

Friends of the Olympia Library Newsletter

June 2026



Friends of the Olympia Library

Our mission

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

Find us on the [web](#)
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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:
Saturday, July 4th
for Independence Day**

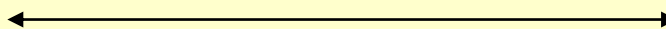
FOL Board Response to Proposed Changes to TRL Operations

Two officials from Lewis County have recently advocated changes to Timberland Regional Library operations. Brian Mittge, President of the Board of Trustees for the library system, and Sean Swope, Lewis County Commissioner have proposed that the TRL libraries become more neutral with less advocacy and that some books for children, juveniles and young adults be moved to the adult section, among other changes. You can read more about this in the two newspaper articles linked below:

<https://www.thedailyworld.com/2026/06/16/leaked-timberland-regional-library-board-of-trustees-desired-outcomes-document-outlines-homogenization-plan/>

<https://www.chronline.com/stories/sean-swope-i-stand-firmly-with-brian-mittge-its-time-to-get-libraries-back-to-being-libraries,404286>

The Board of the Friends of the Olympia Library supports the approach the library currently takes and sent the following letter to the Board of Trustees of TRL. The FOL President Jann Hoppler read this letter during the public comment period of the TRL Board meeting on June 24, 2026.



Board of Trustees
Timberland Regional Library

Dear Board of Trustees, Timberland Regional Library:

The Board of the Friends of the Olympia Library strongly support the current Mission of the Timberland Regional Library as adopted by the library Board of Trustees, which states, "We connect our diverse communities to ideas, experiences and each other."

The Vision and Values of TRL go further to emphasize, in part, being a welcoming space, providing equitable access for all, and supporting diverse communities, perspectives and ideas. These directions are consistent with the American Library Association's Core Values. We oppose moving away from this national standard.

The Board of Trustees and administration have recently committed to essential work in our library system:

- Improving financial management.
- Improving organizational culture.
- Restructuring administration.
- Strengthening relationships with communities.
- Recruiting and hiring a permanent Executive Director.
- Deciding on the strategy and timing of a levy lift campaign.

We urge the Board of Trustees to remain focused on these tasks. This is urgent work that requires teamwork and focus.

As volunteers, taxpayers and voters, the Friends of the Olympia Library are ready to help.

Sincerely,
Jann Hoppler, President
Friends of the Olympia Library
Cc: Andrea Heisel, Interim Director
Thurston County Commissioners

TRL Board Trustee *Mary Beth Harrington's Response to FOL Board's Letter

Mary Beth Harrington is Thurston County's Representative on the Timberland Regional Library Board of Trustees. She has served on the Board for more than a decade.

Thank you for sharing your comments on behalf of the Friends of the Olympia Library. Let me explain that Trustee Mittge's 'desired outcome' list was discussed in a personal meeting on Friday, June 12 that he and the other Lewis County Trustee, Hal Blanton, had with TRL's Interim Executive Director Andrea Heisel. This document has **NOT** been brought forth for discussion or review by the full Board. If this were to proceed further, it would most likely start in our Policy Committee. Currently, it is not on the agenda for our meeting tonight nor is there any plan to implement this.

I want to assure you that I am 100% opposed to every item on Trustee Mittge's agenda and will ardently and vehemently fight against anything like this from being adopted by TRL. I have participated in fights like this at libraries across the country and am pleased to say that so far, we have won every fight.

As you know, Timberland Regional Library's values were developed with community input, with an emphasis on "supporting diverse communities, perspectives, and ideas." As an organization, TRL upholds the values of intellectual freedom, the Board-adopted ALA Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read/View statements, and the 1st Amendment. These principles are foundational to public libraries and are reflected in our own [Mission, Vision, and Values](#).

TRL's Interim Executive Director Andrea Heisel has previously written on the topic of intellectual freedom, and I can direct you to a couple of recent articles you may find helpful in understanding the viewpoint of library leadership. [Freedom Between the Lines: Everyone's Story Belongs in the Library](#) was written during Banned Books Week in 2024 and [Free People Read Freely](#) during the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the ALA's Freedom to Read statement in 2023.

Moving Forward

Olympia Library Manager Victoria Harmon, reported at the June 9th Friends of the Olympia library Board Meeting that TRL Interim Executive Director Andrea Heisel has been meeting with TRL communities, staff and stakeholders. "I am learning a lot and it is helping to inform our path forward together" Heisel stated.

Harmon added that she, with input from the library staff, now have more discretion to make decisions for the direction of Olympia and West Olympia Libraries.

Book Store Updates

The FOL Book Store Operations Committee has several changes in the works for the layout of the sales area. A revolving kiosk has been ordered to make CDs, DVDs and Audio Books more accessible to shoppers. The elimination of the current unit will also allow for an additional tall book shelf.

Volunteers

FOL volunteers gather quarterly for lunch, to meet and get to know their fellow workers. An opportunity we don't often get now that the Giant Sale of Books has become history.

This photo is of the May 25th luncheon in the Plum Street Casa Mia Restaurant.



****The Board of Directors of the Friends of the Olympia Library meets 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