



## Director's Report

### January and February 2024

#### ***Special Highlights***



The book locker is “officially” ready for service. Many people throughout JCLS helped put on a successful ribbon cutting ceremony for the new after-hours holds pick-up book locker in Shady Cove. In attendance were Library Director Kari May, Assistant Directors Kelda Vath and Joan Vigil, Shady Cove Branch Manager Marion Mensing, Library Associate Hunter Moore, Business Librarian Roslyn Donald, and Area Manager Masyn Phoenix. Upper Rogue Chamber of Commerce President Amber Hardin promoted the event and provided the ribbon and scissors, and the Shady Cove Friends of the Library hosted a nice reception afterwards. The event provided an opportunity to explain

to the community why the locker was purchased, why it was placed where it is, and to show them how it works. The word spread further throughout Jackson County when Channel 12 News covered the ribbon cutting and interviewed Director May.

In early January, May and Vigil, along with Board members Kim Young and Kevin Keating, met with Medford city officials, including the Mayor of Medford Randy Sparacino, City Manager Brian Sjothun, Police Chief Justin Ivens, as well as RCC and RVTD representatives. In the meeting, Chief Ivens said he appreciated the steps the library has taken to reduce criminal activity on the premises and reported that calls to the police department from the library were down. May reported that many patrons have received hundreds of valuable resources and referrals from the Community Resources Team as well as the many patrons referred to the Library from agencies around Jackson County. All parties in attendance agreed that they have seen improvements in safety and security in the downtown area and committed to continuing to work together.

The Community Survey for the Facilities Master Plan remained open through the end of January, and responses continued to pour in. Consultants from Group 4 worked with the Project Management Team to finalize the details for the Strategic Visioning Workshop to be held later this month. Plans are also underway for a Community Listening Session to share preliminary findings from the study, as well some community focus groups.

#### ***Marketing***

In December and January, Marketing ran ads in local parks and rec guides, the Rogue Valley Times, on Facebook, and in Spanish-language ads on local radio. Three storytime videos saw enormous viewership boosts in January, with two of them reaching over 15,000 views. The Read This! book recommendation video series returned in

January, and the first trailer for the latest documentary, "Same Old Train," premiered, telling the story of the spur railroad that connected Medford and Jacksonville, from 1891 through the early 1920's.

Marketing Specialist Mariah Mills rounded up some staff volunteers to take some pictures to celebrate shelfie day on JCLS social media. "Shelfie Day" is a day for book lovers to share their favorite books and library shelves with the world in a fun way. After all, the world belongs to those who read! On this day, readers are encouraged to take a selfie with their most beloved library shelf showcasing the books that stand out for them. Staff responded to the call with creativity and fun – Digital Services Supervisor Eric Molinsky even posed with a digital shelf!

Notably over the last few months, media coverage of library programs and efforts has increased, from the Big Ideas Discussions in Ashland to Lego Day events in Eagle Point.

**Media Coverage:**

KDRV on Downtown Quest: <https://bit.ly/3t5TaRc>

KDRV on Big Ideas Discussion: <https://bit.ly/48eQK21>

KDRV on Big Ideas Discussion 2: <https://bit.ly/4aH1DLE>

KRDV on Shady Cove Book Locker Ribbon Cutting: <https://bit.ly/3SPPhAs8>

KRDV on Dinosaur Exhibit at Shady Cove: <https://bit.ly/3UvMI6A>

RV Times on Eagle Point Lego Program: <https://bit.ly/3ueZq9M>

Ashland.News on Big Ideas Discussion (part 1): <https://bit.ly/3unLkDa>

Ashland.news on Big Ideas Discussion (part 2): <https://bit.ly/3Uw5q8H>

**Notable Videos:**

Read This! - January: <https://bit.ly/47nleff>

Rogue Reads Storytime: <https://bit.ly/47zzROe>

Same Old Train Trailer: <https://bit.ly/3vVWTBK>

**Public Services**

**Highlights**

Local educator Irving Lubliner gave a presentation at the Ashland and Medford branches focusing on his mother Felicity, who was a Holocaust survivor. Lubliner collected essays that his mother had written about her experiences and published them into a book called *Only Hope*. The audience appreciated Mr. Lubliner's mother's message: we have a choice in how we allow our lives to shape us. Though she had lived through atrocities, she was determined that these experiences would not be forgotten and that they would not turn her into a bitter, hateful person. The event was well-attended at both locations, and the audience stayed to ask questions and share personal stories with Lubliner. A man who attended the Ashland program told staff that the library was



one of the best, most welcoming places he has encountered in his two years of being unhoused. He thanked them and said that it makes more of a difference than staff know.

