



Director's Report January 2023

Special Highlights – Hours Expansion

Since December 1st, many patrons have expressed their appreciation that Ashland and Medford branches are now open seven days a week. For some, Thursday or Friday is the only day they can come to the library. For others, the extra hour of time indoors makes a huge difference to their life and wellbeing. Overall, staff have received overwhelming affirming feedback that the expanded hours have a very positive impact on patrons' ability to access a wide range of library resources.



Public Services

Bear Creek

As the weather outside became frightful, Ashland provided adults several opportunities to hunker down, engage their minds, and get crafty. In November, Librarian Ethan Craft taught patrons how to make throw pillows using sewing machines, and a scrapbooking Take & Make designed by Library Specialist Carolyn Maloney flew off the shelves.

Head of Adult Services Ellie Anderson collaborated with the Ashland branch of the American Association of University Women to present the first installment in the Big Ideas program series, where notable local experts will offer monthly presentations on important and timely topics. At the inaugural program, Ashland Chief of Police Tighe O'Meara and Jackson County Commissioner Dave Dotterer discussed Oregon gun laws, and a wide range of patrons with diverse opinions on the subject gathered to discuss the issue at hand and hear from different perspectives.

Phoenix Branch Manager Jody Fleming represented JCLS at the Día de los Muertos Festival held at Phoenix Elementary on November 2. She connected with members of the community from many backgrounds and gave out Take and Makes. She met with her contact at the elementary school, Laura Millette, who invited her to see an elaborate and deeply personal ofrenda, or altar, that she had created to celebrate the occasion. Fleming felt honored to be a part of the festival and to see an important aspect of the Day of the Dead holiday.

Talent Branch Manager Patrick Mathewes was delighted by the return of visits from a special-needs classroom. It was the first time they had visited since the pandemic, and he loved greeting all the new faces. They will come back in three weeks to return the books they checked out, and then visit regularly until the end of the school year. The teacher mentioned wanting to take them to other libraries, and Mathewes recommended the Phoenix branch.

Central Area

Central Point's weekly Babies & Wobblers programs have been wildly successful. In December, it was standing room only in the community room, as students were off from school and parents brought older siblings to enjoy program as a family. Library Associate Noel O'Brien has been doing an amazing job connecting with parents and caregivers and has created a great following for this program.

In November, Medford held a branch-wide “Game Day.” Staff from all departments connected with patrons, ran trivia sessions, facilitated game play, shared favorite boardgames, led roleplaying games, and led a program to teach attendees how to make their own board game.

Medford’s participation in the Downtown Medford Association’s Third Friday activities continues to be popular. In December, the theme was “Music Night.” The Rogue Valley Sauerkrauts German Band performed waltzes, marches, and polkas. Their music could be heard throughout the library, and patrons of all ages joined in to dance. As they left, attendees selected sheet music ornament Take and Makes to continue the festivities at home. Afterwards, staff received a great comment card: “My new favorite place - very considerate and helpful, fast, and efficient.”

Lower Rogue

After a long hiatus during the pandemic, the Paws to Read program returned to Jacksonville. Kids of all ages come to the library to read to certified therapy dogs. Tails wagged and attendees giggled gleefully in response. It was difficult to tell who was more excited to be back in the library: the kids or the dogs!

The Jacksonville Friends of the Library spent three Saturdays in December offering gift wrapping services to Jacksonville patrons. They served warm drinks and cookies while students from the South Medford orchestra played for patrons who were browsing the shelves while their gifts were wrapped.

Five crafters showed up in Applegate for a Christmas Craft program. While decorating gift tags and festive boxes, they sipped on hot cider and enjoyed the holiday music from Hoopla playing in the background.

Upper Rogue

On November 2nd, White City staff celebrated Día de los Muertos and invited patrons to put a spin on the traditional calaveras craft. Instead of crafting a skull out of sugar, kids used sharpies to decorate a skull of longer-lasting plaster. While some followed the demonstrations of traditional designs, other had fun getting creative with decorations that were personal in meaning.

