New Library Director plans for the future

Michael Crose, the Timberland Regional Library (TRL) Interim Director was promoted in the summer of 2010 to the position of Library Director. With 20 years experience working for TRL, Crose has developed a strong understanding of how the library district serves its communities. His new responsibilities include managing all aspects of the multi-county rural library district, which includes 27 libraries and 7 cooperative library centers and kiosks.

Crose remarked, “The library of today blends state-of-the-art technology with our traditional one-to-one high-touch services. A library is not just about what’s on the shelf, it’s about the people in that library becoming more informed as they build better lives for themselves, their families and their communities. From computer stations with Internet access to downloadable movies, music, audio books and eBooks, to author visits, family storytimes and teen programs, the library remains the commons of its community.”

TRL has continued to best serve the public by reaching out and forming partnerships within the library district’s five counties through TRL’s mission to improve literacy by connecting with schools, literacy and early learning groups, theater groups, museums, businesses and other organizations. Crose also said, “Your public library serves the unique needs of every community by bringing people and information together and providing equal access to information for all. At TRL, we will continue to advance our technology and develop new services to meet the ever changing needs of our patrons.”
New Technology

Rural libraries to receive major Internet upgrades

Timberland Regional Library (TRL) was approved to participate in two high-speed broadband grant projects that will bring faster Internet service to more than 100 community institutions in underserved areas across Washington State. Thirteen of Timberland's library buildings are expected to benefit from the two projects.

The projects are funded by the U.S. Dept. of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). The libraries in Amanda Park, Chehalis, Hoodsport, McCleary, Naselle, Mountain View (Randle), Packwood, Salkum and Westport will be upgraded to high-speed broadband connections. Four additional Timberland libraries, which include Centralia, Ilwaco, Raymond and South Bend, have high speed connections, but will receive infrastructure upgrades.

Over the last five years, TRL upgraded network connections to 14 of its 27 libraries to meet the needs of patrons using public PCs and free Wi-Fi access. The BTOP projects will cover most of the remaining libraries. Both projects are expected to be completed by the fall of 2013.

Website update offers new look and valuable features

In May, TRL redesigned its website at www.TRL.org. The new design is visually appealing and provides a simpler path to locate information. As the updated website launched, TRL introduced Facebook, Twitter and Flickr websites, found by clicking on the icons from the library district's homepage. Examples of some of the new features of the website include:

- Access to the library catalog and your account from every page
- A “How do I” feature with simple answers to common questions
- An updated map of library locations, including kiosks
- Links to TRL’s “Download Collection” housing downloadable media in many formats
- A new Birth to 5 page focused on early learning, home based literacy activities
- Link to used book sales
- A choice of two different text sizes
- Link to paying library fines online

To provide more convenient services to patrons, the library district expanded free Wi-Fi (wireless Internet access) at all 27 Timberland libraries. Wi-Fi is accessible from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week.
Youth Programs

Readers “Make a Splash” at the library

Kids and teens set sail for water-themed adventure as soon as school let out in TRL’s summer at the library program. The theme for 2010 was “Make a Splash!” for children and “Make Waves @ Your Library” for teens.

Events appealed to youth of all ages, from tub-time activities for babies and toddlers to water sports and science for older children and teens. By participating in these library activities, special performances and story time programs, 13,849 children learned by watching, listening, and most effectively of all, by doing and discovering.

TRL and individual libraries awarded a variety of prizes from books to book lights and coupons for local businesses and area attractions. All prizes were donated by Friends of the Library groups, businesses, and other organizations.

Turning homes into Read-Aloud spaceships

The Family Read Aloud, an annual TRL initiative that connects family fun with early learning and building reading skills in children from infancy through grade three, opened and closed with two nationwide reading initiatives, Dr. Seuss’s Birthday (Read Across America Day) on March 2 to Beverly Cleary’s Birthday (Drop Everything and Read Day) on April 12. All Timberland libraries provided free Read-Aloud activity kits featuring a spaceship-designed home that encouraged children and their families to read together in every room of their own home. In 2010, 1,406 families and 187 classrooms participated by reading aloud together.