### Holiday events at JCLS

December was a joyful month filled with celebration. The Talent Library Club held their annual Holiday Boutique. This event went beyond the usual offerings at Friends of the Library book sales by including toys, holiday decorations, jewelry, knickknacks, art, and more. The wide variety of donated items makes it possible for patrons of all ages to shop for gifts even if they have very limited funds – all sales were made on a donation basis.



As Christmas grew closer, several branches across the county hosted special storytimes with Santa Claus. In Applegate, Branch Manager Christine Grubb’s husband, Steven, donned the suit, and kids were delighted to have Santa Claus visit to read stories, sing songs, and give away holiday treats. Patrons were grateful to have an event in their own community, especially in a smaller branch; it means a lot to feel “home” for the holidays.



In Central Point, staff hosted a magical event with cookies, cocoa, a “fireplace” made from paper and a television screen, and a special visit from the jolly old elf, who may have looked particularly familiar to the local families.

Library Associate Joseph Ritchie stepped up into the role of “official costumed representative of Santa Claus”, even dying his beard and eyebrows for the occasion.

The Ashland team partnered with Dramaturg and former OSF Actor Barry Kraft (and some recruited helpers) to present a scripted version of *The Polar Express*. Afterward, more than 70 folks joined the team for a Celebration of Winter, rolling beeswax candles, creating candle holders, and decorating cookies. Kraft repeated the same program at the Jacksonville Library, with participants working on a train craft afterwards.



Proving that holiday spirit is no match for bah-humbug weather, the Jacksonville Friends kicked off the holiday season at the Victorian Christmas parade in downtown Jacksonville in the pouring rain. They got lots of shout-outs and attention dressed in book boxes and matching hats and gloves.

In early December, kids at the White City branch help the staff paint the windows to get the branch decorated with holiday spirit. They had so much fun and are looking forward to painting the windows with a new design in the new year.

The Shady Cove Library partnered with Shady Cove City Hall and the Upper Rogue Community Center to host the annual tree lighting ceremony in the shared space between their buildings. The Shady Cove Friends of the Library provided some snacks inside the library for people who wanted to get out of the cold. This also provided a chance for Branch Manager Marion Mensing and Library Director Kari May to host one of the pop-up community feedback surveys for the Facilities Master Plan.

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### Upper Rogue

#### Shady Cove

The Shady Cove Library is hosting an exhibit on Dinosaurs in Oregon from January 18th to February 19th. Mensing secured the traveling exhibit from the Museum of Natural and Cultural History in Eugene with special funds donated by a local patron. This interactive and educational exhibit features displays, games, and hands-on interactives, and it teaches patrons why there are so few dinosaurs found in the state. The exhibit got wider



publicity when Channel 12 News interviewed Mensing about what her goals are in bringing the exhibit to Shady Cove. “Whatever (children) see here can spark all kinds of things for the future,” Mensing, told NewsWatch 12. “They can maybe become an archaeologist or work in some other science field. I just love that it’s interactive and they’re all really neat learning opportunities.”

#### Prospect

The branch began distributing Positive Affirmation cards in early December, and they were quickly picked up and shared among elementary school students during their weekly school visit. Later, they had a crafting program that led attendees in decorating small boxes that were unique and personal. Each patron carefully sorted through magazine pages, cutting out images and coloring the boxes until they were just right. Many of the boxes featured nature themes such as images of monarch butterflies, sea turtles, and reindeer.



Prospect’s connections with Prospect Charter School continue to grow. They added a story time for kindergarten and 1st Grade classes, Library Associate Breanne Wolgamot also started a chapter book story time with the 2nd grade, reading a book in the Thea Stilton series. Staff continue to enjoy weekly visits from the 4th and 5th grade classes. Notable moments include a collaborative effort to put together an oversized foam map of the world, TikTok dance demonstrations, a turn in interest from spooky tales to joke books, and many fine additions to the branch’s art collection.