The Eagle Point Friends of the Library Yarnia knitting club marked the end of the year with a treasured tradition: the group spends all year knitting beanies that they then give away to local school children in December. This year, they gave them to students in Eagle Point, Central Point, and Butte Falls. The students responded with several nice thank you cards that were displayed in the branch throughout the month.

Shady Cove held a vaccine clinic in December. Max’s Mission was on hand to answer further health questions, and food boxes that had a nice assortment of non-perishable foods — and a certificate to buy fresh food — were provided to anyone who needed them.



The Shady Cove Library, the Upper Rogue Community Center, and City Hall collaborated to host the annual Christmas Tree lighting ceremony. The Friends popped popcorn, served hot cider, and gave away wrapped ornaments to kids. There was also a drawing to win a gift card to Barnes & Noble bookstore. The Shady Cove Fire Department sent a fire truck to specially deliver a highly-anticipated guest of honor! One by one, all the kids climbed the steps to tell Santa what they were hoping for this holiday season. The Community Center gave away hot chocolate, cookies, and candy canes. At the end of the event, a twelve-year-old girl came up to Branch Manager Marion Mensing and said, “you really pulled this off, I had a lot of fun.”

Programs

Children’s Services

Jacksonville hosted two special read-aloud programs during the fall and winter months. Local author, musician, and storyteller Tish McFadden read her illustrated children’s book *Song of the Redwing*, and acclaimed Oregon Shakespeare Festival actor and dramaturg Barry Kraft performed a special reading of *The Polar Express*. Interspersing the sounds of a train whistle and silver bell, Kraft delighted his audience; he also repeated the performance at the Welcome Winter program in Ashland.

To celebrate the holidays, Rogue River held a storytime focused on traditions. Families began by making an ornament with a ribbon the same length as the child’s height. Each year, the child will cut a new ribbon and can see how much they have grown when they go to hang their ornament. A family from out of town attended the program and added some stickers to theirs so they could remember where they were when the ornament was made.

Ashland Children’s Specialist Kelly Steiner teamed up with North Mountain Nature Park member Libby VanWyhe to offer a native plant program. Attendees learned about flora and fauna of the Rogue Valley and the local Indigenous people’s culinary, medicinal, and practical uses of Southern Oregon’s native plant species.

Eagle Point kicked off Rogue Reads: Music and Community with a performance by local music ensemble Musica Matrix. Some people came for the sole purpose of enjoying the viola concert, while others enjoyed the musical ambiance while they conducted their library business.

Teen Services

Eagle Point rang in the new year a little early by hosting a Library After Dark: Teen Lock-In program. Twenty-five local kids came to play games, sing karaoke, eat snacks, and hang out in the library after hours. At the end of the program, many were already asking Library Specialist Jenna Steigleder when they could do the program again.

Gold Hill staff launched a Teen/Tween hangout in the community room on Wednesdays. The first iteration had four patrons coming in to socialize and play board games. The following week this number increased to eleven.

A couple of Ashland High School's robotics club members came by the Ashland Teen department to check out their collection of various robotics equipment. The students gathered one of the LEGO sets to build with at their next club meeting and are excited to collaborate with the Teen department to lead some STEM programs in the coming months.

The Ashland Teen department also kicked off their Beginning Ukulele program last month with five participants, most brand new to the instrument. They learned some basic chords, and were soon playing songs ranging from “Happy Birthday” to “I’m Yours” by Jason Mraz.

Adult Services

Programs for adults in November and December saw the last of the theme *Fall Into Adventure* and the beginning of the community reading program *Rogue Reads: Community and Music*. Community, collaboration, and connection have been emphasized, and patrons are responding with appreciation and positivity. The Talent Library hosted a Leaf-Printed Cloth Napkins program led by Library Associate Erica Rische-Baird. Rische-Baird said that one of the attendees excitedly noted that “Since none of them knew each other in advance, it turned into a real community-building experience as the ladies chatted and did their crafts together.”

