteer appreciation event continued to set a positive tone for library supporters and remind them of their value to the library even though the toughest times seemed to have passed. The local Boosters Club awarded us funding as did several other individuals and corporations, securing programming for a year or more. The local community center, Centro Cultural, re-established ties with the library to cosponsor two very well attended library events.

Another success was an invitation to submit a full grant application for a highly competitive LSTA grant for a Latino outreach project. Finally, our 2007–08 budget was over \$215,000. This additional funding

allowed us to fully restore hours and gave us a much needed infusion to the collections. All of this occurred in less than nine months!

Locals who know our library still express concern when I introduce myself. “Sure we’re under-funded and struggling to meet OLA threshold standards,” I say, “but the support I have received from generous staff, Friends and volunteers, the administrators with high expectations, and the grateful patrons make every challenge an opportunity for reward.”

Every day in this rural library we remember how we were almost shut down and know, like many Oregon libraries, that our existence is not a given. Every challenge must be taken seriously and worked on diligently, and every success must be shared and celebrated. Working together, the library and the community of Cornelius are addressing these challenges. 🌿

## Estacada's New Library

Continued from page 21



Estacada Public Library at dusk viewed from the future Wade Creek City Park.

money and volunteering that was required to build this building shows the level of dedication Estacada area residents have committed to their future,” said current Estacada Library Director Katinka Bryk, who worked alongside Director Beth McKinnon during the project. McKinnon recently retired from her job as director. “Library Director Beth McKinnon spent over 1,000 volunteer hours ensuring this project’s success—and its beauty and functionality is a testament to what a great job she did.” 🌿

*For a list of major donors to the project, please go to [www.estacadalibraryfoundation.org](http://www.estacadalibraryfoundation.org).*

*Photos courtesy of Charles Ingram.*

