



**OFF THE SHELF**  
**North Olympic Library System**  
**2210 South Peabody Street**  
**Port Angeles, WA 98362**

RELEASE: February 26, 2020  
PUBLICATION DATE: March 4, 2020  
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RE: Numbers Tell a Story

Every ten years, the Census counts everyone living in the United States. By mid-March, you'll receive a postcard in the mail with information about how to complete the 2020 Census - online, by phone, or by mail. It only takes 10 minutes to complete and reflects where you are living on April 1.

Accurate census data is important! The data collected supports decisions about such things as the number of House of Representatives seats per state, voting district lines, Head Start funding, and block grants for community services. The Census matters to our community and affects federal and state funding for important local projects.

To celebrate the 10-year count, the library is hosting a Census Party on Saturday, March 21 from 2pm – 3:30pm. Lorraine Ralson, Partnership Specialist at the U.S. Census Bureau, will be present to answer questions. Number-based games will be available to play and refreshments will be served at this all-ages event. Computers are available for anyone to use at the library and staff are available to answer questions or help you get to the Census website.

Census data provides a glimpse into the future and the past. The first US Census took place in 1790 when the US was made up of 13 states. At that time, the total US population was 3.9 million people, and the entire population of New York City was just over 33,000. In 2010, the US population was over 300 million, and New York City was still the largest city at 8 million people.

On the state level, the Office of Financial Management prepares annual population estimates for cities and towns in Washington. In 2019, Washington's population was estimated at 7.5 million. The current estimated population of Sequim is 7,695. In 1980, population of Sequim was 3,013.

The Sequim Branch Library building was built in 1983, when the town's population was less than half of what it is today. Of course, the library provides services to more than just in-town residents, but the numbers help tell the story. The library is a popular place and as the town and surrounding area's population increases, the available space in the library becomes more and more cramped.

In 2019, there were over 130,000 customer visits to the Sequim Branch Library and more than 400,000 items were checked out or renewed. Community members used the meeting room for over 500 meetings last year, in addition to the 200 programs offered by the library. 1,500 people signed up to get a new library card and 47,000 prints were made from the public computers last year. The Sequim Branch Library is a busy place!

If it's been awhile since you've been to the library, stop by to say hello. If you haven't made it to the library yet, stop by anytime during open hours to get a library card. The Sequim Branch Library is located at 630 North Sequim Avenue. Visit [www.nols.org](http://www.nols.org), email [sequim@nols.org](mailto:sequim@nols.org), or call 360.683.1161 for more information.



*Columnist: Emily Sly, Sequim Branch Library Manager*

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