



Friends of the Winthrop Public Library

COMMUNITY UPDATE!



Great Expectations

FOWL Aims to Break Ground on New Library in 2020

By Boo Turner

According to a history penned in 1962 by librarian Lola Lufkin, it's clear that residents of the Methow Valley have always pitched in for the Winthrop Library. The Bear Creek Willing Workers Club created the first library in 1915, in the home of Mrs. Painter. Men "put on a smoker" to raise funds, quilts were sewn and sold, Sears & Roebuck and the Seattle Public Library donated books, and wages were sacrificed in order to buy books. In 1929, "an energetic lady, Mrs. Evan Jones, envisioned a city library, and rising above obstacles which could have halted a person of lesser courage and determination, set

about getting one going" to serve Bear Creek, Winthrop and Mazama. The name they chose? The "Winthrop Public Library (Rest Awhile)."

Over 100 years later, the non-profit Friends of the Winthrop Public Library (FOWL), has taken up the charge to create, fund and build a new library—in a unique venture with three public partners including the Town of Winthrop, the North Central Regional Library system (NCRL), and the State of Washington, as well as many, many community supporters.

FOWL's effort to bring a more spacious library to the community is moving full speed ahead towards June

2020, when breaking ground is expected at the new site on White Avenue.

Oh, the Places You'll Go: (Quickly, to Tap State Funding!)

Driving the breakneck pace to get to groundbreaking is the appropriation, by the Washington State Legislature, of nearly \$2 million towards the capital costs of the new facility. To tap this funding, speed is a necessity against a ticking clock that requires that the State funding must be spent by June 2021. But first, and in order to fully use the State appropriation, FOWL must match the funding with private donations and pledges—approximately \$2.7 million—by May 2020.

"The State appropriation is a reimbursement grant," explained Jill Sheley, FOWL's Executive Director. "FOWL must demonstrate it has enough private donations and pledges for the whole project before any of the State money kicks in," she said. "So we are moving as swiftly as possible to raise the funds for this essential community asset." She added that the project will not require any new taxes.



Main entry of the new Winthrop Public Library

Concept rendering by Johnsoton Architects

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"In fact, the new library lets patrons receive the full benefit of the taxes they already pay—in more space, technology, collections, and room for programs."

Sheley anticipates that foundation grants and large gifts will make up the majority of the private funding. "The entire community will be asked to join in and invest in its library, too," she said. Donations are welcome at any time and can be made online or by mail.

This Land is Your Land

A recent milestone that highlights FOWL's progress is the acquisition of a second, adjacent parcel of land that will give the library needed room for parking, outdoor learning, play areas, and space for possible future expansion—as well as a view of Mount Gardner.

"Local donors made this additional land possible," said Bruce Honsinger, the Vice-Chair of FOWL who helped finalize the transaction. Honsinger called Wayne Fisher, Mike Real, Gary Dodson and Rita Jensen "visionaries who recognized that the additional land gives the footprint to build the library the community wants."

The land donors are among a number of early financial supporters—including Lee Whittaker and the late Ken Westman—that have supported FOWL in advance of the capital campaign it just launched in September.

"We are extremely grateful to these early supporters," said Sheley. "They are critically important in the momentum to build this new library. While the State funds are important, it is private donations that will make the library a reality."

When the early Methow Valley wished for a library,

they banded together to get it done. The same is true today—it will take the participation of everyone to open this new library to all who walk through its doors to learn, discover, gather and enjoy.



Library supporter Wayne Fisher helped FOWL acquire a second land parcel.

People Make it Possible

By Ashley Lodato

Wayne Fisher

Wayne Fisher was instrumental in FOWL's recent acquisition of a second parcel of land for the new library, which will allow it to have ample on-site parking, outdoor space for learning, play, relaxation and connecting to the magnificent landscape that will be a backdrop to the new library.

Fisher raised his two children, Landon and Leah, in the Valley and says, "I knew the importance of having a good library and schools." To that end, Fisher has, over the years, invested in children and education by supporting the Little Star School and, now, the new Winthrop Library.

At a full-house community meeting in May at the library, Fisher saw the need for the second parcel and urged FOWL to "focus energy on it," publically offering financial support to acquire it. With a career in the building trades,

Fisher knew that the original .81-acre lot was too small for a 7,300-square-foot building. "My small home in Winthrop is on a larger lot!" he says. "The library needed a lot more space for parking, and a small park to enjoy the view of Mt. Gardner."

A lifetime library user, Fisher encourages new residents to give back and get involved in the community. "It

"When I visit other towns I try to visit their libraries. For me they are better than a good movie."

- Wayne Fisher

is your turn now," he said. "It will improve your lives. You'll live longer, with smiles on your faces."

Rita Jensen & Gary Dodson

Gary Dodson and Rita Jensen also made a donation to help buy the second parcel of land for the new library. Both were library users from a young age. For Dodson, the library was social—a place to meet up with friends. Jensen, on the other hand, would "check out loads of books to read while on my parents' sailboat." Today, the couple uses the Winthrop Library to get books, audio resources, and attend talks.

And both have been shushed at libraries. Dodson's childhood librarian repeatedly told him—to no avail, he says—"you really need to learn to whisper." Jensen was scolded more recently, in a roundabout way. "A visitor was working at a computer while several of us were chatting," she says. "Apparently

the visitor was not happy with the volume of our conversation. She turned to the librarian and said 'this library is really noisy!' The librarian responded, 'Oh, this library is known for being quite social!'"

"I loved that!" adds Jensen. "Gary and I strongly believe that healthy communities have libraries that are gathering places. We want to help provide that for the town of Winthrop and the upper valley."

