WASHINGTON STATE LIBRARY

Washington Secretary of State
SAM REED

2009 Renew Washington Communication Grants

Final Narrative Report Cover Sheet

Date September 28, 2010 Contract # G-10/270 Grant #_____

Library Fort Vancouver Regional Library District

Title of Grant Mobile Billboards

Amount Awarded $6,000

Grant Period
Start Date April 20, 2010 Through September 17, 2010

Submitted by Amy Lee, Project Manager

Signatures Certifying the Final Report
We certify that all of the information contain herein is correct to the best of our knowledge. We certify that 3 of 3 objectives of this grant have been achieved. We certify this report includes an analysis of each objective of this grant and an evaluation of the impact this grant has made on our services. We certify $ 5735.04 has been claimed and $ $264.95 of the amount originally awarded was not used and the reasons are explained in this report.

Signatory_____Date_____

Fiscal Agent_____Date_____

Signatory: *Defined as the person who would sign the grant contract and whose signature will be a representation that the legal entity submitting this report has authority to enter into the grant contract; and that the signatory has the authority to sign the grant contract on behalf off the legal entity.*

Fiscal Agent: *Defined as an individual authorized by the Grantee's governing body to obligate it to the financial liabilities and accountable to the Grantees governing body for the integrity of the official accounting system and the financial statements that the system provides.*

Submit this form and the Final Narrative Report to:

Anne Yarbrough
Grants Program
Washington State Library
Post Office Box 42460
Olympia, WA 98504-2460

In addition, send electronic copy to: **anne.yarbrough@sos.wa.gov**

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Final Narrative Report (2009 Renew Washington Communication grant)

1. **This grant has helped amplify the value of our library with decision-makers in our community.**

x	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

Please explain:

We think our "Mobile Billboards" project is an innovative one. We transformed two plain looking delivery trucks into colorful mobile billboards with the positive message: "FVRL -- Delivering on Lifelong Learning" in an attractive background filled with recognizable library items and heartwarming images of people of different generations that everyone can identify with.

Since the two trucks travel a combination of 43,000 miles a year all within our service area, they give our constituents who are our "funders and decision makers" great exposure to the visual statement about what libraries stand for – a place that delivers lifelong learning!

With an estimate of five-year lifespan on the vinyl wraps, the money spent has given us a high return on investment for the purpose it intended. Thousands of people will continue to take note and be exposed to this timeless message of what libraries, especially FVRL is about!

2. **Summarize the project, the situation it was intended to address, and the objectives of the project.**

Fort Vancouver Regional Library District, headquartered in Vancouver in Southwest Washington state, is an independent taxing district. We serve all of Clark, Skamania and Klickitat Counties, and the city of Woodland in Cowlitz County. With 13 libraries, three bookmobiles, a Vancouver operations center, the service area is more than 4,200 square miles and includes farm, open range and national forest lands, communities along the Columbia River, small towns and expanding urban and industrial areas. The

approximately 468,000 constituents in the service areas are our funders and decision makers. This is a large area and a very diverse population to reach out to in terms of distance and demographics.

Our libraries are located in the communities of Battle Ground, Cascade Park, Goldendale, La Center, North Bonneville, Ridgefield, Stevenson, Three Creeks (Salmon Creek area), Vancouver (main library), Vancouver Mall, Washougal, White Salmon Valley, and Woodland.

The objective of the communication grant is to amplify the value of our library with decision-makers in our community. There are many ways and options to achieve the goal. However, many options require a large budget because our decision-makers basically are the taxpayers in our district. To reach all the people including non-library card-holders in three counties and two cities by means of newspaper advertising, mailings, transit ads or any other means of paid communication proved to be very expensive and was determined out of the scope of this grant after our initial research.

To achieve the goal, our proposal was to convey the message, "FVRL -- Delivering on Lifelong Learning" by transforming the blank canvasses of our delivery-truck side panels into eye-catching mobile billboards. We believe this is one of the best ways to amplify our value to the largest number of people using the grant money.

3. Summarize the results of the project, including activities accomplished, and any problems or unexpected outcomes encountered.

The best way to show the results of the project on the van transformation is to look at the before and after photos attached with this report. (Please see attachments #1-6.)

Our Graphics Coordinator designed the vinyl wrap graphics (attachment 7, 8, 9) with the input from the Project Manager and the Communication Director. To complement the message of delivering on lifelong learning, we decided the graphics should include images of the different generations from babies to seniors! We wanted people (our users) be the center of the design, so our designer cleverly manipulated the stock photos by adding library items to the images, with results of showing a number of the people using different library resources like reading a book, listening to a Playaway (i.e. book on MP3) or holding a computer etc. Besides the various age groups, we chose images of people of different ethnicities to represent the diverse populations in our district. We are extremely pleased with the end results of this project!