The Britt Orchestra's chamber concert, held at the Jacksonville Library on December 17th, had a tremendous turnout. Patrons squeezed between book shelves and stood on book stands to get a better view of the string trio playing pieces by Haydn and Bach.

Highlights from *Rogue Reads* programming included *Growing up When Music Mattered*, presented by James Pagliasotti, at the Ashland Library. Pagliasotti took patrons on a history tour of a time of intense creativity in music. Later, Librarian Ethan Craft facilitated a well-attended *Live Looping with Larry Smith* program. Local musician and Rogue Community College faculty member Larry Smith demonstrated how looping pedals can be used to layer musical tracks and how to interrupt and interact with them in creative ways.

Outreach

At Home Services (AHS)

The Crafts at Home program continues to increase in popularity, and more and more patrons are requesting the service. With a goal of increasing service to 125 patrons, the AHS team needed a way to save as many bags as possible for patrons who receive materials through the mail. As a solution, staff have resumed visiting the Weatherly Inn retirement facility to deliver items in-person to the patrons who live there.

Business Librarian

In November, Business Librarian Roslyn Donald attended the Women Entrepreneurs of Southern Oregon Entrepreneur Fair held at the Ashland Hills Hotel. There were approximately 70 entrepreneurs exhibiting, with 400 attendees. Donald networked with the plentiful exhibitors, and many signed up for the business newsletter distribution list.

The Medford library was the location for the November Medford Chamber Greeter Meeting, hosted by Rogue Living Magazine and Kensington Investments. Neither of these businesses have a physical location suitable for hosting, so they asked to use the library's large meeting room. There were about 45 attendees, and several of them signed up to receive the library newsletter. Later, the *Southern Oregon Business Journal* published "Overcoming Second-Chance Hiring Anxiety," an article Donald co-authored with Daniel Scotton, in its November issue.

DART

In November, Mobile Services Specialists Brian Rozendal and Kaitlynn Edrington took DART all over the county, ramping up visits to Housing Authority sites and food pantries. DART joined Library Specialist Megan Pinder and migrant rights nonprofit UNETE for a Día de los Muertos celebration to promote the library's digital services. DART also began partnering with the White City Food Pantry and the Kelly Shelter to provide support on a more regular basis.



Opening the month of December, DART made a special appearance in the Gold Hill Christmas Car Show, decorated in full holiday regalia. After the parade, the van parked in front of the library and staff were joined by Gold Hill Branch Manager Lorna Hilke to promote Rogue Reads programming.

Digital Services

Digital Services and the Ashland Adult Services team continued their outreach at the Ashland Senior Center by offering two well-attended classes on iPhone and Android phone basics. Staff also presented workshops on Bluetooth DIY and Internet Safety in JCLS branches in November.

Another group of Orbic-brand replacement hotspots were added to the circulating collection, further decreasing the holds queue and increasing monthly checkouts. The No One Left Offline (NOLO) hotspot program, in partnership with the City of Talent, was successfully renewed for 2023.

Education Services

Community Outreach Librarian Evelyn Lorence accompanied Gold Hill Library Associate Amy Fann to visit the Comet Academy Magnet Program students at the Hanby campus. Lorence and Fann talked about the Rogue Reads titles *Because* and *Amina's Voice*, and introduced youth to JCLS programs and resources.

Lorence and Librarian Kayla Samnath wrapped up a successful reading enrichment unit with the residential classroom at the Juvenile Detention Center in November. Students participated in a month-long class read of *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman. To further engage with the book, students completed extension activities and finished with a viewing of the film version of the book to compare and contrast. The students shared their appreciation of the program with special handwritten thank you cards for both librarians.

