



Director's Report August 2023

Support Services

In July, two changes were made to collection shelving: Young Adult (YA) audiobooks have been integrated into the adult audiobook collection, and adult graphic novels have moved to their own section. Staff had noted that the YA audiobook section was not very active. Most teens today are not looking for audiobooks on compact discs, and YA audiobooks have a lot of crossover appeal with adults. Now that they have been interfiled, the titles have already seen an increase in circulation.

The graphic novel relocation is one step in a larger interdepartmental project. Technical Services staff have been working closely with Collection Development Manager Laurin Arnold to re-catalog the collection so the items are more accessible to patrons looking for the genre. Prior to this transition, graphic novels were classified throughout the non-fiction section and were not always easy to find. New collection codes have been created, and relabeling is underway. Every item in the collection is being evaluated by staff, with well-used copies being replaced, and gaps in series filled in. Plenty of new titles are being added, too.



While adjustments to the catalog are underway, branches have been preparing by collecting the books in dedicated shelving. Staff have been noting a lot more traffic to this collection now, especially since adding signage and displaying popular titles. Ashland Librarian Brianna Levesque writes, "I've seen patrons I don't recognize and regulars discovering it. One regular patron told another, 'Have you seen this? They have actual adult graphic novels now!' Of course, we had them before, but they were difficult to find; it's great they are getting more visibility!"

Collection Development

Collection Development continues to streamline and improve the Suggest a Purchase process, allowing them to stay on top of patron and staff requests. This work has been noticed and commented upon by staff and patrons. One patron comment left in the suggestion form read, "I like this new purchase request format! Simpler and faster. Thanks."

The Library of Things Task Force has updated the structure of Library of Things (LOT) work going forward. Selection will be handled exclusively by the Collection Development Manager using the selection, weeding, donation, and maintenance/repair guidelines that the task force is currently creating. Once purchasing and weeding items restarts, a Book Club Bag Committee will be created. This group will design a release schedule that will keep the selection fresh throughout the year, select and weed out bags, and create discussion topics to be included in the kits.

Technical Services

This fiscal year's materials budget went live July 3, and orders were ready to be submitted right away. The Collection Development Team's proactive approach to selecting physical items, digital collections, and library database renewals has helped to set JCLS up for a successful spending year. Technical Services Manager Ashley Johnson reports that this has been the smoothest and quickest Acquisitions budget rollover JCLS has had in many years.

Information Technology

Website Specialist Michael Stanfield has been working with hosting vendor Stirling Brandworks to upgrade the JCLS website's search engine. This change offers improved search results and the ability to adjust relevancy rankings as needed. **(Note: this upgrade does not impact the public catalog, Aspen, only the website search.)**



Stanfield also worked with ILS Administrator Kris Becker to expand the website accessibility widget to the public catalog pages. Users can click on the accessibility icon to expand the menu and select from options such as increasing text and cursor size, adjusting contrast, and changing the font to one easier to read for dyslexic users.

Facilities

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for Facilities Master Planning services closed on August 4, 2023, and the Facilities Committee met to review proposals on August 10, 2023, before holding interviews with the top bidder. The Committee anticipates making a decision by the end of August and will bring a contract to the Board for approval in September.

The Ashland HVAC project hit a bumpy patch during the recent July heat wave. Unfortunately, issues with the cooling system resulted in unexpected branch closures due to exceedingly high temperatures in the building. Fortunately, the situation has been resolved. Contractors and the County were on-site addressing the issues with the cooling system, and the new system is almost fully operational. JCLS and the County are working together with the contractor to ensure that all systems are stable and functioning optimally before the final walk through.

Public Services

Central Area

Medford Branch

Wildlife Images continued their programming tour with a visit to the Medford Children's department in July. Patrons listened to a presentation about the organization's mission and then were introduced to some very special guests. Children, adults, and staff across multiple departments were delighted to meet their animal ambassadors; Peter the Possum was a particular favorite.

Medford Teen's *One Day at Camp Half-Blood* – a Percy Jackson-themed program – was so successful that the department held it twice. Teens were sorted into cabins and quizzed on Greek mythology trivia. They also enjoyed crafts and themed snacks. Drachmas were awarded as prizes for trivia, and attendees went home carrying craft kits to make an ocean in a bottle and a paint-your-own camp flag.



Patrons of all ages joined in for the Medford Library Game and Puzzle Swap. Attendees brought in their gently used board games and puzzles and took home some new ones in exchange. Jigsaws in particular were very popular, with some patrons bringing in more than ten puzzles and exchanging them for different ones.

