

Friends of the Olympia Library Newsletter

May 2026



Friends of the Olympia Library

Our mission

To support, promote and augment the operations of the Olympia Library.

Find us on the [web](#)
Find us on [Facebook](#)
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Olympia Timberland Library
313 Eighth Ave. S.E.
(360) 352-0595

Hours: 10-6 Monday-Saturday
Closed Sunday

West Olympia Library
625 Black Lake Blvd SW
In the Capital Mall
(360) 764-4440

Hours: 10-6 Monday-Saturday
Closed Sunday

All Timberland Libraries will be closed on Monday, May 25th for Memorial Day.

Andrea Heisel Selected Interim Executive Director

Wednesday evening during a special session of the TRL Board of Trustees, Library Services Director Andrea Heisel was selected, by a unanimous vote, interim executive director for the Timberland Regional Library. Below is a link to the news release.

<https://trl.org/news/trl-board-of-trustees-selects-andrea-heisel-as-interim-executive-director/>

FOL Holds 52nd Annual Meeting

On May 12, 2026 the Friends of the Olympia Library gathered in the Olympia Library meeting room to review the previous year and elect officers for 2026-2027.

Meeting attendees unanimously elected the following candidates for board positions whose terms will expire in 2028:

Jann Hoppler, President

Melanie Tyler, Treasurer

Pat Harper, Board Member at Large

Peter Sweet, Board Member at Large

Remaining Board members whose terms expire in 2028 are: Abby Cooke, Vice President, Mary Condon, Member. Natalie Howard, Member, Rob Harper, Secretary.

Victoria Harmon, TRL Regional Manager, reported that 78,000 items had been checked out of the Olympia Library from January through April and 16,000 items from the West Olympia branch in the same period.

TRL has rescinded layoff notices to 36 permanent staff members, probationary workers, voluntary and disciplinary layoffs would still move ahead.

FOL President, Jane Hoppler, reported that FOL volunteers had accepted, sorted and sold over 42,000 donated items in the Book Store and online to support the Olympia and West Olympia Libraries. Items we couldn't use or didn't sell were distributed throughout the community most recently adding the Senior Center and Oly Books for Prisoners to the list which includes our Little Free Library, Amtrak Station, Laundromat and thrift stores.

FOL representatives advocated for the community and Friends groups by making public comments at the TRL Trustees Meetings and in a joint letter with two other TRL Friends groups.

Treasurer Melanie Tyler reported a \$25,000 increase in the Olympia Friends net worth from May 2025 to April 2026.

Volunteer Coordinator, Abby Cooke, said FOL now has 44 active volunteers with 10 added since the beginning of 2026.

Membership Chair, Mary Condon, counted 138 paid members, including 88 lifetime members.

The meeting was adjourned for refreshments and to celebrate a very good year.

Olympia Blogger's Take on Timberland Regional Libraries

Blogger Emmett O'Connell is a former TRL Trustee and member of the Friends of the Olympia Library Board. Below is a link to his blog, Olympia Time, where he discusses the background for the current crisis in TRL.

<https://olympiatime.com/2026/05/02/the-deep-history-and-structural-mismatch-of-timberland-regional-library/>

FOL Volunteer Publishes First Book

One of our volunteers, *Ari Koontz*, is about to be a published author! Macmillan is publishing "Just Ask Elsie" next month, a middle-grade chapter book about inclusive sex education that is being highly reviewed.



"A fresh take on activism, fifth grade style, that helps round out the genre." —*Kirkus*

"In their debut novel, Koontz creates a believable character on the cusp of middle school. Elsie is brave but uncertain, grounded yet prone to anxious overthinking. A much-needed addition to the slim collection of middle-grade books about puberty."

—*Booklist*

"With humor, kindness, and a clear message about helping others, this book handles puberty and identity with care... A thoughtful, inclusive debut novel that will speak to many upper elementary readers." —*School Library Journal*

Publisher's page: <https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781250410986/justaskelsie/>

Event at Browsers: <https://www.browsersolympia.com/events/5157420260617>

Summer Reading Starts in June!

Summer Reading Programs or Clubs used to be for kids only, but not anymore. All ages can participate. Watch the Timberland webpage at trl.org and your local library for more information.

Meanwhile, follow the links below to find the many events both in person and online happening now.

To see what's coming up, follow this link to find in person events for all ages:

<https://timberland.bibliocommons.com/v2/events?locations=OL%2CWO>

For online events including author talks, TRL Board meetings, book clubs and more, follow this link:

http://timberland.bibliocommons.com/v2/events?locations=BC_VIRTUAL

****The Friends of the Olympia meet every month on the second Tuesday in the Olympia Library Meeting Room from 1-3 pm.***

You are invited to attend and find out what we are planning for the future!

FOL VOLUNTEER FORM



The mission of the Friends is "To support, promote and augment the operations of the Olympia Library".

Volunteer

Would you like to help the Friends of the Olympia Library?

There are varying degrees of participation for every interest level!

Fill out this form and leave it in the box on the FOL slat board wall opposite the FOL Book Store inside the Olympia Library. The FOL volunteer coordinator will contact you.

If you have questions, please contact: fol73volunteers@gmail.com for more information. *The Olympia Library requires all volunteers to have a background check. Volunteers must be over 18 years old.*

Name: _____

Best way to contact me: _____

Email: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Jobs that interest me:

____ Accepting book donations on Wednesdays or Saturdays.

____ Emptying the donation bin.

____ Book sorting and/or pricing.

____ Stocking ongoing book sale shelves.

____ Help with publicity, membership and volunteers.

____ Help with FOL Board activities.

Date _____ *Your information will not be shared.*

For more about the FOL: www.olylibraryfriends.com

FOL MEMBERSHIP FORM



Friends of the Olympia Library

Join the Friends of the Olympia Library

Members receive our newsletter *and* the good feeling of supporting your local library.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

E-mail _____

Telephone (_____) _____

*None of your personal information will be sold, given, or traded to any third parties for any reason.

New Membership _____ Renewal _____ Date _____

Memberships are for one (1) year, except "Friend for Life".

If your dues are for more than 1 year, indicate # of years here _____

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP (Tax Deductible)

Individual	\$ 10.00
Family	\$ 15.00
Senior (65+)/Student	\$ 5.00
Business	\$ 50.00
Best Friend	\$ 100.00
Friend for Life	\$ 150.00

Please mail this application and your check to:

Friends of the Olympia Library

313 8th Avenue SE

Olympia, WA 98501

or

place it in the membership box on the Friends slat board wall opposite the FOL Book Store in the Olympia Library, or join online: www.olylibraryfriends.com/join