



Director's Report November 2023

Public Services

Eclipse 2023

Patrons all around Jackson County gazed skywards to observe an annular solar eclipse on October 14. Libraries began preparing early with educational programming and distributed 500 pairs of glasses, enabling users to view the phenomenon safely. These glasses were provided through STAR Net and the Space Science Institute, and Librarian Jonathan Ulrich led the procurement and distribution process.

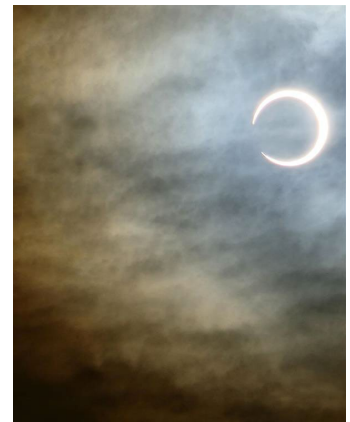
On October 6, Shady Cove hosted a virtual program presented by retired Astronomer Kevin Manning, who worked as a Consultant for NASA and with the Chandra X-Ray Observatory (space telescope) with the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. This special 90-minute program, called "Astronomy for Everyone: Eclipses & Other Mysteries of the Universe," was designed to fully enable participants of all ages to become "eclipse experts" while enjoying a live virtual journey through the universe. Information about the rare Annular Solar Eclipse on October 14, 2023 — and the upcoming Total Solar Eclipse on April 8, 2024 — was described in detail. After the presentation, patrons were invited to ask questions and given links for a free Eclipse Activity Book, complete with fun STEM hands-on activities to help illuminate the science behind these events, and an accompanying 38-minute video illustrating how it all works. Staff provided a book display, videos, and links to JCLS databases.

Medford Childrens hosted a ScienceWorks collaborative program in early October. Participants made eclipse models while ScienceWorks facilitators talked about how solar and lunar eclipses happen, and what to expect when watching one.

For the eclipse itself, Ulrich hosted an Eclipse Viewing Party program at the JCLS Heart of the Rogue booth in Pear Blossom Park. Participants viewed the eclipse through the clouds at its peak at 9:18 am and started clapping.

In Central Point, representatives from ScienceWorks were on hand to provide activities for the kids and an amateur astronomer set up two different types of eclipse viewers. Inside the branch, staff showed a live feed from NASA for those who did not want to be outside. The Central Point Friends of the Library provided breakfast treats.

In Butte Falls, Branch Manager Shone Ellis came into the library early to set up before the eclipse and ended up with many community members joining her. It was very cool, and kids really thought it was awesome.





Halloween Highlights

Once the eclipse programming wrapped up, spooky season was in full swing at JCLS. Branches offered a variety of programs, from spooky bingo at White City to Gold Hill's *Little Shop of Horrors* plant workshop. Many branches held pumpkin-themed programs where the festive gourds were painted and embellished. Take and Makes were in high demand as families decorated their homes for the fall season. Library staff also got involved in their community's celebrations, including Ashland's annual costume parade down Main Street and Eagle Point's Hoedown and Boo Bash. Nearly 1,000 people flocked to the Hoedown, where staff and volunteers were ready with an array of lawn games, fun prizes, and the DART van. On Halloween, staff were delighted by a stream of trick-or-treaters, and many JCLS staff got into the festive spirit as well. Book-themed costumes abounded.

Bear Creek

Ashland

The Ashland Children's Department continued their STEM programming and offered a program dissecting owl pellets. Children paired up in teams of two and worked together to extract and identify the creatures that make up the bird's diets.

Teen Librarian Katie Fischer and Teen Specialist Lynn Snell ran a booth for Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Youth Resource Fair as part of Southern Oregon Pride events. It provided an opportunity to network with other community organizations, including the Oregon Center for the Arts at Southern Oregon University and OSF. Snell and Fischer connected with teens and distributed free books. At one point in the event, Fischer and Snell spoke with a young person who expressed gratitude that the library had books, including giveaway books, that reflected their cultural identity and perspective. They said they would not have been able to access as many reflective stories without the library.

