

Library adds books thanks to Libri grant

The Kamiah Community Library recently purchased 81 children's hard-bound books, which are now catalogued and ready to be enjoyed by the young patrons in the area, with help from the Libri Foundation.

The Libri Foundation was established in 1989 for the sole purpose of helping rural libraries acquire new, quality, hardcover children's books they could not otherwise afford to buy. Since October 1990, the foundation has donated over \$3,500 worth of new children's books to more than 2,600 libraries in 49 states including Alaska and Hawaii. The Libri Foundation supports the concept that children who learn to enjoy reading at an early age continue to read throughout their lives. In order to develop a love of reading, children must have access to books which stretch their imaginations, touch their emotions, and expand their horizons.

The Libri Foundation matched and doubled our Friends of the Library's \$350 contribution with \$700 and a generous donation from Hel Berenson and Laura Ackerman enabled the library to purchase an additional \$350 worth of math and science books. Stop by during the month of September to check out the new books!



April Blankenship/Progress

The Kamiah Community Library recently grew the size of their collection by 81 new children's hard-bound books thanks to community contributions and a grant from the Libri Foundation.

Is Meth a problem in Kamiah?

90% polled in local survey say 'yes'

Do you think meth is a problem in Kamiah? Do you know someone who uses or has used meth?

These were some of the questions discussed during the Idaho Meth Project Forum at Kamiah Elementary School this summer. The goal was to increase community resident awareness of methamphetamine use and addiction within the Kamiah area, and to survey attendee perceptions.

Eighty area residents (43 adults and 37 youth) participated in Forum discussions moderated by Brian Brokop, Lewis County Sheriff. Youth, parents, grandparents, and community members were present, as well as recovering methamphetamine addicts who shared stories of their experiences.

Sixty-nine Forum attendees (42 adults and 27 youth) also completed a written survey questionnaire. Youth aged 10-18 represented 39% of the survey respondents; 11% were young adults (19-30); 35% were aged 31-50 years old and 15% were 51 and older.

Almost 90% of survey respondents felt methamphetamine use is a problem in Kamiah and 62% knew someone who uses or has used meth. Three-quarter of those respondents who feel methamphetamine use is not a problem did report knowing someone who uses or has used meth. All but two survey respondents felt the Forum was instructive.

Meth is the top drug of choice and the #1 drug problem in Idaho.

The Idaho Meth Project is a large-scale prevention program aimed at significantly reducing first-time meth use through public service messaging, public policy, and community outreach.

The Idaho Meth Project Forum was hosted by the Kamiah Community Partnership Coalition as part of the Drug Free Communities program. Sponsorship partners were Idaho Meth Project, Kamiah Joint School District, Kamiah middle and elementary schools Parent Teacher Organizations, Community Action Partnership, Kamiah After School Program, Lewis County Sheriff Office, and Safe and Drug Free Schools.

Addition

William (Bill) Amos has filed his declaration of candidacy for a four-year term on the Kooskia City Council. His name was inadvertently left out of an article in last week's Progress.

Trash

"We've literally had Volkswagen bugs, the whole car, put in to a dumpster," said Robert Simmons of Simmons Sanitation in Kamiah. "People will tear down a house or remodel and fill five or six dumpsters.

"The county residents pay for it. It's not fair for one neighbor to pay for the other neighbor's remodel or the other neighbor's new house...those people need to pay extra for that."

Brandt and Simmons stressed that dumpsters are strictly for day-to-day waste.

"One of the things I want to stress is if folks are in doubt what they can put in the dumpster, take it to the landfill," said Brandt. "No more carrying couches over to dumpsters. The ordinance specifies nothing over three feet long. No branches, no stumps."

The stiffer rules also affect some Lewis County residents. Brandt and Simmons noted that Lewis County residents and City of Kamiah residents will not be allowed to use Idaho County dumpsters.

The main area of contention will likely be the dumpster site at Dabco located at the base of Tommy Taha Road.

Signs have been posted at all sites and the consolidated sites include Dabco, Leitch and Clear Creek junction, between Kooskia and Kamiah, Harpster Bridge, and Big Butte Schoolhouse on Highway 162. Another site is being looked at along the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River.

Although Idaho County has one of the lowest rates for residential garbage service in the state, the abuse of dumpsters adds unnecessary costs to all local ratepayers, noted Simmons. To curb costs he encourages people to report abuses at dumpster sites. "Residents will save money by turning people in," he added.

Simmons said he does not want to purchase surveillance cameras for dumpster sites because that will drive up costs, but if people refuse to be accountable for their trash disposal then the county will consider the option.

