

## Public Services

### Banned Books Week Celebration



The District hosted its first major live and in person author talk since the pandemic. To celebrate Banned Books Week, Jonathon Evison, author of frequently-banned book *Lawn Boy*, spoke to a crowd in the Grand Reading Room of the Medford Library about his experience with *Lawn Boy* being the 2<sup>nd</sup>-most challenged title, according to the ALA, in 2021.

He also shared stories about living in Southern Oregon and visiting the Medford Library in the old Carnegie location and purchasing bags of books for \$1 that he used to help with his research, back in the days before the internet. Rebel Heart Books was on site selling copies of Evison's books, which he signed for participants after the talk. Jacksonville and Ashland branch libraries live-streamed the presentation at their locations.

While Evison was here, the Marketing team went out to Hummingbird Estates to film a short video with him. The video is currently being edited into two parts, one focused on Evison's book, *Lawn Boy* and one with more generalized writing questions. These videos will be posted on the JCLS YouTube channel in October.

### Find the Magic



September kicked off the fall program's theme "Find the Magic," and patrons are already finding so much magic in their libraries. Many libraries hosted the "Make Your Own Dragon Mason Jar Night Light" program from the systemwide programs menu. Most of these programs hit maximum capacity. Central Point Library Specialist Noel O'Brien called it "A HIT," with all 26 kids in attendance.

The Medford Children's Department had a full house for their special storytime, featuring the book *When You Open a Book* by Caroline Derlatka, a tale about all the magical adventures you can go on simply by reading a book. Children also got to create and decorate a library card holder – encouraging those who did not already have one to get one in celebration of Library Card Sign-Up Month.

### Hispanic Heritage Month



Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month (September 15-October 15) is in full swing. Many branches have displays highlighting authors, musicians, and actors of Hispanic and Latinx heritage. Programming for this special month was also in full swing, with Rogue River and White City branches teaching all ages how to create beautiful and traditional crafts, such as pinatas, Mexican tin art, and paper flowers. The programming and decorations at many branches provided a welcoming atmosphere for all and a chance for many to learn and appreciate the vibrant Hispanic/Latinx culture. A special kudos to Medford Librarian

Spencer Ellis, who wrote an outstanding [blog](#) highlighting the history of Hispanic Heritage in Southern Oregon.



Rogue River Library Associate Cici Gomez created a beautiful eye-catching display for Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month. She took time to plan out the display and put a lot of her heart and soul into it, using her own family customs and memories as a foundation. Gomez also made sure to showcase not just Mexican culture, but other Latin cultures as well. She provided library items and other materials to help educate and inspire patrons of the many gifts of Latin legacy. Rogue River is receiving a lot of patron feedback about the display's beautiful colors, and about how much they appreciate the vibrant Hispanic Heritage posters throughout the building that remind them of the personal qualities that truly make any person "great."

Central Point Branch Manager Erin Ulrich, and Library Assistants Hunter Moore and Eva Navarro attended Central Point's Hispanic Heritage Festival on Friday, September 20. They met more than 275 people at their library booth and even made some new library cards. They chatted with current library patrons and new folks who were happy to find out the range of amazing services that JCLS has to offer.

## **Bear Creek**

### **Ashland**



*Talk like Pirate Day* was on September 19, and the Children's team decided to make the whole week a celebration of pirate fun. Storytimes all had a pirate theme; pirate names were given out; and the department was decorated as well.

During the month, several sensory activities were set up around the department. One, designed by Specialist Kelly Steiner, was popular with patrons. Steiner brought in a Mammoth Sunflower and displayed it alongside some tweezers, small cups and an instruction sheet. This program allowed young library patrons to learn about the natural world and work on their fine motor skills. Fine motor skills are important to develop for a host of reasons, but for an early literacy program the importance is tied to learning how to write.

Teen Specialist Miki Hocker ran an all-ages Star Trek Day program. Folks of all ages participated in a variety of fun and engaging Star Trek themed activities and crafts, and there was a lot of positive feedback from patrons. Later in September, Teen Librarian Katie Fischer put out some relaxing "portable Zen Garden" kits to help tweens and teens with their back-to-school anxiety. With the start of the school year being so busy and stressful for many middle and high schoolers, having these easy-to-partake-in, stress-relieving kits can go a long way.

