



## Director's Report

March 2023



### ***Rogue Reads Wrap Up***

The third annual Rogue Reads wrapped up in March, and staff across the system worked hard to make sure it ended on a high note. There were several iterations of James Pagliasotti's *What It Was: Growing Up When the Music Mattered* presentation. Entertained patrons of all ages peppered Pagliasotti with questions about his experience in reporting on Rock and Roll in the 60s and 70s. A patron who came to use the internet jovially asked, "You can rock out that hard in a library?" Another remarked, "This music makes the library seem so alive!"

*Live Looping with Larry* was a hit, and attendees were thoroughly engaged in the real-time performance. One of the audience members commented that they had learned a lot during the session. The Mini Macramé Wind Chime kits proved popular at all branches. In Medford, a patron came in right at opening time because they were specifically interested in learning more about macramé. Staff pointed out recommended titles on the instruction sheet and options for further learning, directing them toward where they could be found.

Southern Oregon Songwriter's Association President Steve Yungen and his colleague Anna led a Songwriting 101 program at the Medford Branch. The presenters shared tips and tricks for song construction, advice on finding inspiration and combating writer's block, and local resources for musicians to gain more of a following and find workshopping groups. Several attendees brought their own instruments and shared their work with the group.

In Ashland, the series of mini-concerts in the library, which featured musicians from the Rogue Valley Symphony, concluded on the last Thursday of February. Many people stopped to listen to the music of two stand-up basses, which could be heard in many parts of the library. It was a wonderful opportunity to highlight instruments that are not often given center stage. The musicians are both originally from Latin America, and they spoke about how their cultural heritage and the music they grew up listening to drew them to play bass. Later, Vicki Purslow, a music history and education professor at SOU, led a program on History and Culture in Popular Music to cap off the Ashland Rogue Reads programming. While attendance was low due to a winter storm, the participants who braved the weather got a lot out of the event.

Several branches held a "Songs That Tell Stories" program led by drummer and storyteller Laura Rich. In Butte Falls, a group of local students attended the program and played their drums, out of sync at first until, under Rich's gentle and expert guidance, they were able to get into sync. They enjoyed not only being loud in the library, but also listening to Rich's stories about Africa and drum making.



Ernest Paul.

In Prospect, a young drummer spread the rhythm mnemonics she learned (like AR-MA-DIL-LO) to her friends and classmates after the presentation, and they were overheard chanting the beats at a local basketball game. Rich's presentation was warm and welcoming. The stories were interesting and humorous, the music was fun and moving.

Ruch's *Applegate Valley Musicians and Troubadours* was a massive success, featuring six different performances and over sixty attendees. Performers included the Voices of the Applegate, the Four Winds Quartet, and one by a student of the Ruch Outdoor Community School and her grandfather,

On Saturday, February 11th, The Medford Branch held an all-day family Music and Movement event. Upstairs at the reference desk, patrons could spin the prize wheel to win Rogue Reads swag. Patrons could also pick up a



Magical, Mysterious, Musical Take & Play kit. Interim Medford Branch Manager Carrie Tannehill prepared velvet bags with one of many mystery instruments (tambourine, castanets, maracas, egg shakers, harmonica, and a hand drum) inside of them. Youth Services Coordinator Brystan Strong led a Toddlerobics: Music, Movement, and Me program. Many of the young participants used their new musical instruments to play along.

Teen Librarians Jackie Keating and Andrea Leone and Community Literacy Librarian Evelyn Lorence hosted a virtual author talk with Eric Gansworth on February 21st. Gansworth is the author of the Teen Rogue Reads title *If I Ever Get Out of Here*. Gansworth gave a 40-minute prepared talk about why he wrote the book and what it was like to grow up on a reservation and live in the world outside of it. A Q&A session followed his presentation.

Librarians Evelyn Lorence and Kayla Samnath then shared the recording as a special Rogue Reads treat to students from the Barriers to Bridges program at the Juvenile Detention Center after they had all finished reading *If I Ever Get Out of Here* as a group. The students also received an orientation to the Medford Library, followed by Music Jeopardy in the Teen Zone hosted by Leone.

