

FRIENDS OF BIRCH BAY LIBRARY

THE FOBBL
FLYER



Volume 3 Issue 3
Third Quarter 2020

www.friendsofbirchbaylibrary.org · birchbaycommunitylibrary@gmail.com · Facebook: FOBBLibrary

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY DI MARRS-SMITH

Board of Directors

President:

Di Marrs-Smith

Vice-President:

Keith Alesse

Treasurer:

Sharman Burnam

Secretary:

Wendy McCloud

Communications Chair:

Brian Bell

Events Co-Chair:

Harielkia Bryant

Development Co-Chair:

Doralee Booth

Directors At Large:

Bea Ball

Ruth Higgins

Connie Taylor

Dawn Wetherby

The heat of summer is upon us! It is nice to see people social distancing at the beach; reading in the sun, building sand castles, and walking in the surf. While these sights fill us with joy, they also bring a sadness of what our FOBBL summer was supposed to be. The Friends have missed having project conversations and tours of the house, book sales on the lawn, and music from the porch. This summer has certainly not been what any of us expected.

One change this summer was the decision from the Whatcom County Library System's (WCLS) decision to decouple the Birch Bay and Blaine Library projects. After dealing with the combined project for almost a year, we are now working with WCLS solely on our building project. The Friends are thankful for the focus as our Department of Commerce (DOC) grant deadline is getting closer. We have until May 31, 2021, to have either matching grant funds of \$2 million dollars in hand and groundbreaking taking place, or enough progress to ask the DOC for an extension. We think the latter is the most realistic scenario.

The Friends will be having our first virtual Annual General Meeting on August 24, 2020 at 7 p.m. through Zoom. At the AGM we will be

holding elections for six open FOBBL Board of Director positions. If you are interested in joining our Board, this is the time to throw your hat in the ring. The Board will present the history of our project, a project update, our fundraising work last year and fundraising goals for the coming year. Attendees will automatically be entered into our drawing for some fabulous FOBBL door prizes.



We need community support to help us raise these funds. If you have been hesitant to give to the library project, please reach out to the Friends and discuss any reservations you might have.

I look forward to talking with you at the AGM. If you would like to discuss the library project sooner, please contact me at ddiannesmith@gmail.com or 206.850.8590.

Enjoy the summer sun, fashionable masks, social distancing, and happy reading.





WCLS TAKING STOCK, ADAPTING TO NEW REALITY

By Christine Perkins, WCLS Executive Director

Greetings, Friends. I hope this newsletter finds you and your family healthy and happy despite all the curveballs this pandemic has thrown us so far. Though new challenges arise every day, I am very proud of the work that Whatcom County Library System staff have done to adapt our services throughout this time – enhancing our online offerings, transitioning to Zoom and Skype-based meetings and events, rolling out socially-distanced curbside holds pickup of library materials, and boosting Wi-Fi signals in library parking lots so people can access the internet. I am pleased to report that the site of the future Birch Bay Library now has free public Wi-Fi available 24/7, and that our Bookmobile is offering holds pickup in Birch Bay every Wednesday from 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. To learn more about the wide variety of library services available to everyone in Whatcom County, visit www.wcls.org/info. No computer? Call us at 360-305-3637 and staff will fill you in.

When we first started working with FOBBL on the Birch Bay Library building project, we knew there would be many challenges ahead but nowhere on our radar was a worldwide pandemic! Now, many months in and no clear end in sight, WCLS is taking stock of every project and trying to adapt to our new reality. As you know, unemployment in Whatcom County is at an all-time high (and higher than the statewide average) and the continued closure of the

U.S. Canada border has had a profound negative impact on the citizens of “north county”, the City of Blaine, and Birch Bay and Blaine businesses. With such a bleak economic picture right now, we have come to the conclusion that it is just not realistic to expect voters to approve any funding measures this year. The WCLS Board of Trustees met in July and agreed to not pursue the formation of a Library Capital Facilities Area in 2020.

