

# *The Meridian Free Library District – a gift for the Village from the Occident Club.*

## 1908

The Interurban-Boise Valley Railway Company completed its first connection to Meridian in late June of 1908 - in time for a Grand Fourth of July celebration.

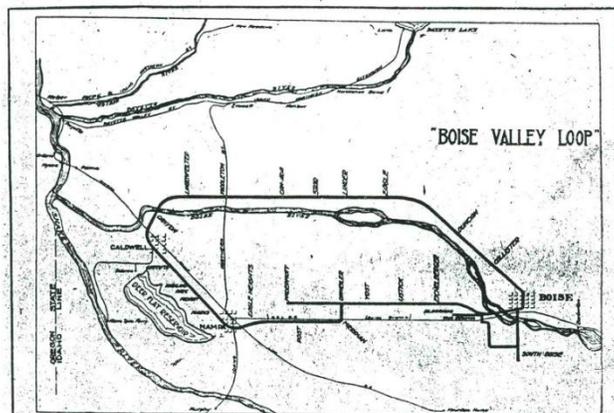


Photo above shows the "Boise Valley Loop" on which the Interurban Line ran on for 19 years.



Photo courtesy of Idaho Historical Society

Photo above is of Meridian's Interurban Depot, the former Boise Valley Traction Station.

# 1924

The first meeting of the Occident Club was a luncheon held on June 19, 1924. Members of the Nampa Century Club were invited to "help us get started right."

Their meetings included book reports, studies of foreign cultures, musical numbers and their dreams of improving life in the village and the area surrounding Meridian. One thing that would improve life in the village would be a library.

A traveling library was opened in Meridian at the Songer Pharmacy on September 12, 1924. The books were obtained from the State Traveling Library at Boise by the Occident Club of Meridian and the "latest and best books are included in each shipment."

The Occident Club sponsored Library Drives with Pie Socials, Card Parties and Dances. They had refreshment booths at the State Fair selling hot meat sandwiches, homemade pies and ice cream. They raised enough to start a small library collection.

1926

# Library Drive

—BY THE OCCIDENT CLUB OF MERIDIAN—

## BUY A TAG

### FRIDAY, FEB. 19

#### ENTERTAINMENTS

CHILDREN'S SPECIAL at 4 o'clock.

PICTURES SHOWS---Stories by Mrs. Pitts of Boise at the Meridian Theatre.

PIE SOCIAL and Entertainment at 8 o'clock at the Methodist Church.

CARD PARTY at Mrs. Dan Barker's at 8 o'clock.

DANCE at Parkin Hall, 9 o'clock p. m. Good Music

# 1925

On March 25, 1925, they moved the books to the City Hall and in 1928; they were told that they needed to find a building to house the Library.

# 1928

The Interurban Stage ceased operations and the train station was for sale.

# 1930

After some price negotiation, the club purchased the Interurban Stage station for \$1,205.00. They took out a loan for \$1,000.00 at 8% interest. Over the next few years, the club continued to raise funds with rummage sales, carnivals, dances and card parties to pay the mortgage and repairs on the building that they used for their club house and for the library.