Several of the branches held a Silent Disco Dance Party to celebrate the end of the program. A Silent Disco is where participants listen to the same music but through individual headphones so as to not disturb people around them – and is usually held in public spaces – like a library. In Ashland, the teens discoed for a bit and then played a couple of rounds of the video game Just Dance. In Medford, the Silent Disco, scheduled to go from 1 to 3 p.m., was extended until 4:30 p.m. Patrons were simply having too much fun dancing and continuing to get their groove on, and the extra time brought infectious joy.

## Public Services

### Bear Creek

Ashland is busy preparing for the upcoming HVAC closure. Staff are organizing front door service. The upcoming April closure of the Children's area and meeting room spaces inspired the Children's team to take programming off the library grounds and out into the community. Working with several partners through Parks and Recreation and local community gathering places, dates have been set up and spaces reserved.

A slime afternoon at the library provided an opportunity for children's staff and participants to learn about chemistry, all while having a magnificent messy time as a part of a weekly afterschool series of programs.

The video game tournament, a long-running program in Ashland Teen, brought 4 tweens who competed in heated Mario Kart races. They stayed for the whole program, and everyone got snacks and prizes for participating.

Knitting was a theme for teens in Ashland. Adult Services Librarian Ethan Craft led teens in a crochet class, with students learning how to crochet an octopus. One teen was devastated that she was going to miss the class, but Keating was able to take Craft's instructions, some yarn, and crochet hooks, and create a kit for her. While some of the students were brand new and some had crocheted before, everyone had a great time and picked up the project quickly.



Additionally, a staff person from The Websters, the knitting store in downtown Ashland, led their final Cozy Crafternoon of the season: a teen knitting program. Participants got to chat and get to know each other while they knitted and enjoyed tea and cookies. They learned how to make a soft bracelet complete with button and clasp. The last time this program took place was on March 11, 2020 – 5 days before the pandemic closed the libraries – so it was great to resume it.

Tween D&D continues to be the most consistently popular program put on by Ashland Teen. One parent emailed saying “My daughter has been attending the monthly D&D group and loving it. She looks forward to it all month. My kids are homeschooled and really appreciate the chance to socialize with other kids doing fun stuff at the library.”

As part of the Community Table series, which highlights community services, Librarian Ken Loders organized a successful information table about library services, held on the main floor of the library. Many people use the library for books or computer access but do not realize the wealth of other programs and services JCLS provides. On Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, from noon to 3 p.m., Loders answered questions that broadened patrons' understanding of the library.

Talent Library Associate Parsina Dias designed a passive program for teens to match pictures of characters with the book they came from, and three teens scored 100%. Branch Manager Patrick Mathewes was impressed since he was only able to identify about half of the fifteen characters. The winning teens each received a JCLS water bottle, and everyone who participated got to choose a sticker.

The Talent Library Club celebrated their eight-year anniversary this month. They have been conducting book and holiday sales to raise money to fund programs at the Talent library and have been a very supportive group. Due to scheduling and health conflicts, the group has decided to forego their Spring book sale and go on hiatus until their September meeting. This will give them time to prepare for both the Fall book sale and their Holiday boutique, their two main events of the year. “This group has done a great job of meeting our needs, and I’m glad that they are seeing to some of their own,” said Branch Manager Patrick Mathewes. “They will come back even stronger in the Fall, and in the meantime their treasurer will be available to receive donations and write checks for any programming expenses.”

## Central Area

Adult Services Librarian Kayla Samnath facilitated March's Medford Book Chat for the book *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens. The group opened the meeting with discussing the author's background and her other works. Everyone enjoyed the book, and participants spent a lively time debating some of the nuances of the plot and whether certain characters were believable. Attendees received either a Rogue Reads mug or tote bag. There was a drawing to win a copy of *Music is History* and a copy of *Where the Crawdads Sing*.

The Medford Teen Advisory Group (TAG) met on Valentine's Day. While enjoying some Valentine's-themed treats, the teens discussed books to read as a group during the summer and made suggestions for summer reading book prizes.

Janine Salvatti of the Master Gardener's Association led a virtual presentation on gardening. She shared the process for the Lasagna and No Dig gardening methods, with general tips and tricks for preparing garden beds for spring. Patrons ended the program with multiple questions about fertilizers, local resources, and more.



