

CORNERSTONE

*Westfield Library Foundation Inc.
Annual Newsletter*



**WESTFIELD
LIBRARY
FOUNDATION**



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1902 Society

*Erin Downey
Executive Director*

In 1856, Westfield received a grant from the William McClure family to start a library. To qualify for the grant, a community had to have at least 100 books, a reading room, and a lecture room. The library failed to thrive during the Civil War, but resumed operations in 1883.

In 1901, the library moved to a small storeroom but in April 1902, the Westfield Washington Public Library was officially established. The library has continued to grow and serve the citizens of Westfield and Washington Township for nearly 120 years. Even with its doors closed during a pandemic, the WWPL managed to pivot and provide robust virtual and curbside pickup services for its patrons.

In honor of the enriching work that WWPL provides, the Westfield Library Foundation has established the 1902 Society. Members of the Foundation's 1902 Society are forward-thinking partners who are engaged with the Foundation in planning for the future of the Westfield Washington Public Library.

Your gift will be used to promote new projects, grow collections, plus advance technology and literacy initiatives that will benefit our community.

In recognition of your generosity, 1902 Society members enjoy the following benefits:

- Advance purchase of tickets for special events
- Advance invitations to private author receptions and books signings
- Donor recognition on the Westfield Library Foundation's Donor Wall, website, social media and annual newsletter
- Volunteer opportunities throughout the year

To learn more about the 1902 Society and how you can join and support the library's mission visit:

www.westfieldlibraryfoundation.com/1902Society

WWPL: #New Era#New Chapter

Sheryl Sollars
Library Director

In April 2021, the WWPL celebrated its 119th birthday. As we celebrate the past, we also look forward to a bright future that includes a new home for the library. The Westfield Washington Public Library will build a new \$16.7 million dollar building in downtown Westfield, kicking off a #NewEra#NewChapter for patrons and staff.

The new library will be located south of Park Street and west of Westfield Blvd. The building will encompass two floors and 45,000 square feet. Groundbreaking is currently expected in Spring 2022 with an opening planned for Summer or Fall 2023.

Plans for the interior of the new library are not finalized, but the goal is to provide easy access to the library's collections, more open gathering areas, outdoor spaces, study rooms and a café.



NEW HOME OF WESTFIELD WASHINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
SCHEMATIC DESIGN CONCEPTS



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

The Westfield Washington Public Library worked with **krM Architecture** to gain insight and understanding of their current building and evaluate options for a possible new location. Through an inclusive community input process, we have gathered information about existing library space, programming and planning, and created a vision for a new public library.



SITE LOCATION MAP



NEW HOME OF WESTFIELD WASHINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
SCHEMATIC DESIGN CONCEPTS



Retrospective: A Year Like No Other

Susan Nixon

Foundation Board Member

The Westfield Library Foundation is proud to share the work we've done on behalf of WWPL and our community for 2020-2021. Our board put forth effort, creativity and time into furthering our mission: to advocate, elevate and raise funds for the Westfield Washington Public Library. We also realized that during these challenging times, the online component of WWPL is resilient and adaptive. And that whether our library can be of service in person or virtually, it continues to empower individuals, strengthen families and make our community a better place.

- With the pandemic taking a toll on students and their education, the foundation raised funds to help pay for student tutors in the Westfield Youth Assistance Program, as well for students in need in our community at large. The initiative raised \$12,500.
- The Christmas Tree Raffle has become an annual event. On December 1, 2020, the foundation raffled off three custom-decorated trees. This fun and festive event raised over \$4000.
- In April of this year, the Foundation celebrated the WWPL's 119th birthday with a variety of events both at the library and throughout the community. Community partners including First Community Bank of Indiana, Cone & Crumb, Urban Vines, Quack Daddy Donuts, Charlestons, Cambria Hotel, Westfield Wine Vault, Wolfie's, Birdie's, Moyer Fine Jewelers, and Musselman Landscape Solutions shared a portion of their profits on select days or donated prizes in honor of the celebration. Prizes were also awarded to patrons for guessing the number of books in the library and for completion of a fun scavenger hunt.

- The Foundation announced the formation of the 1902 Society, encouraging patrons who look to take an active role in planning for the future of our WWPL as well as aiding with critical funding as the library embraces the #NewEra#NewChapter and a long awaited new space in downtown Westfield.

The Foundation applied for and secured additional grants, as well as formed strategic partnerships in 2020-2021, including:

- Walmart Community Grant of \$1500 to be used for new equipment for the Family Educational Exploration Center in the Children's Department.
- IPEP Safety Grant of \$11,000 provided funds used to add security cameras on the outside of the library for the safety of patrons and staff.
- Walmart Community Grant of \$1500. The grant will be used to launch a new collection in the Children's Department called Wonderbooks.
- Our Adult Programming Sponsorship with First Merchants Bank continued into 2021.

In just two years, the Foundation has raised almost \$100,000 for the WWPL.