Adult Services staff leapt into action when a frightened patron called to ask for the status and location of a wildfire that had sprung up near her home in the Ruch area. The team was able to quickly provide her with Oregon Department of Forestry information from the Fire Watch app. Fortunately, the updates were positive, and the patron was relieved and grateful. She asked if there was a non-app resource for such news, and the team sent her links to the browser version of Fire Watch as well as the KDRV "FireWatch" website page, which contains similar information.

Adult Services Librarians Spencer Ellis and Kayla Samnath partnered with the Housing Authority at the Concord Apartments, where they led a craft in which patrons were given supplies to create their own bookmark or color a premade version. They then laminated them and added a tassel as a finishing touch. Multiple attendees made two or three bookmarks.



Central Point

Stuffed Animal Storytime was a huge hit! Young library patrons brought their beloved plush friends to the library for an evening "campfire" program, complete with stories, snacks, and songs. After the program was over, the kids wished their friends goodnight and left their stuffed animals to have a special slumber party in the library, where they got up to all sorts of shenanigans. Photos were taken of the animals participating in various library activities and then collected into a slideshow to be shared with the kids and their parents. When the kids were reunited with their friends the next day, they loved hearing about all of the silly things the animals were up to overnight.



Lower Rogue

Rogue River

Be on the lookout in this upcoming month's issue of the *Rogue River Press* for what will be the first of a monthly article that includes updates on library services and programs offered at the branch.

Ruch

Branch Manager Megan Pinder met with Resource Specialist Michael Workman to discuss ways to connect Ruch patrons with community resources for underserved populations. The branch added Naloxone to its first aid kit and created a display of hygiene kits and community resources. Ten hygiene kits and several handouts have already been utilized.



Upper Rogue

Butte Falls

Butte Falls offered a rock painting passive program during July. Many of the young patrons who regularly visit the branch have expressed to staff how much they love crafts. One of their parents had seen that the Shady Cove library had offered a similar program, and staff were happy to fulfill the request. Staff laid out art supplies and provided minimal instruction to make this activity available for whoever wanted to join in. Participants painted 29 rocks to create a colorful and fun addition to the walkway behind the Library. A drawing was held to select a name for the new installation, and staff are delighted to introduce Dizzy the Library Snake.

Later, teens had another chance to get crafty with a painting program. Beverages were provided for the artists to enjoy while they were guided through painting a sunflower. Everyone reported that they'd had a great time and were happy to take home a new piece of art.



Eagle Point

On July 4th, the Eagle Point staff participated in the Eagle Point Star Spangled Everything Fair. They set up a booth in front of the library where library staff signed people up for library cards, answered questions about increased hours, promoted Summer Reading, and gave away small prizes. A face painter was on hand, and staff provided temporary tattoos. The front doors of the branch were open so people attending the fair could use the restrooms and drinking fountains. In the four hours Eagle Point staff were there, they had over 680 interactions with the public.



The Eagle Point Women's Club Piecemakers took over the display case this month with a beautiful presentation of Contemporary Quilting. Alongside more traditional quilts, there are colorful bags, banners, and even portraits created with quilting techniques.

Prospect

Take and Makes continue to be one of the most popular offerings at the Prospect branch. In July there were a variety of options, including ice cream pops, mystery game bags, and a suncatcher craft that encouraged young makers to find interesting summer flowers and plants. Young patrons seemed especially excited with the suncatchers, and that kit flew off the cart. For those who linger in the library, Prospect added bright and inviting seating to their teen area, giving patrons a cozy spot to curl up and read.



Shady Cove

Shady Cove hosted Summer School class visits during the week of July 11. Community Librarian Evelyn Lorence and Education Services Specialist Stephanie Polendey set up a book speed dating activity, which the kids had specifically asked for. They loved browsing the books' "profiles" and choosing the ones that best matched their interests.



Later that week, the branch welcomed the Moala family, who presented a Hawaiian dance program featuring regional styles of dance such as Tongan, Tahitian, and Maori. Presenter Chawna Moala told Hawaiian folklore stories and afterward discussed the history of the islands. The children in the audience were chosen to come up front and learn a dance. The kids did a wonderful job, and the dance was enjoyed by all.



White City

White City celebrated Shark Week by creating Shark Bookmarks. The kids loved crafting toothy creations that will help them devour all of the books that they check out. After the program, staff assembled take & makes with the leftover supplies, and kids loved making them at home, too.

Bear Creek

Ashland

July was a fun and busy month in the Ashland Children's department. John Jackson of Bugs R' Us educational services wowed a large crowd of children and families with his live bugs, insects and arachnids. Jackson introduced folks young and old to fun facts about different bugs and their habits and lifecycles. At the end of the program, brave participants were invited to snack on a freeze-dried cricket or mealworm.