The Jacksonville branch began a partnership with Freckled Fawn Nature School, an outdoor preschool and kindergarten, for their indoor lessons. Students started with a tour and received an overview of library basics to familiarize themselves with the building and what it offers. In Talent, the branch hosted a class visit of eleven 6th graders from a local homeschool group. The students used the 2-hour visit to research and gather resources.

Outreach to Child Care (OCC)

The Outreach to Child Care team expanded their offerings in the Fall season. By the end of November, six new sites had registered for the program and 18 new storytimes were added, including seven in Spanish or bilingual. Demand for supplemental materials from both old and new providers also increased. Since spring, circulation of Theme Bags is up 44%, and Baby Boxes are up 26%.

In November every child served by the OCC program received a new gift book in their preferred language, funded by the Jackson County Library Foundation. A total of 1,461 books were given away (328 Spanish language titles, 4 Mandarin language, and 1129 English language titles).

Social Services

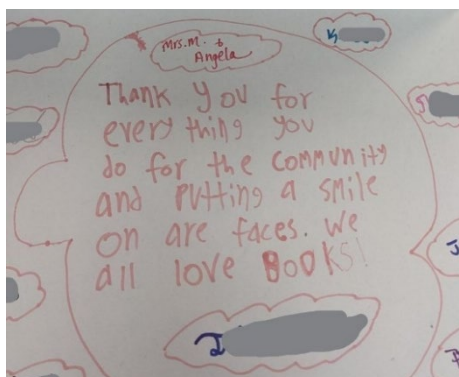
Winter months tend to be difficult for the Social Services team, as houseless patrons face increased hardship from the weather and lack of available resources. Nevertheless, they have done their best to meet the challenge and provide as much assistance as possible. In November, the team was awarded the AllCare Grant that they had applied for. The full allotment of \$19,500 was given to the program in order to purchase more essentials for the patrons we serve. In December, the team distributed much-needed coats and hats to patrons as a result of a clothing drive headed by Social Services Intern Emalee Beavers.

The Wednesday Morning Hours Program continues to result in positive outcomes, outreach, and connections with both patrons and the wider community. The program has been able to work closely with outside organizations to get 5 patrons into shelter and connect 6 other patrons to much needed physical and mental health care. The team also formed a new partnership with local advocacy group Unete to better provide services to Spanish-speaking patrons.

The team is hard at work preparing for the launch of a new program in 2023. On a monthly basis, community partners will be scheduled in study rooms to conduct outreach. This should streamline the referral process and provide easier access for our patrons with the resources and programs they need.

Finance

After months of diligent prep-work, JCLS kicked off the new year with the first payroll run through PeopleStrategy. With support from the PeopleStrategy team, the HR and Finance teams worked to ensure that the payroll ran correctly. Staff seem to be picking up the new system well and are excited about the user-friendliness of the interface. They also have increased access to more information than they have had with the previous system. The District feels that this has been a successful move and looks forward to continuing to enhance systems and processes for staff.



On January 23, auditors will arrive on site, and the audit for fiscal year 2022 will officially begin. The documentation has already been sent to KDP, and the finance team is looking forward to making progress. The extension deadline has been approved to April 2023, and the auditors are currently on track to meet that deadline.

Meanwhile, preparations are underway to draft the budget for FY2024. Finance Manager Brittany Brite has been conversing with department heads and is drafting a list of needs for each department and branch to get a jump start to the budgeting process.

Human Resources

From October to December, the HR Department has worked ceaselessly to hire, onboard and orient 27 new staff. Phase One of the Extended Hours Project was executed successfully on December 3. All the positions needed to staff the expansion in Ashland and Medford have been filled, with the exception of one Clerk position, which will be reposted in January. The Prospect/Butte Falls and White City Branch Manager positions have been filled, and the HR team is now shifting their focus to forecast and plan for the next phase of the expansion project.