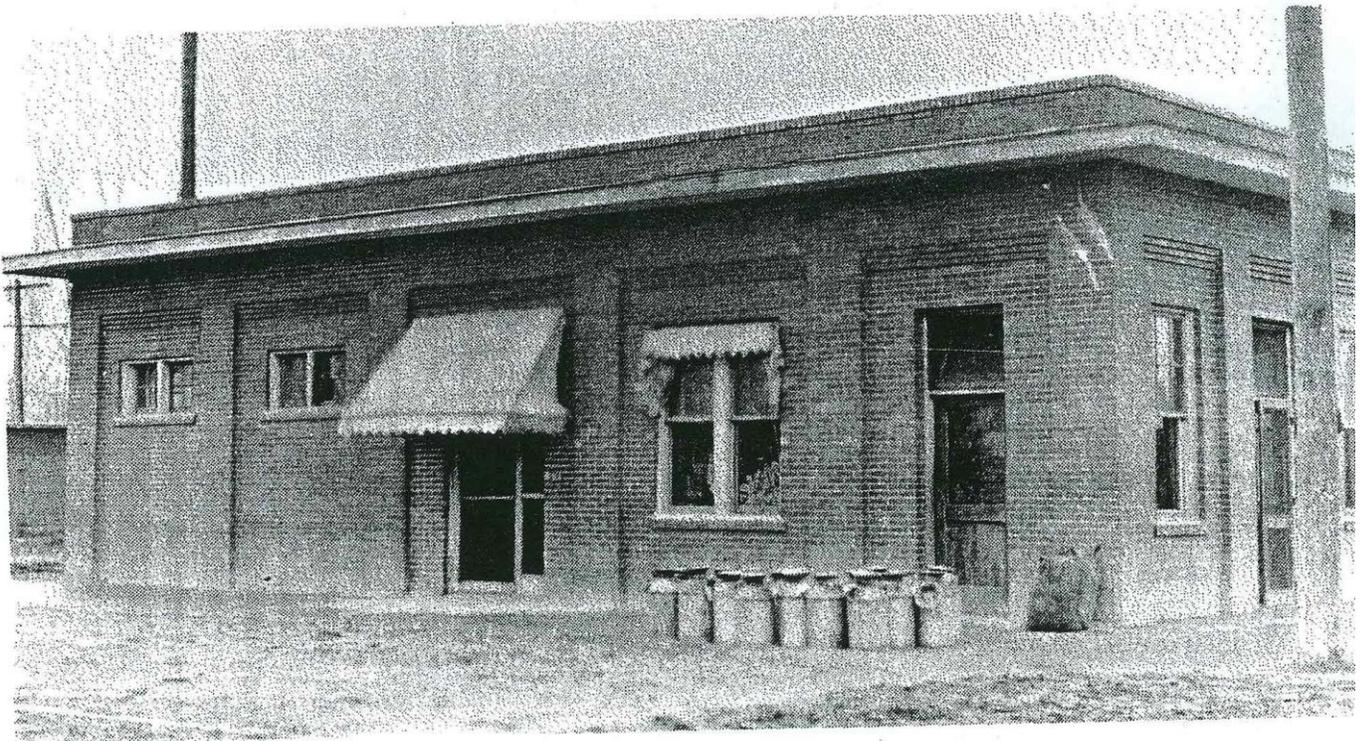


Photo courtesy of Idaho Historical Society

# 1950

**The Library was standardized in 1950 so that it became eligible for tax support. The Meridian City Clerk reported that the Occident Club received a tax levy of 1 mil for the library in 1950. When space proved inadequate, fund raising efforts brought enough money to add a 50 by 20 foot room on the east side of the depot and the library moved into this addition in 1951.**

# 1968

**In 1968 plans were made for further expansion of the Library. Fund raising efforts were begun to reach the goal of 40% in local funds to match for \$17,879 in federal funds from LSCA. The building was expanded to 1800 square feet.**

# 1974

**It became obvious to the members of the Club that they could not continue to operate the Library with volunteers and the 1 mil levy from the City. Many people outside the City wanted to use the Library as well. Petitions were circulated calling for the formation of the District. On August 27, 1974, the voters approved the establishment of the Meridian Free Library District. Members of the Occident Club voted unanimously to provide the Meridian Free Library District use of the building for a fee of \$1 per year. At this time, there were two libraries operating in the same building - The Meridian Public Library and the Meridian Free Library District.**

# 1975

**One year later, on August 26, 1975, an election was held asking residents of the city to tax themselves for a library. It passed and the two libraries merged and became the Meridian Free Library District. The Occident Club deeded the property to the District.**

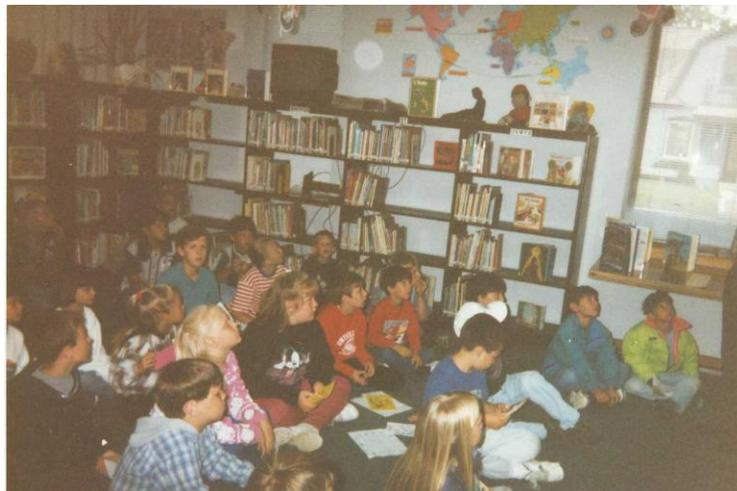
# 1986

Using funds from an LSTA grant, the building was expanded in 1986. The new building included a small kitchen area and a meeting space for the Occident Club. They continued to hold their meetings there until the club disbanded in 1996.



