

Applicants sought for Poudre library district board

Kevin Duggan, The Coloradoan 2:22 p.m. MST, January 19, 2015



(Photo: Coloradoan library)

Fort Collins and Larimer County officials are seeking applicants to serve on the Poudre River Public Library District Board of Trustees. The seven-member board provides policy oversight of the district's libraries, including budgets.

Trustees must reside within the legal service boundaries of the district. The deadline to apply is noon Jan. 26.

Residents may apply online or an application may be filled out and returned to the Larimer County commissioners office, 200 W. Oak St., or the Fort Collins City Clerk's Office, 300 LaPorte Ave.

Information: www.larimer.org/library

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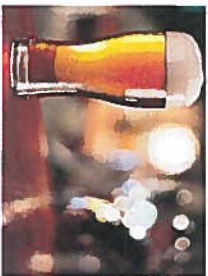
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Happy hour: Your ideas are overdue

Coloradoan staff 4:02 p.m. MST January 23, 2015



How long has it been since you've visited your library? A week? A month? An entire year?

The Poudre River Public Library District is planning for the future, and would like your input.

Join community leaders for a happy hour in the Coloradoan's new Café. We'll break into small groups and share our thoughts about how the Library District can take the conversation beyond the books on its shelves.

Our goal: Continue to make libraries relevant, important, and purposeful. We can't do it without you.

Who: Editor Lauren Gustus will lead a "Lean Coffee Model" discussion. Library leadership will kick us off.

Date: Tuesday, Jan. 27

Time: 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Location: The Fort Collins Coloradoan's new Community Café, 1300 Riverside Ave, Fort Collins. Drinks will be provided. Bring your big ideas!

Want to attend? Visit <http://bit.ly/1ECUBGc> (<http://bit.ly/1ECUBGc>) to RSVP. Or email editor Lauren Gustus at lgustus@coloradoan.com.

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Windsor attorney Frey leaving job but not town

Chuck Fessie 1:15 p.m. MST January 23, 2015



(Photo: Don Reichert/For the Beacon)

For more than 30 years, John Frey has been an intricate part of the fabric that makes up the town of Windsor.

Frey started working for Windsor in 1983 when he became town attorney. He held that post until 2009 when he stepped aside, slightly, to become the assistant town attorney to current town attorney Ian McCargar.

Frey held the assistant position until this year when he decided to call it a career.

"John's an outstanding attorney, but what sets him apart is his manner and his intelligence," McCargar said.

"His ability to relate to people is unparalleled."

Among his many accomplishments, Frey was instrumental in the Interstate 25/Colorado 392 interchange project. Frey's efforts resulted in Colorado funding \$20 million of the \$25 million project.

"When we started we didn't know what to expect and now you have Infill and it has very much become a region that is growing and continues to support one another," Frey said of Windsor's growth.

Before coming to Windsor in 1983, Frey practiced law in Northern Colorado since 1972, when he graduated from the University of Colorado Law School. For 25 years, Frey focused on civil and criminal litigation. In 1984, he helped open the firm of Freya, Korb, Heggerty & Michaels, P.C., which served Fort Collins for 24 years. In 2006, the firm merged with Ian McCargar to become Frey and McCargar LLC.

In 2007, the firm merged once more, this time with John E. Plack Attorney at Law P.C. to become Frey, McCargar, & Plack LLC. Their new firm's focus is civil law, including family matters, local government and land use law. They also provide mediation and arbitration services to.

Frey has served Windsor and the Northern Colorado Community on various boards, commissions and initiatives, including being as president of the Larimer County Health Board, Poudre River Public Library district board of directors and Larimer County Humane Society board of directors. At the humane society, he contributed many hours to the help the shelter's construction initiative.

"John's a very engaging human being," said Lucia Lilley, former Fort Collins city attorney. "He understands relationships and he understands politics. He goes into a complex project wanting to solve it and he brings the skills and tools to be able to solve it."

Frey is an author, avid cyclist, photographer, historian, political scientist and mentor to Northern Colorado lawyers. He and his wife of 40-plus years, Chris, have two grown daughters, four grandchildren and a golden retriever.

"I'm going to stay involved with Windsor," Frey said. "I feel some ownership in that. I'll play some golf, do some cycling and stay active."

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Soapbox: The library needs your help writing its future

7 p.m. MST January 25, 2015



(Photo: Courtesy Photo)

The Poudre River Public Library District is at a stage in its organizational life when it needs to take pause and re-assess services and programs. After eight years of successful growth and expansion as a separate government entity, it's time to circle back to our generous and supportive public to make certain we are meeting the needs of our community. For that reason the Board of Trustees has contracted with State Communications to facilitate a community needs assessment to gather your ideas and opinions about the library district's future. How can we best serve both the individual customer who uses our services in-person or remotely as well as meet the community's informational and educational needs in these times of rapid technological and societal change?

To refresh your memory and as a point of reference for newcomers to our service area, the Poudre River Public library district came into existence almost eight years ago when voters approved the funding of a library district. Prior to 2007, the library was a department of the City of Fort Collins. Our service area is 1,800 square miles and its boundaries are similar to those of Poudre School District. Since 2007, we have enhanced and increased our facilities.

