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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**San Juan Island Library Celebrates Record Participation in 2026 Summer Reading Program**

**San Juan Island, WA** – The San Juan Island Library is celebrating record youth participation in its annual Summer Reading Program, with more than 450 registrants for the second consecutive year. In 2026, the program reached a record 496 registrations—the highest total to date.

A cornerstone of the library's commitment to lifelong learning and community engagement, the Summer Reading Program encourages children, teens, and adults to discover the joy of reading throughout the summer. Participants track their reading and/or listening time to win prizes and rewards. This year's theme, *Unearth a Story*, featured outdoor dinosaur-themed storytimes, crafting workshops, teen programs, and the popular Wednesday Afternoon Performances, which offered free live entertainment for families.

Youth Services Manager Melina Lagios expressed excitement about the historic turnout.

"We are elated by the community's overwhelming response. The growing participation shows how deeply our community values literacy, libraries, and shared experiences for all ages. We're grateful to our dedicated staff, student interns, volunteers, and local sponsors, such as Sweet Retreat, who make this program possible year after year and fun for all ages."

Participation has steadily increased since 2022, attracting more families with preschool-aged children who are reading aloud together, as well as middle and high school students. Teen participation was particularly strong this summer, with 91 registrants, 57 active readers, 2,390 days read, and 89 attendances at teen programs. The library's creative approach—including expanded outreach, partnerships with local organizations, forming a youth advisory group, and creating digital challenges—helped engage even more families and individuals across San Juan Island.

"I was very happy to see that the 2026 Teen Summer Reading Program had more participants, days read, and prizes collected than ever," said Elizabeth Griffin, San Juan Island Library Youth Services Librarian. "Our Teen Library Council, a small but mighty group that meets twice a month to help plan library services, has provided invaluable guidance in making sure

expectations and incentives are meaningful to their peers. This has contributed to a 185% increase in active participants since we began the current program model in 2022.”

Summer Reading Programs have been offered nationally for more than 100 years. Our local program is managed by the San Juan Island Library with funding from the Friends of the San Juan Island Library. Planning is already underway for next summer’s program, *Mysteries Await at Your Library*, inspired by the timeless appeal of mystery stories and the excitement of solving puzzles.

For more information, contact Melina Lagios at [mlagios@sjlib.org](mailto:mlagios@sjlib.org) or visit [www.sjlib.org](http://www.sjlib.org).

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