It is unlikely that the economic outlook will improve greatly in 2021, but the lingering promise of \$2 million in statewide funding for the Birch Bay library compels us to continue working with FOBBL to make one more push to secure the total necessary to complete construction. The WCLS Board agreed to separate the Birch Bay library project from the Blaine library project, and focus solely on Birch Bay at this time. While exact strategies to raise the necessary funds have not yet been hashed out with FOBBL leadership, we know we will be targeting our fundraising on the Birch Bay community. It will be “all hands on deck”. Every private dollar contributed to the project will reduce the amount that the public will be asked to provide. We know that some families may not currently be in a position to give; we ask that those that can, do. In a time of uncertainty, let’s all get behind something we can look forward to: a new Birch Bay Library! Thank you for your support.

Free Wi-Fi Now Available



Need a Wi-Fi connection to do school work, check out books, or surf the web? We got you covered. WCLS has now made free Wi-Fi access available at the Birch Bay library site from the parking lot! Use any device capable of connecting to Wi-Fi. Open your Wi-Fi settings and click on WCLS Public Wi-Fi, no password required. Just another great feature of your local library!

Become a Friend of Birch Bay Library

We would love to have you join us and become a member of our group. Members have full voting rights at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the ability to become a member of the Board of Directors.

Membership is **FREE** and open to all who would like to support the Birch Bay Vogt Community Library project. Become a member or update your member status by using the forms available on our website:

<https://friendsofbirchbaylibrary.org/membership/>

We look forward to working with you!



FUNDRAISING FROM HOME

By Connie Taylor

Every day I get about 93 emails, several want donations to a cause I've shown an interest in. I do make financial donations on occasion, but most of my donations are in the form of service. I know my service is of value, as is yours, however, our service alone will not finance the building of a library. What we need is money. I have found some ways I can financially support my future library while also doing what I do: shop, surf, use benefits and avoid taxes.



One new way that I'm making donations is through Amazon. I have my Amazon account set up through Amazon Smile, so when I make a purchase part of my purchase goes to FOBBL. It's easy to set up. Learn

more here: [Amazon Smile](#)

For my birthday this year Facebook helped me ask my friends to donate to FOBBL using their Birthday Fundraiser and I was able to generate \$315 for the library. Thanks Facebook and my friends!

You, or your friends, might have an employee benefit that can help. Boeing and BP are known employers that provide matching funds and they aren't the only ones, this site can help you located other employers that will [Double the Donation](#).

FOBBL is a registered 501(c)(3) organization. Donations made to FOBBL are usually tax deductible, please contact your accountant to be sure. Maybe you've invested in retirement income and reduced your income tax but now you're 70½ or older. You can donate up to \$100,000 from your individual retirement account directly to charity. The contribution counts towards your required minimum distribution and isn't included in your adjusted gross income.

Donate
Now!
Click Here

There are many ways to support our efforts to getting our library built if donating financially is something you are able to do, please do. You can learn more at this [WCLS donation link](#).

STORY TIME

Adversity to Advocating

By Keith Alesse

Libraries have had an extremely positive impact on my life. In early grade school I struggled with reading. My parents, both schoolteachers, used their skills to support me, given my inclination to question everything. They got me the extra help I needed to overcome what I eventually came to understand as a dyslexic wiring of my brain.

The group effort was successful and, once over the initial hurdle, I quickly grew to love reading as a way to answer my questions about the world around me. I am sure it wasn't the first book I checked out, but the one I remember was a book on chemistry from the Blaine Elementary School library that I'd hoped would teach me how to build fireworks.

My parents continued to encourage my brother and me to read. They enticed the Whatcom County Library System to move the Birch Bay Bookmobile stop to the parking lot of our candy shop. There, they offered to give out snow-cones to everyone who came in with a book they had checked out; an offer The C Shop still honors today. My brother and I thought it was mighty brilliant that our parents had figured out how to get the library to come to our house every week! We took full advantage of our fortunate situation.

