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**CONNECTIONS:** YOUR LINK TO THE  
State Library of Oregon



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## ORPARC Library’s “Culture Connection Collection: Supporting Kids of Color in Care”



*By Sadie Verville, Communications Analyst, Operations Division*

During the spring of 2022, the State Library had the honor of awarding a competitive grant to [Oregon Post Adoption Resource Center \(ORPARC\)](#) for their project [“Culture Connection Collection: Supporting Kids of Color in Care.”](#) The [Culture Connection Collection \(CCC\)](#) is a collection of books centered around supporting children of color in foster care, adoption, and guardianship and kin care. These books were added to ORPARC’s existing lending library. Anyone in Oregon supporting these children can access the books available to enhance the children’s lives and wellbeing.

The goal of the project was to collect books that solidify the racial and cultural identity of the kids, as well as buffer them against trauma and support them in their journey through state care. ORPARC collaborated with cultural consultants to curate materials primarily authored and/or illustrated by people of color *for* people of color. Consultants included adoptive author-parents [Nabil Zerizef](#) and [Melissa Hart](#) as well as the Parkers from [Believe in Wonder](#), whose work includes representative sci-fi with foster-adoptive themes. ORPARC also used demographic data from the Oregon Department of Human Services to identify children and parents of color in state fostering and adoptive families to whom the new collection can be promoted.

Since the project's launch, ORPARC has received positive feedback from families not just in Oregon but also outside the state. "Audiences agree the collection is a timely and beautiful innovation," said Kendra Morris Jacobsen, project lead and Director of Oregon Programs for ORPARC.

One participant in the project wrote about the impact of the program on their own life. "As an adoptee, seeing the race data for other adoptive parents and children made me feel less alone in Oregon," they said. Kendra notes how powerful this feedback is. "We've received some really heart-warming responses from patrons, but hearing from the participants themselves who put in the work has been particularly gratifying."

While very successful, the project hasn't been without its challenges – namely, getting the word out that this incredible resource exists. "We're partially dependent on caseworkers and the community to help share the news, or to use the collection themselves to support their foster-adoptive clients," said Kendra. "State caseworkers and providers are unbelievably busy solving emergencies while parents themselves are overwhelmed. It takes time for word to spread and for

people to see the value and magic inherent in lifting these children up through literature.”

Promoting the collection not only makes these resources more accessible to those who need them, but it also enhances the collection itself and gives exposure to the hardworking consultants, authors, and illustrators that contribute. Promotion of the project also increases awareness around resources outside of their library collection – it highlights ORPARC and the needs of the children they serve.

As for the future of the collection, Kendra says they hope to help more children and families involved in the child welfare system. They’re also interested in improving the quality of translated Spanish materials while also adding more materials in other languages. ORPARC also wants to expand the variety of books in the collection for LGBTQ+ families and youth.

We’re looking forward to seeing the ways the program continues to impact and support the community in Oregon and beyond. Spread the word, and make sure to check out the [amazing consultants and contributors](#) at ORPARC!

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## **2023 Summer Reading with Talking Books**



*By Max H. Robinson, Administrative Specialist and Recording Studio Coordinator, Talking Book and Braille Library*

What is your favorite way to enjoy the summer season? If your idea of the perfect summer day includes lounging on a blanket in the park with a crisp library copy of the latest beach read, we're on the same page!

This is the season for libraries across the country to offer summer reading programs for people of all ages and abilities. Summer reading is a great way to maintain literacy skills, promote a lifelong love of reading, and connect folks with enriching learning activities and games. For children and teens, engaging in these free, library-promoted activities helps them fend off the "[summer slide](#)," where students can lose retention of up to two months of their classroom learning when school is not in session.

Considering all of the benefits that summer reading provides, the Oregon Talking Book and Braille Library has developed an excellent [2023 Summer Reading Program](#) for students with print impairments across our state. Registered Talking Books users ages 5-18 are challenged to read at least six books over the summer. In addition to the intrinsic benefits of reading books and enjoying learning activities,

