



Director's Report May 2023



Special Highlights

Hours Expansion

Business Librarian Roslyn Donald arranged for a series of ribbon cuttings at branch libraries to celebrate the launch of expanded hours on April 10. She also coordinated with the Medford Chamber to host Greeters in conjunction with the ribbon cutting on April 6. Central Point followed with a ribbon cutting on that first Monday, April 10. Central Point Friends of the Library provided cake and coffee, and representatives from

the Chamber of Commerce, Police Department, Parks & Recreation, City Council, and JCLS staff were in attendance. The library has been busy on their newly opened Mondays, and busier in general over the beginning months of the year.

Applegate saw steady foot traffic on Thursday, a day when they used to be closed. The Phoenix Library celebrated being open on Fridays by offering patrons dozens of Take and Makes and lots of snacks. When patrons asked Branch Manager Jody Fleming if she liked the new hours, Fleming replied, "Yes! This is a dream of mine come true! I am so happy to be open five days a week now!"

The expanded hours are a big hit at the Jacksonville branch. Several members of JCLS staff, along with a Library Board member, Jacksonville Friends, and a few Chamber members attended the ribbon cutting ceremony held on April 12. Rogue River's ribbon cutting on April 13th was attended by JCLS Administration, Rogue River staff, and representatives from their Chamber of Commerce. Patrons are adjusting to and utilizing the expanded hours more and more.

On April 11th the Eagle Point Library celebrated its increased hours with a ribbon cutting ceremony. JCLS Administration along with Eagle Point staff welcomed the Upper Rogue Chamber of Commerce, the Eagle Point Friends of the Library, and Business Librarian Roslyn Donald who all attended the event. The ribbon cutting in Shady Cove was held on April 21. The Upper Rogue Chamber of Commerce helped, and the Shady Cove Friends of the Library served juice and snacks.

In Prospect, the new hours align better with school hours and provide opportunities for during-school programming and after-school library use. Staff have seen increased library usage by students and families after school dismissal. At White City, they have welcomed many new patrons as well as their regulars. All patrons have been extremely excited about the extended hours and days.

OLA Conference

JCLS had a strong showing at the Oregon Library Association annual conference in Bend, Oregon. In addition to the fifteen staff who attended, four Board members also went. The Board's commitment to learning about

libraries and supporting OLA was noticed by many conference-goers. Collection Development Manager Laurin Arnold presented a session entitled "Career Advancement by Staying Put," and Library Director Kari May participated in a panel presentation "Reimagining Library Services" to a large audience. Outreach to Childcare Bilingual Specialist Megan Pinder, Chairperson of the Libros for Oregon program, put together a Poster Session that was displayed in the Exhibit Hall.

Public Services

Ashland staff focused on outreach and Front Door Services for most of the month of April while the HVAC replacement project entered Phase 2. In May, the project moves into the final phase, and Ashland will be open only on the main floor. Thus far, the experience with this change is that space is tight, but patrons are very grateful to be able to come back into the library space. In addition to maintaining telephone, email, and limited in-person reference services during the Front Door Service period, Ashland's Adult Services Staff took advantage of the library's reduced onsite services to do outreach in the community. Adult Staff tabled at The Rogue Valley Grower's Market each Tuesday, SOU's Stevenson Union twice, the YMCA twice, and at the Rogue Earth Day celebration, spreading the word about library services and signing people up for library cards.

During closure the regular preschool storytime moved to Lithia Park. This was an excellent opportunity to reach families who might not have been aware of library programming. Staff met new families and welcomed existing attendees at these pop-up events.

A successful teen program offsite was "Build Your Own Succulent Terrarium" held at Ashland High School. Teens chatted and laughed while they selected their succulents, soil, and decorative rocks to make them with. At the middle school, the program was also a hit, bringing in 38 middle schoolers across two lunch periods to make the hanging live plant art. Teen Specialist Shawnee Stacy also ran the program at the Phoenix and Talent libraries, where teens and tweens from those communities were pleased to participate and bring home their living creations.

A patron came into the Talent Library with their 3–4-year-old grandchild early in April. As they walked through the front door, the patron said to the child, "look at all the things that are here in the library!" Library Associate Erica Rische-Baird approached them and asked the child if this was their first time in a library, and both said "yes," that the child had never been in any library before. Rische-Baird responded how special and exciting that was, and then, thinking of the bubbles at the circulation desk that staff had been handing out to patrons in celebration of the new expanded hours at the branch, said to the child, "You know what this calls for to celebrate? BUBBLES!!!" After some bubble fun and lots of giggles, Rische-Baird led them around the children's section of the library, showing them the books, movies, art on the walls, coloring pages, the train set to play with, and the new colorful rugs the branch had recently gotten. The child immediately stood on the Dr. Seuss rug, and without prompting, started pointing to and identifying the characters on the rug.