## **Phoenix**

A young patron donated a book she wrote to the Phoenix Library. It is titled "I Love School" and among drawings of cats, spiders, trees, houses and the sun itself, she writes "I love school every day!" Branch Manager Jody Fleming and Library Associates Lori Wilson and Parsina Dias were thrilled to read it and keep it at the Phoenix branch.

Fleming attended the Phoenix Flower Festival at the Phoenix Grange. She told visitors about the planned pollinator garden, butterfly garden and indoor beehive that will be planted and installed beginning in June 2025. Adults and kids were “wowed” by this information and cannot wait to see it!

## Talent

In preparation for both next month’s scheduled carpet replacement and to refresh things for patrons, the Talent staff have been busy shifting some of the sections of the collection to new homes. Some of the sections moved include New Adult Non-Fiction and Fiction, Children’s Non-Fiction and Picture Books, and the Children’s Spanish-language items.

## Central Area

### Medford

The Children’s Department had been contacted by a caretaker, asking for assistance from an adult patron who did not know how to read and where to start with books that would be of interest to an adult but would also allow for building reading skills. After connecting the caretaker with nonfiction early readers about John Lewis, the caretaker let the staff know that the patron cried about being able to read a book mostly solo for the first time, and for it to be about someone he saw himself reflected in. She thanked the staff for their help in being able to connect her with books that impacted him so much.



Crystallized Flowers proved to be an exciting and interesting program for teen patrons. Using Borax, water, and fabric flowers, the patrons were able to create beautiful flowers to bring home. Due to how long the process took, they were also presented with bud vases that they could decorate in whatever way they wanted to, with lovely results.

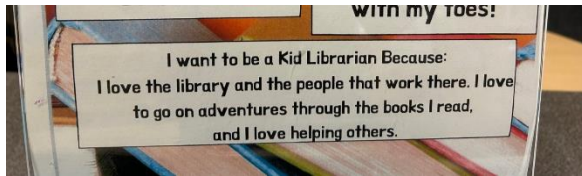
#### Patron Comment:

Hi! Just wanted to thank the library for the recent Book Folding Class at the Medford Library. My friends and I thought it was fun. I chose the simple diamond design and when it was finished decided to embellish a bit. Attached are a couple pics I'd like to share with the helpful people who gave us this great little class. Thank you very much!



Patrons joined Medford Adult Services staff for an author talk by Linda Lochard, local author of *Life Along the Applegate Trail: A Tale of Grit and Determination*. Patrons learned about the historical events that inspired Lochard’s work of fiction: both the original travelers on the Applegate Trail in the 1840s and her personal experiences reenacting the trip in the 1990s. Patrons also learned about Lochard’s writing process and current projects, and many left with a signed copy of her book. Photos include memorabilia from Lochard’s reenactment trip. Patrons worked together to try to fit in a square representative of the size of a standard wagon that made the trip.

## Central Point



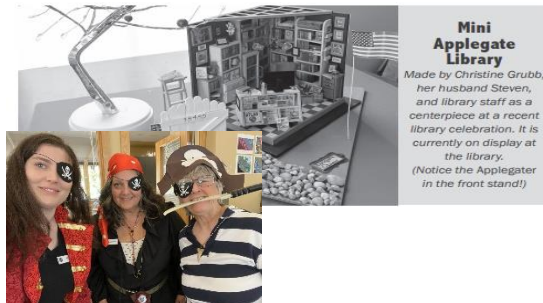
This month's Kid Librarians were Aria and Sadie. They have great taste in books and were happy to share their favorites with other young Central Point patrons.



Fall means Fat Bears at Central Point Library. Branch Manager Erin Ulrich loves talking to patrons about the merits of being the fattest bear in the river at Katmai National Park. Patrons are encouraged to find out about the famous bears and participate in voting for their favorite chonk!

## Lower Rogue

### Applegate



The Applegate Library diorama created for the District's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary event was pictured in the local newspaper, *The Applegater*.

Shiver me timbers! Talk Like a Pirate Day attracted a trio of Applegate staff pirates.