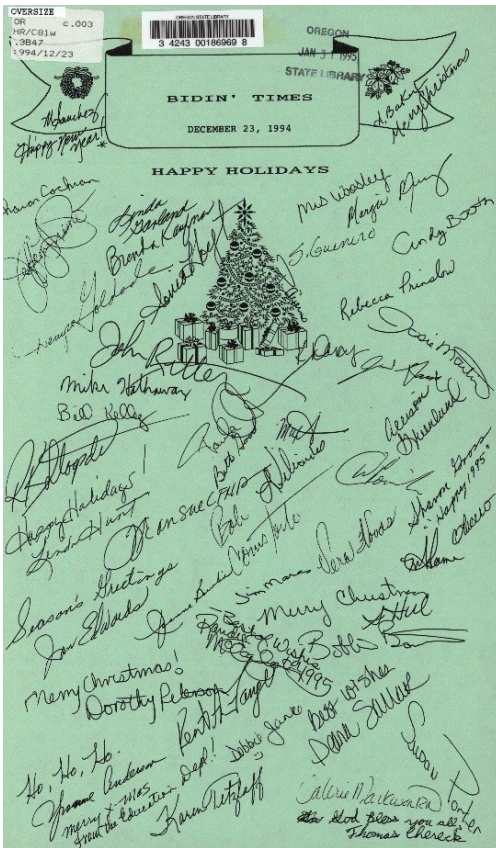
this year's participants can enter weekly raffles for a \$25 Amazon gift card. And if they submit a reading log by August 25, they will be entered in the grand prize drawing for their choice of an Apple iPad or Musical Night Out Package. The runner-up prize is a portable karaoke machine!

Participation opportunities are expanded even more with great offerings from the [National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled \(NLS\)](#). They are hosting an online series of [summer reading events](#) for anyone to attend, which include story times, music, and special author talks. Register for each event individually at the Oregon Talking Books [Summer Reading webpage](#). Let's make the summer of 2023 the best yet with great books and awesome learning activities, ensuring that everyone can "[Find Your Voice](#)"!

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## **OrDocs Team Contributes to Prison Newspaper Project**

*By Kate Anderson, Digitization Specialist; Heather Pitts, Cataloging Services Librarian; and Jey Wann, Oregon Documents Coordinator; all from Government Information and Library Services*



Did you know that over 700 prison newspapers have been published in the United States? [American Prison Newspapers](#) is an online collection of newspapers written by incarcerated persons dating from the 1800s to the present, with entries from all 50 states. At a recent meeting of the [State Documents Collaborative Group](#), staff of the State Library became aware of the project and wondered if any items held at the State Library would be eligible for addition to this unique collection. The [University of Oregon](#) has already contributed titles from the Oregon State Penitentiary and the Oregon State Correctional Institution.

We investigated what additional items in our Oregon Documents collection could be included and discovered that we have two titles from the Oregon Women's Correctional Center that were not yet included in American Prison Newspapers: [Bidin' Times](#) and [The "Rap" Sheet](#). Both of these newspapers were written by women for women and provide unique perspectives into the day-to-day experiences of these incarcerated adults. Issues in our collection run from 1972 – 1995.

We contacted Reveal Digital, the group that is developing the collection, and found that not only were they interested in including these titles, they offered to scan the newspapers for us!

To prep the titles for shipping, we checked them out so staff would know where they were, removed them from their poor housing known as kranila, and placed

them in archival envelopes with coated paper clips to ensure multi-page issues would stay together. Then we boxed and shipped them to Reveal Digital for scanning. Having them do the scanning made the process much easier since there were over 400 issues!

After receiving word that our newspapers had been scanned and were on JSTOR, the platform that provides open access to the American Prison Newspapers collection, we downloaded the files and created PDFs with optical character recognition (OCR). Applying OCR makes PDFs fully text searchable, as well as readable by a screen reader. We also took the opportunity to create a name authority record, which uniquely identifies the prison and collocates resources by or about it, for the [Oregon Women's Correctional Center](#).

Once the PDFs were created, we added more accessibility features, including titles so a patron opening multiple documents could know at a glance which issues they had open plus table headers and language identification to assist those utilizing screen readers. The final piece was to add alternate text descriptions to any images so that those with visual impairments or those who may have internet connectivity issues could still understand the images that are embedded into the documents.

After we saved the documents, we cataloged and uploaded these newly digitized newspapers. They are now available in the [State Library of Oregon Digital Collections](#), where you can browse through the issues or search for content. You can also find them online on the [Northwest Digital Heritage site](#).

We hope that by bringing to light the experiences and words of incarcerated women in Oregon, we can provide opportunities for learning and understanding.

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# Scavenger Hunts, Origami, and Crafternoons: Academic Libraries Work Hard to Ease Student Stress



*By Sadie Verville, Communications Analyst, Operations Division*

When thinking about college libraries, the first thing that comes to mind might not be baby goats or [fashionable skeletons](#), but sure enough, students might just find those things where they least expect them.

Over the past couple years and even before COVID-19, college and university libraries in Oregon have worked hard to organize non-academic activities that ease student anxieties and provide a space to have fun and relax. In addition to using the library for research or homework, students can now go there to escape the burnout of their demanding academic workload.

