

The National Medal for Museum and Library services is the nation's highest honor for libraries and museums that are serving their communities in exciting ways. Weippe Public Library & Discovery Center director Terri Summerfield and community member Gradi Thomson traveled to Washington to receive the national medal and spoke to IMLS about how the library impacts the community.

Terri Summerfield: The Weippe Library is now also an interpretive center so it's the Weippe Discovery Center and Public Library. And we really are the community hub. We have not only regular library services but we have a technology center with public access computers and a Louis and Clark visitor center with interpretation on the inside as well as a living landscape on the outside.

Gradi Thomson: We try to go to the library once or twice a week and sometimes we go longer but you have just a plethora of things that you can do. You can rent movies; you can check out books, they have a little area for the kids to do things while I am looking for my books. So we spend a lot of time there doing different things and not only that this library has so many different community events. The day we left to come here we had a Christmas tree lighting ceremony, so there is always something to do at the library.

Terri Summerfield: Well, it's a very small community, our population's is 440 people, we have a service of about a 1000 people that we serve and so everybody knows everybody and a lot of us are just very high energy, friendly, wanting to serve and help those that are looking for information.

Gradi Thomson: You walk in, you're greeted with a friendly smile; someone is always willing to help you no matter what you need. Almost every time I go in if I need something they will put aside what they are doing and help me find whatever I need. I have never had to use the electronic look up which is a time saver with three small children.

Terri Summerfield: I really see the public library Discovery Center as the focal point for the community to provide the services that it needs in every aspect of life for my community. Due to the mountainous terrains of our community, internet access is very limited to the broader community and through several grants and partnerships we've been able to bring high speed internet to the library and offer public access computers.

Gradi Thomson: They have a summer reading program where the children can come in and they sign up and there is a different theme every year. A child takes home their -- it's a reading log and you log what you've read, you come in every week for, they have a presentation, arts and crafts, you turn in your log, you get a sticker and you get to pick 2 small prizes and you also get to put your name in a drawing for a larger prize and the kids just absolutely love it. It brings from what I have seen kids who you wouldn't, who don't get a lot of reading time at home, it gets them to the library to open this literacy program to them.

Terri Summerfield: We try to find interesting presenters that will entice the kids, something interactive, interesting subjects. This summer was on different cultures

throughout the world and so we had different people from different countries. Our board member Ms. Marge, she has been to Africa several times and so she came in and did a presentation and brought drums and different types of things that she has brought back from Africa. And the kids just ate it up because it was new, exciting and when that happens then they are excited for next week, well what's going to be next week?

Gradi Thomson: It is a community hub. You can see people from all walks of life in the library and they have something for everybody.

Terri Summerfield: Even though it's kind of cliché to say it's my job, its my life more or less that I am there to help my community so that's what I'm there to do and if you need help I am going to help you in any way that I can and if I can't do it immediately I am going to find a way to get you what you need.