He said it's virtually impossible for his staff to catch people in the act. "People who abuse the dumpsters know our routes better than we do. They know exactly when we are going to be at the dumpster."

To combat those who back their vehicles up to dumpsters and pile them full with brush, telephone poles, animal parts, tires and everything else imaginable, Simmons has installed fencing and gates around consolidated sites. The goal is to allow an individual just enough access to drop allowable garbage while also preventing animals and the wind from dispersing it.

Simmons noted that Idaho County is one of the last counties in the state that

provides dumpsters for public use. "Most other counties have controlled sites like what we are putting in now and they are getting more and more controlled," he said. "This is the last effort to have county dumpsters. It's up to the people to police them. That is what is going to keep this program in place."

Brandt gave a recent example of the perfect scenario of community policing. He said a man dumped a load of brush on the ground beside a dumpster at Harpster. Someone told him not to do it, but he argued he had a right since he paid his taxes. The man was tracked down and told it was a \$1,000 fine or clean up his mess. The brush was removed.

The problem is that people do not always want to tell on their neighbors, said Simmons. "Anytime people see abuse they need to put a dollar sign to that and say 'that is going to cost me more money,'" he said.

Placing disallowed items in dumpsters is also a health hazard, explained Simmons. He said one of his workers had to have vertebrae fused in his neck when a tire with a rim fell out of a dumpster and stuck him.

A garbage truck recently started on fire when batteries were placed in a dumpster. They connected to the side of the truck and ignited a blaze.

Burned or shot up dumpsters also cost taxpayers. Replacing one costs about \$900.

One of the biggest costs of garbage disposal involves transportation. Simmons hauls much of its waste to a Missoula landfill at a rate of \$71.50 per ton. It also costs Simmons insurance since the 150-mile route involves driving beside pristine waters.

Waste diversion would save a lot of money, noted Simmons. For example, if wood, metal, and debris were brought to the transfer station instead of dropped in a dumpster, Simmons said the metal would be recycled and the wood debris could be hauled at \$25 per ton.

The spiraling costs of garbage service has the county sitting on about a \$225,000 deficit in that line item, said Brandt.

"Right now the county's focus is just controlling the cost," he added. "If I could hold it even it would tickle me to death."

He added that all of the solid waste fees pay strictly for the cost of solid waste. "There is no percentage used for administration or anything else," said Brandt.

Brandt admitted that the solid waste issue is a very complicated system that was put into place decades ago. "We have no ability to get our arms around the whole garbage issue," he said.

Part of the complexity is the huge geographic area that must be served combined with a scattered population.

Continued from front

"It became a monster," said Simmons. "We'll pick up dumpsters and later that day someone will call us and say 'why haven't you been there yet' because someone has buried it. If it was just day-to-day household garbage we wouldn't be in this situation. There are those few people who think the dumpsters are there for their personal use."

Brandt said another reality that most people refuse to accept is the amount of trash they produce. "The reality is the people produce a lot of garbage."

Simmons estimated that the average household produces about 1.2-1.5 tons of garbage a year.

Simmons added that people need to consider what they are buying and focus on reducing and reusing items.

On the reuse or waste diversion issue, Brandt said the changes in solid waste do not currently address dumpster divers. "We are not going to address that right now as long as it does not become an issue.

"I'm all for it if someone can get into a dumpster and pull something out that they can sell or use, that's less that we have to ship.

"We're not giving them permission, but we are not saying absolutely no, yet."

The county is also joining forces with neighboring Lewis, Clearwater and Nez Perce counties in the creation of a regional landfill.

"We are there," said Brandt. He expects that an agreement will be signed with interested parties this week with the private business Idaho Waste Co. The agreement will give Idaho Waste one year to find a suitable site and once the site is accepted they will have two years to open the site.

"The county is not putting up any money," said Brandt. "We just agree to bring our waste." The cost would range from \$22.50-\$27.50 per ton.

Brandt said the landfill addresses two main concerns: reduction in distance hauling and hauling along rivers.

Simmons said solid waste fees would be stabilized and according to Brandt may possibly drop.

In the meanwhile, people are going to need to do more planning about their waste disposal, said Simmons. However, if communities or groups are interested in renting their own dumpster they may do so but they would pay extra and be responsible for its location and content.

"This is a learning curve for all of us, for the county, for Simmons, for the people," said Brandt. "We are more than open to suggestions. I like suggestions. Don't just complain.

"The main thing is to get people to take responsibility."

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