At Oregon State University (OSU) Valley Library, librarians have been organizing [Crafternoons](#), a biweekly activity where students can participate in a group craft session. Last spring term's sessions included crocheting, creating comic book strips, painting pots, and more. Earlier in the school year, students made

notebooks out of old catalog cards. Some of the most popular activities have been making terrariums and creating buttons with the library's button-making equipment. Ella Stout, a student worker at the library, talked about how enthusiastic students are for the various crafts. "There are lots of requests for bringing certain crafts back, especially the buttons. No matter what kind of craft it is, there's always one person who's very enthusiastic about that craft."

In using equipment like the button maker for Crafternoons, librarians are able to show off the variety of resources beyond books or calculators they have available for students. They've been able to demonstrate kits related to book binding, zines (small, informal publications), water coloring, and more that students can check out in their free time. OSU Valley Library has also collaborated with other departments to show that the library isn't as intimidating as people might think. "Librarians aren't scary," said Sara Trott, a librarian for OSU. "Definitely a little weird, but not scary."

Pre-pandemic, the Crafternoons were a way for students to connect outside of their classes in a way that was more than digital. They addressed social and creative student needs at the library, not just academic needs. After COVID-19, this became especially important – it was a great way for students to socialize in person again and allowed the library staff to get to know students better away from a screen. For transfer students who come to the campus in the middle of the year, it's been a crucial resource to get them connected. "[It] has proven to be a really good way for students to get to know each other and for us to get to know the students," said an OSU Valley Library staffer.

For students on OSU's e-campus, librarians are sending out flyers with information on an upcoming virtual Crafternoon. "E-campus students don't always feel like a part of the campus, so we're inviting them to take part in a collaborative zine or booklet. The summer topic is summer fun," said Zach Wellhouse, the Online

Learning Librarian for OSU Valley Library.

Students have deeply appreciated the opportunities provided by the library, telling staff regularly how thankful they are that they're doing the Crafternoons. It's been a great way to provide a space where people can create things with no expectations or pressure – they aren't being graded on these projects. Not only that, but the library is an affordable space for socializing outside of class, work, or dorms. “[I’m] always surprised by the wonder or delight when people say, ‘Oh, is this free?’ [We’re] making this a third place where people don’t have to pay to have fun,” said Zach.

Another fun event at OSU Valley Library in the last year was [a weekly scavenger hunt](#) for a goat with a prize going to the student who finds it. But OSU students aren't the only ones having fun with the help of their library! Oregon Coast Community College offered free book bags to students as well as take-home [origami craft kits](#). Western Oregon University's Hamersly Library has a [Recreational Collection](#) where they offer puzzles, board games, video games, and more for students to check out.

University of Oregon has a great [gaming collection](#), with over 600 video games and consoles to check out. During the 2023-24 school year they're launching a gaming center that will support tabletop, console, and PC games and will support both events and drop-in gaming, free to all students!

Next year, OSU Valley Library is collaborating with several departments to bring new activities to the students, including a collaboration with [Glitter in the Archives](#), a queer special collections project highlighting historic LGBTQ+ materials.

We're excited to see what the next school year brings for the creative activities

academic libraries are organizing. Keep an eye on the State Library's social channels – we'll be sharing different events as they come up!

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## **This Old Library: There's a Place for Us**



*Image by Max Robinson, Volunteer and Recording Studio Coordinator in Talking Books*

*By Jey Wann, Oregon Documents Coordinator, Government Information and Library Services*

We spend a large percentage of our waking hours at work. Even in the era of remote and hybrid work schedules, many staff at the State Library spend a

significant amount of time in the building. Consequently, some of us have favorites places: places that are beautiful, weird, inspiring, or where we can go to rest and recharge.

Angie Jannelli (Oregon Documents Specialist in Government Services) lists the Oregon Index alcove as her favorite space. “It’s beautiful,” she says, “and hasn’t been remodeled much.” The alcove houses the physical index from which the [Oregon Index Online](#) was produced.

Both Joel Henderson (Donor Relations and Volunteer Coordinator in Operations) and Robby Pietz (Document Delivery Specialist in Government Services) list the old stacks elevator as one of their favorite places. You can see more information about this venerable, uplifting friend in the [March 2023 issue of \*Connections\*](#).

Robby is also partial to the windows in the Government Room, which overlooks the [Capitol Mall](#). Jerry Curry (Outreach Services Librarian in Government Services) likes the whole Government Room; he’s even suggested he’d like to have his desk there. Jerry also likes the Multi-Purpose Room, a basement space that houses preservation and conservation supplies and activities and until recently was the home of the [Library’s recording booth](#).

Speaking of the recording booth, Max Robinson (Volunteer and Recording Studio Coordinator in Talking Books) lists it as one of his favorite spaces. “Looking forward to making some incredible books come to life in that space soon!” he says.

