

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

RELEASE: March 28, 2018
DATE: April 4, 2018
COLUMNIST: Patrick C. Driggers, Customer Service Specialist
RE: Expanding Horizons for the Home BOound

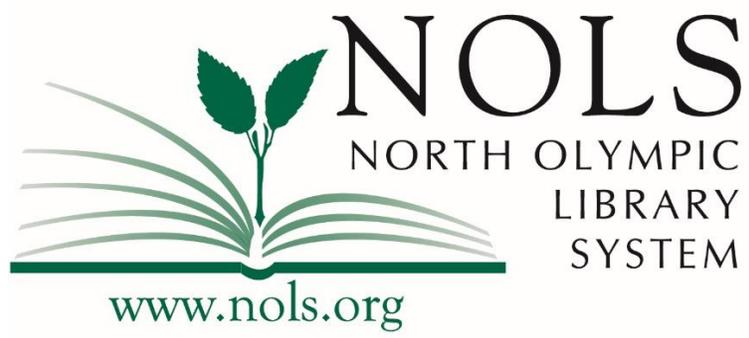
When patrons are unable to make it to the library in person, the North Olympic Library System (NOLS) brings the library to them. The “Outreach to the Homebound” program is a great example of one of the many ways library services reach beyond library walls to improve lives and expand horizons. As Dr. Seuss said, “Reading can take you to places you have never been before.” A person may be physically unable to leave their home, but the movies, music, and books delivered by NOLS are tickets to explore new places, unique people, different times, and other worlds.

What is the “Outreach to the Homebound” program? NOLS staff and volunteers work with individuals unable to travel to the library due to age, illness, or disability, in order to ensure these patrons have access to library materials. If they wish, Outreach customers can provide the library with information about their reading preferences. Library staff use that information to create customized holds lists. Outreach customers may also provide a list of specific items they would like to receive. And of course, some Outreach customers use the Library’s online catalog and automated holds request system to load their own holds queue with items of interest. Materials are then assembled by staff and packaged in a cheerful green bag ready for delivery to each individual Outreach customer. Materials for Outreach patrons in the Sequim/Dungeness Valley area are first sent to the Sequim Branch Library, where they are picked up by volunteers who deliver the bags right to the homes of Outreach patrons. When the library materials are due, the volunteer picks them up and returns them to the library – generally swapping out the old bundle of books for a fresh one, full of great reading, viewing, and listening materials ready to be enjoyed.

Outreach to the Homebound volunteers are in a unique position to connect with Outreach patrons, often providing valuable human contact as part of the service. Sue Simpson, a volunteer who makes deliveries from the Sequim Branch Library (as well as volunteering inside the Sequim Branch, performing a number of helpful tasks), says she enjoys her time with Outreach patrons, and finds the whole process very satisfying. “I have one lady... she’s about 90, and she used to drive the Bookmobile all around for the library. She has the best stories going way back. She is losing her eyesight, so now she’s getting audiobooks from the Outreach program!”

NOLS’ Outreach to the Homebound program is free, and available on a long or short-term basis. To sign up, call the NOLS Outreach department at 360.417.8500 x7708, or visit www.nols.org and select “Outreach to Homebound” from the “Services” menu tab. An Outreach Newsletter is also available at nols.org, and chock full of reading recommendations. Visit the Sequim Branch Library at 630 North Sequim Avenue, or get in touch with your friendly library staff by calling 360.683.1161, or sending an email to Discover@nols.org.





www.nols.org