Prizes included hundreds of books and other items. The grand prizes were backpacks and suitcases filled with books. Each family and class that signed up for the Family Read-Aloud received a copy of the book, Read to Your Bunny by Rosemary Wells, compliments of the Timberland Regional Library Foundation.
Adult Programs

Adult Winter Reading chases the chill away
Thousands warmed up with a good book when they joined in the 13th annual Adult Winter Reading challenge January 2 to March 15. The reading challenge offered the chance to win prizes while staying snug all winter and reading. Patrons that read or listened to five books during the program earned a chance to win prizes that included overnight resort getaways and book and beverage baskets. 14 lucky readers names were drawn as winners from the 1,176 participants that read 14,440 books. Timberland libraries also awarded additional prizes locally. Businesses and Friends of the Library groups donated all of the prizes.

Timberland Reads Poe Together
Timberland Reads Together (TRT) was a month-long program held in October to promote and celebrate reading and community throughout the Timberland Regional Library District.

TRT’s sixth annual one-book, one-community selection was the Tales & Poems of Edgar Allan Poe. One of the classic authors of American literature—a master of the short story and a magician of the short poem, Poe invented the detective story, perfected the horror tale, and first articulated the theory of the modern short story and the idea of pure poetry.

People were encouraged to read any collection of Poe’s works and invited to attend free book discussions, live performances, film screenings, poetry recitations and arts activities throughout the month of October at local Timberland libraries. Attendance increased dramatically from 2009, as more than 3,000 people overall attended 90 events held across the 27-library district.
**Passport to Timberland offered vacation alternative**

The TRL Foundation and Timberland Regional Library partnered to create “Passport to Timberland” a guidebook featuring photos, addresses, open hours and points of interest from each library and its community. Thousands of patrons used the Passport to Timberland to explore the recreation and beauty of Southwest Washington, home of the Timberland Regional Library District. Bicycle routes and audio downloads were added to accompany the guidebook.

Each person with a Passport to Timberland guidebook was able to get the page of the library they visited stamped. Stamps counted for potential prizes, which were based on the number of libraries visited. Prize categories included children up to age 12, youth 13-17, and adults 18 and older. Local businesses and organizations donated all the prizes.

**New kiosks opened in Thurston County**

In partnership with the Rainier Volunteer Library and the Nisqually Tribe, Timberland Regional Library opened a library service kiosk at the Rainier Historic School building and the Nisqually Tribal Library. Both kiosks are located in Thurston County. Kiosks are equipped with two computer stations. One computer station provides access to the TRL library catalog, web site, reference librarians and reference databases, while the other computer station allows Timberland library cardholders to check out holds that were delivered to either of these kiosks.

Timberland library card holders can use the kiosk to:

- Search the online library catalog and place holds on books, DVDs, CDs and other materials and request that holds be delivered to the Rainier library for pickup
- Search the TRL online reference databases
- Search the TRL Web site for upcoming library programs
- Contact the Timberland “Ask A Librarian” service by phone, email, and online chat
- Pick up and check out holds that have been delivered to each location
- Check their library card account
- Sign-up for a computer session at any TRL library

There are no Timberland library materials housed at either location, except for holds that arrive for pickup by TRL patrons.

**Rainier Volunteer Library & TRL Kiosk**  
207 Centre St. S  
Rainier, WA 98576  
Phone: (360) 446-4800

**Nisqually Tribal Library & TRL Kiosk**  
4814 She-Nah-Num Drive SE  
Olympia, WA 98513  
Phone: (360) 456-5221, ext. 1125
President of the Board of Trustees

2010 was another year of fast-paced change for the Library District. In addition to upgrading our online library catalog, introducing a major makeover to our website and opening new kiosks in Rainier and the Nisqually Tribal Reservation, the Board of Trustees selected a new Library Director to lead Timberland Regional Library (TRL).

In addition to these improvements, our relationship with the governments and tribes within the five counties, the Timberland Regional Library Foundation, Friends of the Libraries and the local Library Boards have evolved during this year. Our collaboration ensures the sustainability of our library and the sustainability of our communities of common interest. As President of the Board of Trustees for the five-county library district, I work with my fellow trustees to accomplish our mission to provide information, resources, services and places where all people are free to read, learn, connect and grow. We do this ethically in service to our communities. We develop policies, review and approve budgets, and foster a workplace that attracts, retains and values its employees and champions a commitment of world-class service to our patrons and their communities.

