

Dec. 17, 2021

Press Release

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United Way of the Blue Mountains Partners with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, and opens the program up to children in all of Umatilla County

Umatilla County had several small libraries enrolled with the Imagination Library, but they couldn't accommodate all the children in the county. Cecili Longhorn, Director of the Stanfield Public Library, said the program is well loved by children and their parents. Now the program is open to children all over the county.

The Stanfield Public Library will hold a festive Christmas Gift Bingo fundraiser for the program, 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 21 at the Stanfield Community Center, 225 W. Roosevelt Ave.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library promotes literacy, opening the door for children to succeed in school and in future careers which helps the whole community thrive. Education is a focus area for United Way of the Blue Mountains and literacy is a key to that. Literacy has always been dear to Dolly Parton who saw the struggles of her own father because he couldn't read.

The Imagination Library fosters a love of reading and learning in preschool children by mailing them a free, age-appropriate book monthly until they turn 5 years old, regardless of the family's income. Children who are enrolled at birth will amass their own personal library of 60 books!

Children are delighted with the personalized books they receive, and families can share that joy. Reading together is the single most important way to help children get ready to read. Parents can support their child's education and cognitive development by sharing books as part of their everyday routine.

Sixty percent of kindergartners in neighborhoods where children performed poorly in school did not own a single book, according to Patterns of Book Ownership and Reading.

Erin McCusker, District Director, Umatilla County Special Library District, said they are busy enrolling children in the reading program. "It's so exciting," she said. "It's great news, a gift to all of our children."

To register a child in Umatilla County, or to donate to help support the local success of this program visit www.imaginationlibrary.com.

Also for more information, to sign up or donate, please visit www.uwbluemt.org/dpil

Sincerely,
Christy Lieuallen, Executive Director
United Way of the Blue Mountains