Central Point Library Associate Noel O'Brien led the branch's the School's Out Fun programming. "S.O. Fun! is really beginning to take more shape," O'Brien reports. "I have a great core group of kids who come every week, along with new faces! We have been doing so many fun crafts such as optical illusions, birdfeeders, and Valentine's Day-themed lanterns made from recycled glass jars and tissue paper. While we crafted, we listened to 4 genres of music to see how music affects our style of art. I am really enjoying the discussion portion of the program after we read our books to see what the kids think!"

### **Lower Rogue**

Gold Hill hosted a history program, two music programs, and a senior meetup. They continued to host additional recurring programs including the teen hangout, story time, two book clubs and a writing lounge in February. The history program was presented by Ludlow Sibley, a local resident who gave a talk on Old Sam's Valley School: A History. Sibley is a patron of the library, a Friends of the Library member and a donor of hundreds of books that were like new. He donated these to the Friends of the Library to raise money for programming. Sibley also lives in the old high school. The discussion was well attended by patrons interested in local history. Patrons who attended the "Friend Speed Dating for Seniors" program enjoyed an impromptu concert by two attendees who brought their ukuleles.

Jacksonville's No Strings Attached Book Group met for the second time in February. The attendees discussed the various things they are reading, ranging from ancient Greek historical texts to contemporary fiction. They commented on how interesting it is to hear about books that they might not have thought to read or find commonality in one's readings with new acquaintances.

### **Upper Rogue**

While the overlap of the school day and current library hours make it difficult for school-aged children and teens to utilize the library branch outside of class, the Butte Falls Library proved a popular spot to pop in to check out books and warm-up on a recent snow day. Staff are excited for the upcoming extended hours to create more opportunities for young Butte Falls residents to spend quality time in the library.

An Eagle Point High alumnus contacted JCLS wondering if the library had a 1979 Eagle Point yearbook available. The alumnus wanted to show some of the pictures of her being crowned prom queen and her graduation to her grandson. Since the woman does not live in Jackson County, Library Specialist Jenna Steigleder emailed her scans from all the pages she was in. "I scanned some pages over to her and she just about cried over email - It was really sweet," Steigleder said.

Prospect has spent the latter half of February blanketed in snow. The library roof grew some very impressive icicles due to the freeze/thaw cycle. The winter weather is beautiful; however, the branch snow shovel is looking forward to the well-earned respite of a balmy Spring.

The Valentine's Day card making party in Shady Cove went very well. Cookies and juice were given out and enjoyed by all. Fun was had by all at this multi-generational program, and some nice cards were made. Later, Mrs. Triller's Kindergarten class painted Polar bears and penguins, and the Friends of the Library hung the new art in the children's area.



Also in Shady Cove, Dan and Carole Nielson did a presentation on Niagara Falls and the Erie Canal on Tuesday Feb 21<sup>st</sup>. The Friends of Library served hot coffee and snacks, while the Nielsons provided interesting information.

White City hosted a “Date A Book” event, where staff selected books from a variety of age ranges and genres and wrapped them up for patrons to select. They also made sure to include a selection of eBooks and Audiobooks on Libby and Hoopla.

White City staff hosted two listening sessions to hear feedback from the community on what they would like to see on the outside enclosed patio. While no one attended in person, several patrons completed the survey while checking out books. Staff are excited to move forward with this project and create a fun, vibrant outdoor space for patrons.

### Programs

February was not just for music-making; it also marks Bird Feeding Month. In Central Point, Spark Space Specialist Kayla Adamiec displayed homemade bird feeders, local bird guides, and other books focused on birds and birding. She held a Feed the Birds program, and attendees made bird feeders for their yards and made pinecone bird buddies.

Central Point’s Babies & Wobblers storytime is growing. They started the program with 69 total attendees in September 2022 and 167 in February 2023. They are considering adding a second weekly session to keep up with demand.

The Paws to Read program brings patrons to Jacksonville from all over the county. The program is so successful that the dogs and owners have had to move from the children’s area to the meeting room. Four volunteers come with their dogs every Wednesday afternoon to be met by eager children waiting to practice their reading (and petting) skills.