The branch hosted a Meditation Strand craft, and staff turned the meeting room into a soothing mediation space with calming music and resources about mindfulness and mediation. Patrons also enjoyed tea and a few

treats as a route to inner peace.

#### Eagle Point

At the end of December, Library Specialist Jenna Steigleder hosted a New Year’s Eve lock-in for teen patrons. There were board and video games available, snacks, karaoke, crafts, and more. The event only ran until 7 p.m. and ended with some sparkling apple cider to ring in the New Year a little early.

For Eagle Point’s Branch’s first Rogue Reads program, the branch hosted a “Design Your Own” coaster event. Patrons used stickers, photos, beads, and Scrabble tiles to personalize their coasters. A clear coat covering was applied at the end so that the coasters would be waterproof and safe for use.

Every Wednesday in January, Steigleder partnered with a local organization to host a special storytime. Representatives from the Eagle Point Fire Department, Little Butte Donuts, the Eagle Point Police Department, and Rogue Credit Union came to read stories and sing songs with the preschoolers and teach them a little bit about their jobs. This series has been a big hit in the community, with record numbers of attendance every week.



In honor of International Lego Day on January 27<sup>th</sup>, Library Associate Sam Caredig hosted a Lego Party. There was a live action Lego board game, Lego building contests, scavenger hunts, and a challenge to see who could build the fastest race car.

#### Butte Falls

The Butte Falls “Bookin’ It” Walking Club has continued to be diligent despite the dreary weather. Many people who have joined the weekly

group thanked the staff for encouraging some participants who may not normally join in to do so. With it being grey and rainy, there have only been a few dedicated participants, and staff hope that more will join as the weather improves.

As part of Rogue Reads, staff set out Positive Affirmation Cards in early January. This passive program encouraged patrons to learn to think and speak kindly to themselves and to others, and to believe in their own abilities. Branch staff commented that they noticed a lot of smiles that week, and the cards seemed especially popular with high school kids, who mentioned wanting to take some to their other classmates as well.

## Central Area

### Medford

There were several notable staff interactions with patrons in January, showcasing the impact that even a small moment can have on the community. A patron who had been coming regularly to the Homework Help program on Wednesdays surprised Children's Specialist Kai Lee with this personalized thank-you note in gratitude for the support they had given. Meanwhile, in the Teen Section, Librarian Andrea Leone shared: "I was helping an 11-year-old out with using the phone and she was calling her mom to bring her more work to do. She said, 'I just love the library. It's so quiet, and fun. And I can get my work done!'" Rounding out the departments, Adult Services Library Specialist Lisa Baehr reported that a patron stopped at the Medford Reference Desk to thank the library for continuing to provide a typewriter. She needed one to fill out an unusual tax form.

Librarian Spencer Ellis and Library Specialist Kateri Warnick engaged in an outreach program at Rogue River Estates. They provided embroidery supplies, paint pens, and sharpies for attendees to create their own tote bags, while other local organizations provided music, food, and other entertainment.

The DIY Sparkly Hanging Flower program attracted a diverse group of patrons including a college student, an 8-year-old boy and his great grandfather, and a woman experiencing homelessness. The attendees enjoyed the creative time, and each adult thanked the library repeatedly for offering this craft event. The college student asked several questions about other services provided by the library and was excited to explore them in the future.

The Children's Department hosted a Bubble Dance Party, which proved so popular that it spilled out from the storytime room and ended up filling the entire department.

The Ashland and Medford Teen Librarians, along with their teams, have rejuvenated the @jclsteens Instagram page and are now posting with a regular schedule of Mondays and Fridays with weekly program information and book recommendations. They are working to ensure that all JCLS branches are represented in this project on an equitable basis.

### Central Point Library

Children came to Spark Space Hours and unleashed their creativity to craft an entire town out of recycled materials. The Eco-town is on display in the library and lots of families look at it and talk about what the different elements are made of.



Cosplay was the topic at a recent program for teens and adults. Presenter Roman Massey talked about going to Comic Cons, including tips on etiquette, safety, and costuming. Participants were fully engaged and commented that they were happy to meet other cosplayers in the area. Massey remained after the program to help individuals with questions about how to tinker with their costumes to make them work better.

