

Copper Queen Library throwing outdoor party to celebrate national award

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By Leah Mueller



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BISBEE — Bisbee's Copper Queen Library has good reason to celebrate. The beloved facility was named Best Small Library by Library Journal in 2019, but it recently won an even bigger award — the 2024 National Medal of Museum and Library Service.

According to the library's website, this coveted award is "the nation's highest honor, given to museums and libraries that demonstrate excellence in service to their communities."

The CQL was up against some heavy hitters, including big city libraries with deeper pockets and greater access to fiscal resources. Bisbee's small but mighty facility offers impressive services, including seed and tool lending

libraries, technology training for seniors, a second off-site annex building in the San Jose neighborhood and much more.

In true Bisbee style, Library Services Coordinator Alison Williams and Library Manager Jason Macoviak plan to honor CQL's recent win with an outdoor party.

"Winning the National Medal is such a huge honor, and we want to make sure we include the amazing community in this win," Williams said.

Of course, a hometown celebration wouldn't be complete with live music.

Gertie and the TO Boyz will bring their unique, upbeat style to the event. Frontwoman Gertrude Lopez is an accomplished musician and a librarian in the San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation. She has studied and embraced the dance music of her tribe since girlhood.

Lopez now serves as manager of the San Xavier Learning Center Tribal Library, where she mentors, teaches and tutors tribal members of all ages.

Also known as the "Queen of Waila," Lopez recently was inducted into the Tucson Musicians Museum's Hall of Fame.

"Gertie Lopez is a leading force in the performance and preservation of Tohono O'odham culture and music in Arizona and Mexico. Since she was a little girl, she has been immersed in study, performance and preservation of her tribe's social dance music," Williams explained.

"This free celebration concert with Gertie is to celebrate the wonderful people the Copper Queen Library serves, who share this award," she added.

CQL's highly anticipated celebration will be at City Park on Friday, June 14, at 5:30 p.m.. Beer is a must for such an event, and Tombstone Brewing Company plans to set up a tent.

All ages are welcome. There will be a free book giveaway for the kids. The library has also invited the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum, which took home one of the national museum awards in the same contest.

