

## History



Up until the late 1950s, Kyle, Texas was without a public library. In the late spring of 1956, Mrs. Agnes Golumbeski, at that time a home economics teacher in Kyle, asked Bobby Word and Blanche Richmond to come to the Kyle Home Economics cottage to discuss putting together a summer book program for the children of the town. This had never been done before in Kyle, and Mrs. Word and Mrs. Richmond approved of the idea.

Mrs. Word and Mrs. Richmond kept the school library open for the summer, reading stories and checking out books for children who began to come in increasing numbers. That was the beginning of the Kyle Public Library. When the summer was over, the two women decided that the successful summer program could be expanded into a library for the entire community.

Mrs. Word approached Dr. Elizabeth Stallman, head of the library school at the University of Texas in Austin for advice about how to start a library. Dr. Stallman taught Mrs. Word the basics of library organization and was very helpful and encouraging about the prospects of a library in Kyle.

Mrs. Word and Mrs. Richmond gathered a small group of people, including Frances Sledge, Charlene Dorman, Mrs. Gerhard Schulle, Margaret Thiele, Mrs. Gerald Brugink, and Riso Millhollon. Around 1958, this group came to be known as the "Friends of the Kyle Library." The Friends asked various citizens of Kyle to donate their private books for the community's good.

Lex Word, then the owner of the Bon Ton Grocery Store, offered a room in the back of the store to the Friends. Volunteers opened the library, which had a separate alley entrance from the store, one evening a week and occasionally on Saturday mornings to check out books and offer story times for children. More books continued to be donated, and Mrs. Word went to the State Lending Library in Austin every three months to retrieve and return new, different books for the community.

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