Central Point Branch celebrated two 1000 Books Before Kindergarten finishers. London and Charlotte both had 1000 books read to them, and they are going to be ready to succeed when they get to school. Each child has a bee with their name on it on the bulletin board in the library. They move their bee along as they reach their 100-book increments. It is a fun way for kids to track their progress and for the community to see how many readers are in the program, while also encouraging others to participate.

## **Lower Rogue**

### **Applegate**

The newest display is from an 11-year-old Origami enthusiast and local Applegate patron. James has been doing origami since he was five and checked out a library book about origami. It is wonderful to see how libraries can nurture an interest, and especially touching that this artwork is now being shared with others. Who knows? Maybe another patron will now be inspired to pick up origami – luckily, the library has plenty of books on hand to help.



### **Gold Hill**

The Graphic Novel class from Hanby Middle School has been visiting the Gold Hill library every two weeks to check out and return books.

### **Jacksonville**

Jacksonville Friends sponsored the James M. Collier Siskiyou Violin group, who performed a classical music concert. The group consists of over 25 students of varying ages from all over the Rogue Valley. The students were grateful for the funds donated to support their upcoming trip to a violin competition in Vienna, Austria, and the opportunity to practice their music for an appreciative audience.



### **Rogue River**

The branch's "Collage of Community Ancestry" display showcased local history, displaying photographs of some of the many extended families in the Rogue River area.

### **Ruch**

Through the Ready to Read Grant, Ruch received a brand-new train set in December to replace its well-loved and very worn set. The new set is a kid magnet, affording adults chat with each other as their children play.



Ruch continues to host regular visits from most of the classes at the Ruch Outdoor Community School. The kindergarten class visits each week, rain or shine, to check out books and enjoy a storytime.

## **Bear Creek**

### **Ashland**

January introduced the Children's Department's first annual Stuffedie Sleep Over. This adorable program attracted children of all ages and their stuffed animals. One little girl informed the team that she had brought two stuffies: one who was "brave and could spend the night, the other one wasn't quite as brave, so they were not going to stay." The children made blankets for their stuffies with supplies the team provided, tucked them in on carpet



squares, and then everyone settled down for a bedtime story. Once the story was over, it was time to wish their toys goodnight and head home. Little did they know, the stuffed animals were not ready for sleep quite yet. The staff and stuffies got up to plenty of hijinks, from watching a movie in the meeting room to a popcorn party. A display of photos was created so that kids could see what their friends had gotten up to during the night. When they came in the next day, they were given a refrigerator magnet the team created commemorating the event. Participants were awed and thrilled to see their stuffies in action, and adults appreciated the magic the team created for their children.



On January 23rd, Teen Librarian Katie Fischer and Teen Specialist Miki Hocker visited Ashland Middle School to lead a lunchtime "decorate your own journal" craft. Students were engaged in this activity, and multiple students requested a repeat program in the future. While at the school, Fischer discussed scheduling class visits with School Librarian Karl Pryor to promote upcoming programming.



On January 2nd, Big Ideas program on Affordable Housing, presented by State Representative Pam Marsh and Brandon Goldman, Community Development Director for the City of Ashland, presented to a full house. The program was covered by local news outlets, including KDRV and ashland.news, which published two in-depth articles.



### Phoenix

Something wonderful happens at the Phoenix Library every time Library Associate Lori Wilson reveals a freshly-filled I Spy case. This month, the theme was winter, and the display case was filled with a delightful scene of faux ice, a wooden train track, arctic animals, buttons, cocoa and marshmallows, sleds, and many other trinkets. Once the case is carefully arranged, Wilson provides a list of items patrons must find within the array. Some are trickier than you'd think! When the kids have found them all, they bring the completed list to the circulation counter for a well-

earned treat. This is a hugely popular passive program; every family that visits the library to check out items seems drawn to the I Spy case and completes the challenge of finding the items. Wilson has a sophisticated eye for creating a delightful, simple game that dozens of kids look forward to playing when they visit the Phoenix branch. It is one of the many aspects of this library that make it so special.