TRL has not been exempt from making difficult financial decisions and cost-cutting moves to shore up gaps in our budget. Times like these force organizations to think creatively about how they can operate more efficiently, what partnerships and collaborations could be forged to meet joint objectives and what expenses can be scaled back without a major impact on service to our patrons. We’ve been able to manage our scarce resources in the present while growing our relationships and systems for the future. We know that the strength of our relationships with people and organizations is as important as ensuring that library patrons are delighted with our service. I am grateful there are so many Timberland area folks who love libraries, and I appreciate your efforts to grow that list.

I’m proud of the dedicated employees of TRL and how they work each day to serve the information, education and recreational needs of the almost half a million residents our library district serves. By scaling back on expenses, instituting fines for overdue materials and conserving resources, TRL was able to continue to maintain its reputation for customer service without layoffs, reductions in open hours or library building closings. As trustees, we strive to be responsible stewards of your trust, ensuring responsive services to every patron using one of Timberland’s libraries. Our partnerships are critical to achieving our mutual purpose.

Stephen Hardy
President of the Board of Trustees
Mason County Trustee
Library Director Message

The public library is not just a place to find a book or attend a program. It’s the commons of your community, a warm and welcoming destination where people are free to access a world of ideas. Libraries enhance the quality of life in a community by providing an outlet for knowledge to be gained, information to be shared and people to become inspired for further learning.

Libraries reflect the communities they serve as the focal point for people, new ideas, and a changing culture. Library use continues to climb as Timberland Regional Library (TRL) issued more than 27,000 library cards in 2010, an 8% increase from 2009. The number of youth, teen and adult events rose 54% in 2010 with 82,392 people attending live performances, presentations and activities. Well trained and enthusiastic staff deliver outstanding public service. The library district saw great strides made in technological advancements, including a major website remodel, upgraded online library catalog, the launch of downloadable e-Books, Facebook and Twitter websites and Wi-Fi access extended to 7 days a week. For the 2nd consecutive year, checkouts for downloadable materials doubled.

TRL is examining patron use and demand for electronic resources. New formats offer patrons more choice. On the facilities front, even though the economy struggled, and our tight budget hasn’t enabled the library district to build new library buildings in underserved areas, two new library kiosks in Thurston County were installed to better serve the community of Rainier and the Nisqually Tribal Reservation.

Timberland Regional Library brings people and information together creating more vibrant communities by serving the information and educational needs of youth, teens and adults in our library district with:

- Classes and workshops where people learn new job skills for a changing workplace
- Reading programs for kids, teens and families designed to increase success in school
- A re-designed website that makes finding information easier with many new features
- Family Story Times that engage and educate babies, toddlers and preschoolers
- Timberland Reads Together, our one-book, one-community reading program where people read, discuss and participate in events related to the same book
- Passport to Timberland, a guidebook providing vacation options for patrons featuring library photos, addresses, open hours, interesting facts and recreational options
- Literacy programs that build reading skills through partnerships from organizations with similar missions

I invite you to experience and discover the treasures you’ll find at your local Timberland library. It’s a place to dream, a place to learn, and a place to connect. See you at the library!

Michael Crose
Library Director
2010 Statistics
Library cardholders: 369,617
Visitors to TRL libraries: 2,618,565
Computer use in Timberland libraries: 560,093
Audio books, music and video downloaded: 51,116
Reference questions answered: 579,228

Circulation
Cardholders borrowed 4,824,123 items.

Collection
Timberland added 105,555 books, magazines, DVDs, talking books, music CDs and more for a total of 1,717,245 items.

Programs & Attendance
Children and family programs: 2,256 programs with 65,620 people
Teen programs: 366 programs with 3,646 people
Adult programs: 1,207 programs with 13,126 people

Volunteers:
TRL received support from 418 volunteers. They gave 9,762 hours of their time. Thank you volunteers for your commitment and dedication!

2010 Revenues & Expenditures
Total Revenues: $19,659,517.99
Total Expenditures: $18,099,847.00

*Includes selecting and acquiring materials, preparing them for lending, delivering holds to patrons’ libraries, borrowing from other library systems, and mending.
Increase to sustainability reserves - $1,559,670.99