

# Annual Report 2012

### 2012 By the Numbers

#### COLLECTION

303,985 total physical items 9,227 eBooks 2,991 eAudiobooks 1,038 magazine subscriptions 100 eMagazines 27 digital databases

#### COMMUNITY

41,210 cardholders 121,030 Whatcom County population minus Bellingham

#### CIRCULATION

1,868,081 items checked out 6,336 items borrowed via Interlibrary Loan

#### VISITS

941,031 in-person visits 1,438,300 virtual visits to networked library services

#### **PROGRAMS**

2,014 programs and events 38,656 attendees

#### PEOPLE

89.54 FTE Library Staff 16,418 Volunteer Hours

#### **OPEN HOURS**

19,816 total open hours at nine libraries and bookmobile

### **WCLS Mission**

Connecting information, ideas, and community.

## **WCLS Vision**

An engaged community where curiosity is cultivated, literacy flourishes, and democratic ideals thrive.

## New Directions for Service - WCLS Strategic Framework

Throughout 2012, the focus at Whatcom County Library System was on planning for the future, using community input to develop a Strategic Framework to take us through 2015. County residents completed surveys, attended focus groups, participated in Steering Meetings and actively took part in the all-day Search Conference in May.

WCLS heard several messages repeatedly: a shared interest in providing access to library materials in all formats, a need for library programming in welcoming spaces to promote lifelong learning starting from birth, and the library's role in helping the public navigate the digital world.

All of the comments,

suggestions, and ideas were carefully reviewed and synthesized into four Strategic Initiatives for the next three years: Access, Advocacy, Community Building, and Early Learning.

At the end of our planning process, the Library Board adopted a new mission statement: "Connecting information, ideas and community." This mission is our guide to achieving our vision: "An engaged community where curiosity is cultivated, literacy flourishes, and democratic ideals thrive." We look forward to working toward this vision in the next three years.

Read the Framework online at <a href="http://wcls.org/strategic-plan">http://wcls.org/strategic-plan</a>.



Our focus on early learning prepares young minds for a lifetime of success.

## Message from the Library Board Chair



Deb Lambert, Chair Board of Trustees

2012 was a year of planning for the future and change, in order

to ensure the continued success of your Library System.

Our Director, Joan Airoldi, who was visionary in her approach to planning, and instrumental in our success, announced her retirement after 10 years of service—and set the stage for more change!

With the Strategic Framework in place, our excellent staff, our many Friends groups and our Foundation, and your support, we are well-positioned to welcome our new Executive Director in 2013 and face the future.

As a library board, we will continue to ensure fiscal responsibility as we sustain and develop library services to meet changing informational and societal needs.

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Children who have access to books in the home achieve higher levels of education than those who do not.

# Ending Fines for Children and Teens

Parents have one more reason to head to the nearest public library and get their child a library card - effective January 1, 2013, neither Bellingham Public Library nor Whatcom County Library System charges overdue fines for children's materials checked out on children's library cards. All cardholders age 17 and under benefit from the change.

\*As part of Whatcom County Library System's strategic planning process, we looked at ways to support children's reading. We heard from parents who said that fear of incurring library fines was one barrier keeping them from getting library cards for their children. This policy change eliminates that barrier," said Joan Airoldi. WCLS Director.

Ending fines supports early learning; one of the four focus areas in the new WCLS Strategic Framework. The point is to get library cards into as many children's hands as possible and start them on the path to lifelong learning. Studies show that children who have access to books in the home achieve higher levels of education than those who do not.







Teen community-reading, creating, fun!



Classes & programs for everyone.



Joan Airoldi - WCLS Director 2002 - 2012

# Library Director Retires

Library Director Joan Airoldi announced her retirement at the end of 2012. Joan was director at WCLS for 10 years, from 2002 to 2012.

During Joan's tenure the library system transitioned into the digital age, offering eBooks, downloadable audiobooks, Wi-Fi at all locations, and 24/7 online reference services.

Joan helped facilitate the Whatcom Libraries Collaborate One Card initiative which provides all residents with access to materials at all Whatcom County academic and public libraries.

Checkout of library materials increased from just over one million in 2002 to 1.86 million in 2012.

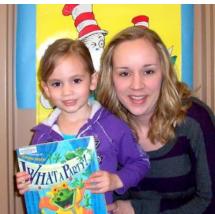
In 2005, Joan received the PEN/Newman's Own First Amendment Award and with the award funds, seeded the Whatcom County Library Foundation.

Under Joan's leadership, the libraries at Lynden, Deming, and North Fork completed building or expansion projects, and capital projects are planned or underway at Ferndale, Island, and South Whatcom at Sudden Valley.

