

GARDEN CITY LIBRARY FOUNDATION HERALD

SAVE THE DATE

Please plan to join the fun with us on **June 8**

(4:00 - 7:00pm) for our Olympics Book Bash!

You don't want to miss out on our largest fundraising event of the year, which is always a crowd pleaser! Ticket prices and more information will be sent to you in April.

We appreciate the sponsors who have already committed to sponsoring our Bash:

- Republic Services
- Idaho Power
- JST Manufacturing,
- Western Building Maintenance

IDAHO GIVES

We would appreciate your support at

www.idahogives.org

April 29 - May 2 2024!

**GARDEN CITY
PUBLIC LIBRARY
FOUNDATION**

BOARD MEMBER REQUEST

The GCPL Foundation raises funds for the Bells for Books Bookmobile and many other outstanding programs at the library, and we enjoy ourselves in the process. We're always looking for new people and new ideas, so please consider joining our board!

For an application, email us at **gcpl.foundation@gmail.com**
subject: Board Application.

BELLS FOR BOOKS STILL RINGING



The blue cat is so beloved that it has to take periodic "vacations" in the closet.

Children are full of surprises, so the Bells for Books Bookmobile staff is always ready for the unexpected. A roving hamster, a bouncing ball, a gift of a hand painted rock, and an earnest inquiry about the expiration status of the snacks are all part of a day's run and fun.

Since the Bells program began in 1994 much has changed. The volunteer parents have been replaced by dedicated library professionals, the small collection of books has burgeoned into the thousands, and the van has grown into a fully equipped bus. Much, however, has remained the same.



A lot of fun can happen in just a little space.

The bus still travels to parts of Garden City where children might have trouble getting to the regular library, the children get a snack each time they visit, and although a cow bell no longer alerts the children to the arrival of the bus, the original bell occupies a place of honor on the bus.

Last year Bells for Books served 4,096 visitors and checked out 6,907 books. It gave school supplies to the children in August and warm hats and gloves in late fall.

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The latest news and updates from your favorite library foundation

BELLS FOR BOOKS CONTINUED

The staff members know the individual children and chat with them about their interests and families in addition to recommending books and assisting them in finding them.

At each stop, the bus is full of laughter and activity. It's a safe and fun place for children to be with friends and trusted adults.

During the summer, Bells for Books will expand its hours and locations, because one of the original goals of the bus, to decrease the amount of "summer slide" that Garden City children experienced, is still a goal.

After all these years, the children's joy and excitement when they spot the big, blue bus approaching still rings true.



The Bells staff looks forward to seeing the children as much as the children look forward to seeing them.

LIBRARIES ARE MORE ENGAGING & MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Harry Potter, cloaked in invisibility, sneaking into the Hogwarts library, Indiana Jones searching for clues about the Holy Grail in a library in Venice, and the purple apparition shushing the Ghostbusters in New York City's Public Library—memorable movie scenes such as these along with hundreds of stories and books about libraries and librarians attest to the significance of libraries in our lives. Yet, some people question the value of libraries, especially in an age of instant and abundant information at our fingertips through the internet. Author Neil Gaiman has the perfect explanation for the doubters: "Google will bring you back 100,000 answers. A librarian will bring you back the right one."

Providing access to information and education to all members of the community is what attracted Garden City Public Library (GCPL) Director Lindsey Pettyjohn to her vocation. In her 23 years of experience in many locations in America and even in Okinawa, Japan, she has seen the means of acquiring information at libraries change over the years, but the demand for information has not diminished at all. Whereas in the past she directed do-it-yourself car mechanics to giant binders of car manuals, she and her staff now instruct the DIY crowd in using a database.

Another major function of the library, providing books for scholarship and entertainment, also has not decreased. Pettyjohn reports that, "checking out library books is as strong as ever." After initially believing that ebooks would change patrons' reading preferences, the library staff found that the public still prefers physical books. Last year the GCPL checked out 17,000 physical books and 2,000 ebooks. Picture books for children are one of the most popular items,

because beautiful illustrations, musical language and captivating stories are still the best ways to cultivate a life-long love of reading in children.

But libraries do more than provide information and reading material. The GCPL provides DVD's, games and objects from its "Library of Things." Do you need a fishing pole or a sewing machine for a few days, or does your child want to play with a fancy American Doll for a while? The library can check these items out to you. There are 45 people on the waitlist for two Oculus VR Headsets, so it's fortunate that the library recently acquired funds to buy additional ones. Libraries also provide space, instruction and resources for learning and exploration. A quick glance at the GCPL calendar reveals learning opportunities for community members of all ages and interests. The GCPL is constantly finding new ways to make the library more inviting and effective so it can fulfill its mission to "engage and enrich the hearts and minds of the community."

For good reason, libraries have been around since the 7th century BCE and are currently far more popular than many people realize. At a conference recently, Pettyjohn learned that the only place in America that has a larger "door count" than libraries is Walmart. But far more important than the popularity of libraries is their substance, as noted by the American writer Sidney Sheldon. "Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life. Libraries change lives for the better. A library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of life."