Entry-level, paraprofessional, and lower management positions continue to see large, strong pools, which result in well-qualified candidates as finalists. Upper management positions have been taking longer, and the Central and Lower Rogue Area Manager positions remain open. Pools of qualified individuals have been received, but job offers were rejected based on relocation and/or family dynamics. Both positions will be reposted in January.

As 2022 drew to a close, HR discussed staff training needs for the upcoming year. With so many new hires, focus will be on repeating vital information for all library personnel such as the JCLS Code of Conduct Policy, the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement, library policies, and customer service strategies such as de-escalation training. In addition to refreshment on the basics, further training will build on equity, diversity and inclusion and safety guidelines for all staff.

Marketing

The Marketing Department stayed busy producing a slew of materials for Rogue Reads: Music & Community. These materials included professionally printed posters, standup displays, the Winter Event Guide, and digital displays for branch PC and TV monitors. Additionally, the department produced press releases and two in-house radio ads, along with a social media campaign. Promotional swag, including stickers, mugs, and tote bags were also included.

The department partnered with Youth Services Coordinator Brystan Strong, who narrated a special storytime video presentation of "Because," one of the Rogue Reads book selections. Other recent videos included "The Paradox Hotel" author Rob Hart's Q&A on his book, and "Winter's Three," the latest installment in the library district's ongoing ambient storytelling series. Three JCLS staff read seasonal poems paired with winter footage captured by Marketing Specialist Ryan Pfeil.

Press Releases:

"Big Ideas" Discussion: <https://bit.ly/3GSLRR1>

January Windows in Time: <https://bit.ly/3GvKZ3m>

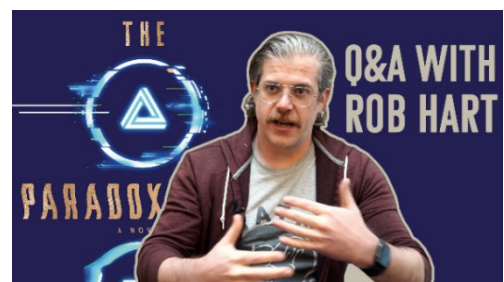
January Events: <https://bit.ly/3GTtU4G>

Videos of Note:

Q&A with author Rob Hart: https://youtu.be/nwp-zl3_eBw

Winter's Three: <https://youtu.be/qGU0NfnCc-I>

Rogue Reads Storytime: [Because](#)



Support Services

Collection Development

The new Collection Development Department continued to solidify throughout November and December. Procedures were created and refined, an ordering structure was established and, most importantly, the Selection Librarian positions were filled, with Monica Owens as the Youth Selector Librarian, and Felishia Jenkins the Adult Selector Librarian.

Staff are promoting the Library of Things (LOT) collection in creative ways. Diane Dekany, Library Associate at Rogue River and member of the LOT Circulation Sub-Committee, created a staff quiz. Staff reported that the quiz helped them learn more about how to work with the collection. On November 10, 2022, Collection Development Manager Laurin Arnold and Social Worker Haylie Courtney introduced members of the Medford La Clinica staff to the LOT. They were amazed by the items offered and were excited to check things out for themselves.

With the launch of the county-wide Rogue Reads program on December 1st, Technical Services and Collection Development worked together to make sure the library has plenty of copies of the Rogue Reads titles in a variety of formats. A statistical snapshot was taken before the start of the program to help track usage patterns and make data-driven decisions for next year's program.

Arnold continued to visit branches with a tour of the Adult and Teen collections at the Ashland library with Head of Adult Services Ellie Anderson and Head of Teen Services Jackie Keating. During the visit they ironed out the upcoming process for the young adult audiobook collection to be interfiled with the adult audiobook collection, and Anderson and Keating introduced Arnold to the unique materials hosted at the branch, such as the Oregon Shakespeare Festival collection.

Arnold continues to meet and build relationships with vendors, including Midwest Tapes and Brodart. She attended the Oregon Digital Library Consortium Board meeting for the first time, taking up the role as the JCLD representative.

