

Check out seeds at the West Linn Library

By JOANNA CAMPA
For The Tidings

West Linn Public Library employee Bobbie Kelly has been an active gardener for 40 years and knows her way around a garden. When she read an email from a co-worker about how some libraries around the country were starting their own seed libraries (community seed sharing programs), it got her thinking: why not start one here?

She started doing research and found out that seed libraries in the U.S. are on the rise. In 2010 there were only about six in the country. Three years later there were over 90 successful and flourishing seed libraries nationally. The West Linn Public Library is about to join their ranks by starting a seed library

WestLinn
PUBLIC LIBRARY

called Seeds for Seeds which will launch on Thursday, March 19.

What exactly is a seed library? A seed library lends or shares a variety of seeds.

To get started Kelly contacted local nurseries asking for donations of seed packets and was delighted to receive about 200 donations. Seeds for Seeds is intended to be self-

maintaining because gardeners who took home seeds the first season are encouraged to harvest seeds from their best plants and bring

those seeds to the library for the next planting season.

Patrons can check out up to six varieties of seeds, taking only the number of seeds they can use. The library will also have a few small garden tools available for check out and books that can help make your garden a success. A variety of seeds will be available including peas, ba-



Bobbie Kelly is starting a seed library, which will launch on March 19 at the West Linn Library
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sil, and marigolds. Kelly would also like to add some heirloom seed varieties and seeds that are accustomed to their local area. She is looking to partner with local schools, nurseries, and home gardeners to help donate these to the program.

Kelly believes the West Linn Public Library is a perfect place to start a seed library.

"This is just one more way the library can reach out to serve and educate the community," she said. "This program also helps patrons of

any economic background, helping those in need be able to grow their own food."

Kelly also adds that there is an earth-wise element to the program as well.

"This program goes a long way with sustainability," she said. "The seeds help people become more self-sufficient and teach them how to grow healthy food. Knowing what you're eating and that it's natural is very important these days."

To help patrons get as much information as possible to make their garden a success Kelly is planning on holding at least two gardening programs this year: How to Save Seeds and Winter Gardening.

The success of the seed library will be dependent on library patrons.

"Demand from the community and their needs will steer this program and see where it goes," Kelly said. "I believe that this is truly a groundbreaking idea."