



A Library Love Story

Editorial by Bayview Resident, Ali Spahn

As a young girl in the 1050s, our local library in New Rochelle, New York, felt like entering an old cathedral; dark, and very daunting. So much so, I never enjoyed the visits. That library was a place you would go to borrow dog-eared books, study in silence, be fined and admonished for late-returned books, and get “shushed” by a grouchy, pinch-faced spinster. Well, if you haven’t stepped foot in a library within the past few decades, which I am guilty of, take the leap. You’ll soon realize “this ain’t your mama’s library”.



Now, modern libraries are a home away from home. Silence is no longer a requirement; versatility is. Your local library is a warm safe place where you can be entertained, educated, and, above all, connected. You can pop in when your Wi-Fi is on the fritz or check your email with the computers available to use for free. You might go there to dry off, get warm or to get out of the heat. To meet a friend or to be alone. For a bit of excitement by joining one of the many classes or for a moment of calm. And there are no late fees and no limit on books to borrow. Imagine that.

Recently, I took a position at the local library (my kids had a chuckle at that, Mom the “librarian”) and found that the library is the beating heart of our community. I would hear about our patrons’ families, their spectacular vacations, their pets and even their challenges.

For instance, there’s a gentleman (let’s call him Dave) who came in to pick up a stack of DVD movies and appeared to be extremely anxious. It seemed Dave needed a friend, so I asked how his day was going. He explained he was a veteran and was going through a tough divorce, did not have a place to live, was trying to be approved for veteran disability and felt extremely alone and scared. I was taken back that he was so candid. I listened to him for a while wishing I could ease his pain. Over the next few months, every time Dave stopped by to pick up movies, I would be given an update on his status. Fortunately, each week his situation improved.

Finally, during Christmas week, he was excited to tell me a relative had offered him an RV to use and he found an RV park to settle in. Dave felt life was improving. He was calm and smiling. Having someone to talk to through this trying time I could tell **CONT.**

lifted his spirits. Now, every Friday when he comes by to borrow another stack of DVD movies for the weekend, he has a friend to have a quick chat with; that warms my heart.

My good friend, Sheryl, is a member of the Bayview Book Club that meets at the Athol Library once a month. I asked Sheryl why she loved her library. “When I walk into a library I’m excited at finding that perfect book to sweep me away to another time or place. Sometimes it can feel like I’m on a treasure hunt,” she said.



Athol resident, Jeanne Braun, is a frequent visitor to the Athol library and a member of the Athol/Bayview Book Club. Jeanne and her husband, David, both enjoy attending the library “Paint & Sip” classes and even use the occasion to have a special “couples” day. “It was a wonderful date with my husband! We both enjoyed it immensely,” Jeanne exclaims.



During these tumultuous and ambiguous times, my library friends and all the library children give me hope. Moms and Dads bring their kids who literally run to the children’s book section to find new books to take home in their sack or basket and they fill those to the brim. The children color, giggle, engage with other kids, play with toys, read books while sitting on the floor and delight in the children’s programs and contests designed by the talented staff.

Cheryl Lugar, who taught a Candy Making class at the library had this to say, “I’ve actively taken part in various classes where I learned valuable techniques to enhance my garden soil, master the art of pruning my apple trees, and explore the creation of new soup recipes. Additionally, I was honored to share my passion for candy making by teaching at the library in both 2022 and 2023. It was a great opportunity to meet some of my neighbors and share something I love doing.”

And since February is “Library Lovers” month, I encourage you to take a few minutes to see what YOUR library offers. Take a class. Join a book club. Get to know the staff. Read a fantasy novel or listen to an audio book. Borrow a thousand-piece puzzle. My friends, I found the library is not just full of books; it’s full of love.

Unlocking Master

by Sheryl Puckett

Steve Alcalá is the skilled locksmith behind **Lock Master Locksmith Services**. Steve generously shared his journey to Athol, his passion for locksmithing and the array of services he offers to the community.



Steve and his family embarked on their North Idaho adventure in 2009, leaving behind the landscapes of Pennsylvania. His journey to Athol was a step-by-step exploration that began with a position at Allied Security in Spokane. Initially settling in Hayden, they later seized an opportunity to move to a larger property on Bunco Road co-owning the **Bunco Collective Cottage** on their **Son Mountain Ranch** property.

"Absolutely love it here," Steve exclaims. With a knack for all things mechanical, Steve's journey into locksmithing was spurred by the encouragement of his mother-in-law. Over 35 years later, he continues to find joy and fulfillment in the locksmith profession.

Lock Master Locksmith Services caters to both commercial and residential needs. Steve also extends a helping hand in certain vehicle lockout situations. The flexibility of his services is further highlighted by his willingness to provide assistance during emergencies, whether it's a holiday, weekend, or evening.

Steve takes his role as a security guardian seriously. While Idaho and Washington may not require licensing and bonding for locksmiths, Steve ensures that he is fully insured.

He goes beyond traditional locksmith services by offering security assessments for locks, contributing to the safety of homes and businesses in Athol. In response to the evolving needs of his clients, Steve offers advanced solutions, including master key systems and standalone touchpad systems for keyless entry. While he doesn't set up alarm systems, his expertise lies in providing tailored security solutions that fit the unique requirements of each client.

Steve has the ability to cut keys on-site. Whether it's a residential door or a commercial property, his on-site key cutting services save time and provide efficient solutions.

For those in need of Steve's locksmith expertise, he can be reached at Lock Master Locksmith Services:
Phone: 208-699-8078

Email: lockmaster.steve@gmail.com

Website: www.lockmasterlocksmith.com

Steve Alcalá proves to be a key figure in Athol, offering not just services but a genuine commitment to the safety and security of the community.

Muted *editorial by Sheryl Puckett*

During the Bayview Water & Sewer District's November 20 Rate Increase Hearing, Zoom participants encountered a puzzling issue that should have left the board members seeking clarity. Unfortunately, this heightened awareness was lacking, especially since this hearing affected everyone in the district.

While the secretary granted us access to the hearing through Zoom, there was a surprising twist – we were later informed that we **weren't** officially considered signed up. Consequently, we were denied the chance to make public comments during the designated period.

This inconsistency in the approach left me perplexed, especially when compared to the practice at Kootenai County Hearings where every Zoom participant is asked if they wish to speak, stating their name and address. Or are Kootenai County officials providing this as a service rather than a legal obligation? Which itself reveals a point of contention, how must a governmental agency express the true spirit of the Idaho Open Meeting Law?

This discrepancy raises fundamental questions about the essence of a Public Hearing when participants are denied the opportunity to express their views during the critical public comment period. Given the absence of any policies or rules for Hearings on Zoom in Bayview Water & Sewer District, there is a pressing need for clarification on what constitutes a sign-in for Zoom participants to ensure fair participation in future hearings.

One may wonder, doesn't being allowed into the Zoom meeting constitute signing in as it does at Kootenai County meetings? Perhaps attendees who want to speak need to fill out a form prior to the meeting with their signature and address. That process should be written into a BWSD policy since Zoom meetings are here to stay.

The words "public hearings" means listening to the public so shouldn't everyone be able to speak? This matter should be addressed and now.

Sharing Warmth And Food



January 24 the **Bayview Community Council** provided a free a community meal to over 50 folks at the Bayview Community Center. It was a way of bringing neighbors together in the midst of winter

when social get togethers are few. These four ladies made it happen: Ali, Judi, Jennifer & Marlys.

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