### Talent

The big January program at the Talent Library was a Trivia Quiz covering the popular online gaming platform Roblox. Everyone who participated chose a prize bag full of assorted stickers and candies. The top player was very proud of his victory and confided to Branch Manager Patrick Mathewes that he had done ninety different Google searches in preparation for the quiz.

Talent Library staff keep a fresh rotation of curated displays in the branch. Recent themes have featured Winter, Roblox, "Books That You Have Always Meant to Read," and their annual Staff Picks display. The Staff Picks section features favorite reads from the year and, as usual, proved to be very popular with patrons with nearly all the titles checking out at least once. Branch Manager Patrick Mathewes also rearranged several sections to make more room for popular formats like DVDs, Graphic Novels, and Easy Readers.

### Outreach and Programs

#### Outreach



Outreach, Programs, and Digital Services Staff were out and about in December, and took pop-up Facilities surveys to many of their events. Though the First Frost event at the Ashland Ice Rink was busy from start to finish, the Grinch had just enough time to pause and give his input. No matter what size your heart is, everyone wants to see their libraries thrive!

#### At-Home Services

On December 4th, Library Specialists Kateri Warnick and Mackenzie Pollack spoke to the Rogue Valley Council of Governments Senior Advisory Committee about AHS and other senior-focused programs

and services the library offers.

AHS has received many cards and notes thanking staff and students for their Project Cozy gifts.

“To everyone involved in Project Cozy, it is with great surprise and happiness that I received your many little gifts, all put to immediate use! Thank you for filling the hearts of all of us who are recipients.”

“It is impossible to say how much I appreciate the services I receive from and through the library. TV and the world at large is rather sad now days, but I can always find solace in a book. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.”

“Hello, younger people; we oldsters do so appreciate your thinking of us. Your service truly does bring some peace and joy into our solitary shut-in days. May love always be your guide. ♡”

#### Business Librarian

The Downtown Quest promotion completed in November was a huge success. The two main goals were to promote foot traffic among downtown businesses and to assist the businesses in working together to promote each other. In all, 111 gamecards were handed out, from both Medford library and downtown businesses. Thirty of these were returned finished, with a total of 204 stamps collected. Each participating business saw 8.4 customers engaged as a result of the Quest.



Downtown Quest’s success inspired nine downtown businesses to inquire about joining the Downtown Medford Association, and two have already joined. Annie Jenkins, interim Executive Director of the Downtown Medford Association, said “We hit it out of the park with this one!”

Donald gave a presentation about the library’s role in community economic development to the Central Point Planning & Permits Department staff. These staff members issue business licenses and construction permits, so they are often a key point of contact for new businesses. The staff were delighted to learn about library business services and agreed to stock business rack cards at their front counter. Additionally, their director proposed putting a blurb about the library and business into the city’s monthly water bill mailing, which goes out to all Central Point households.

#### DART

DART had five visits, two to Kelly Shelter, and three to regular partners with the Housing Authority of Jackson County. In addition to the regular outreach options of new cards and technology support, DART highlighted Rogue Reads and helped multiple patrons get started with a book and signed up to use the Beanstack app.

#### Education Services

The Education Services team was busy promoting the special Rogue Reads Author Talk with Julia Alvarez with local schools. Eight schools participated in the talk on January 31, with many more schools promoting the featured books *Return to Sender*, *Finding Miracles*, and *Already a Butterfly* in their school libraries.

Community Librarian Evelyn Lorence and Teen Librarian Andrea Leone had many teens and tweens participate in January's Craftivity at the Housing Authority of Jackson County sites. Participants had fun creating gnomes and making up stories about their gnomes' origins.

### **Outreach to Childcare**

Outreach to Childcare hosted a table at The Children's Museum of Southern Oregon's Polar Express events in December, where Bilingual Library Specialist Nick Rementeria and Library Specialist Emily Hawks chatted with people and signed folks up for library cards. Selection Librarian Monica Owens and Library Substitute Melissa Grudin interacted with more people on the second day of the event. The Polar Express event saw over 1,500 community members attend and introduced a sensory-friendly session on Saturday that welcomed children that benefitted from having a lower level of stimulation.

Rementeria also hosted a library visit for one of his regular daycare sites at the Children's Department of the Medford branch. Rementeria gave a tour of the department, presented a storytime, and did a penguin craft with the children.

