

HOW TO FUND A NEW LIBRARY IN POPE COUNTY

THREE-LEGGED STOOL APPROACH: DONATIONS, GRANTS, & PUBLIC FUNDING

Each time the cry has come up for a library, or new library to be built in Pope County, the prevailing thought has been, "How can we raise the money?" Our beginnings have been humble, but the village has chipped in with donations of labor, services, donations, and sweat equity. The future libraries of Pope County will use a three-legged stool approach and be built with donations, grants and public funding.

Russellville Public Library:

In 1885 the Excelsior Club, a group of civic-minded young men started raising funds for a city library. In 1900, plays, luncheons, concerts, and other money making projects were held to finance buying books.

In 1924, a small one-room frame building erected on vacant lot north of the Presbyterian Church. Funds were raised by women of Russellville and sponsored by the Lions Club. The Church Board gave permission to construct a building on the church ground. The Lions' Club members led the fundraising drive, but the Rotary, Kiwanis, and many others contributed. Furniture was donated or sold to the library at cost. And, much of the labor on the building was done by volunteers. The first libraries were supported by voluntary contributions by citizens. Later, it was included in the Community Chest.

In 1935, the Deaton Family donated land to the library as long as it was used for Educational purposes. In 1937, the Little Library located at 114 E Third Street was built with Works Progress Administration (WPA) labor and funds. Matching funds were donated by local citizens. Land was donated by the Deaton Family. Total Cost: 1800 ft² cost \$250,000, but \$7,000 was the actual cost of the building, with \$1,151 spent on furniture. The building is now used for Library programming for our children, teen and adult programming.

In 1956, the 1 Mill library tax was passed by the Pope County Citizens.

In 1975, the Library Board received a Library Services and Construction Act Grant (LSCA) for building an 8,100 ft², \$324,000 project which held 12,000 books.

In 1985, the County Judge bought a used tool truck and built the interior shelves and carpeted the truck to be used as a Bookmobile.

In 1989, the Donald W. Harkey addition was opened adding almost 5,000 ft² to the Russellville Library.

Atkins Library:

The Atkins Centennial Library was first established and sponsored by the Atkins Civic Club in 1933. Local funding and support combined with federal funding supported the building efforts. After relocating several times, its current home was built in 1975 under the (LSCA) combined with local funding from the City of Atkins, the Atkins Lions Club, gifts from many friends and patrons of the libraries, memorials, special drives, the one-mill Pope County library tax, the Arkansas Library Commission, and a contribution from the Pope County Quorum Court. The Atkins Library expanded in 2000 with a gift from Mary Catherine Maxwell.

Dover Library:

The Dover Public Library began in the 1950's as a stack of books in a front display window at L.J. Churchill's General Mercantile Store. These books came from the Russellville Public Library. In 1974, a dual purpose building was built for the Dover City Hall and Dover Library and was housed in less than 800ft² space. The citizens of Dover saw the need for a larger library and kicked off a fund drive on August 1, 1987. The fundraising committee started out with a donation of \$5,000 from the Dover Chamber of Commerce and \$10,000 from the Quorum Court. The committee "sold" bricks and floor space by the square foot and the square yard, had pie suppers, and musical programs. Also, an auction was held to get labor, services, and other donations. The auctioneer brought in donations for 1 foot square for \$10 and a square yard for \$90. The residents of Dover and the surrounding areas raised \$50,000 to build a new 2,400 ft² building.

What was donated?

Land was donated by A.G. and Bettye Barton. Area businesses donated building materials, and about 60 people donated labor. All the bricks for the building were bought by the area school children. The building was put "in the dry" with help from the area's "nail benders" group, and the brick plant donated one brick for every two purchased. The fundraising committee had a booth at the Fair, and Mobley Construction Company issued a challenge to area building materials and skilled craft businesses to become part of the growth of Dover by contributing to the construction of the new proposed library. Cubic yards of concrete, framing, carpet, tile, electrical, painting, lumber from concrete pad to ceiling joists, donations of labor ranged from hauling of sand to installation of the central heating and air conditioning system. Donated labor included: hauling of all fill and masonry sand, state licensed electrician and electrical engineer, labor to perform all electrical work; labor to build trusses, labor to frame building, percolation test on soil, drawing plans for the building, labor by licensed plumbers to install central heating and air conditioning system and plumbing, plus hookups, installation of carpet, labor to finish concrete, donation of time to draw risers to submit to Arkansas Health Department for approval, and all lumber from pad to trusses. Also donated, one brick for every two bricks purchases, concrete to complete building pad, use of crane as needed, pipes for plumbing, bathroom fixtures, sheet rock hangers, finishers, carpenters to assist in framing the building and a bulldozer to prepare the land pad. Other fundraisers included: a dance sponsored by the Dover High

School, an ice cream social, the Dover FHA, the Pope County Historical Association selling copies of Pope County History Volume II, and several other fundraising efforts.

The building committee acted as project coordinator for construction eliminating the need to hire a construction supervisor. Judge Abernathy was contacted about the county taking care of gravel, fill sand and paving the parking lot. Other donations were for: ceramic tile; electrical; truss labor, pad work, carpenter's labor, and digging and pouring the footing; sand leveling; parking lot painting, and parking lot lighting. The library won 1st Place in a local parade for its "It takes more than books to build a library!" and won \$150 and made \$120 more in its Face Painting Booth.

In 1988 the Dover Library was built. The collection was previously located in a store front. 48.8% came from individual contributions, 12.5% from the Dover Area Chamber of Commerce, and 6% each from the First National Bank of Russellville, Pope County Historical Museum and Tyson Foods. The fundraising committee had a donation from a foundation to donate the final 5% needed for the project.

Hector Library:

The Hector Library opened in 1996 as a result of a small rural community's vision. The Library was built over a period of seven years by donated labor, materials and a \$10,000 donation from the Quorum Court of Pope County.

Future Libraries

The future libraries of Pope County will use a three-legged stool approach and be built with donations to the Library Foundation, grants and public funding. The PCLS Library Foundation, is a 501(c)(3) where donors can make tax deductible donations. And, additional grants can be received. To make a donation:

To Donate to the Foundation:

By Check:

PCLS Foundation
116 E Third ST
Russellville, AR 72801

Online:

<http://www.popelibrary.org/foundation/>

Donate Now

Click on Russellville Building Fund, or go directly to:

<https://causes.anedot.com/rplbldgfund-cc37e2e279a>

An anonymous donation of \$170,388.88 to the Library Foundation for the benefit of the future Russellville Library Building arrived two days after the Library Foundation received its 501(c)(3) status.

Grants

The PCLS and PCLS Foundation are both looking for grants to build the library.

Shawn Pierce, Director
Pope County Library System