At the end of September, Ashland Adult Services collaborated with JCLS Outreach to table at Southern Oregon University's Meet Ashland event, where





new and returning students got to know local businesses and organizations. Staff created 40 new library cards and gave away stickers, new books, and attention aids.

October's Music in the Library program drew many attendees for a cello concert. This month's musician interspersed information about her instrument and the cello repertoire with beautiful pieces of classical, folk, and popular music.

JCLS participated in the first annual [Ashland Mystery Festival](#) by hosting five Author Panels and providing an honorarium for the festival's 10 featured authors. More than 200 people attended the panels, held in the Gresham Room throughout the day on Saturday, October 21st, and learned about topics such as "What Never Happens at a Crime Scene," "How to Tail a Suspect," and more. In addition to the panels at the library, special events were held all over town, organized by author Ellie Alexander and the Ashland Chamber of Commerce. Plans are already in the works for next year.



Phoenix

Program attendance continues to be strong at the Phoenix library. The "Make a Fall Luminary" craft offered by Library Associate Parsina Dias was popular with attendees of all ages, who festooned glass jars with vibrant leaves. These beautiful candleholders are sure to add the perfect touch to fall décor.



Branch Manager Jody Fleming attended the Phoenix High School's Homecoming Parade with her Friends of the Phoenix Library President, Lee Gonnella.

Central Area

Medford Branch

At the Medford Library, a group of adults attended the Bad Taxidermy Program, facilitated by Librarians Elanna Erhardt and Kayla Samnath. Participants embraced their inner mad scientist and stitched together a motley assortment of deconstructed stuffed animal parts and unveiled their new creations to the group.

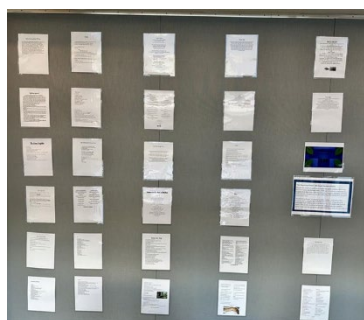


Following the success of the Gaming Gave in Eagle Point, the Medford Teen department has been making progress in creating their own gaming space. A television was mounted to the wall, and a lockable media cabinet will soon be installed to house gaming consoles and a DVD player. Moving the furniture has opened the space, and teens are already utilizing the cozy area to connect and relax.



Medford Children's, Teen, and Education Services collaborated in a three-part field trip with Kids Unlimited 6th-8th graders. Students learned about the new UBOB challenge and upcoming library programs, received library cards, and engaged in activities related to the Dewey Decimal System.

A new teen poetry display was installed in late October. Mr. Penewit, a 6th grade teacher from St. Mary's reached out to the Children's and Teen departments about displaying poetry created by his students. The



display is on the wall in the hallway outside of the Teen Library. Penewit and his students hung the poems, and a week later the class came to the library to read the poems and peer review each other's work.

Central Point

Central Point staff reorganized a small area in the Children's collection to expand the Graphic Novels area and give the Spanish language books their own space. Staff and patrons are pleased with how it turned out and agree that this change makes both collections more accessible and attractive!



Fat Bear Week

Branch Manager Erin Ulrich created a masterpiece of a display to celebrate Fat Bear Week. The bears of Katmai National Park in Alaska are a prime example of how to be fit and fat, as their abundance of body weight will help them survive their winter hibernation. Fat bears also signify the health of the ecosystem in Katmai National Park. When salmon is abundant, bears pack it on, much to the joy of park visitors and webcam viewers. Ulrich linked to the livestream, and patrons watched the bears pack on the pounds as the bracket was filled in by votes. Eventually, Grazer was crowned the new Queen of Katmai, and Central Point looks forward to continuing the tradition next year with more bear-related programming and materials.



Lower Rogue

Applegate

The Applegate Library was decked out in autumnal attire in order to set the stage for The Applegate Music Festival. A steady group of patrons strolled through the library listening to a keyboardist and pianist, ukelele and guitar player, and a cellist. It was a huge hit for the community.



