



Innovation Project Application

Library: Bay County Public Library

Project Manager: Sarah M. Burris

Phone: 850-522-2120

Email: sburris@nwrls.com

Name of Project: Sweet Songs of the Mountain Dulcimer

Project Amount requested: \$600

Scope of the Project:

The scope of "*Sweet Songs of the Mountain Dulcimer*" is to introduce the public to the mountain dulcimer, help build basic music literacy, and to provide additional learning opportunities by pulling in talented dulcimer instructors to the Bay County area.



What need in the library/community will this project address?

During a continuing education program on March 14th, 2017, Kathy Krausnick presented *Introduction to the Dulcimer*. She is a Bay County Public Library volunteer. The original goal was to introduce the public to the mountain dulcimer, an instrument that originated in the Appalachian Mountains in the early 1800's. Dulcimer comes from Greek meaning "sweet song." The pleasant surprise from the program was that four members of the audience brought their dulcimers from home! Many could not play, but had inherited a dulcimer. It became a show 'n' tell of the dulcimers and how they came to own a dulcimer. One dulcimer was handmade by a husband at the John C. Campbell Folk School. Another intricate dulcimer with hummingbirds cut out of the top was handmade by a grandfather who was known for his craft. It was quickly recognized that there was a community desire to learn how to play the instruments.

Although there wasn't a budget to start a program, we began a *Beginning Dulcimer Class* at the library in May of 2017 for a once a month class taught by Kathy Krausnick. The first hour of the class is a beginning lesson and the second hour is dedicated to practicing favorite or new songs. The largest class was 9 students and they all brought their own dulcimer. The dulcimer is an easy instrument for non-musicians to learn basic music literacy. A beginner should be able to leave class having felt comfortable playing a simple song. Classes help you keep in rhythm with others and ask questions for self-improvement. Several of our regular attendees now practice their dulcimers on a daily basis.

The dulcimer program has room to grow. There are others who would like to join the class or learn the dulcimer, but do not have access to the instrument. Purchasing 3 dulcimers could increase access. It would be good to have a library dulcimer available for the class. If we add two circulating dulcimers into the library collection, those interested in learning can try out the instrument for a longer period of time. Our music in class is tuned to D-A-D, which relies on having the 6 ½ fret and is not available on all dulcimers. The dulcimers selected for purchase must have the extra fret to maintain consistency.

Another challenge is that the *Beginning Dulcimer Class* takes place on a Friday afternoon from 1 – 3 p.m., limiting the number of dulcimer players who can attend the class. If we could add an occasional Saturday afternoon workshop with a traveling instructor, we could reach dulcimer players who cannot attend the class during the week and elevate local talent.

Resources required:

3 Simplicity Dulcimers (add fourth string and extra 6 ½ fret) \$227 total
\$71 each (Shipping is \$8 +\$2 per instrument)
<http://www.backyardmusic.com/dulcimers.html>

I emailed elementary school music teacher, Joann Benson, who used Backyard Music's dulcimers for her class. The instruments and the dulcimer program have been going strong for 9 years. She gave rave reviews about their sound and durability.

3 sets of D'Addario J64 4-String Dulcimer Strings \$17.70 total
\$5.90 each on Amazon.

3 Snark Dulcimer Tuners \$32.91 total
\$10.97 each on Amazon.

Spare Picks \$10.00

Music Stand for class \$13.00

Guest Workshop Instructor Fee \$300 total
Jessica Comeau from Pensacola
<http://www.jessicacomeaudulcimer.com/>

\$150 per 2 hour workshop and would bring spare dulcimers for those without instruments

Activities/Timeline (include estimated completion date):

The *Beginning Dulcimer Class* that takes place once a month (a Friday from 1 – 3 p.m.) is already scheduled with our volunteer instructor, Kathy Krausnick for 2018. The instruments would be added into circulation as soon as all components were received with advertising of availability. The first Saturday Dulcimer Workshop would be held in March 2018. The second Saturday Dulcimer Workshop would be held in June 2018. Estimated completion date would be July 31st, 2018.

How will the library sustain this project?

The library would continue the *Beginning Dulcimer Class* once a month. To help the program be sustainable, Sarah Burris (Project Manager) has been taking the classes and is now comfortable teaching Beginning Dulcimer to others. The dulcimers in circulation would remain in the system as long as in good, working condition. Part of the grant is to purchase spare dulcimer strings to help maintain longevity of the project. Though the Saturday Dulcimer Workshops might not continue, these programs would build larger connections within the mountain dulcimer community.

Library Director's signature: Robin Slade Date: 10/30/17

Clay & Coopers Date: 10/30/17
Signature of agent, office, or board to whom the Director reports

For PLAN use only:

Approved _____ Not Approved _____

PLAN Executive Director _____