Central Area

The Medford April Windows in Time program was "Jacksonville – Then and Now: A Photo Essay" presented by Ken Gregg. Using historical photographs from Peter and Emil Britt from the 1850's to the late 19th century,



Gregg did a “now and then” presentation comparing the historical photos with matching contemporary images. The Windows in Time series is a partnership with Southern Oregon Historic Society.



The Banned Book Club read the book *Genderqueer* by Maia Kobabe. The group agreed on the importance of having this book available to the public. One of the regular attendees said something along the line of “This author wrote this book because they had to run headfirst into the oncoming fire, they had to hit bomb after bomb on their own. Armed with this book, others won’t have to run headfirst into anything, at least they have some comfort in not being alone, and not having to experience some of those hardships. It gives them language to use to express who they are”.



There were several music programs performed in Medford in April including Swingin’ with Dean, The Valley Duo, and Renaissance and Baroque Music with Duo Jetté.

Adult Services Librarians Kayla Samnath and Spencer Ellis worked with the Housing Authority to put on an outreach event at the Concorde location. The building manager provided food for the participants, and Ellis and Samnath facilitated a “no sew” pillowcase craft. They prepped 20 kits, with three different patterns available for participants. During the event, more than 30 people came into the room to participate. Some folks came in groups and worked on one pillow together. Both Samnath and Ellis worked the room, ready to assist folks who needed help, or to just hang out and talk. They had a great time getting to know the people at this location.



Four classes visited the Central Point Library. Students checked out books and explored the library. S.O. Fun: Cool Kids Read is averaging 24 attendees per week. Over the past month they have made picture frames, drawn their imaginary friends, and decorated some beautiful chickens. Branch Manager Erin Ulrich partnered with Jennine Greenwell, Older Adult Behavioral Health Specialist at Jackson County Health & Human Services to offer a six-week Healthy Brain & Aging class at the library. It will run from May 30 - July 11.

Lower Rogue

The Southern Oregon Miniaturists are currently displaying some of their amazingly intricate pieces in the Jacksonville foyer. Among them is a tiny, elaborate tree house and a true-to-life representation of the real Kwame Jakeba, a botanist who worked on medicinal plants. The organization will be offering a workshop on how to make a miniature treehouse in May.

Upper Rogue

On April 15th Eagle Point hosted a Bibliophile bash to celebrate National Library Week and National Poetry Month. Patrons were able to participate in a number of reading, writing, and poetry related crafts and activities.

Prospect staff welcomed a library visit from Prospect Elementary’s 4th grade class. Staff provided a tour of the library, learned about library cards, and how to find nonfiction titles with the Dewey Decimal system. The class will

be returning to use the library on a regular basis.



Programs

Children's Services

The Ashland Children's team partnered with North Mountain Park to launch a Storywalk along the bike path and offer a "Finding the Fae Folk" program. The Fae Folk program included a fairy storytime, fairy decorating, and a scavenger hunt for fairy doors hidden around the park. Attendees were also able to learn more about the local fauna and flora along the way. North Mountain Park Director Libby Van Wyhe, who helped with the program, sent the following note to Ashland Children's Librarian Lyn Heerema:

"Words cannot express my joy about today's program. Finding the Fae Folk at NMP was a blinding success! A HUGE triumph, my friends. This is why I've dedicated myself to environmental education... but in recent years, I'd lost the joy, and the magic seemed far away. Today, I was prompting kids to make wishes to the willow fairy inside the willow hut and telling them how much the oak tree loves to be hugged! Thank you for helping me find delight and the magic of sharing nature with children. "



On April 29, Medford hosted its second annual Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros celebration. Over 200 people, primarily children and families, enjoyed activities and performances that celebrated cultures from around the world and that are represented here in the Rogue Valley. The day started with storytelling by the Southern Oregon Chinese Cultural Association; they also wowed patrons and staff by parading their Chinese Dragon puppet around the library. Other performances included Hula and belly dancing, a bilingual storytime and language lesson by the Southern Oregon Japanese Association, and a Mexican Folk dance performance and lesson.




In the Children's department, kids and families could do activities and learn more from the following organizations: Columbia Care Services, Oregon Human Development Corporation, Rogue Climate, the Rotary Clubs of Southern Oregon, Siskiyou Health Center, and Unete. When families arrived at the event, they were given a program passport, and they earned stamps by watching performances, doing activities, and taking a photo at the photo booth. Once their passport was complete, they could receive a free book from the DART van and a free empanada from the CABA Empanada food truck. DART acted as both an introduction to the program and the place where participants could collect their free book at the end. Accompanied by Library specialist Milagros Morales for bilingual support, this event was the busiest day of the month for the DART team.

