

March 18, 2013

**Public Testimony to
Joint Ways and Means Sub-Committee
on General Government - Oregon State Library**

The Governor's Recommended Budget for 2013-2015 calls for the elimination of the State Library's Government Research Services team. This group has been the partnership organization for Willamette Valley Genealogical Society (WVGS), providing the cataloging and processing of the genealogy materials purchased by WVGS. They also staff the Reference Desk, helping state employees and the public find government or historical information while WVGS volunteers answer genealogy questions.

Questions that are raised by this announcement:

Will the Reference Room remain open and research materials be available to the public?

Although it is not stated in the mission of the Library, the Oregon State Library also serves the general public besides state agencies, Oregon libraries and the sight-impaired. Not all materials in the Oregon State Library are listed in the on-line catalog, and many documents have to be viewed at the library, especially in the Oregon or Special Collections.

The Reference Room is the public face of the Oregon State Library. The Oregon State Library:

- 1) **staffs and maintains** the Reference Room Monday through Friday and on one Saturday each month
- 2) **provides space** for a genealogy collection and catalogs donated genealogical materials
- 3) **helps recruit and train volunteers** for book repair, cataloging, and genealogical research assistance
- 4) **is also open one Saturday** a month for the WVGS meeting and for the public to do research
- 5) **co-sponsors** a Volunteer Training workshop once a year
- 6) **maintains equipment** in the Reference Room, such as microfilm readers, printers and computers
- 7) **updates and maintains** on the Oregon.gov/OSL web site which includes information on Genealogy at the Library
- 8) **helps students** from public schools and Willamette Heritage Center with student projects, genealogical and historical.

What happens to the partnership between the Oregon State Library and WVGS?

WVGS has the largest and best collection of genealogy resources in Oregon. What will happen to this collection?

In 1987, WVGS and OSLS formed a partnership and sign a Memorandum of Understanding for each Biennium, which includes the statement that the Oregon State Library and the Willamette Valley Genealogical Society "**mutually desire to maintain and enhance the Genealogical Resource Center, providing genealogical research services, material and facilities for genealogist and Oregon history researchers at the Oregon State Library**".

The Willamette Valley Genealogical Society promotes awareness of the collections of the State Library and

- 1) **helps recruit and train** genealogy volunteers to help in the Reference Room Monday through Friday and on the open Saturday
- 2) **donates** genealogical and historical materials to the Library, more than several thousand books and periodicals over the years

Monthly Genealogy Statistics

Date	Genealogy Patrons (all walk-ins)	Questions Answered (all formats)	Questions referred by OSJ Staff	# Attendees at the Saturday Program	Special Projects
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Jun-13					
May-13					
Apr-13					
Mar-13	150	65		27	Saturday Program
Feb-13	70	75	1	31	Saturday Program
Jan-13	115	40	2	17	Saturday Program
Dec-12	135	60		32	Saturday Program
Nov-12	175	65		29	Saturday Program
Oct-12	150	70		20	Saturday Program
Sep-12	155	65		30	Saturday Program
Aug-12	135	40	1	?	Saturday Program
Jul-12					
Jun-12	225	100	1	39	Saturday Program
May-12	180	85	3	25	Saturday Program, Beginners - 6
Apr-12	195	90	0	26	Saturday Program, Beginners - 3
Mar-12	165	49	2	20	Saturday Program
Feb-12	135	60	3	31	Saturday Program
Jan-12	125	65	4	24	Saturday Program
Dec-11	125	45	3	27	Saturday Program
Nov-11	140	56	2	26	Saturday Program
Oct-11	155	70	4	32	Saturday Program
Sep-11	140	50	2	32	Saturday Program
Aug-11	210	120	2	24	Saturday Program, Silverton group-6
Jul-11	165	60	0	35	Saturday Program

ARCHIVED YEARS BY BENEFIT

Date	Patrons/Walk-ins	Average Per Day	Questions Answered	Questions referred by OSJ Staff	Average Monthly % of Attendees at the Saturday Program	Letters	Phone Requests	Emails
2011-13								
2009-11	4130	7.94	1773	76	27			
2007-09	2681	5.4	817	82	23			
2005-07	2596	5.1				31	58	204
2003-05	3445	6.6				86	82	266