# 1995 Bond Election!

By 1995, the population of the District had grown significantly and the Board of Trustees decided that it was time for a bigger building. They researched population projections and worked with the Idaho State Library on space needs. In order to build a new building the District would need to pass a Bond Election with a 2/3 majority vote.



Once again, the ladies of community came together to help build a library. Betsy Buckley and Pam Wood started a Friends of the Library group for the purpose of passing the bond.

man presented a problem in the 17 years he has lived on Dawn Court, so he wonders why opening Locust Avenue is needed.

"My personal feeling is I'd like to see it kept closed. It would mean more traffic on Dawn Court and Locust Avenue, and there would be more shopping center, soon to be constructed at Fairview Avenue and Locust Grove Road. Neighbors said motorists would take the windy roads through their subdivision to avoid Fairview traffic. Eventually, the district, residents and the developer com-

See Connect/3G



Tom Shanahan/The Idaho Statesman

Pam Wood helps her 4-year-old daughter Emma pick out a video at the Meridian Public Library recently. Wood is helping form an advisory group to try to get a bond passed for a new public library.

## Bond sought to build new Meridian Library

Crowded building inspires formation of 'Friends' group

By Martin S. Johncox  
The Idaho Statesman



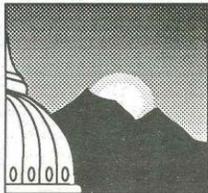
Patty Younger Betsy Buckley

You don't have to go inside the Meridian Library to under-

The Friends of the Library raised funds by holding a carnival to pay for advertising for the bond. They printed flyers and posted them in local businesses. They organized groups of people to go door-to-door handing out flyers and talking to people about the importance of the new Library.

# November 7, 1995

## Bond Passes!



### Idaho State Library *NEWSLETTER*

Volume 34; No. 12  
December, 1995

## Meridian Public Library passes \$3.4 million bond

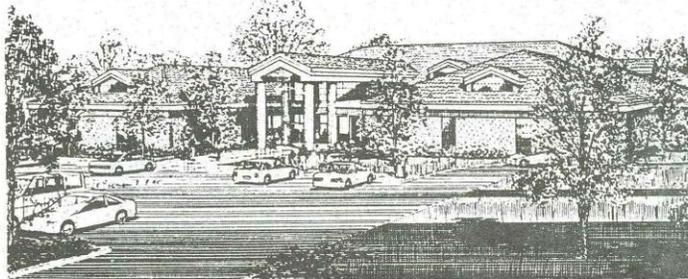
Construction could start in May for a new Meridian Public Library building. Voters overwhelmingly approved a \$3.4 million bond election on November 7.

"I think it says that a lot of the new people moving in are more interested in their community, and the older residents are as well," library director Patty Younger said. "It's a wonderful thing for Meridian."

The new library will be 30,000 square feet. Its children's section alone will be 4,500 square feet — the total size of the current library. The new library will also include parking for 68 vehicles, a community meeting room, quiet adult reading room, public use computers, quiet study areas, expanded reference and magazine sections, and compact discs will be available for checkout. Younger said it would take about a year to build the facility.

The bond passed with 77 percent approval. A super-majority of 66.7 percents was needed for passage. Younger said turnout was a record for a Meridian library bond, at 2,330. A \$2.6 million bond for the library failed last February. The 20-year bond will increase property taxes by 25 cents per \$1,000 of taxable value.

Election officials report 14.8 percent of registered voters came out to vote in this election. Younger cred-



An artist's rendering of the new Meridian library.

its this bond's success to increased public awareness. She also said it helped to have a rendering of the proposed building and a location planned a head of time. The Friends of the Library and Board and staff members spent a great deal of time working on publicity, creating flyers and banners, planning media events and conducting a door to door campaign the Saturday before the election which covered the town.

"We did everything we could possibly think of to get coverage about our needs," Younger said.

Although the staff is excited about the bond's passage, they realize they have "more work ahead than we could imagine." Younger met with

planning and zoning people the day after the election and need to have all their bid specifications done by April in order to meet their May deadline for beginning construction.

Younger said local librarians have been very supportive of their efforts. Younger and directors of the Boise Public Library, Ada Community Library and Caldwell Public Library will be meeting next week with the library's architect to go over the building plans and make suggestions based on their experiences with library building projects.