The vinyl wraps were produced and installed by the chosen sign company on August 18 and August 26. Because of the delivery schedule, we could only do one van at a time on the day when it's not in use. The design is identical for both vans, and with the amendment to the grant for an additional $1,000, we were able to add a design to the back and to the front of the two trucks besides the side panels, which really completed the look tremendously.

To celebrate such beautiful work and message, we put a picture of one of the trucks on our library's Facebook page and got many "likes" and good comments. We also included the Communications Grant information in our report to the Library Board (attachment #10) and in our staff newsletter (attachment # 11.) Other publicity included a small write-

up in the Neighborhood section of our local newspaper, the Columbian (attachment #12.)

The actual design work took longer than we expected because of the various revisions. Also the fact that our designer sent cost inquiries to three sign companies prolonged the implementation of the project a little bit. However, it ended up saving the grant some money because we signed the contract with the lower bidding company, hence we have an unused fund of about $265. This short delay also meant that the vinyl wraps could not be finished before our levy lid-lift election on August 17 as we hoped we did when we first applied for the grant. Yet realistically, even without the delay from the bidding, the design was a time consuming creative process and the finished date would have been very close to the election day, and would not have given the trucks too much time for exposure before the election. Nonetheless, our levy lid-lift did pass with a tiny .28% margin!

4. **In the context of your communication effort, quantify where possible, the results of the project. (For example, number of decision makers reached; number of people who received printed materials; number of staff that have participated in internal messaging or communications training; media coverage resulting from communications effort; changes in support from public decision makers; changes in funding levels for the library or services offered through the Renew Washington grant)**

The two delivery trucks picked are two of our newest vehicles, a 2008 Ford E-450 and a 2009 Ford F-350. These two trucks make deliveries throughout our district six days a week, covering more than 800 miles a week and are seen by thousands of people in the communities we serve every time they are on the road.

Although it's not easy to measure any direct impact of our project, we are confident that the indirect, accumulated impact lies in the long term and frequent exposures of the trucks to motorists, pedestrians, patrons and passengers everywhere during their delivery runs. The two trucks make a combined 69 stops per week in our service area from Vancouver in Clark County to Goldendale in Klickitat county (see attachment #13 for the courier schedule.) They are driven an estimated 43,000 miles per year for delivery.

We hope the positive message "FVRL – Delivering on Lifelong Learning" and the attractive design will remind people of the true value of a library, so that the non-library card holders will come to visit and the library supporters will appreciate our services even more. We will keep track of anecdotal comments as time goes by as one of the measures of the success of the project. So far, we received very good responses from staff who have seen the trucks, and some thought that we had purchased a couple new vehicles!

5. **Did the project meet its stated objectives? Compare the project objectives to actual accomplishments.**

We've accomplished the two objectives listed on our work plan according to the proposed timeframe, that is, to design, produce and install vinyl wraps to cover our two newest delivery vehicles, and now they have become our "mobile billboards" with the new message "FVRL – Delivering on Lifelong Learning" which conveys the value of the library. The third objective is that we expect the vinyl wraps to stay on the vehicles for a life-span of exposure for up to five years. From our experience with similar vinyl wraps that we installed on our three bookmobiles five years ago, this life-span can easily be reached, given our bookmobile graphics are still in tact and in good shape on the vehicles' bodies five years later.

We are very satisfied with how beautiful the artworks and the installations on the vehicles turned out to be. It's wonderful that we own the assets, i.e. the delivering vehicles, and now they double up as our "mobile billboards." When we see attractive designs on any vehicles (usually commercial vehicles), our normal reaction would be "aw" or "wow" – I hope with our vans, there's no exception, that our constituents will be wowed by the thoughtful design that depicts the whole life span of a person – and illustrates what our services are all about – providing lifelong learning, entertainment and much more for the young and old alike. Although it is not easy and also too early to measure or quantify the project's actual accomplishment, one thing for sure is that the cost-per-impression of this project is far lower than with any other marketing tool available to us in the large area we serve. For example, just one large advertisement in our daily newspaper can cost thousands of dollars, and it is very temporary and only aims at the subscribers of that particular publication. Whereas with our mobile billboards, we *own* the advertisement and the "message" is being delivered throughout our service district every time when the vehicles are on the road, which is six days a week for many years to come!