## Gold Hill



Following up on the story included in last month's report, patron Kian finished reading all the state books and helped complete stickers on the map in the library. Around the middle of July, Kian and his sister each checked out one state book, and the sister complained that Kian stole her book, so he got to read it and get the sticker. Kian then said his goal was to read every state book by the end of summer. By the last week in August, there were still five states remaining without stickers. Kian checked out three, and I knew another child had checked out the other two. He was somewhat distressed (only mildly so but still distressed for a 10-year-old) that all the states would not be completed in time. He asked if we could keep it an extra week to fill in the map. Branch Manager Julie Doty put the last two states (Virginia and West Virginia) on hold for him and keep it an extra week if the other child did not come in. A week later, Kian came running in at about 3:30, fresh from his soccer game, to return the last two books and place the stickers on the map. His dad said that as soon as the soccer game was over, he said, "Can we go to the library?" The Atlas he is holding was presented to him for being such a prolific State book reader.



## Jacksonville



One of Jacksonville children's favorite Special Storytimes is when the rogue Valley Pollinator Project comes to the branch. This time, the kids got to look at bees and beetles through a microscope.

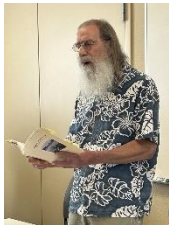
## Rogue River

Rogue River is seeing a steady flow of weekly school visits with both younger kids and teens/tweens. Not only are the students super-excited to be at the library (i.e., genuinely interested in reading, not just taking a break from classes), but they appreciate the face-to-face interactions with library staff, too. Branch staff continue to forge connections and provide a positive library experience. In fact, the students consider the class visits to the library "reward," which says a lot! Many of the students also continued their regular library visits throughout the summer.



Rogue River patrons of all ages tend to love Take & Makes, and the team is providing more of them. Regarding the Self-Care Support Kit, a patron said: "Whomever put these together *INSPIRED* us and cheered me up! . . . Great ideas! Cute positive prompts . . ." For the future, they would like to see "inspiring seasonal stuff and creative ideas for vibrant wellness," which the branch will be carrying forward into winter. The Self-Care Support Kit contained a Positive Potato or a Positive Penguin, inspirational quotes, a 30-day self-care challenge, and other essential self-care items.

## Ruch



At a very well attended program, local author Paul Tipton read excerpts from his recently published book, *Strange New Cowboy: Vietnam Stories and Poems*, interspersed with poems by members of The Applegate Poets on the prompt, "An end to war."

## Upper Rogue

### Butte Falls

A highlight this month for programming was the Password Management class that taught the best practices for establishing strong and secure passwords and how to best manage these passwords.

Back to school! Storytime returned to kindergarten and first-grade classes this month. Later in the month, Storytime returned to preschool at the community school partnership location The Landing. These Storytimes will continue every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the school year. Staff and students alike are so happy to have this special time available to them.

This month patrons were given their first glimpse of this year's OBOB/UBOB challenge. Children in grades 3-12 have the opportunity to come together at the library with their coaches to practice and prepare for their competition later in the year. Butte Falls students are excited to be able to participate in this contest with students from all over Oregon.

## Eagle Point



In honor of Talk like a Pirate Day, patrons played a live action board game where they pretended to be pirate ships on the high seas, trying to find treasure without getting sunk by the Kraken. They watched Muppet Treasure Island while making pirate-themed crafts or having a foam sword fight. There was also a treasure hunt in the Secret Garden, and a chance to find out their pirate name.

The Paws to Read program at Eagle Point is growing more popular. Whether kids are coming to read to the dogs, hear stories read to them, or just stopping by to give Tangee and Georgie some pets, kids like hanging out with the dogs. This week they were set up in the fireside area due to overlapping programs, but that did not stop people from coming and seeing the four-legged library friends.

## White City



The young patrons at White City continue to build amazing structures every other week during the Spark Space Lego Hours.

Staff have received multiple comments on how much they enjoy the seasonal decorations, especially the papel picados ("perforated paper" / "pecked paper") which is a traditional Mexican decorative craft made by cutting elaborate designs into sheets of tissue paper. One patron commented that they know it is the beginning of fall when they start to see these decorations hanging.

## Community Resources

The Community Resources Department has been anticipating some of challenges individuals face during colder weather and is focusing on expanding resources to ensure the community's evolving needs are met. This includes gearing up for an increased demand in housing, warm clothing, and food assistance, and providing more robust mental health support as the winter months can be challenging.