Jacksonville

Photographer Ken Gregg gave a talk at the Jacksonville Branch titled "Jacksonville Then and Now." He showed photos of many of the historic buildings and sites in Jacksonville and compared them to the way they look now. Ken is a wealth of information about the area, and his photographs are a fascinating glimpse into the impact of time and culture on one's physical surroundings.



Rogue River

Rogue River served up something for everyone last month. The "Spice Up Your Life" Take and Makes continue to be wildly popular. Library Specialist Diane Dekany curated a "Book Tasting" cafe event where attendees sampled from a variety of books on display to find one that perfectly fit their reading tastes. The event was geared toward teens, and while they snacked and sipped on refreshments, they took five minutes at a time to evaluate the books on each table of genres (non-fiction, fiction, and graphic novels). They could look at the back and front cover, read the book synopsis, and then a few random pages. Following the quick assessment, the participant would then rate the book and determine if it's something they'd like to read sometime. It was a mix of a book fair and speed dating, and Dekany had plenty of titles to sample from. She used



readers advisories, "best of" lists, YA award winners, and even bookstore commentary to come up with an eclectic mix of interesting titles that teens/tweens might like to read. The event was very popular, and they are planning on offering another in 2024.



Ruch

Library visits are up almost 75% over last year, likely due to increased programming and class visits. Local historical archaeologist Chelsea Rose held her debut presentation "Wild Women of the West: Archaeological and Historical Challenges to Myth and Misrepresentation in Popular Culture." Patrons crowded into the classroom to hear her speak about nearly fifteen years of research and archaeological investigations that illuminate the ways in which women feature in the history of the American West. The fascinating and often-erased stories of local women of color, social reformists, brewers, businesswomen, and more were revealed and celebrated as they have always deserved.

Upper Rogue

Butte Falls

The Art Adventure Club was tons of fun this month. The club met twice in October. Butte Falls staff and patrons played and created with foam clay, played games, and made some fun fall leaves with scratch paper and foam.

Eagle Point

Library Associate Nicole Shuey designed and put together Take and Makes, where patrons could make their own beaded axolotl keychain. Nearly all of the kits were gone by the end of the first day they were put out. Eagle Point hosted the Friends of the Animal Shelter who brought some baby kittens and taught patrons how to adopt and care for pets at their local animal shelter. Patrons took home resources and crafts, and library staff especially loved meeting the cutest little program attendees they have ever had.

Prospect

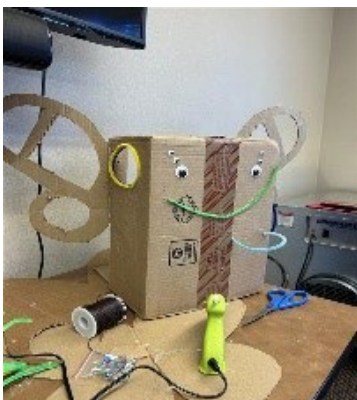
Library patrons enjoyed hot drinks, treats, and putting together a simple but lovely Autumn Door Hanger craft. Some folks also popped in to enjoy snacks and a chat, taking their craft supplies "to-go." Crafters who worked on their door hangers at home have proudly shared photos of their handiwork with staff. Library Associate Breanne Wolgamot restarted story time class visits at Prospect Charter with weekly visits to the morning and afternoon Pre-K classes. On 10/31 they enjoyed a special Halloween story time featuring ghostly crafts and a reading of new collection title, [A Halloween Scare in Oregon](#).

Later, the branch hosted an afternoon of costume upcycling. Using recycled cardboard boxes and assorted notions from the crafting cabinets, attendees created clever costumes, including this "butterfly robot" body that was as full of features as any robot should be. The finishing touch was a blue pipe cleaner cupholder, and the patron was ready to trick or treat in style.

Outreach, Programs & Digital Services

Programs

Branches are still Falling into Adventure through systemwide programming. While October was the final month for the Bike-themed Special Storytime programs — intended to help promote the annual Bikes and Brews Festival — patrons can still travel to Oregon through the Live Action Oregon Trail Program, make special autumnal decorations, or enter the Teen Comic-Contest through November. Programs Coordinator Brystan Strong leads program planning committees with JCLS staff to design systemwide programs. These



programs serve to promote each quarter's theme, give unique programming opportunities to branches, and connect communities that may be separated geographically through common experiences. Winter systemwide programs have already been scheduled, and Strong, as well as the committee, are currently in the middle of planning programs around the spring theme: Full STEAM Ahead!