In Ashland, Children’s Specialist Cody Walburn presented his first-ever storytime. Children’s Librarian Lyn Heerema introduced Walburn and led the group in the opening hello song. The program was a great success with additional help from library specialists Kelly Steiner and Nick Rementeria, and the kids in attendance welcomed Walburn. Also, Rementeria and Walburn willingly agreed to take on a toddlerobics program in Ashland since Heerema volunteered to be last-minute help at the Phoenix Branch. Afterward, Heerema received feedback that the program was “great,” and patrons look forward to the next one.

The monthly *Windows in Time* and *Big Ideas* programs in Medford and Ashland continue to be well-attended. This month’s *Windows in time* program was *Giving 101: The Carpenter Foundation* in partnership with the Southern Oregon Historical Society. The *Big Ideas* program was *The Past, Present, and Future of Public Broadcasting in Our Region* featured Paul Westhelle, Executive Director of Jefferson Public Radio, and Phil Meyer, President & CEO of Southern Oregon PBS.

Getting outside of the library, 11 excited patrons attended Coffee 101 with Noble Coffee Roasting, a free class sponsored by the library at Noble Coffee on February 15th. Librarian Brianna Levesque coordinated this event, which is usually a class that Noble Coffee charges participants for, as a free-to-the-public educational opportunity highlighting a local business.

### Outreach



## **At Home Services**

This month, AHS has added another new patron to the service and contacted several others about joining. With the increasing popularity of Crafts at Home, AHS has decided to offer them monthly instead of every other month with support from the Jackson County Library Foundation. This month, Marketing Specialist Ryan Pfeil joined AHS on their trip to Rogue River Estates for their monthly deliveries. While there, Pfeil interviewed a patron for a video project he is putting together for the Jackson County Library Foundation.

## **Business Librarian**

Business Librarian Roslyn Donald served on the “Entrepreneurial Ecosystem” panel for the Downtown Merchants Association’s monthly meeting, along with Marshall Doak of the SBDC and Michelle Johannes of MJ Associates. Another new stop on the Business Librarian itinerary was the Housing Authority’s Rogue River Estates, a facility that houses seniors and people with developmental disabilities. This will be a monthly lunchtime event with information on tax prep assistance, preventing identity theft and consumer scams, and general financial literacy topics. Donald also attended the first meeting of the reinvigorated Talent Business Alliance, which featured a strategy brainstorm about the Talent business community’s SWOT – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Donald joins the rest of the community in being very glad to see new activity in the Talent business community.

## **DART**

In addition to regular visits to Housing Authority sites, the Kelly Shelter, White City Food Bank, and the Landing at Butte Falls, DART added another monthly stop at The Jackson, a transitional housing site run by Rogue Community Health. Mobile Services Specialists Kaitlynn Edrington and Brian Rozendal assisted patrons at the new site with everything from general library questions to setting up personal computers for email and internet browsing. DART also attended the first annual Break the Chain/V-Day event in Ashland on February 14, which was a resounding success both in attendance and engagement.

## **Digital Services**

In February, Digital Services began a new partnership for providing tech classes with Rogue Valley Manor (RVM). Staff presented iPhone and Android Basics classes on four different days during the month, which were attended by 15 residents per class. These classes utilize a live screencast of the curriculum and one-on-one assistance on site with Digital Specialists. Several attendees have scheduled further appointments with the department.

## **Education Services**

Evelyn Lorence and Eagle Point Library Specialist Jenna Steigleder brought “Speed Dating with a Book” to over 100 7<sup>th</sup> graders at Eagle Point Middle School. Students were exposed to various age-appropriate books, ultimately finding their perfect book match. Throughout the course of this program, more than 60 new library cards were made. Feedback from the school included comments about how rewarding it was to see the students interacting with books and how valuable it was to show them the library in a new way. Later, Lorence and Steigleder attended Hillside Elementary's Literacy Night, connecting with over 175 students and their families.

The [February Open Book e-newsletter](#) for educators featured a Q&A with DL Richardson, the Southern Oregon Black and African American Student Success Specialist for the Southern Oregon Education School District. Also featured were a booklist of great books celebrating Black History Month, information about Eric Gansworth's Rogue Reads author talk, and a cultural reflection resource from TeachingBooks.