"We want the plan to be as fool-proof as possible," Younger said. "We're talking about a lot of money. It's great that they are doing this."

# 1996

**The property at 1326 W. Cherry Lane was chosen because it is exactly in the middle of the Library District. The property wasn't for sale, but the owner, Anna Koskella was willing to sell because it would become the Library. There was a farm house, barn and pasture on the property when it was purchased. Anna donated an antique plow that now sits on the east side of the building.**



**The farmhouse was moved to another site to be enjoyed by another family. The boards from the barn were carefully removed and taken to several different homes to be reused in a new way. Even though great efforts were taken to save the large trees on the site, only one remains. It is near the antique plow on the east side of the building.**

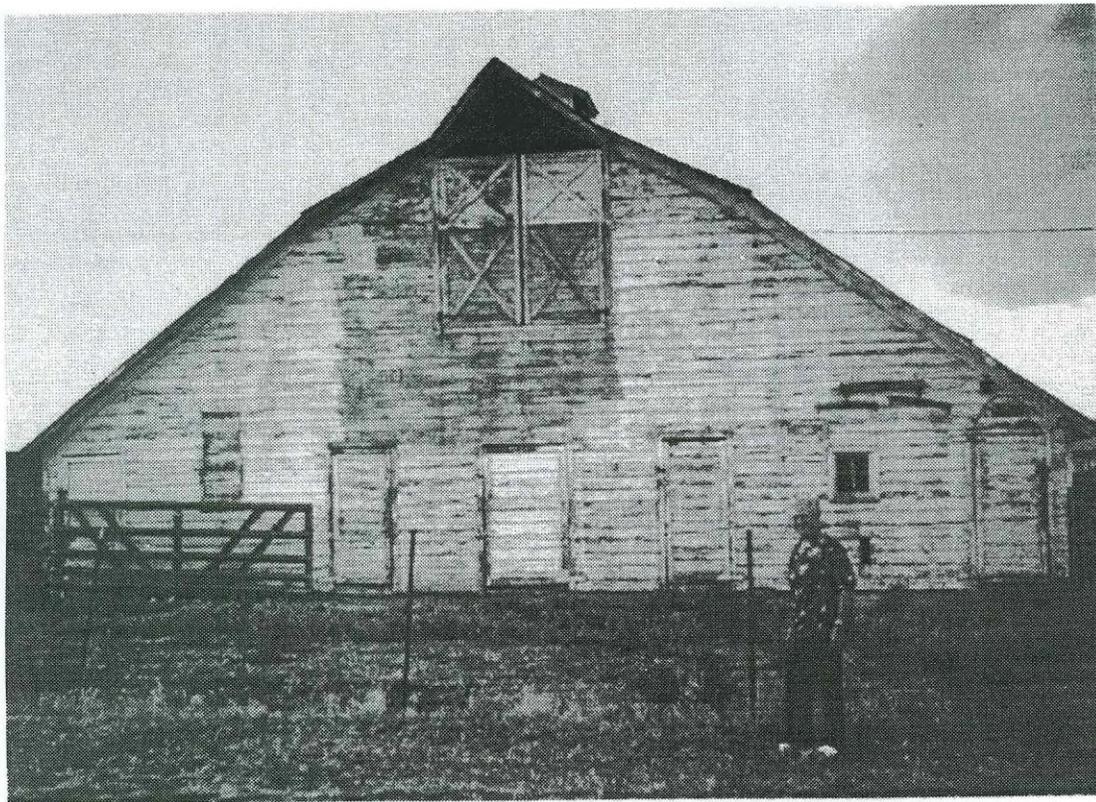


Photo courtesy of Anna Dunten Koskela

## New Meridian Library to replace area of longtime local resident

By Anna Dunten Koskela  
Special to The Valley News

The new Meridian Library will soon be build on the land that Anna Dunten Koskela has lived on for 55 years. She felt good and thought she was ready to leave the old homestead when she was approached by library officials last spring. She said, "I feel happy to be able to help my town that I have I have lived in all my life."

Now as the days get closer for her to move, it is quite scary! There are so

acre farm June 1, 1941 when they were married. She has seen many changes since then. She has always had a special sentimental feeling for old barns. It is going to be very hard to see the old barn be torn down. Jerald would store hay in the barn to feed the hay to Jersey cows he milked. The neighbors helped each other putting up the hay and doing the threshing. Most farmers put the crops and did the haying and threshing with horse drawn machinery. It was so much different then as the

ting up hay, threshing grain, etc.