Every Monday at 2:00 p.m. the children's team has been offering a "Level Up Club." Children's Specialists Kelly Steiner and Cody Walburn offered different STEM programs. July's focused on chemistry, and children and their families were introduced to the science of reactions by combining vinegar and baking soda with chalk in thin bags to make them inflate and pop with a burst of color.



The Ashland children's team continues to partner with the Nature Center in North Mountain Park to take their creative energy off campus as well. One Saturday, the team presented a puppet show about the power of the sun. Attendees were delighted by Walburn's portrayal of Brenda the Bear, while Children's Specialists Jose Romero and Ellen Werner accompanied with a cast of puppets. Children's Librarian Lyn Heerema served as the emcee of the show. After the performance, a craft rounded out the event.

Phoenix

Branch Manager Jody Fleming visited summer school students at Phoenix Elementary for two weeks in July. Fleming read stories and provided a hands-on program about rocks and minerals. Many kids also signed up for the Summer Reading Program. Fleming has visited the summer schoolers several times over the years and always enjoys storytelling and doing crafts with them.



The Phoenix Library had a particularly popular take and make kit this summer. Children received paper and crayons to draw their favorite stuffed animal. Once the artwork was completed, they brought the picture back to the library and were awarded with soft fleece blankies to bring home.

Talent

Branch Manager Patrick Mathewes facilitated a Lego Challenge, which was very well attended. Patrons of all ages worked together to build a dozen creations to be displayed in the library for a month. The surveys from this program were extremely positive, frequently mentioning the creativity and social interaction it fostered. One mom wrote, "It let the kids explore, interact, and develop their minds in a positive environment."



Programs

Summer programs continued to educate and entertain patrons of all ages. The goal of the Summer Reading Program is to prevent the "summer slide," and programs for teens and kids are doing that across the District.

Artist and teacher Miss Molly presented a very special storytime at the Jacksonville Library. After reading Angela DiTerlizzi's *The Magical Yet*, she showed children how to create their own "yets" to help them feel more confident about learning new things. Anything you haven't learned is a thing you haven't learned... yet!



Ventriloquist Steve Chaney and his sidekick Corny Crow visited Central Point Library. Attendees learned how to make their own puppet out of a sock, googly eyes, hair, and a rubber band, and afterward Chaney taught them the basics of ventriloquism. Some very brave audience members volunteered to be part of the show, and the performance left everyone in stitches.

Shady Cove Library presented the ScienceWorks "Be a Physicist" program, where participants learned about sound and how to construct sound amplifiers. There were some interesting designs and sounds created throughout the program.



Everyone enjoyed the experiments, learned something new, and several patrons checked out books on the topic before they left.

An enthusiastic group of teens attended Medford Library's Paint Your Own Constellation program. They expressed their creativity by painting the night sky (or in some cases, a whole galaxy) behind a constellation of their choice. The participants added glow in the dark stars after the canvases dried for a little bit of whimsy on top of the painting.

Outreach

At Home Services



Summer Reading is truly for everyone, even At Home Services patrons. This year, six patrons have earned their free book so far, and more are on track to complete the challenge by the end of the summer. The department was also able to add five new patrons to the service this month.

Business Librarian

This month featured the first "Meet a Business Mentor Night" offered in partnership with Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE). This drop-in event offers free business counseling from volunteers who have previously owned businesses for start-ups or existing businesses. Four business owners and one prospective volunteer came. Volunteer mentors included Bruce Keller, John Roberts, and Joanne Cleckner, who bring more than 90 years of business experience to help SCORE mentees.

Digital Services

Digital Services helped 151 patrons in June with different types of technology education, including an Android Phone and Tablet Basics class conducted at Ashland Senior Center.



Education Services

The Education Services team reached 115 students at 10 different events, including summer enrichment activities in Medford, Eagle Point, and Shady Cove. July's newsletter featured an interview with Janae Emerson, an Early Childhood Special Education Teacher, and an overview of the Gale database tailored for middle and high schoolers.

Outreach to Child Care

Outreach to Child Care (OCC) served 894 children at 33 sites in July. The program circulated 1,925 items (1,068 English-language items and 857 Spanish-language items).

Library Specialists Emily Hawks and Kateri Warnick attended the Head Start Health Kick-Off at Alan Berlin Head Start in Medford, where they updated and renewed several library cards and distributed information about the Summer Reading Program.