In addition to designing programs, Strong has started her weekly branch visits, starting with the Lower Rogue. Strong chats with staff during these visits about their past, present, and future programming. These visits also provide an opportunity to take in feedback or questions and turn them into future training opportunities and find ways to streamline or strengthen processes and procedures.



Outreach

At Home Services

At Home Services added six new patrons who began receiving materials in October. AHS and Education Services continued their Project Cozy collaboration, delivering craft kits to South Medford High School. Innovation Academy students will create the gifts that will be given to AHS patrons in November.

Business Librarian

Business outreach was busy with the end of the fall festival season and several individual research appointments. One highlight was a presentation for the City of Medford licensing staff, who oversee all business permitting operations. They admitted they had never considered the library as an engine for a thriving local economy and were impressed with the scope of library services for businesses.

Megan Furrhman, co-director of A Greater Applegate, passed along this praise for the Library's services:

"Having the library consistently at the Applegate Evening Market this year was invaluable. Not only for helping provide Wi-Fi for vendors to more easily sell their products, but also by showcasing the resources available for our rural businesses. Even the fact that there is a Business Librarian is new information for many people! Consistent tabling at the market is also very beneficial for us as we grow the market, both from the vendor side and the consumer side. Knowing that the library would be there is so helpful for our manager and customer base.

Thanks again for all that you do to support the Applegate."

DART Van

With fall in full swing, DART continued its regular stops at Housing Authority sites, the White City Food Bank, and Kelly Shelter. At one of the Housing Authority triannual resident events, DART had 37 patron interactions in just 90 minutes. DART was also featured in the Southern Oregon Pride parade in Ashland on October 7. Afterward, the team joined Ashland Library Associate Crystal Smith and Library Specialist Cody Reese and engaged with more than 200 patrons. While at Southern Oregon Pride, the community responded in support of the library presence in the parade and as a resource across the weekend event. Many came just to thank staff for being there, and even offered volunteer service to give back to the library.

At the Heart of the Rogue Festival in Medford, the DART team provided tabling support alongside Adult Services, helping facilitate the crafting activity in the Kids Zone. Kids of all ages visited the library booth.

Education Services

At the beginning of the month, Education Services helped host 57 kids for a library tour at the Medford Library. There was also an opportunity to fit in a database training session with an educator, teaching her how to navigate the catalog and showcase helpful databases for the classroom.

Community Librarian for Youth Literacy Evelyn Lorence, Education Services Specialist Stephanie Polendey, Medford Teen Librarian Andrea Leone, and the DART team collaborated to bring a Homework Help Resource Training program for Maslow teens at a Housing Authority site. This program will serve as a model for future opportunities to show teens the homework help resources available through JCLS.

The Open Book eNewsletter went out October 4th and has been one of the most popular editions to date. It featured an Interview with Phoenix Elementary School teacher Marla Dentino. Booklists focused on Día de los Muertos, Hispanic Heritage Month, Spooky Reads, and a Creative Writing Scary Story prompt for high school grades.

Outreach to Child Care

Outreach to Child Care (OCC) served 1,551 children at 68 sites in October. The program circulated 2,683 items. Specialists Kateri Warnick and Nick Rementeria were invited to table at New Heights Christian School's Scholastic Book Fair.

Digital Services

Digital Services provided a wide range of help for patrons in October. In addition to the usual help with Libby and other library services, the team helped a patron with a job application submission, provided education about flash media, and taught how to send emails, use smartphone camera functions, and connect to mobile devices for playback through home audio.

Area Manager Carrie Turney Ross and Supervisor Eric Molinsky worked on identifying and sourcing equipment for the new classroom space in line with the grant funds received from the Public Library Association. This included sound reinforcement and smart screen technology.