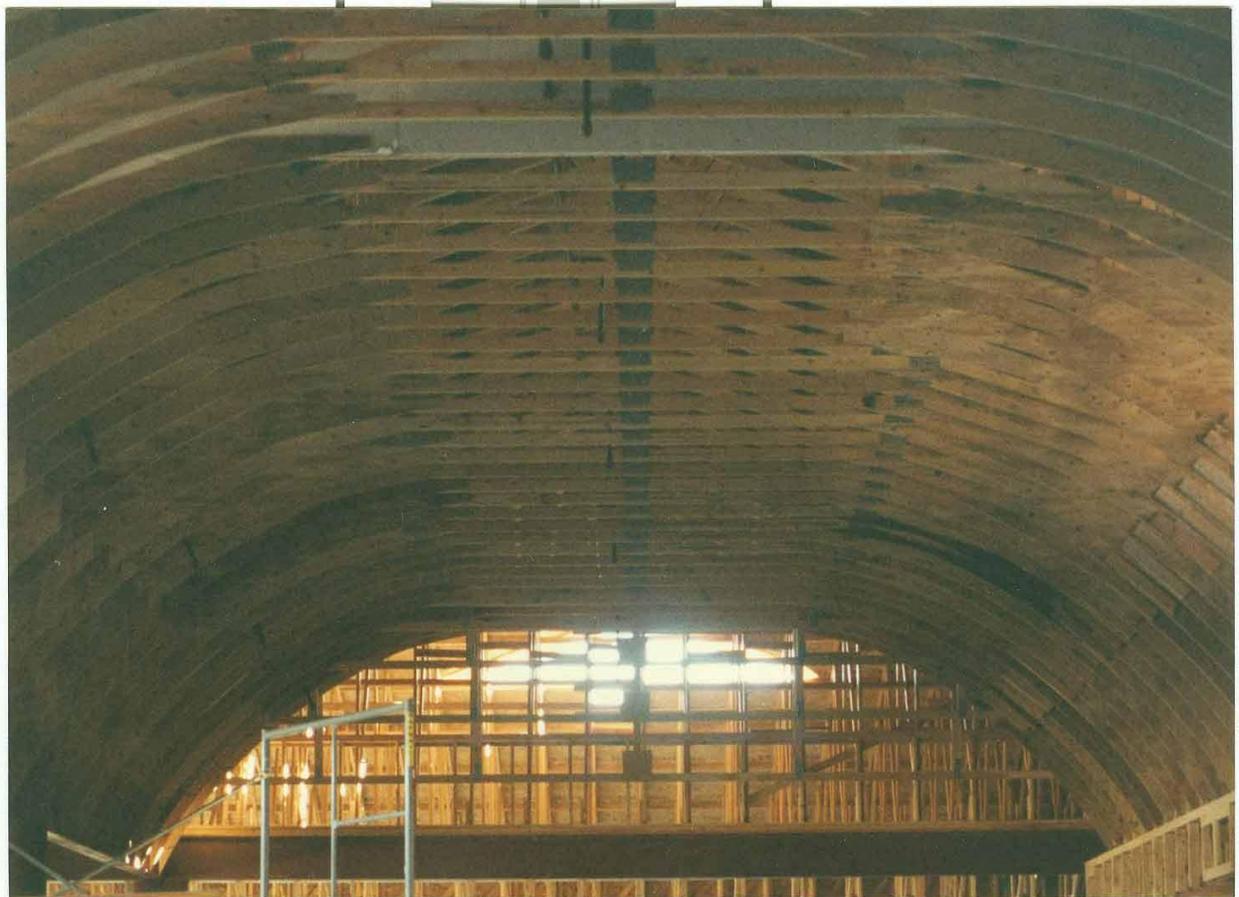
Jerald and Anna Raised a daughter and three sons. Anna feels children were happier and more content growing up on the farm even if they didn't have all the things children have nowadays. They helped their parents and they also would entertain themselves playing games with the neighbor children — hide and seek, kick the can, and baseball.