Central Point’s Spark Space Specialist Kayla Adamiec held a “Lunch Craft” at Crater High School. She promoted library services and made connections with local high school students. One of those students came back to the library to participate in a program held later in the month.

## **Outreach to Child Care**

Collection Development Manager Laurin Arnold and Youth Selection Librarian Monica Owens met several times with the Outreach to Childcare (OCC) team in preparation for their collection being included within the sphere of collections managed by the department. These meetings consisted of OCC staff explaining in detail their duties, processes, and the makeup of their current collection. All JCLS collections are developed and maintained with the end users in mind, while also taking into account the mission and vision of the library. This mindset has always been in place when Collection Development Staff has worked with branch staff and will continue with OCC.

## **Social Services**

February has been a busy month for the Social Services team. The cold weather has increased patronage and requests for service referrals. The team is working hard to introduce its new team members to the community and utilize a variety of personal skills to better help patrons. Additionally, Social Services Intern Emalee Beavers held a cold weather shoe drive and was able to obtain more than 150 pairs of shoes. These generous donations have already impacted the community in a positive way.

A highlight of this month has been furthering a partnership with Jackson County Mental Health. This organization has been coming to the library to do outreach with patrons to ensure that everyone in need of mental health care is able to access it. In addition, they provided the Social Service Team with a plethora of personal lock boxes for patrons, where they can store their beloved items or confidential mental health documents. As always, the program aims to focus on ensuring that the Library is a welcome and safe place for everyone.

## **Finance**

The District's fiscal year 2022 audit is making good progress, with the majority of it having finished the final partner review. This year's audit is going smoother than the 2021 audit, and the District expects the 2023 audit to be even better as the Finance department continues to refine processes and create efficiencies between the Foundation and Friends groups.

The FY24 budget is currently on track for the committee work session later in March. As part of this process, managers have been given the opportunity to discuss financial needs for their branches and/or departments. The Admin team will then work with their department heads to analyze and project FY24 expenses and bring it back to the Finance department for evaluation with the Library Director. This positive change allows for better transparency and communication between the admin team and managers.

## **Human Resources**

February brought focus back to hiring for the hours expansion, starting with both the Upper and Lower Rogue Library Associate positions. As the District nears the final hours expansion, recruitment for the necessary new positions remains on track.

Area Meetings have morphed into All Hands meetings. Previously, Area Meetings were held multiple times a month, every other month. After reviewing the format and goals of these meetings, the meetings were changed to be held virtually twice a month, with a recorded option. The newly-formatted February "All Hands" meetings were a success. Staff received training on Librarian basics such as the Freedom to Read Act, book challenges and meeting room policies.

The District implemented MetLife as the District's new Life, AD&D and Long-Term Disability provider, replacing Unum. MetLife has also become the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider. MetLife's offerings are better, offering staff five free counseling sessions, compared to three under Unum. JCLS now has two separate EAPs, and the benefit continues to be readily utilized.

Since Performance Evaluations will take place in April, the HR Team is preparing for the first year utilizing PeopleStrategy's online Performance Management System. The system will streamline the process, making it more seamless and efficient for both supervisors and staff, and reducing the workload for HR. The HR team received training from PeopleStrategy and tested the process before scheduling training for supervisors in mid-March.

## ***Marketing***

In February, the Marketing team's advertising efforts went toward promoting the continued launch of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL). To date, the Facebook ads alone have reached almost 25,000 people, and over 1,700 families have signed up for free books through DPIL. SOPBS also filmed a great highlight on the program, which is available on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3Sny09n>. With Rogue Reads coming to an end, the team's attention has already shifted toward Summer Reading.

The team have also been creating materials to get the word out to the community about the expanded hours, which will launch April 10. The team has created a press release and flyer and is working on a direct mailer that will go out to the Upper Rogue area. There will also be ads on social media, with notices in library branches and on the website. As Director Kari May is quoted in the press release: "Our communities have been asking for expanded service hours for over three years, and we are excited to be able to offer more access to our library resources. With a more consistent schedule across the system, we hope that our patrons will be able to find a library open when they need one."