Community Resources (formerly known as Social Services)

October has been a month of transition for the Community Resource Department as they switch gears to help patrons prepare and gather resources for the winter months. The team launched an "Art in the Afternoons" program. The last session consisted of a sewing class to aid patrons with the knowledge and skills to patch clothing and fix missing buttons. The patrons who showed up to the class also got a travel size kit of sewing materials to begin using their new skills on their own.

Additionally, the team is excited to announce the introduction of the Community Resource Spotlight. On the wall of the Community Resource Center in Medford, a bulletin board has been hung, which will highlight and display various community resource agencies who may have special services to offer each month. The team will then coordinate with this agency for a scheduled day of outreach within the library where this agency will come and speak with interested patrons.

Finance

The Finance team is completing reconciliation of funds for the first quarter, which needs to be completed before a Quarterly Budget Report can be finalized. The team is hopeful that all funds will be reconciled, and that a complete and accurate report will be available for the next board meeting.

Human Resources

Six new volunteers were oriented to the Medford Branch during the month of October. The Teen, Homework Help and Outreach departments each received new volunteers to help with their workloads. The new volunteers participated in several hours of learning about the history of JCLS and policies and procedures. The afternoon ended with a tour of the Medford building and an opportunity to see workspaces and meet supervisors.

Several staff gathered around the virtual table for October's ED&I Roundtable, which is a monthly educational opportunity for staff to connect and learn about an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion topic. Produced and led by Staff Development Coordinator Loren Clupny, October's theme was LGBT History Month and the complicated nature of community history for marginalized groups.

Marketing

In October the Marketing Department created a month-long Beanstack “Spooky Season” Reading challenge that ended with more than 200 participants who read for nearly 30,000 minutes during the month. This was the first of more short-form Beanstack challenges to come, aimed at retaining usership on the platform and invigorating reader engagement with the library. The November Challenge is “Shakespeare Retellings,” in honor of the Folio 400 anniversary. The latest “ambient storytelling” video was also released, this time adapting Poe’s “The Oval Portrait.”

Press Releases:

Big Ideas Program: <https://bit.ly/46DjSig>

Meet a Business Mentor: <https://bit.ly/3QrYkP5>

Media Coverage:

JPR on Dolly Parton Imagination Library: <https://bit.ly/3FoSmtN>

KOBI on Medford Security Update: <https://bit.ly/3PNWfNa>

Notable Videos:

Shady Cove Book Lockers Time Lapse: <https://youtu.be/tt7IS74oO20>

The Oval Portrait: <https://youtu.be/rf0mkP4M4Eg>

Support Services

Collection Development

Purchasing for the Library of Things (LOT) Collection has resumed. Using the guidelines created by the LOT Task Force, Collection Development Manager Laurin Arnold began by selecting more copies of the most popular items in the LOT collection. These things include a Cassette to MP3 Converter, External USB DVD/CD Drive, Film and Slide Scanner, Projector Kit, CD Player Boombox, Digital photo scanner. The Technical Services Department will order and process these items for circulation in the coming months.

Information Technology

As part the JCLS cybersecurity plan to enhance and improve network security for the organization, IT made a change to restrict the Staff Wi-Fi network to JCLS devices only. This change will prevent potential security threats that personal devices pose. Staff (and the public) are able to use JCLS Public Wi-Fi with their personal devices.

Facilities

On October 18 and 19, Operations Coordinator Crystal Zastera and Facilities Assistant Kyle Depew attended the Southern Oregon OSHA Conference held in Ashland. Zastera and fellow Safety Committee member Eric Molinsky attended the SDAO Risk Management Training. JCLD Board Member Kim Young was also in attendance.

Due to ongoing issues with a staff elevator at Medford, JCLS is planning for an elevator repair project. This repair project will solve the current issue and will proactively address future anticipated issues in the other two Medford elevators.

Library Administration

Library Director Kari May attended the Urban Libraries Council (ULC) Annual Forum, held this October in Seattle, Washington. The theme of the conference was “People, Power, and Place.” The Forum brought together library leaders from large library systems across the United States and Canada for two days of sessions focused on issues and innovations impacting libraries, from the loneliness epidemic to generative Artificial Intelligence, as well as the role that the Library and Library Foundation plays in advocacy and strategic planning for a resilient future.