One of the standout staff achievements this month has been the incredible work of Resource Specialist Leigh Madsen, who has successfully connected five more patrons with their own bicycles, complete with locks. These bikes represent more than just transportation, they provide independence, mobility, and access to essential services. The team is proud to see how these small, yet significant gestures empower patrons and contribute to their well-being and sense of autonomy.

This month, the department is pleased to report that the team connected close to two dozen patrons to vital mental health services, ensuring that those in need have access to the support and resources necessary for their mental well-being. A particularly touching moment for the team came when a regular patron shared how the library and staff have impacted their life. They revealed that the supportive environment of the library has saved their life on multiple occasions as they navigated

struggles with suicidal ideation. They described how the library has become a sanctuary for them, and a place where they feel seen, valued, and part of something greater. Their story is a testament to the power of a kind, welcoming space and serves as a powerful reminder of the essential role the Community Resources Department and the library play in the lives of many.

## **Outreach, Programs and Digital Services**

### **Digital Services**

Digital Services Specialists Laurel Bucher and Nicole Vukcevic and Digital Services Supervisor Eric Molinsky introduced a new class at Ashland Senior Center called *The Day the Music Thrived: Streaming Music from Your Library and Beyond*. The content covered a brief history of the creation of the MP3 audio file, and how music piracy and the crackdown by the industry led to today's legal streaming platforms. Molinsky showcased JCLS's Hoopla service, while Vukcevic and Bucher covered Apple Music and Spotify. Community-building features of the third-party apps were highlighted, such as collaboration and sharing, to show how technology could be used to foster connection instead of isolation.

Digital Services patrons had good things to say about the help they received in general and about the library. Staff noted: "Patrons stop by the circulation desk and give praise to Ryan [Digital Services Specialist Ryan Murphy] for his kind and thoughtful demeanor and for helping them solve all their technical inquiries. Today a patron said please let his manager know that I would like to give Ryan a 10 out of 10 for his great service!!!"

A comment left by a patron:

"I have been in touch with your eBook department, a very nice gentleman from that department gave me very good instructions on how to borrow books on my computer. I suddenly have all these great books on hand to read 😊 I want to keep track of them all so have created a spreadsheet – I keep telling myself 'Why haven't I contacted the library before.' Thank you again for your kindness and great service!!"

### **Outreach**

The Outreach team attended 35 events in September and reached 1,868 individuals. Even more thrilling for *Library Card Sign Up Month*, 191 individuals signed up for a library card at outreach events by September 28! The bulk of these were students and families at back-to-school events supported by the Education services team and DART visits. Outreach staff supported six events that celebrated Latinx Heritage Month in partnership with branch staff. At one of these events, an avid e-book reader learned about the digital collection in Spanish and promptly renewed her library card on the spot.

### **Business Librarian**

To support Coalicion Fortaleza's (CF) El Mercadito popup market, Business Librarian Roslyn Donald connected Southern Oregon Innovation Hub Steward Kim Freeze to CF leadership because she knew the Hub had sponsorship funds available for supporting entrepreneur events. The two organizations met, and the result was a \$300 Hub sponsorship for El Mercadito. Library resources are valuable, but sometimes helping community groups make connections is the most valuable resource of all. Donald continues to work with the Innovation Hub to promote entrepreneurial events throughout both Jackson and Josephine counties.

JCLS provided wifi service to vendors at the Applegate Evening Market. During the event Donald was chatting with a vendor and found that the vendor was unaware that the library offered ebooks in Kindle

format. Donald talked to her about Libby ebooks available in the Kindle format and signed the vendor up for a library card that night.

### **DART**

DART happily provided wifi to two nearby vendors at Happy Tails Festival in Gold Hill as wi-fi access had not been considered for the event. The team also attended El Mercadito with Library Associate Golden Rogers. Rogers was able to provide Spanish translation services and assist a Spanish speaking visitor in completing a library card application and becoming a new library patron.

### **Education Services**

Community Librarian Evelyn Lorence and Education Services Specialist Bella Silva visited twelve sites and helped sign up new library card holders. During these visits, Lorence and Silva promoted UBOB Year 2, getting many families registered via Beanstack or a physical passport. Education Services also had a chance to work with White City Library Associate Milagros Morales and Rogue River Library Associate Cici Gomez at Unete's Back to School event. This event was successful for connecting with Latinx patrons. Additionally, Lorence and Silva partnered with Ashland Librarian Brianna Levesque for the Meet Ashland event at SOU, which was an excellent opportunity to introduce the incoming university students to JCLS resources.