Winning Essays

In April 2021, the Foundation celebrated the WWPL's 119th birthday. Throughout the month, there were a variety of activities both in the library and in the community. A writing contest urged authors to share why the WWPL is important to our community.

There were three categories - 5-12 years, 13-17 years and 18+. Each of the winning essays has been published here.

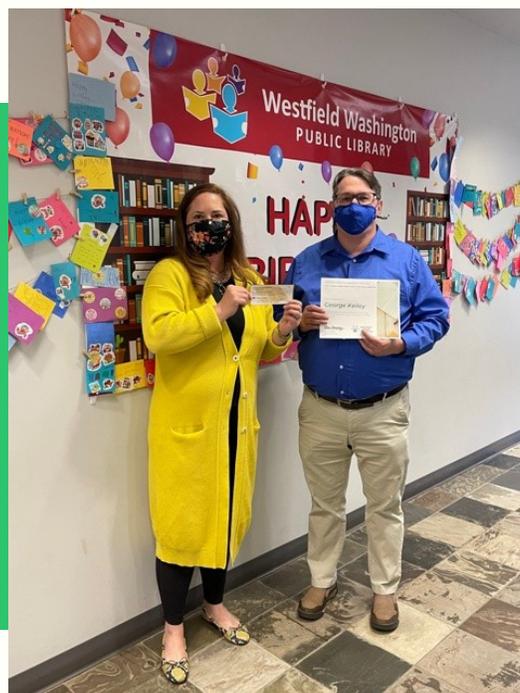
*George Kelley,
Winner 18+*

When I was a child my local library was my very own T.A.R.D.I.S., the space and time ship of the British Science Fiction character Dr. Who. From an early age walking inside transported me to anywhere I wanted to go, be it the real world of science and history or the fantasy worlds from the exploits of Encyclopedia Brown to the Land of Narnia. My library card was a key to knowledge and entertainment that I might never have access to on my own. Once I found the world to explore I could take that world home and savor it for two weeks.

My love of the library has followed me throughout my life. In every community I have moved to the first stop was the local library with utility bill in hand. I wanted to passport to so many worlds. I remember my first day walking into the Westfield Washington Public Library and feeling some of the same joy I felt as a kid seeing the stacks of my hometown library. In my years living in Westfield I have found the library valuable not only for reading material. Libraries offer a variety of community services, technology training to patrons in computer software use, online health resources including insurance information. They assist individuals apply for jobs, create resumes, and prepare for interviews. Libraries help people complete online government forms. There are rooms for adults and children studying for important school work, a safe place to meet a tutor, and of course a conduit for community information from new businesses to

celebrations. Libraries have also evolved with changing community needs and technology. Today, I might go to pick up the latest book from an author I am interested in exploring, but I might use the computer system to find my family history through ancestry software. While there I may learn about a new club forming that meets in one of their rooms, or hear a lecture from a local expert.

Since the ubiquity of the internet I have heard how libraries are becoming obsolete. That somehow we have all the access we need at our fingertips or on a phone in our pockets. The library too has created ways for those living in a more digital environment to borrow electronic books and explore a vast inventory of media through their website and apps. But the phone in your pocket can't simply replace a train librarian. Be it sifting facts from nonsense or remembering an author that you just can't recall but the book was popular and had a blue cover. But more so the library building is place where children find security and quiet for study, adults can rebuild their life and a community can come together. In the Jewish tradition there are 10 things that must exist for a city to be suitable to live in. As an American I add one more, a library. A temple of democracy and center for ongoing development of humanity.



Winning Essays

Laura Bracy

Winner 13-18

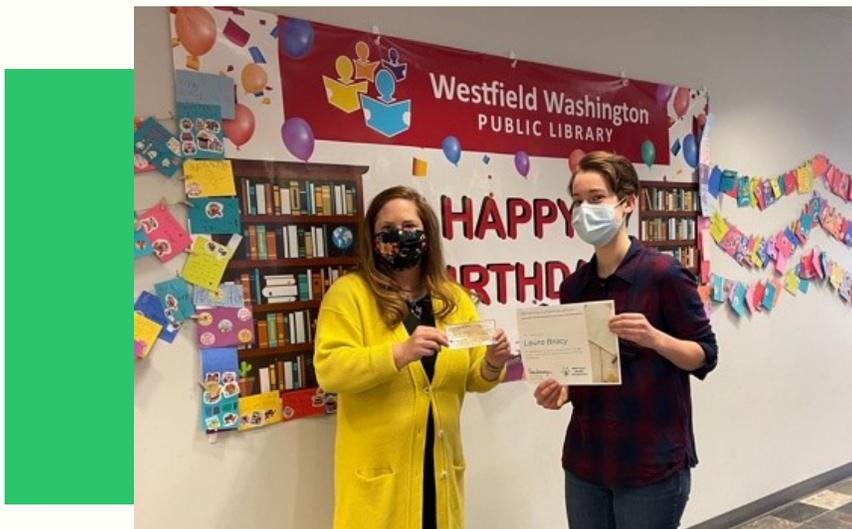
In eighteen years I've lived in five different states. Each time we move it's an adjustment for everybody. One of the first things we do to settle in is to get our new library cards. Doing this makes us feel more connected with our new community. I believe our public library provides two important services to our community, it preserves and it serves. You could say that as a concept the library has become outdated because of the internet, but we need the library now more than ever.

