

# BOOK,

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"It was tough, I know nothing about the internet and the cleaning lady at our retirement home had to help me with that. You would have thought I worked at OfficeMax since I spent so much time there, but they were a big help," Christopherson said.

The hard work paid off in the end. Graham's first book, *Wally's Friends*, is already available on amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com, and three more are in the offing.

Graham and Christopherson think there are several morals to their story: listen to the nagging kids, never feel too old to try something new, something or other about the importance of friendship and seeing each other's uniqueness.

"Wally is a terrific human being even though he doesn't always believe it," Christopherson said.

"I never would have done it without him," said Graham. "I would have gotten disgusted in the first 10 minutes of trying."

It's almost too easy to draw parallels between their story and Graham's first poem about



Submitted  
Wally Graham's illustration for the *Mister Toad* poem.

a toad and a bear, but the resemblance is too precious to ignore.

That very first poem, written more than 20 years ago, ends

with the line:

"So children, don't be blue.

There's something special about every one of you."

# TAX,

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Allan Pollock, general manager of Salem-Keizer Transit, said the transit district wouldn't start collecting the funds until April 2017. However, more service would be implemented before that.

"The plan as it stands now is to implement Saturday service in the summer of 2016, then Sunday and extra evening service probably the summer of 2017," Pollock said. "We have reserves to use before the funds are collected, but we're still not sure of the exact timing. That is our tentative schedule."

Weekend and extended evening service used to be part of the transit district, but were cut several years ago due to the recession. Adding services back has been the main goal of the district's Moving Forward plan.

Phase 1 of the plan, being implemented on Sept. 8, calls for increased frequency on busy routes, buses running on a consistent schedule and more cross-town routes throughout Salem and Keizer.

The additional service to

be funded by the payroll tax would be phase 2 of the Moving Forward plan.

In the spring, transit officials conducted surveys to see if the payroll tax or a property tax would be more popular with the public.

"We did two surveys, a telephone survey and an on-line survey," Pollock said. "The data from the telephone survey, which is statistically valid, is when we surveyed 300 likely voters in the service area."

In the phone survey, half of the voters were asked about the property tax first, with the other half asked about the payroll tax first. When the property tax option was given first, 58 percent of respondents were in favor. When the payroll question was asked first, 67 percent were in favor.

When more specific costs were given, support for property tax fell to 49 percent, while support for the payroll tax fell to 57 percent. Once the payroll question was clarified to indicate employers would be the ones paying, support went back up to 61 percent.

"Then we did an online survey, which had more than 2,000 respondents," Pollock said. "We were very pleased

with 2,000 responses. Generally the numbers were pretty much the same."

Based on those survey results, board members opted to go with the payroll tax option, which would be about \$1,050 a year for a business with an annual payroll of \$500,000.

If the levy is approved, Pollock said a new student bus pass program would tentatively be implemented in September 2016.

"But I know the board is also thinking about doing it earlier," Pollock said. "We're still trying to finalize the numbers."

Plans should be more firm soon.

"These are all tentative plans," Pollock said. "The board will decide on an implementation schedule probably in their August meeting."

For more information on the Moving Forward plan go to [Cherriots.org/MovingForward](http://Cherriots.org/MovingForward).

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