I guess I will have to go along with the change of time! We can't stop pro-

**Construction began in May of 1996 and took one year to complete.**









**Moving day! The Library employed a professional moving company and many volunteers helped with the move. It took two weeks.**



*May 16, 1997*

**Ribbon Cutting and Open House.**



**Notice Terry Smith using his cell phone!**



# 2004

**In 2004, the Meridian Library District purchased a bookmobile. The first official outing was the Annual Christmas parade. Formal services began in January of 2005.**

## Meridian library to get bookmobile

Bus will bring books closer to people who can't get to branches

By Kathleen Kreller  
The Idaho Statesman

MERIDIAN — Librarians usually don't have to consider things like gas mileage, transmissions and commercial driver's licenses.

But the Meridian Library District's leaders gave much thought to those issues when buying a bus that's being transformed into a bookmobile that will hit the city's streets in January.

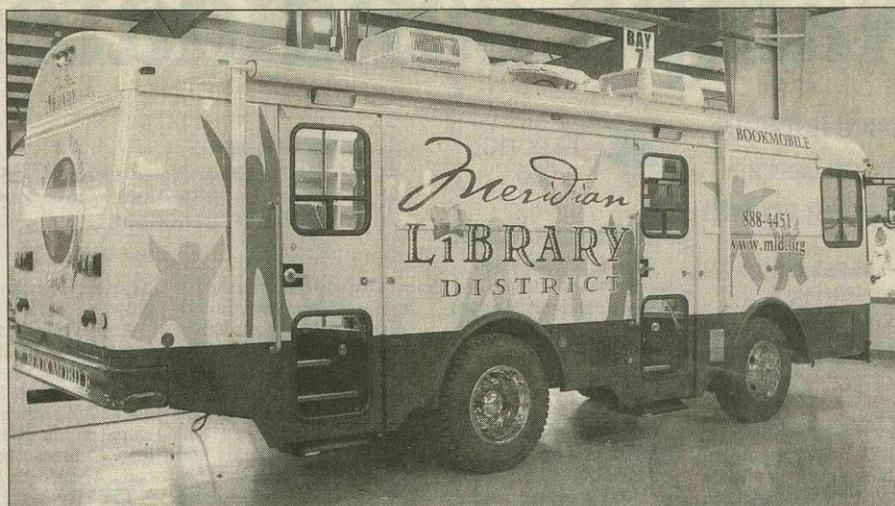
"We did not get the most expensive one available," said Library Director Patricia Younger. "We got one with a good transmission and good engine and things like that. You don't usually think about those things."

Younger said the bookmobile is needed to reach residents who don't have the physical ability or time to make it to one of Meridian's two library branches.

"It's a mobile library branch that will help us serve our large district better because we can take the library to the neighborhoods," she said.

To raise the needed \$147,000 to purchase the 28-foot bus, the district held book sales and included line items in their budget for the past two years. The bus is expected to arrive next week after getting finishing touches in Greensboro, N.C.

The bookmobile, which will hold 5,000 to 8,000 books, will



Courtesy photo / Kenny Bishop  
The Meridian Library District's new bookmobile gets finishing touches at Matthews Specialty Vehicles in Greensboro, N.C. The vehicle is scheduled to hit the streets of Meridian in January.

feature a dark green and burgundy color scheme with floor-to-ceiling maple bookshelves. It also will feature computers with satellite Internet access.

"It seems fairly roomy," Younger said.

Before the bookmobile starts rolling in January, the district is conducting surveys to find where it's needed most, Younger said.

"We are trying to find out where to take it and what they would like to have on it," she said.

Heather Clark will work on board the bookmobile as its librarian and sometime driver.

"It is kind of a switch for me, because I have been a library director for eight years," Clark said.

"I purposely chose this because I thought it would be fun and exciting."

Clark said the bookmobile will be used for outreach programs for seniors, youths and busy families. That may include taking books and other programs to senior citizens in nursing homes.

"If they can't read for themselves any more, we'd love to do a program where we are reading to them," she said.

Clark said busy families often do not have time to make it to the library after long work hours and other commitments.

"So when they are done with all those things, they just go across the street instead of across town

for service," she said of how they could use the bookmobile.

Clark said the district will hire a driver with a commercial driver's license to operate the bookmobile, but she may have to fill in occasionally.

"My understanding is that it's like driving an RV," she said.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Kathleen Kreller at [kkreller@idahostatesman.com](mailto:kkreller@idahostatesman.com) or 377-6418.