Technical Services

ILS Systems Administrator Kris Becker and Arnold collaborated to refine and simplify the process for staff and patrons to submit purchase suggestions. The new process takes better advantage of Koha and Aspen's integrated tools and streamlines selection procedures for Technical Services staff.

Board games and puzzles have been pulled out of the Library of Things and are becoming a new collection in the regular catalog. Patrons can now search for and request these items via the Aspen catalog, or browse them on the shelves of their home branch. More game titles are being added to further expand this fun collection. It is hoped this shift will add visibility to the collection and increase its use.

As has been mentioned in previous reports, our primary book vendor has been plagued with fulfillment issues. The chart displayed above shows the number of items received by Technical Services in 2022. Despite the supply issues, it is encouraging to see things rebounded in the final months of 2022.



IT

IT is on track to upgrade and replace all staff computers this fiscal year. The order of desktops, laptops and peripherals has been received, and IT will configure and deploy all new equipment within the next few months.

The eRate-funded project to replace and upgrade WiFi continues to progress. All indoor Wireless Access Points (WAPs) have arrived, and IT expects the additional new outdoor WAPs to arrive soon. Network Administrator Allen Gayler will meet with the Hunter Communications technician assigned to this project to plan the schedule for deployment. The intent is to install and upgrade all WAPs by Spring 2023.

The uninterruptible power supply (UPS) in Medford was upgraded in December. IT is in the process of evaluating the UPS's and backup batteries at all branches to determine what else may need replacing. Upgrading Medford's backup power system will help keep infrastructure running throughout the system in the event of a power outage, since it serves as a hub for connectivity in the branches.

Technology and Innovation Manager Parvaneh Scoggin is working with Assistant Director of Support Services Kelda Vath to update the JCLS Technology Plan to align goals with the Strategic Plan. This plan will be key in developing budget and project priorities on an ongoing basis. Once ready, the updated plan will be presented to the Board.

Facilities

In facilities news, a secured ladder was installed on an upper exterior of the Ashland library. This installation was recommended by Jackson County to allow safe access to the upper-level roof in order to complete the scheduled Ashland roof repair later this fiscal year. It will also enhance safety for any future work that needs to be completed.

Also in Ashland, a cohort of JCLS staff, including Operations Coordinator Crystal Zastera, Bear Creek Area Manager Kristin Anderson, Vath, and Assistant Director of Public Services Joan Vigil, met with HVAC project contractors from Outlier and Jackson County Facility Maintenance Project Manager Adam Trautman onsite to discuss logistics and agree on plans for the Ashland HVAC project. They confirmed that Front Door Service could be offered during the weeks that the Ashland library will need to close to the public due to the complexity of the HVAC replacement work. The project is scheduled to begin March 7th. During the first phase, the first two levels of the branch will be open and functional to the public. The basement will be closed off to allow work to be done, and the meeting rooms will remain closed throughout the project. The second phase will begin on March 20th, and the building will be closed to the public for approximately four weeks. During this phase, the branch will provide Front Door Service to the patrons, and staff will operate out of the Children's area. The final phase is scheduled to begin on April 17th, when the main level will be open while the upper level is closed. This project is scheduled to be completed in early May.

Zastera and Vath met with Pathway Enterprises representative Richard Simpson to communicate the forthcoming hours expansion and potential additional custodial needs. As part of the Phase 1 expansion to

Medford and Ashland hours, JCLS added day porter services for Ashland on Fridays.

The vehicle used by the Outreach Department has been due for replacement for some time. After struggling with low stock and various procurement issues, Zastera located, secured, and placed an order for a new vehicle in November. Zastera and the Outreach staff eagerly await delivery of the vehicle, which is anticipated to arrive later this month.

The Eagle Point meeting room carpet replacement was completed in November. The meeting room carpet was handled separately from the rest of the building's carpet replacement due to stock not being available at the time.

