

Recycling @ the Library

North Lake County Public Library in Polson is proud of its recycling program.

The busy staff recycles everything from used-up batteries and bubble wrap to the usual excess magazines, cardboard, newspaper, plastics, aluminum and steel cans, phone books and office paper.

That's unusual in a small community where curbside recycling pickup is not available and most residents still "recycle" directly into the landfill. But North Lake County Public Library takes a different view of the issue.

To solve the logistics, they have incorporated recycling into the job description of one part-time employee, Maclaen Burningham. Maclaen, along with his parents, Steve and Valerie Burningham, makes sure the recyclables are taken weekly to the area's drop-off stations and sorted into the proper bins.

Plastic grocery bags (those not used by patrons to carry home their books) are also dropped off at the appropriate recycling location. The same goes for toner cartridges. Clean, excess bubble wrap and packing materials (particularly Styrofoam pellets) are taken to a local shipping store, where they are gladly accepted and reused. The library staff has substantially reduced the number of unneeded catalogs received by calling each company and removing the library's name from mailing lists.

Recently, North Lake County Public Library added new books to its collection about the science and practice of recycling. After all, it's only right for the library to blaze the trail toward a more responsible way to dispose of our community's trash.

