

NEWS RELEASE

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Boundary County Library District Named the Best Small Library in America

BOISE, Idaho -- The Boundary County Library District (BCLD), located in Bonners Ferry, Idaho, has been named the Best Small Library in America for 2017 by *Library Journal* magazine.

The award was created in 2005 to showcase the exemplary work of libraries that serve populations of fewer than 25,000. The BCLD is an invaluable resource for the remote community it serves, which is located at the top of Idaho's panhandle and lies closer to the Canadian border than the Idaho state capitol of Boise, 500 miles to the south.

The BCLD's long-time director, Sandy Ashworth, developed strong county-wide library support by getting out of the stacks and into the community. The area was faced with a shrinking economy that had been based largely on farming and timber. Seeing the need for businesses that would strengthen the economy in progressive ways, Ashworth repurposed space in the library to accommodate the technical and hands-on resources that residents needed to transform Boundary County's future into a vibrant, sustainable one.

The current BCLD director, Craig Anderson, and his team continue that forward-thinking approach through such innovations as their MIT FAB lab, a youth entrepreneur program, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) offerings from sources such as NASA, which are brought to Bonners Ferry via a wide-screen monitor that is connected to the world through Polycom.

Library Director Craig Anderson said, "We are thrilled at the recognition from *Library Journal* for the great things that our small library has accomplished for Boundary County, and this honor motivates us to keep bringing both traditional and progressive library services to our community." Anderson added, "Our staff enjoys coming up with new ways to engage and help our patrons -- whether that is through an early literacy program, community-wide reading challenge, or resources to start a business."

State Librarian Ann Joslin said, "The Boundary County Library is a model for the amazing things that can happen when a library director, staff, and board truly listen to the needs and aspirations of their community and then take action to not only meet those needs, but exceed them."

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