## **Library Administration**

### **Marketing**

Promotion of the Unofficial Battle of the Books program began in earnest and has had excellent early participation. In celebration of Library Card Signup Month, the Marketing team also created a series of short commercials for library programs and resources and bundled them into a fun 'product launch' spoof.

Press Releases:

Big Ideas Discussion Series: <https://bit.ly/3AOTGqp>

Jonathan Evison Author Talk: <https://bit.ly/4dMcLY4>

Notable Video:

Library Card Signup Month: <https://youtu.be/oxliJ6dNB54>

### **Human Resources**

The HR Team partnered with Wellness 2000 to host the annual fall vaccine clinics at both Ashland and Medford branches. The clinic was available for staff and family members. 49 COVID and 53 Flu vaccinations were administered. Staff expressed gratitude for holding the clinics, which were a great convenience to employees.

October 1<sup>st</sup> was the annual JCLS Staff Day. Six months of planning went into the day. The theme was "You Belong Here", and two guest speakers were brought in to talk about belonging, inclusivity, values alignment, bias and trust. Two breakout sessions highlighting various areas of professional development were featured, along with a delicious lunch. Swag bags and staff t-shirts were distributed to staff at the end of the day.



## Support Services

### Professional Development and Networking

In September, Youth Selection Librarian Monica Owens attended the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) National Institute in Denver, CO where she was able to network with other youth selection librarians and learn how other libraries select and market their collections.

Assistant Director of Support Services Kelda Vath attended the inaugural SOU Sustainability Network Conference held onsite at Southern Oregon University. This conference brought together individuals from businesses, non-profits, and educational institutions from across the Southern Oregon and Northern California region to engage with ideas and each other around potential collaborative sustainability efforts.

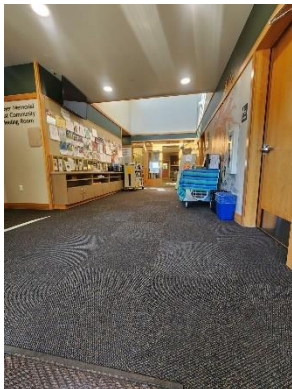
### Technical Services

Thanks to recent upgrades to JCLS's integrated library system (ILS), Koha, the Technical Services team successfully migrated the Library of Things collection out of its stand-alone software and into the regular public catalog. As of October 1, 2024, patrons are able to search, browse, place holds, and borrow items from the Library of Things in the same intuitive way that other library materials are borrowed. Technical Service staff prepared staff and raised awareness of the exciting change with patrons, and so far, staff and patrons alike have expressed surprise (and relief!) at how simple and positive this change has been.

The manner of accessing the Book Club Bag collection has also evolved. Formerly available through the same stand-alone software as the Library of Things, the Book Club Bag collection is now browsable in the public catalog, and bookings for the bags can be made by contacting library staff. The Book Club Bag collection uses Koha's new bookings module which allows for date-specific reservations. At this time, the bookings feature is only available on the staff interface of the catalog, so a new customer service workflow has been designed to offer convenience for patrons and their book groups reserving the Bags while the patron-facing enhancements to the booking module software continue to be developed.

### Facilities

New carpet was installed at the Shady Cove library the week of September 23<sup>rd</sup>.



The branch was closed for the duration of the work; however Shady Cove patrons were all reminded of their option to place holds to pick up at the book locker outside the library during closure. Thanks are due to the Courier team for stocking the locker with holds while branch staff were offsite during the carpet replacement project, and to the IT team and County Facilities Maintenance in conjunction with the JCLS Facilities team and Shady Cove staff for their part in a successful outcome.

Additionally, the Phoenix library had new flooring installed in the entry foyer. This smaller project was completed during days the branch was closed to the public so there was no disruption in library services.

JCLS continues to take steps to bolster resilience in the communities we serve through monitoring indoor air quality and providing air scrubbers inside library facilities during the smokiest times of the year. As part of these efforts, JCLS purchased Purple Air monitors for the exterior of the rural libraries, Butte Falls and Prospect, which were recently installed. This now brings the total number of Purple Air monitors on library properties to three, as Ashland library had a Purple Air monitor installed on its exterior last year. JCLS intends to continue to add more monitors to library facilities to provide the public with information about air quality in their local areas in the future.