Council Tree library opened in 2009, Old Town library was expanded and remodeled in 2012 and Harmony library was remodeled in 2012 in cooperation with our partner, Front Range Community College-Larimer Campus. Enhancements to Library Park were completed in 2014. Also, administrative and support staff moved into a separate building, Webster House, to free up more space for public use at the Old Town library. Our collections now include a wide array of digital content including eBooks, digital music and audio and research databases in addition to more than 400,000 print and audio-visual items. More than 1 million people walk through our doors each year and over 3 million items are checked-out or downloaded annually.

The library district has achieved the ambitious goals of its most recent strategic plan and the 2009 master facilities plan. Now, we need your help in identifying and prioritizing programs and services that will be relevant for the next five years.

The needs assessment kicked off in November 2014 when nearly 70 stakeholders and library advocates participated in focus groups held at our three libraries. Currently, all residents of the library district are being asked to share their thoughts, and prioritize the many different ways that our public library can better serve the public by participating in a survey that will be live until Jan. 31. The survey is available online at www.overduideas.org/ (<http://www.overduideas.org/>) or you can fill out a paper copy at one of the libraries. You will be asked to select amenities, improvements and programs you would like to see in our libraries, identify barriers to use, prioritize funding allocated to different areas, and give feedback on both digital and traditional services.

Our consultants will summarize the responses and make specific recommendations to the Board of Trustees in March. The recommendations will be taken into consideration as board and library employees craft a new strategic plan later in the year.

The survey takes only 10 minutes to complete and respondents may enter a drawing to win one of four \$50 Downtown Business Association gift cards. I encourage community members to participate and to think big and bold. Your ideas are overdue!

Holly Carroll is executive director of Poudre River Public Library District.

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BOOKS

Gaiman to stop at Old Firehouse

By Erin Udell

ErinUdell@coloradoan.com

Celebrated author Neil Gaiman will make his way to a Fort Collins bookstore early next month.

Gaiman, who's known for his comic book series "The Sandman" and novels "The Graveyard Book," "Coraline" and "Stardust," will be at Old Firehouse Books for a signing Feb. 6 to promote his newest work, "Trigger Warning."

Gaiman's stop at Old Firehouse is the prize for a sales contest the store won for selling the most copies of Gaiman's book

"The Ocean at the End of the Lane" late last year, the store's events manager Kelsey Myers said.

To get into the event, Myers said customers will have to buy a copy of "Trigger Warning" or must have already bought "The Ocean at the End of the Lane" from Old Firehouse during its sales contest.

Customers are also encouraged to pre-pay for their "Trigger Warning" copy online to ensure their copy in the store and gauge attendance for the event.

Ten percent of "Trigger Warning" profits on the day of the event will go to the Poudre River Public Library, Myers said.

Opinion

Nick Hontz of Fort Collins looks at books with his daughter Bree Hontz during the grand opening of the Council Tree Library in Fort Collins on March 28, 2009. The editorial board says the Poudre River Public Library District should do more to highlight what services are offered, from Minecraft playtime for kids to an expansive collection of electronic media.



COLORADOAN LIBRARY

OUR VIEW

LIBRARY'S BIGGEST HURDLE: SELLING ITSELF

The Poudre River Public Library District faces significant fiscal and philosophical challenges.

One of its primary funding sources is about to sunset. Which means it will look to do more with fewer resources.

A successful strategic plan that included upgrades to both the Old Town and Council Tree branches is complete. Planning is underway for the next three years and one of the organization's principal goals — creating more awareness of library programs and services — is far less tangible than a new or improved building.

Like any other business, the library is striving to meet the ever-changing needs of its current users and to grow its customer base.

"Public libraries have become community centers," says Executive Director Holly Carroll.

ple attended at least one of 2,000 programs — from story times to job-hunting classes; librarians visited dozens of schools, assisted with grant writing projects and conducted business research; and 323,873 people used computers to access the Internet. Looking for Minecraft meet ups for the kids? Your local library has them.

Still, many of us don't think of the library as a destination. We go to Amazon or Barnes & Noble for our books. Most of us don't know what services are available. That's on us, but it's also on the library.

public library system from a resource standpoint. Everyone has access, regardless of socioeconomic status.

As stakeholders, your feedback is crucial as the district develops its strategic plan for what happens years down the road. Through Jan. 31, go online to www.overdueideas.org and take a survey that's meant to help shape the future of your local library system.

Ultimately, community forums and the survey will make up the backbone of recommendations that go the district's board for approval later this year. A three-year strategic plan will be built around our suggestions.

The library's footprint is significant — mirroring the lines drawn by Poudre School District. That's important, in that we be-

shape priorities and look at improvements extending beyond bricks-and-mortar upgrades, a real and lasting partnership with schools is imperative.

Elementary schools serve as community centers for families. Creating a better awareness of the games, programs and books available to school-aged children will pay dividends down the road. This all costs money.

The Building on Basics funding that the library receives from the City of Fort Collins is set to expire this year. No longer part of the city, the district isn't eligible for additional dollars. When the tax expires, it will lose roughly 8.3 percent of its \$8.9 million budget.

The library will dip into reserves to cover the difference, but Carroll said she's optimistic about the district's property reas-

YOUR OPINION MATTERS

Visit www.overdueideas.org to take a survey that will help shape the future of your local library system.

district's capital projects budget is "basically depleted," and Poudre River Public Library District has fewer square feet to serve a larger population than its peer districts across the state. Estimates are the district is 50 percent short of the physical space it needs.

The library is filled with great stories — from classics to mysteries to self-help. It's also got a great story of its own to share, and leadership both within the nonprofit and the community must find new