### **Programs Overview**

February marks the final third of the Rogue Reads program. There are a few more weeks of celebrating this year's author Julia Alvarez and her works. In the first two months of the program, readers have earned 684 badges in Beanstack by reading, participating in programs, and completing activities.

With spring right around the corner, branches are getting ready to go full STEAM ahead with STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) programming. Along with the systemwide offerings of special storytimes, catapult making, DNA extraction, molecular gastronomy, and science demonstrations, some branches have also embraced the season with Earth Day programs. Some programs to look forward to include "Heroines in the History of Botany" (in Ashland), "Cool Trees Cool Planet" (in Medford), and "Noxious (Invasive) Plants of Southern Oregon: Identification and Treatment Options" (in Ruch).

On the last day of January, JCLS offered a virtual author talk with Julia Alvarez, the featured author for this year's Rogue Reads, for school partners from multiple districts reaching approximately 45 students. To quote one attending teacher, "Thank you Julia so much! the kids are loving this!" A more complete summary of Rogue Reads will be included in the February report, including the virtual author talk for the public on February 1st.



### **Digital Services**

The public computers were moved out of the computer lab in Medford to make room for a dedicated computer classroom. Thanks to a grant received from the Public Library Association and AT&T, plans are underway to purchase equipment needed to convert the former public computer lab into a classroom. The Digital Services team plans to start offering classes in the Spring 2024. The computers in the public space have quickly been incorporated into the area, and Digital Services staff now share desk space with the Adult Services team.

Staff from both departments are now available to respond to patron questions, depending on whether their questions are technology based or related to finding information online. The computer lab relocation allows Digital Services to expand its schedule to other branches, including additional visits to Prospect and Butte Falls. The team will also be more available to participate in community outreach and programming.



Area Manager Carrie Turney Ross’s and Digital Services Supervisor Eric Molinsky’s proposal for a presentation to be presented at the 2024 Oregon Library Association conference was accepted. Their proposed session “Turning Technology Education Inside Out” will feature information about how the

Digital Services department evolved to become a patron-focused part of the Outreach department, the unique and cutting-edge idea of having dedicated technology staff, and its scalability for other library systems. Additionally, another JCLS team will present at the OLA conference: Community Librarian Evelyn Lorence, Marketing Manager Ryan Bradley, and Collection Management Librarian Monica Owens will be presenting a session about the Unofficial Oregon Battle of Books program that was launched in 2023, including ideas about how it can be adapted by libraries across the state.

### Community Resources

The Community Resources Team has seen an increase in patrons visiting all branches to access information or to request the team’s help with completing applications to various agencies. More supplies have been purchased for patrons, including reusable rain ponchos and hygiene essentials that have been very appreciated. Staff have seen many patrons have success in finding resources in the last two months. For example, a regular patron of the Medford library who has been living on the streets for the past fifteen years was not only able to access shelter through the Rapid Rehousing Program, but also accessed his disability funds and is soon to move into his own apartment, which he will be able to afford on his own. At the White City branch, the Community Resource team helped a patron suffering from brain cancer find HUD housing closer to her caregiver and to her hospital where she receives care.

Additionally, Community Resources has thoroughly enjoyed working with patrons to host programs that encourage patrons living in poverty to become more involved within the library and learn how to make use of the resources available to them with a library card. In December, the team taught a class on making hand warmers, and in January, there was a crocheting class that focused on making neck warmers.

### Finance

The Finance Team has relocated to the former Admin Conference Room to help make room for growing staff. The team is excited to have everyone gathered in one area, and the business office space has been rearranged to accommodate the Human Resources and Operations teams.

An RFP for auditing services has been issued, with responses due by the end of February.

### Human Resources

The 3rd annual staff Snowman Contest was held in December. Branches, departments, and individuals were asked to create a snowman display, and as usual, the JCLS staff showed up in style. Over a dozen entries were submitted and competition was fierce. Staff voted for their favorite displays and the Admin Trio chose the winner out of the top three. Community Resource Specialist Leigh Madsen won the competition, a trophy, bragging rights, and lunch with the Admin Trio. Leigh’s snowman had an uncanny likeness to Leigh himself and was immediately recognized by staff and patrons alike.