For example, written works have proven to be far more reliable sources of information than sources found online. The library preserves the truth along with many historical books that you can't find anywhere else. Furthermore, the library is a great source for classic movies. After my mom and I read *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier, we wanted to watch the original movie by Alfred Hitchcock. However, we couldn't find that movie anywhere and had almost given up on ever seeing it. One day I decided to check the library and was pleasantly surprised to find it!

In addition to preserving the older works the library also keeps up to date with newer books and movies. Therefore, the library serves us well. Another service the library provides is creating a love of reading. For instance, the summer reading program is a wonderful way to get everyone, no matter the age, involved in reading.

Furthermore, various classes hosted at the library provide an opportunity to learn outside of the normal classroom setting. A few years ago I attended an art class at the library with other homeschoolers and it was a great way to meet new people. The classes foster friendships, which we need in a day and age where it might seem easier to have online friends. All of this creates more of a community. Along with the space for classes, the library also has tutoring and study rooms. Although I haven't personally used these rooms, I see how they provide a space free from distractions and I'm sure I'll be using them when I start college. Last, but not least, the biggest way our library serves is with its free educational sources. Unlike online sources, I get significantly less pop up ads when I read a book from the library! Since the books are free, it enables me to explore various subjects and see if that new skill or subject is something I enjoy.

Now that I have lived in Indiana for three years, I still visit the library regularly for completing school papers, speeches, and cooking. I love my library and I'm glad to have it in my community. The library serves knowledge, free knowledge, and that's a beautiful thing. Even as the internet grows, I pray the library continues to preserve and serve knowledge for the rest of time.



Winning Essays

Claudia Southworth

Winner 5-12

The library is the backbone of Westfield. The variety of books really inspires tolerance throughout our town. The more Westfield grows the more diverse it gets and that is the perfect opening for intolerance, but our library helps to stop that. Also it helps minds, young and old, to grow and develop. Lastly, the way I see it the library is a gateway to imagination.

Westfield is growing so our community will only get more diverse. When diversity happens it's a good thing, because people can learn from different backgrounds. Sometimes this leads to disagreements and that's okay, but it becomes a problem when people forget to respect others beliefs. It can get violent. Thankfully the library provides a solution. It's full of different genres of books with all kinds of different characters. This has and will influence our community now and in the future because it helps us accept each other. Like food without flavor, a world where everones the same would be atrocious.

Schools and teachers in Westfield are great, but the library can extend our knowledge. For example, have you ever wanted to know something so badly, but they didn't teach at school? Well then you could go to the library and find books about almost any topic you could want to research! One time my friend and I were looking for crafts that would be good enough to sell. At the time we didn't realize we could order books from the school library online, so we turned to the Westfield Library. In the end we found some great crafts that inspired us. The library can teach you through fiction, too! Almost every story has a theme. These themes teach us important lessons about life. This most certainly will help people expand their minds in the future and present!



Lastly, I would like to bring it to your attention that books are a gateway to imagination. With more and more technology coming along we need more imaginative engineers. Reading books of all kinds can open our minds to all the possibilities. Nonfiction can tell us how to do something and fiction can inspire what we do. Soon we will completely rely on robots unless people continue to imagine. It's already starting to happen and the saddest part is most people don't even realize it. Robots don't have curiosity, so we need books to help us imagine. Books are essential because they persevere our imaginations.

I hope you can see that our future depends on the library. The books that fill it's shelves are more than bundles of paper. They are teachers of tolerance and imagination. Our world would crumble without the foundation of libraries. I wouldn't even have this chance to use my imagination through this essay if the library didn't exist. As the future draws near the way we use libraries will change. Even some of the reasons we need it will change, but these three needs I have addressd will always satisfy our community.



Executive Director's Message

Erin Downey

What a year it has been! I am so proud to say that the Foundation has successfully continued its mission of elevating, advocating and raising funds for the WWPL. Year Two was definitely a difficult one with the pandemic but the Foundation persevered, fundraising for a new collection in the Children's Department and the WYAP tutoring program, as well as securing vital grants and launching the 1902 Society.

The launch of the 1902 Society is very exciting and I look forward to working with business and community members to uphold the WWPL's place as a valued and evolving resource in our community.

The plans for the new library are underway with the groundbreaking scheduled for the Spring of 2022. We are looking forward to a new chapter for the library in a beautiful new building. The new location will be centrally located in downtown Westfield with easy access for all. There will be plenty of parking as well as easy access from the Midland Trail.

Libraries are the most inclusive institution in our country and we will always work with WWPL to celebrate and promote this message.

As we enter our third year, I hope we can count on your support now and in the future!



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