These early reading experiences, reinforced by a long sequence of other positive interactions with librarians through college and beyond, underpins my thinking that libraries are amongst the most important contributors to both human and community development. When I have looked for ways to volunteer my time in an effort to give back to the world around me, I have found myself drawn to libraries.

The chance we in Birch Bay currently have to bring a library here is one that has not existed before and may never exist again. I think it is worth my effort, time, and money to contribute to making it a reality. Let's work together to overcome the challenges and to enrich our community by creating a focal point for the sharing of knowledge and ideas that we will call the Birch Bay Vogt Community Library.

TELL US YOUR STORY

Keith Alesse grew up attending Blaine schools and working at the family business in Birch Bay. These days, he and Saara live along the Skagit River near Concrete where he is starting his third term on the Upper Skagit Library Board of Trustees. Since 2010 they have worked in Birch Bay to carry on his family business, The C Shop. Keith has been an active member of Friends of Birch Bay Library since its inception.

We want to hear your library story—your favorite, earliest, or happiest experience in a library. Share your story by submitting a 300 word essay to Ruth Higgins, ruthhiggins7@gmail.com.



NEWS FROM WCLS

BOOK BUZZ



Birch Bay Book Club News

Although we have not had the opportunity to meet and discuss books, some are sharing the books they are currently reading. Below are the suggested books by our members.

Ruth S: *Bubble in the Sun* by Christopher Knowlton. 1920's Florida and how it brought on the great depression.

Su K: *The Botany of Desire* by Michael Pollan. How plants manipulate humans to promote their own evolutionary advantage.

Sandi M: *A Good Neighborhood* by Therese Anne Fowler. Story of love, race, prejudice, and what it means to be a good neighbor. I couldn't put it down!

Patricia B: *Talking to Strangers* by Malcolm Gladwell. Wonderful book for inspiring conversations.

Hariekliia B: *Reagan's America* title by Lloyd deMause. A better understanding of the homeless situation in America.

Until we meet again, keep on reading and sharing.



PEOPLES' PERSPECTIVES: COVID-19 IN WHATCOM COUNTY

How will we remember life in Bellingham and Whatcom County during the *Stay Home, Stay Healthy quarantine?* And how will we share the story with future generations? Now is the time to record our impressions.

You are invited to join **Peoples' Perspectives: COVID-19 in Whatcom County**, a county-wide, multimedia initiative to capture and archive our experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.. Visit <https://www.wcls.org/covidperspectives/> for complete information on how you can contribute to this project.

Summer Reading 2020

Summer reading is a great tradition at all Whatcom County and Bellingham Public Libraries! Early readers, kids, teens and adults can take part any time from **June 1 to September 30** by downloading and printing a [BINGO card](#), setting a goal and winning a prize. Everyone can participate!

Our Summer Reading program engages readers of all ages with ideas for things to read or do. Bingo-style cards are available for early years, kids, teens, and adults. Young people set a personal reading goal and record it on their Bingo card. Once that goal is met, they choose a new, free book to keep. Adults who complete their Bingo cards enter into a prize drawing. Stay tuned for more information on how to redeem your card for prizes. Cards can be mailed to you if needed. Contact your local library for complete details.

The FOBBL FLYER is published quarterly, with special editions when warranted.

If you wish to unsubscribe, please email Ruth Higgins with STOP in the subject line.

We welcome submissions and letters to the editor. Submissions subject to space and limited to 300 words or less. Please submit to; ruthhiggins7@gmail.com



Editorial Staff
Ruth Higgins
Brenda Bryce

BOARD MEETINGS

FOBBL Board of Directors meet the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. and are currently meeting virtually via Zoom. Visitors are welcome. If you have a discussion item you would like on the agenda, please contact Di Marris-Smith, ddiannesmith@gmail.com or 206-850-8590. Agenda requests must be received three days prior to meeting to be included.