The second Cohort of the Library Leadership League completed their training, led by Staff Development Coordinator Loren Clupny. The group of twelve was comprised of new supervisors and current staff members. The next cohort will begin training this summer.

Benefit and Wellness Coordinator Kaya Courtroul worked with local business Wellness 2000 to provide a COVID vaccination and booster clinic for JCLS staff and their households in late January. The clinic provided a welcome and convenient opportunity for staff who had not yet gotten their latest booster, and 42 shots were administered to JCLS staff and families.

## ***Support Services***

### **Collection Development**

On December 19th, the Collection Development Department celebrated one year as a new department. Accomplishments over the past year include the creation and work of the Library of Things Task Force, selecting materials for the Outreach to Child Care collection, the expansion of support for the Oregon Battle of the Books, updating the Collection Development Policy, creating a State of the Collection Report, launching the Video Game collection, and presenting at Staff Day about the digital collection.

Collection Development kicked off 2024 with a round of purchasing for the Library of Things. New items ordered for the collection include Things such as a Cricut Joy, telescopes, and portable Blu-ray/DVD players. Additionally, more board games were added to the circulating board game collection, which has proven to be very popular.

Also new for 2024, JCLS adjusted the price cap for the eAudiobooks available in Hoopla. The change was implemented to counterbalance increased usage and budgetary limitations. Hoopla items can range in price from less than \$1 to over \$5 per checkout, and given Hoopla's popularity, the total amount JCLS is charged each month adds up very quickly. To reduce patron blocks, ensure that the library can stay within its budget and can continue to offer up to six borrows per month, placing a price cap on eAudiobooks was the best solution. eAudiobooks were chosen in particular as they are by far the most expensive format in Hoopla. Usage continues to be steady, and since the first of the year, patrons have not experienced any daily blocks to their check outs, which had become common in the second half of 2023. In response to titles that are no longer available in Hoopla, the Collection Development team is making every effort to ensure that many of those titles are available in other formats in the system.

### **Technical Services**

The Technical Services and Collection Development Departments collaborated to establish guidelines for re-ordering canceled orders. These same guidelines apply when handling lost, missing, or withdrawn items that have patron holds waiting to be filled. Due to the nature of these lost statuses within the Integrated Library System (ILS), these "hopeless holds" could go unnoticed for long periods of time. However, thanks to new procedures implemented by Technical Services staff, items are being found, reordered, and patrons are being updated about the status of these items. Once the initial backlog is cleared, addressing these holds will be a regular part of monthly system-wide maintenance.

Recent upgrades to JCLS's ILS, Koha, as well as the public-facing library catalog, and the new JCLS app have brought many new features. One exciting highlight: library patrons can now conveniently pay any lost or damage fees within the JCLS app.

Last Spring, JCLS joined the Orbis Cascade Alliance, a resource sharing courier service connecting nearly 200 libraries throughout the Pacific Northwest. Over the last several months, the Technical Services team has worked to fine-tune some elements of interlibrary loan handling. Among the changes, staff have been relying more heavily on Orbis member libraries, in addition to Oregon-based libraries, to fulfill interlibrary loan requests. This has resulted in lower postage costs and noticeable improvements and efficiencies in managing interlibrary loan processes.

## Information Technology

The JCLS website now has a new and improved translation tool. Website Specialist Michael Stanfield worked closely with the JCLS Latinx Engagement Committee to implement a new translation tool that provides better translations than Google Translate, as well as the ability for staff to fix translation errors on the website. Stanfield also installed a new Notification System for Critical Errors on the website. This allows the IT team to be notified anytime the website experiences an error that could affect its performance.