### **Press Releases:**

Paws to Read: <http://bit.ly/3JIXnph>

March Windows in Time: <http://bit.ly/3L4Y3QZ>

Ashland HVAC Project: <https://bit.ly/41wGOy1>

March Big Ideas Series: <http://bit.ly/3YqatG9>

Spring Programs: <http://bit.ly/3myNSdm>

### **Notable Videos:**

Valentines Storytime: <https://bit.ly/3RV2m2G>

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Teaser: <https://bit.ly/3mwnlxe>

## ***Support Services***

### **Collection Development**

JCLS received 622 new Suggest A Purchase requests in February. Staff tested the system in January to get used to the new procedure, and they seem to feel comfortable using it now. With the new Selection Librarians in place, the Collection Development department can keep up with new releases and popular titles, which means that when patrons and staff go to look for a title in the catalog, they are finding it and do not need to submit a suggestion. The goal is to continue to reduce the number of suggest-a-purchase submissions as the collection development staff gain a better understanding of the needs of the community. Collection Development staff have also heard from various branch staff that patrons have appreciated the changes made to the suggest a purchase process that they use, including better response times, more format categories, and better explanations for why a suggestion is accepted or rejected.

Collection Development staff visited the Applegate, Ruch, and White City branches in February. The goal of each visit is to better understand the needs of each community, how their patrons interact with the collection, and what the branch's immediate and long-term needs are.

After the February board meeting Arnold, Jenkins, and Owens met with local zine creators to learn more about the zine scene in Jackson County. They plan to attend Ashland's May 2023 Zine Fest to learn more about the regional zine community, although any discussions about the possibility of creating a zine collection at JCLS will need to wait until the Fall due to competing priorities.



## Technical Services

The Collection Development and Technical Services departments continue to monitor the situation with the local newspapers — particularly the recently-renamed *Rogue Valley Times* — and are working on adding subscriptions to the system. In the meantime, they have started the branch magazine and newspaper renewal process, creating new streamlined procedures. Each branch has been allocated an amount of the total periodicals budget from which they can tailor magazine and newspaper selections to meet their community's needs.

Thanks to the collaborative work of the Support Services team, with the added hands of On-Call Sub Karin Webster, 6,269 newly received items are now out filling patron holds and sitting on the new materials bookshelves in every branch.

## Information Technology (IT)

The IT department continues to make progress on the multiple projects currently underway. Website Specialist Michael Stanfield continues to meet with various JCLS departments to update their presence on the library website. Areas such as Business Resources, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Social Services, Outreach to Childcare, and Library District pages have been updated, with more to come.

IT has successfully deployed replacement desktop and laptop staff computers to thirteen branches and are on track to complete Applegate and Medford by end of March. Ashland will be done in conjunction with the HVAC project. With the deployment of these new computers, IT is also upgrading all existing computers to the latest version of Microsoft Office 365.

Lastly, the WiFi Upgrade Project has progressed nicely. Nine branches have been successfully upgraded, though due to the recent snowstorm, IT has had to reschedule the upgrades at Butte Falls, Prospect and Shady Cove. The plan is to complete the project for all remaining branches by the end of March.

## Facilities

Operations Coordinator Crystal Zastera set up a visit at Shady Cove branch with Upper Rogue Area Manager Masyn Phoenix and Shady Cove Branch Manager Marion Mensing to discuss plans for a landscaping refresh and to identify a potential site for the future holds pick up lockers. Zastera and Assistant Director Kelda Vath also visited the Jacksonville branch to scout site options for the forthcoming holds lockers.

Zastera held a walk-through of the Medford library with Social Worker Haylie Courtney and the Library's security camera vendor to discuss options for selective upgrades to the system. The vendor will provide a recommended design plan and quote to upgrade the system to provide better coverage to assist staff in responding to security incidents. Zastera is also working through a prioritized list of FY23 furniture requests for the branches. Thanks to funds provided by their Friends groups, Rogue River recently received new meeting room tables, and Eagle Point's new meeting room tables are scheduled to arrive in mid-March.

After a long wait due to unforeseen delays, Outreach finally has a new vehicle. Zastera managed a blind bid process to sell the former Outreach vehicle. The vehicle was sold to the highest bidder at the end of February, and the new Ford Bronco is already being put to good use. Courier Rosie Webb drove the Bronco for her regular route during a recent snowstorm and noted that she was able to travel easily in places where others struggled, particularly around White City.