At [IdahoStatesman.com](http://IdahoStatesman.com)

Link to the Meridian Library District's online library catalog

# 2006

**The building on Cherry Lane was becoming more crowded as were the streets of Meridian. People living south of the Interstate found it difficult to get to the Library. A branch was needed south of the Interstate. Once again, the Board of Trustees decided to run a bond election.**

**The Bond Election held in November failed to achieve the required 2/3 majority vote.**

# 2007

**After waiting the required six months, the Board decided to try again.**

**The Bond Election held in May also failed to achieve the required 2/3 majority vote.**

**The Board of Trustees still held a vision of a Branch Library located south of the Interstate. They purchased three and a half acres located at 1721 S. Spanish Sun Way for building a Branch Library in the future.**



# 2008

**The Board of Trustees began to search for a store front to rent south of the Interstate. After a six-month search and a three-month renovation project, the new Silverstone Branch was ready to open!**

A4 • FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2009

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# Meridian Library branch set to

**Residents are using them for job hunts and entertainment, funding gets tight.**

BY JOE ESTRELLA

jestrella@idahostatesman.com

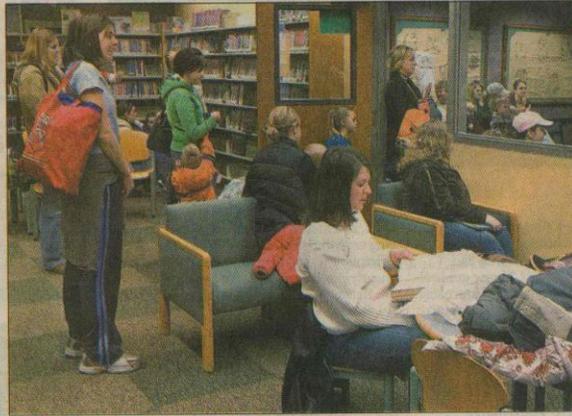
As the economy has weakened, the number of people coming through the Meridian Library's doors has increased to about 3,000 a day, said Library Director Patricia Younger. That's a 25 percent spike over the same period a year ago.

"We have people standing in line when we open at 9 a.m.," Younger said.

The activity level at the library mirrors what is happening at libraries throughout the Treasure Valley, where demand for computer time, requests for assistance with resume writing, and CD and DVD checkouts are reaching record levels. After seeing a 20 percent increase in usage, Boise opened two branch libraries in 2008 and has plans to open a third in June. Ada Community Library also reports increasing usage.

"You will see (demand up) everywhere," said Nampa Library Director Karen Ganske, who is seeing a similar trend there.

The Meridian Library is about to open its first branch to help meet the growing demand. At the same time, the library is having to grapple with the effects of the bad



DARIN OSWALD / doswald@idahostatesman.com

Parents wait for their children at the Meridian Library during story time in the children's section.

economy and will struggle to pay for its expanding operations.

The Meridian Library gets its money in a couple of different ways. Its primary and most stable source of revenue comes from its share of property taxes collected inside its taxing district.

Its other source of money is a percentage it receives from every building permit issued for construction in the district. With construction at a standstill, however, last year's revenues from building permits is going to fall well short of the \$170,000 generated in 2007, Younger

said. "When we start figuring out next year's budget, we're not going to be counting on much from building permits," Younger said. "That means the levy will probably have to go up. But it won't go up very much. The library is still the biggest bang for the taxpayer's buck."

Leo Phelps, 29, has been using the library's high-speed network two or three times a week to search for work since losing his job at the Meridian T-Mobile call center in September.

Phelps has Internet service at home, but can afford

only dial-up service.

"It's a lot faster here," he said.

The library budget for 2008-2009 was \$2.9 million. That was enough to fund operations at the main library, which has 41 paid employees and 20 volunteers. That money also helped with a new 4,500-square foot branch library that is scheduled to open March 27. That facility will have eight employees.

Joe Estrella: 377-6465

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LIBRARY SERVICES**  
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# March 30, 2009

## Meridian Library opens Silverstone Branch!

The Silverstone Branch opened on March 30, 2009 with a Ribbon Cutting and Open House. It is a full-service branch complete with programs for children and adults.

March 30, 2009

Valley Times

Page 19



John H. Burns

*Ed. note:* John Burns' books of short stories are available from Amazon.com, his publisher, Crystal Dreams; or himself at vfw4000@cableone.net.



*Sage advice:* "To keep your marriage brimming, with love in the wedding cup, whenever you're wrong, admit it; whenever you're right, shut up."  
— Ogden Nash

### Realtor's Corner

## Bank-owned properties for sale, some not so cheaply

By Rich Nesbit

Everybody would like a deal. Homebuyers included.

There is nothing wrong with that. The question is just what is a good deal these days. As of March in Ada County on our MLS, there are approximately 251 bank-owned properties for sale.