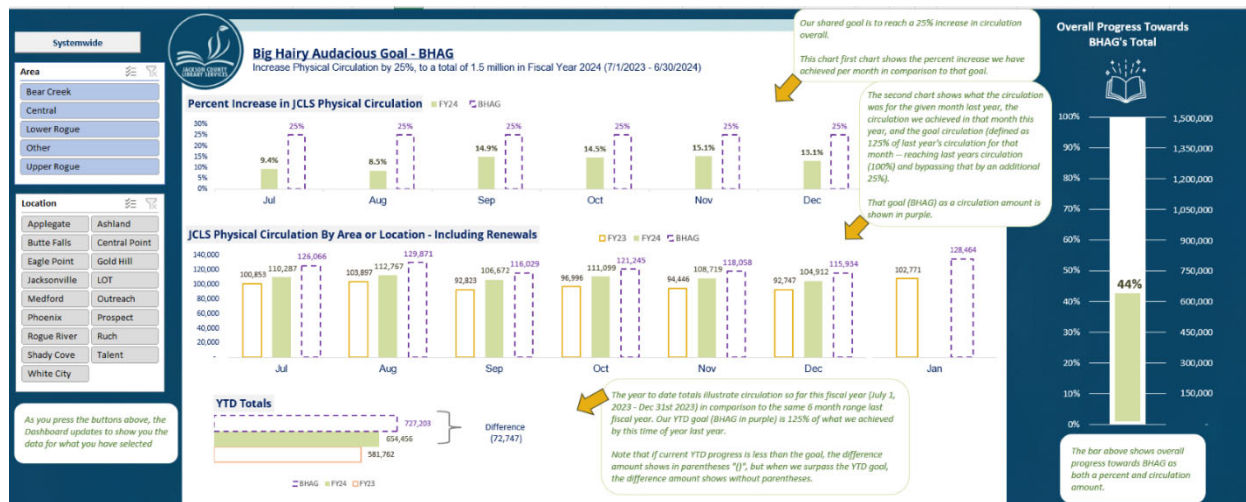
Senior IT Administrator Ron Sharp conducted a cost comparison between purchasing and leasing printers and recommended moving forward with a leasing contract with Office Tech to upgrade staff workroom printers at all branches. These networked printers will be configured to send a notification to Office Tech when the toner cartridges get low so that the vendor automatically ships a replacement cartridge as needed, increasing efficiencies and reducing the need to order and store ink in the branches.

JCLS has renewed the E-Rate contract for internet services with Hunter Communications for one additional year. This renewal extends the existing 3-year contract, engaging the first option of two potential one-year extensions.

In alignment with JCLS’s commitment to data security and operational efficiency, Network Administrator Jason Whyte led the implementation of Bitwarden Password Manager for key staff positions. The adoption of Bitwarden enhances security, streamlines password management, and safeguards sensitive information. This proactive step significantly reduces the risk of unauthorized access, improves password management practices, and fosters a culture of heightened cybersecurity awareness within JCLS.

## Data and Analytics

In her first two months on the job, new Data & Analytics Coordinator Regina Mannino has focused on building relationships with data stakeholders and getting familiar with the variety of datasets that feed into JCLS’s Key Performance Indicators and Strategic Plan Metrics. She has also provided reporting and data upon request for both Collection Development and Library Administration, and she has assisted the Finance Department in the creation of FY25’s internal budget spreadsheets.



In

early 2024, Mannino created a new excel dashboard to share monthly progress on JCLS’s “Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG)”, to increase physical circulation by 25%. Manino presented the dashboard at the Branch Manager’s meeting on January 10th, and later in the month held an open session demonstration for all staff. Staff are excited to have this new tool to help track their progress.

## Facilities

In early December, new carpet was installed at the Central Point Library. Stain resistant carpet for the branch’s meeting room is scheduled to be installed in mid-February.

In partnership with City of Ashland's Forest Resiliency Community Engagement Coordinator Sara Jones, two Sentinel Air Quality Sensors were installed inside the Ashland Library and a Purple Air Monitor was installed outside the building. The monitors were purchased and installed with an Oregon State University EPA grant.

New AED (automated external defibrillator) machines were installed at the Medford and Ashland branches, replacing existing older models. The new machines are easier to use and will be maintained by Cintas, ensuring they will always have current pads and batteries and will be ready to use in case of an emergency.

In January, the Facilities Committee met with Jackson County Facilities Maintenance representatives to review the budget proposal and planned capital projects for the forthcoming 2024-2025 fiscal year. Later in the month, Director May and Operations Coordinator Crystal Zastera met with officials from the City of Central Point to discuss plans for expanding parking around the shared building owned by the City of Central Point. The plan would be to increase parking on the West side of the building. City officials will share the final plans after working with an engineer to ensure the best possible design.