The Washington Library Association acknowledged Joan's exemplary service to libraries by presenting her with the Emeritus Lifetime Membership award.







Bringing home a love of reading.



Proud of their very own library cards.

# The Rise of Digital Books and Media

In 2012 Whatcom County Library System, partnering with the Bellingham Public Library, began providing digital books as part of a statewide group called the Washington Digital Library Consortium.

WCLS also supplies eBooks through other vendors, along with digital magazines via Zinio.

Library eBooks are compatible

with many popular mobile devices such as smartphones, MP3 players, and eBook readers like the Barnes & Noble® Nook™, Sony® Reader, and Kindle®.

"We're glad we can now welcome Kindle and other eBook users to the library!" said Regan Robinson, Public Services Manager at WCLS.

EBook use at the library has been rising fast. In 2012,

checkout of digital materials has increased 25% over 2011 figures.

The total number of digital materials checked out across the library system in 2012 was 37.435.

OverDrive,
Freading, and
Zinio provide
access to
thousands of
eBooks & more
than 100 digital
magazines.

# National Mora Award - Celebrating Día!

Lynden Library received the 2012 Estela and Raúl Mora Award for exemplary efforts promoting El día de los niños, El día de los libros/Children's Day, Book Day, known as Día.

This national award was established by author and poet Pat Mora and her siblings in honor of their parents; the award promotes Día and family literacy. This initiative links all children to books, languages, and cultures.

The award is presented to the most exemplary celebration of Día. Lynden Library received \$1,000 which will be used for Día 2013.

Lynden Library's 2012 Día celebration featured a book give-away for each child, craft activities led by bilingual teen volunteers, and several story times, each followed by a game of lotería (Mexican bingo) with books as prizes. Well over 250 people attended.

"What resonated with the award committee was the grassroots involvement of Lynden's Día," said Mora Award committee chair Beatriz Pascual Wallace. "There was a strong sense of community connection with this event, of everyone coming together to plan, celebrate and share."



Teen Dia volunteers and Lynden Library staff.
Program organizers Tina Bixby & Amelia Martinez are pictured in the back row, 3rd & 4th from the left, respectively.

**Did You Know?** WCLS is constantly adding new books and materials to the library's collection. In 2012, more than 40,000 items were added.

That's a lot of reading material!

## Whatcom County **Library System**

5205 Northwest Drive Bellingham, WA 98226 (360) 305-3600

Your 24/7 Branch Library WCLS.org

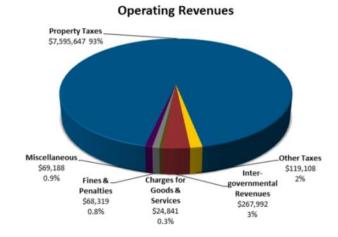


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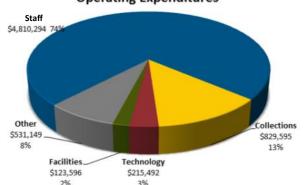
# 2012 Library Finances

WCLS is a junior taxing district and receives 93% of its funding from property taxes. The WCLS levy lid is \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property valuation.

In 2012, operating revenues totaled \$8,145,095, operating expenditures totaled \$6,510,126. Surplus revenue supports cash flow and future funding needs.



## Operating Expenditures



Staffing is the largest expense for WCLS, followed by purchases of library materials.

Whatcom County Library System operates 9 branch libraries, a bookmobile, and administrative offices. Local cities, agencies, and Friends of the Library groups own library facilities and WCLS supplies the staffing, materials, furnishings, and technology.

## Whatcom County Library Foundation 2012

The Whatcom County Library Foundation had a banner year! We processed 160 donations totaling \$32,600, a 60% increase over last year.

With a focus on raising funds and awareness for library system projects, the board of directors held two main events: Branch Out in April and Celebrate the Freedom to Read in September.

The Branch Outfundraising gala raised \$11,300, exceeding its \$10,000 goal. 150 library enthusiasts attended the event, and were entertained by keynote speaker and author, Jo Dereske.

We also Celebrated the Freedom to Read, where quests listened to Joan Airoldi's



A family of library lovers celebrate the Freedom to Read.

account of the history-making legal case that won the 2005 PEN/Newman Award. Prize money from the award seeded the Foundation.

Many thanks to the donors who make a difference in the lives of the people and communities we serve.

#### 2012 Foundation Grants

\$5,000 Books for Babies Program

\$4,000 Capital grants for Ferndale, Point Roberts, Island and South Whatcom Libraries.

\$3,000 Whatcom READS!

\$1,000 Juvenile Detention Center Book Club

\$1,000 Summer Reading prizes

\$300 Little Outreach Libraries

\$250 Sound System and DVD Player for Ferndale Library

\$100 Deming Poetry Workshop