Teen Services

Central Point Spark Space Specialist Kayla Adamiec hosted two Open Lunch & Games programs with students from Crater High School. Students enjoyed pizza and snacks, played games, and made some arts and crafts. In addition, they learned about library resources and were introduced to the library as a safe and fun place to hang out.

During Teatime Tuesday, the teens and staff of the Medford Teen Library discussed the book *We Weren't Looking to be Found* by Stephanie Kuehn. This book follows the stories of two girls as they enter a treatment facility in Georgia and become roommates. The discussion began with trigger warnings and delved into creating a safe space for teens to discuss the trials of living as a teenager today and what mental health, substance abuse, and dependency look like to them. These topics are difficult, but both staff and patrons left with a little more understanding about how they each see the world.

Adult Services

There were three days of programming focused on Holocaust Remembrance at Medford Library, including a gallery of images and art for free contemplation and personal remembrance. These programs were a joint effort by Outreach staff and Adult Services staff, with partnering organizations Bridge to Jerusalem and StandWithUs – Holocaust Education. The events were also featured on 

The Jacksonville Library hosted members of the Britt Festival Orchestra for a chamber music concert on April 1st. The trio played pieces by Franz Schubert, J.S. Bach, Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti, and Rebecca Clarke to a packed crowd. Jacksonville residents commented to staff about how special it was to enjoy this free concert from their hometown concert venue when they would normally have to compete with tourists to attend.



Outreach

At Home Services

Library Specialists Mackenzie Pollock and Kateri Warnick attended the ACCESS Senior Fair at the Medford Armory, joined by Adults Services Coordinator Katrina Ehrnman-Newton, Education Services Specialist Evelyn Lorence, and Adult Services Librarian Ellana Erhardt. More than 600 people visited the JCLS table, with 41 folks signing up for new library cards and another 16 renewing expired cards. Popular topics were AHS deliveries, new library hours, and how to utilize electronic collections.

DART

DART attended the third annual Medford Metal Fest on April 15th, representing the library while listening to local and out-of-state bands perform throughout the day. Staff supported the DART team by providing themed book recommendations for the event.

Digital Services

Digital Services introduced a new schedule for branch visits, in response to increased library hours. The changes included working Prospect and Butte Falls back into the monthly visit rotation. Digital Services staff provided training on Android and Apple smart phone basics at the Rogue Valley Manor as part of a multi-part series. The training continues to be well-received, with an attendance of 12 at the April session.



Education Services

Community Librarian Evelyn Lorence and Shady Cove Library Associate Sydney Salisburg hosted Speed Dating with Books at the Shady Cove Library for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders from Shady Cove School. Students made thank-you cards for the library, and the school librarian shared, "The kids seem so excited about their dates when I pass them out!"

Ashland Teen Librarian Jackie Keating joined Medford Teen Librarian Andrea Leone, Lorence, and Youth Services Coordinator Brystan Strong to host a field trip of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders from TRAILS school in Ashland. TRAILS

does an annual bike ride from Ashland to the Medford Library on the Greenway. Students heard book talks from Lorence and Leone and a presentation about the upcoming Summer Reading Program, the Teen Center website, and other library resources from Keating and Strong. Then the students were let loose in the Medford Teen Library to check out books and participate in a scavenger hunt. One student was a regular of Keating's at the Ashland Library. While Keating presented JCLS Discovery, the student added, "Or you can just ask Jackie; she's really good at recommendations."

Outreach to Child Care

Megan Pinder, the current Chair of Libros for Oregon (LfO), presented a poster session at the OLA conference. LfO's purpose is to support Spanish-language collection development in Oregon libraries -- particularly in small and rural libraries -- by making the resources of the Guadalajara Book Fair (FIL) more accessible through cooperative book-buying, and in aiding participating libraries in the development and implementation of outreach plans for connecting with their Latinx and Spanish-speaking communities. JCLS was a first-time LfO participant last year and plans to apply again this year.



Library Specialist Emily Hawks joined Strong for two events, KinderLaunch at Howard Elementary on April 5th and Literacy Night at Lincoln Elementary. Between the two events, Hawks and Strong talked to 120 people and registered 35 folks for library cards. The two were able to give away books funded by the Ready to Read grant and advertise the library's resources and upcoming events.

Hawks attended Parent Night at the Oregon Coalition for Childhood Development with former Teen Specialist Kathia Damian, whose bilingual skills were extensively utilized. Damian answered questions about the library and expanded on its services while Hawks entered information to register 25 new patrons for library cards.

Social Services

April has been a month of transition for the Social Service Team as they welcomed security officers into the library and worked cohesively with them to improve the safety and security of the building. The team is working on getting back to the roots of serving the library with their social service expertise. They look forward to spending more time with patrons one on one and providing referrals to other agencies in town.