Children's Festival

JCLS and its longtime partner, The Storytelling Guild, celebrated the 57th annual Children's Festival in July. The first Children's Festival took place in 1967 as "A Child's Fun 'N Fantasy Afternoon" under the trees at Britt Gardens in Jacksonville, Oregon. The turnout for that one-day event was so tremendous (200 children) that it was repeated the next day for another 300 children. Today the event is three days and sees thousands of visitors. There are more than 30 arts & crafts booths, storytelling and storytime areas, child-focused stage performances, and more!

This year, the festival theme was "Game On!" as a mirror to the JCLS Summer Reading Program theme of "Level Up." Programs Coordinator Brystan Strong served as the Major Chair for the Storytelling Tree, which provides drop-in storytime. Strong was joined by several JCLS staff over the course of the three days. Staff read books, sang songs, and brought some fun library swag to hand out to the kids in attendance. This year, the festival saw 5,781 visitors.

New this year, some volunteers from The United Rotary Clubs of Southern Oregon joined JCLS to help spread the word and register children ages 0- 5 for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. In addition to books relating to the festival theme, sample Imagination Library books were part of the 'read aloud' collection to drum up some interest in the Imagination Library.

Social Services

July has been a month of transition for the Social Service Department. The department has worked diligently and empathetically to enforce new policy changes and inform patrons of upcoming changes.

The launch of the satellite program at other branches has met with positive results. The Resource Specialists have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the branches in more detail and providing help where it is needed. The social services program also received a generous donation of free bus tokens from RVTB. These tokens will be distributed to patrons in need of transportation aid. They were also able to purchase additional bicycle locks for the Medford branch.

Marketing

In July the Marketing team overhauled the formatting of JCLS' monthly email newsletter, which will be a part of a 6-month test to analyze formatting choices and what content is highlighted. Additionally, the trailer for the next documentary short, "Postmarked: When Mail Took Flight," premiered. The film will look at the history of airmail and its connection to Medford. The Marketing team also chose to test promotional efforts for Libby's Big Library Read initiative, putting more emphasis on the two-week program, to solid results. The book chosen was *A Very Typical Family* by Sierra Godfrey. During the program, it was checked out by more than 250 patrons. These numbers are particularly remarkable since it had not been checked out even once in the prior month. Based on these results, the Marketing team will continue to put additional efforts into promoting the Big Library Read and analyzing its results.

About Libby's Big Library Read: <https://jcls.org/2023/07/10/big-library-read-july23/>

Press Release:

August Windows in Time: <https://bit.ly/3Yqlo4l>

Notable Videos:

Postmarked Trailer: <https://youtu.be/Eq8tjc86e9w>

July Windows in Time Recording: <https://youtu.be/mbxHiPTGT18>

Finance

The Finance Department is in the full swing of the 22-23 fiscal year audit with auditors from KDP. Final entries and reconciliations are going smoothly as previous Finance Manager Brittany Brite has remained with JCLS in a consultative capacity, assisting current Finance Manager Thomas McLanahan. In the coming weeks, KDP will make a field visit to inspect documents and further their audit process. McLanahan feels confident he will be able to produce complete and accurate physical reporting for the auditors.

Human Resources

HR received the analysis of the Climate Survey conducted by contractor Conscient Strategies. Library Director Kari May and HR Manager Brynn Fogerty presented a summary of the results to the Administrative Team and supervisor team and then later to all staff at the district-wide All-Hands meetings. These presentations resulted in good conversation and thought-provoking observations. Conscient Strategies outlined some actions that JCLS could immediately implement, that were labeled as "quick wins." Some of these have already been implemented, such as a Employee Handbook Spotlight in the weekly Staff Connect and an anonymous, virtual Staff Comment Box for direct feedback to Administration.

HR Manager Brynn Fogerty has been offering another avenue of communication through Stay Interviews for staff. This is an opportunity for staff to request a one-on-one and ask questions, talk about issues, career advancement, or learn more about the District. These have been a popular method of feedback mechanisms.

Special Highlights

Several support services staff attended the Oregon Library Association's Support Services Division Conference which was held at the Ashland Hills Hotel in July. Director May gave a presentation about the status of library services in Southern Oregon, highlighting JCLS programs and services as well as information about neighboring libraries Josephine Community Library District, Klamath County Library, and the Hannon Library at Southern Oregon University.

Director May attended an Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) Conversations and Connections meeting at the Ashland Library to celebrate the achievements of the OCF GoKids program. May served as a Steering Committee member for the Southern region. Representatives from organizations in Klamath, Lake, Josephine, and Jackson counties attended the meeting to celebrate local programs that support youth and early literacy.