## Meridian Library opens Silverstone branch



From left, Luke Cavener, Mayor's Office; Chamber Ambassador Elizabeth Stoneman; Library staffer Tami Tipton, Chamber Admin Assistant Shannon Ballou, Library staffer Elaine Shannon, Branch Manager Natalie Nation and Library Director Patricia Younger cutting the ribbon (between and behind them is Library Board President Howard Little), and Library staffers Damaris Boettiger (hiding Mayor de Weerd) and Lindsey Lee. (Photo courtesy Sierra Jorgensen)

MERIDIAN — "The America I love still exists at the front desks of our public libraries,"

wrote famed author Kurt Vonnegut. That maxim is alive and well at the new Meridian Library Silverstone branch at 3531 E. Overland Road (one block east of the intersection of Eagle and Overland roads), where officials held a ribbon cutting on Friday, March 27th to celebrate the branch's grand

opening.

"We had approximately 200 attendees from around the Treasure Valley, and checked out hundreds of items to people from the valley," said Branch Manager Natalie Nation. "The grand opening featured donuts, coffee, hot cocoa and cake donated by Krispy Kreme, Moxie Java and

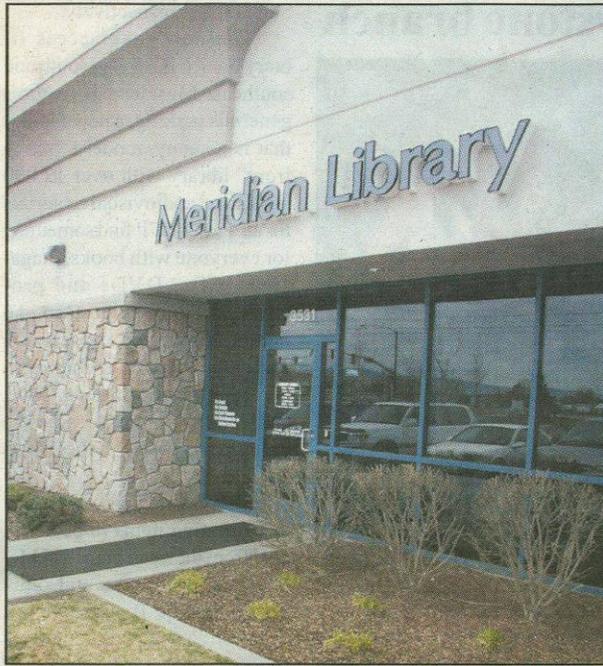
Sam's Club, respectively."

The new easy-access library branch is serving south and southeast Meridian. It features generous parking, a new facility that is a sunny, modern "storefront" library with over 12,000 books and audiovisual materials for all ages. You'll find something for everyone with books, magazines, CDs, DVDs and programs. There are also 16 internet-connected and research computers, four kids-only computers in the Children's Cave, and places to relax and read while enjoying a view of the Boise Foothills.

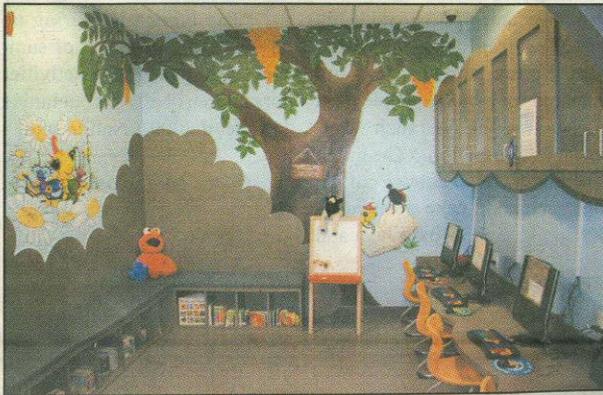
Silverstone staff can assist in requesting items to be delivered from the main branch in Meridian as well as several other libraries in the Treasure Valley. They can also provide homework support for K-12 students, and general information for all ages using reference resources and on-line databases.

"The branch is gearing up for an exciting season of summer reading programs activities for children or all ages beginning in June of 2009," Nation said.

(More photos on Page 20)



**Above, exterior of new Meridian Silverstone branch library; below, children's section with Miss Spider mural sponsored by Friends of the Library. (Photos courtesy Sierra Jorgensen)**



## *The next chapter of the Meridian Library History is starting NOW!*

This brief history of the Meridian Library District was prepared for Staff Development Day – September 28, 2012.