

# Washington County library system celebrates 10 million checkouts

On Friday, December 11th Washington County readers achieved a milestone in the Washington County Cooperative Library Services (WCCLS) thirty-three year history - they reached their 10 millionth check-out in a single calendar year. Judy Stuebe, a patron of the Hillsboro Main Library, was the lucky WCCLS customer to put the count over the top to reach the record for the Cooperative's fourteen member libraries. Stuebe is a life-long resident of Hillsboro and frequent library user. She even remembers attending summer reading programs as a child at the old Hillsboro (Carnegie) Library on Lincoln Street in downtown Hillsboro. After rais-

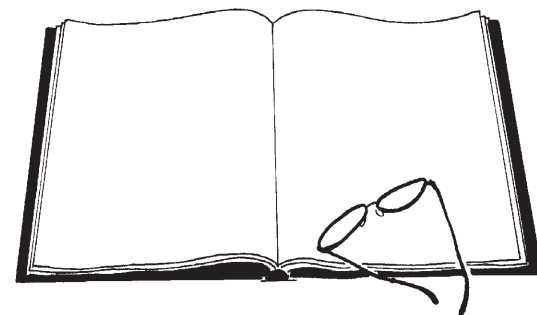
ing four children to be library users - she is now instilling a love of reading in her four young granddaughters.

Eva Calcagno, Cooperative Library Services Director, notes, "10,000,000 checkouts is an incredible milestone, but it's just one of many indicators of increased community use of libraries. Circulation, visitors, program attendance have all increased at double-digit rates over the last five years."

The fourteen WCCLS member libraries have experienced a whopping 43% increase in circulation over the past five years, increasing over 16% in the last year alone. The passage of a WCCLS local option levy in 2006 allowed libraries to restore previously-reduced open hours, rebuild book budgets and add library programs for children and adults, contributing to the surge in library use. One of the best values the cooperative offers residents is access to nearly 1.5 million items in the countywide collec-

tion. This means no matter whether you live in Sherwood or Banks or points in between and need a book that your local library does not currently have on hand - WCCLS will deliver a copy from another member library to your local library for easy pick-up.

Mike Smith, director of the Hillsboro Public Libraries knows that residents demonstrate every day with their feet that they understand the tremendous value of having such a diverse library system available to them here in Washington County. Last fiscal year WCCLS member libraries greeted nearly 3.9 million visitors and are on track to beat that record again. Families, in particular, understand that borrowing books, CDs and movies from the library helps them get by during these tough economic times. With the downturn in the economy, WCCLS libraries have expanded services to support job-seekers through materials, electronic resources



and classes to help them retool resumes and research job options. Librarians frequently encounter patrons who seek help filling out online job applications for the very first time.

Families, like the Stuebe's, also enjoy the benefit of the assistance that libraries provide in helping prepare their children and grandchildren to become ready readers. Attendance at library programs for children has increased 56% over five years, and last year 174,475 children participated in library sponsored programs. The WCCLS summer reading program continues to experience double digit increases in participation - reaching 24,783 youth and teens in the 2009 summer program.

In 2008, patrons checked out or renewed just over 9 million items. And with two weeks

in 2009 still to go, WCCLS projected that the number of check-outs and renewals would surpass 10.5 million by the end of year! Please join WCCLS in saluting Ms. Stuebe and the other 280,000+ Washington County library patrons for continuing to make reading and libraries an important part of their lives. Libraries save you time, save you money and help you prepare for the future.

The Washington County Cooperative Library Services (WCCLS), includes Banks Public Library, Beaverton City Library, Cedar Mill Community Library @ Bethany, Cornelius Public Library, Forest Grove City Library, Garden Home Community Library, Hillsboro Public Libraries (Main and Shute Park), North Plains Public Library, Sherwood Public Library, Tigard Public Library, Tualatin Public Library, and West Slope Community Library.

See page 10 for Banks Library Column

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