Morning Hours have moved to being held every other week rather than every week. Social Worker Haylie Courtney continues to look for another agency willing to partner with the Library and take over the location of Morning Hours moving forward.

A highlight of this month was watching and assisting a regular patron both get a job and an apartment. This patron is now off of the streets and living a stable, healthy, independent life.

Finance

The FY24 budget was approved by the Budget Committee on May 3rd, 2023. One adjustment was made to the proposed budget. This adjustment was to increase staff salaries by 1 step (1.5%), instead of the proposed 2 steps (3%), which will bring the total staff salary raise to 6.5% (including a 5% COLA) beginning on July 1, 2023. The approved budget will go before the Board at the June 2023 board meeting for a public hearing and then adoption.

Finance Manager Brittan Brite and May are in discussions with the District's current auditor, KDP, to decide when the FY2023 audit process will begin. Currently, the District is looking at a start date around late September/early October.

Human Resources

Performance evaluations for all staff started in April. Staff completed self-evaluations, and supervisors used that information to conduct evaluations. Supervisors received peer reviews as a component of their total evaluation process. This was the first year using PeopleStrategy for the evaluation process, which brought everything online and reduced the amount of time the HR Team took to coordinate the process. Goal setting and a sit-down meeting between the supervisor and direct report was the final step of the process. All evaluations are expected to be complete by the end of May.

HR Manager Brynn Fogerty, Benefits Coordinator Marlena Fajardo, and Library Director Kari May met with PeopleStrategy Benefits Broker Sue Flynn to discuss the upcoming renewal rates and open enrollment. The medical insurance renewal is 1% lower than last year. With a new vision package and better dental coverage, the total increase in costs is approximately \$2 or less per month for most staff. Since JCLS elected to use a private Paid Leave Oregon plan, the equivalent plan from MetLife was submitted to the State of Oregon for approval. Contributions to the plan, including deductions from employee paychecks will begin September 2023.

A couple training opportunities were held this month. At the April All-Hands meeting, a bi-monthly meeting that includes all staff members, training included readers advisory and incident reports. The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Roundtable, a monthly training session available to all staff, covered the topic of Climate Justice. Staff Development Coordinator Loren Clupny presented tales of the impact of climate change around the globe. Clupny shared videos, facts and scientific data for staff members to learn from and see the impact in Jackson County and the US.

Marketing

A direct mail campaign to the Upper Rogue area went out just in time for the hours expansion and helped boost turnout at those branches during their new hours. The first Val-Pak mailing featured information about expanded hours and is part of the quarterly marketing plan. The hours expansion and Holocaust Remembrance programming also got media attention. As part of National Library Week, two new library card designs launched, which received great reactions from both staff and patrons as well as on social media.



Media Coverage

[RV Times on Hours Expansion](#)

[KDRV on Holocaust Remembrance Programs](#)

Press Releases

[Hours Expansion](#)

[May "Big Ideas" Series](#)

[May Windows in Time](#)



Notable Videos

[We Will Rebuild, Part 2](#)

[The Rime of the Ancient Mariner](#)

Support Services

A formal Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Facilities Master Plan has been posted with a deadline for proposals of July 10, 2023. Submissions will be reviewed by the Facilities Committee and the District looks forward to this process, anticipated to take place through the remainder of 2023, and its outcomes, which

will help prioritize library buildings and services ten-plus years into the future.

The Ashland library HVAC replacement project continues to make good progress. As mentioned previously, the project is comprised of three phases with varying levels of service interruption. On Monday, April 24th, Ashland began the final Phase of the project, with contractors continuing their work on the upper level. This enabled the branch to reopen its doors to the public, offering access to all library services while restricted to the main level of the building. A mini-computer lab was installed on the main level for this Phase, and patrons were thrilled to be back in their library.

JCLS is happy to be an awardee of an LSTA Competitive Grant through the Oregon State Library in the amount of \$20,000 to be used to fund holds pickup lockers to expand access to library materials and services, particularly to rural residents. The inaugural book locker will be placed at the Shady Cove branch, and the contract with the selected vendor is under negotiation.

Collection Development

The Library of Things Task Force (LOTF) created and released a survey to both patrons and staff in order to gauge knowledge about, interest in, and difficulties using the JCLS Library of Things (LOT). This information will be used to draft the LOT section of the Collection Development Policy and will continue to be useful as the LOTF continues to fulfill the requirements of the Strategic Plan Implementation Plan.

The Collection Development team continued their branch visits in April, visiting Central Point and Rogue River. Children's Selection Librarian Monica Owens visited Ashland to provide more in-depth weeding training to the staff of the Children's Services Department and to analyze their teen collection more closely. Adult Selection Librarian Felishia Jenkins attended the Latinx Engagement Committee's April meeting. All of this supports CD in understanding the needs of JCLS' collection, knowing that each community wants and needs different things.