Ken Westman

Ken Westman left a legacy in the Methow Valley, some of the fruits of which he did not live to harvest, such as the future new Winthrop library. An avid user of the Carnegie Library in Ballard as a child, Ken was an ardent supporter of the Winthrop Library, often bringing back books for the children's section from his travels and writing checks whenever the librarian needed something for youth users. He was the first adviser to Friends of the Winthrop Library, which is dedicated to building a new library. Says FOWL board president Shannon Huffman Polson, "Among other forms of support, Ken came in with generous financial support to help us hire a director and cover her position for the first year, and was committed to the long-term success of the project."

Ken's name remains on the library board roster, says Polson, "with the deepest respect, admiration and fondness for his life, his legacy, and his support for our new library as a keystone to the future of our community."

Gifts in memory of Ken will support the children's section of the library. Contributions can be sent to the Ken Westman Memorial Fund, c/o FOWL, PO Box 592, Winthrop, WA 98862.

We're building a vibrant new library

NOW VERSUS NEW

Our library offers the only free public gathering space in Winthrop and beyond, and its cramped aisles get overwhelmed. The new library will accommodate groups small and large. Shown here: a separate, dividable room for presentations, workshops, clubs, and meetings.



Libraries connect people-to-technology and people-to-people through mentoring, reading buddies, and small group collaborations. Shown here: copiers and plenty of computers with high-speed broadband for distance learning, job skills training and more.



Our current library is 6,000 square feet smaller than recommended for the population it serves. The new library will inspire discovery with expanded collections, programs and technology. Shown here: shelving (for over 20,000 items), study tables, window seats, cozy chairs near a fireplace.



Concept renderings by Johnston Architects

GATHER



Photo by: Jamie Petitto

CONNECT



Photo by: Peter Polson

DISCOVER



Photo by: Jamie Petitto



**WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NEW LIBRARY?
COME TO THE BARN ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5TH!
PANCAKES @ 9AM, MEETING WITH ARCHITECTS @10AM**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FOWL TIMELINE AND MILESTONES

AUGUST 2017

FOWL established as 501(c)(3)

JUNE 2017 - DECEMBER 2018

Community needs assessed

JANUARY 2019

Town of Winthrop acquired site

MAY 2019

Architectural team and Executive Director hired

JULY 2019

\$2 million matching funds appropriated in WA State Capital Budget

AUGUST 2019

Adjacent site acquired by FOWL

SEPTEMBER 2019 -MAY 2020

Capital campaign to raise \$2.7 million

JUNE 2020

Break ground!

JULY 2021

Deadline for use of WA State funds

FEBRUARY 2022

LIBRARY OPENS!

*As of 10/2/19 -- subject to change.

In partnership with:



NC RL NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL LIBRARY

fow198862@gmail.com

@fow198862

/friendsofthewinthroplibrary

PO Box 592, Winthrop, WA98862

Why does Winthrop need a new library? Why now?

At just 1141 square feet, our library lacks space for programs, collections, technology access and workspace. Despite its size, our little library is among the busiest per capita of the 30 libraries in the NCRL (North Central Regional Library) system. It supports 30 book clubs, many children's programs and bustles with activity. The current location was intended to be temporary twelve years ago. Why now? Our existing population often overwhelms the current space and expected growth will outpace the library's ability to serve.

How do you know what the community needs?

Over 18 months FOWL completed an assessment that guides the vision for developing a new library. We conducted surveys, meetings, focus groups and interviews.

The community said it wanted:

- Light-filled, inspired space
- Public meeting rooms
- Acoustically separate, playful children's area
- A place for teens to hang out
- Space and tools to make cool stuff
- More computers, wi-fi and technology to access training and education
- Connection to the outdoors
- More books, magazines, audio & movies—and comfy places to enjoy them.

Who will pay for it?

FOWL will raise funds—with the help of the entire community. We need your help! After the library is built, NCRL will be responsible for its operations, staff, collections, programs and furnishings. The Town will own the building and share responsibility for its maintenance.

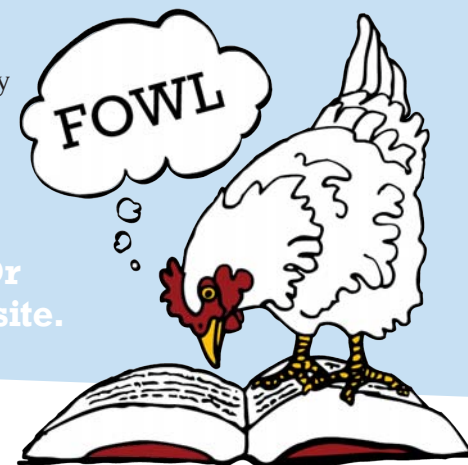
Where will the new library be located?

The location is on White Avenue, across from Town Trailhead and adjacent to Little Star School. It will be easily accessible by school bus and it's within walking distance from the town center.

Will my taxes go up to pay for the new library?

No! No new taxes will be needed to build or maintain the library. Your property taxes already include a library assessment (levied at \$.36/\$1000 in taxable value), which goes to the NCRL system. This tax revenue pays for librarians, books, programming and more.

Questions?
Contact us! Or visit our website.



FRIENDS OF THE WINTHROP PUBLIC LIBRARY
WINTHROPLIBRARYFRIENDS.ORG

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

SATURDAY
OCT
5

9:00 PANCAKE BREAKFAST
10:00 PLANNING MEETING WITH ARCHITECTS
@THE WINTHROP BARN

SATURDAY
NOV
9

9:30-12:30 BOOK & BAKE SALE
@THE WINTHROP BARN

Friends of the Winthrop Public Library is creating, funding and building a vibrant community hub that will be a place to gather, connect and discover.