

## SUPPORT DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY in WASHINGTON COUNTY!

*Did you know that \$13 is all it takes for a young child here in Washington County to receive a specially selected, age-appropriate book in the mail every month for an entire year?* To think that such a modest investment can bring about such a transformative, lifelong impact! Studies show that reading readiness skills are key to success later in life. And you can help to make sure that no eligible child anywhere in Washington County misses out on this opportunity.

The Imagination Library, an international non-profit literacy initiative launched by Dolly Parton's Dollywood Foundation, provides books for babies and young children from birth until age 5. To enroll in the program, the child must live in a community that sponsors the Imagination Library. Each month, a book is mailed directly to the enrolled child, at no cost to the parent, in order to instill a lifelong love of reading and learning. In the words of Dolly Parton, *"If books make a child feel special, then the child will feel books are special."*

To make this "magic" happen, the Dollywood Foundation partners with a local 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that is willing to serve as the program administrative sponsor, called an Affiliate. Since 2006, the nonprofit Literacy Volunteers of Washington County has partnered with the Imagination Library and graciously served in this capacity for Washington County, and as a result, to date, over 1,500 local youngsters' lives have been enriched by the time they reach kindergarten age.

As for the cost, the Dollywood Foundation provides important in-kind contributions, making this program here in Maine far less expensive and labor-intensive than if we were to set out to mail young kids a book each month. A very rough estimate of the average price of a board book or softcover picture book is \$10; adding \$5 for shipping would total \$15 per book-- or \$180 for each child for one year! The Imagination Library's vast scale -- an astonishing 3 million books currently printed and distributed each month -- reduces the monthly combined cost of books *and* shipping to about \$2.10, or \$26 per year, per child. And thanks to the Maine Legislature's \$1-to-\$1 match, the actual expense borne by local funders is reduced to only \$13 per year, per child.

**Here's where you come in:** Estimates based on the latest available US Census figures (2022) show that about 1,500 youngsters here in Washington County are currently eligible to participate in this program. A significant portion of the local matching funds needed to keep the program sustainable into the future has already been raised. With your support, we are determined to reach the families of every baby and child under five in Washington County, so that every preschooler will have his or her own books at home, and start off in life with a love of reading and learning.

***Will you support us by making a contribution to benefit Washington County's youngest citizens?***

Donations can be made to LVWCME with "Imagination Library" in the memo line, and mailed to LVWCME at 94 King St., Dennysville, ME 04628.

For more information, please contact Eileen Campbell, LVWCME Executive Director, at (207) 726-4688, or email [LVWCME@gmail.com](mailto:LVWCME@gmail.com). Thank you!

*P.S. Know someone else who could help? Please share this information, and help us spread the word. THANKS!*