One of my favorite aspects of the building is the Reference Room doors. Although the State Library hasn’t used the Reference Room since 2016, I remember how very official I felt closing and locking those heavy doors every day when the room closed at 5:00 p.m.



old *Congressional Records*.”

As we learned in the [April 2023 issue of \*Connections\*](#), the stacks have some of the most interesting spaces in the building. When Joel was a student worker, he was particularly interested in Tier 1. “I can remember the first time I walked down there and immediately felt very small,” he says. “The old stacks ladders made shelving down there fun, and I would wonder sometimes what bygone germs were being unleashed again upon the world whenever the dust would get blown off those super

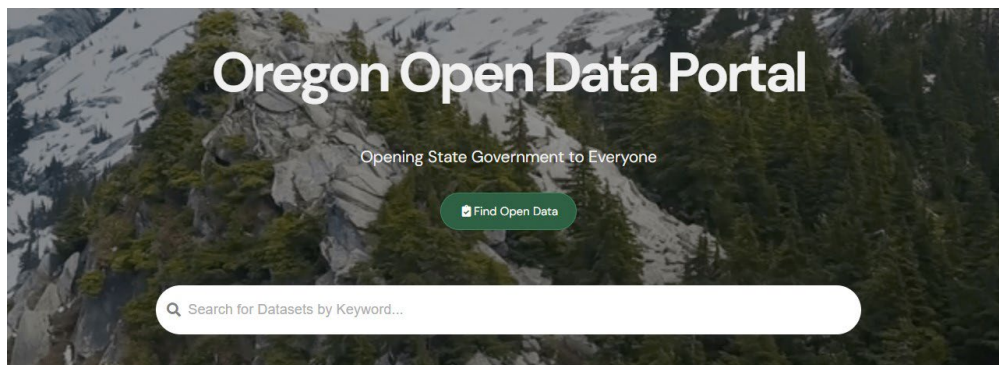
Some staff list favorite areas of the building that either no longer exist because of renovations or that agencies other than the State Library now occupy. Heather Pitts (Cataloging Services and Digital Collections Librarian in Government Services) says she used to recharge in the stacks. “I used to sometimes like to go to the southeast corner of Tier 5 and sit on the floor under a ventilation duct, especially for an afternoon break,” she says. “It was nice to get away and unlikely that anyone would stumble upon me there.” Joel recalls two areas that are no more: a strange, narrow cubicle in the old Technical Services Office on the third floor, and the old couches in the break room. “I took many a great power nap on those couches,” he says.

Not everyone’s favorite space is inside the building. Jen Maurer (School Library Consultant in Library Support and Development) misses the view of the red-flowering currants from the window by her cubicle. The currants are gone, so she no longer can view hummingbirds feeding on them in the spring. There is still a lovely view of the Capitol Mall cherry trees in bloom, fortunately.

Max also likes the Capitol Mall, especially the roses that are currently blooming.

Natalie Brant (Reference Librarian in Government Services) likes to eat lunch on the lawn on the Court Street side of the building. “It’s also really special to me because it’s where I saw my solar eclipse right after I started in 2017,” she says. “It was one of the most eerie and beautiful things I’ve ever seen.”

## State Library Publishes 13 Years’ Worth of Public Library Data



*By Sadie Verville, Communications Analyst, Operations Division*

Ever wonder how many people have library cards in your county? What about the number of e-book checkouts in a year at your local library? Thanks to our Data & Digital Projects Consultant Ross Fuqua, it’s easier than ever to review public library data from all across Oregon!

Recently, the State Library published the [Oregon Public Library Statistics](#) on the

Oregon Open Data Portal, [a new, legislatively mandated initiative](#) coordinated by the State Government's Chief Data Officer. This dataset is composed of information from public libraries since 2010 that we've gathered through our annual *Public Library Statistical Report*. At 168 discrete data points per each of the approximately 135 libraries across the state per year, that's over 300,000 discrete data points. That's a lot of information! And rest assured – personal, identifying patron info is not a part of what we collect.

The *Public Library Statistical Report* collects data about library use, collections, programs, operations, and more. It includes data such as material checkouts, electronic resource use, program attendance, budgets, staffing, WiFi and computer access, and facility information for every public library in the state. Libraries, policymakers, and the State Library use this information to help improve library services for all people of Oregon.

Not only can Oregonians more easily access this information, but researchers on a national level can use it to inform their work in evaluating public library services. Already we've had one national news organization use the Oregon Public Library Statistics to inform their research on [public computer usage](#), which came out only a week after the dataset had been published!

Another great benefit of adding the data to the Oregon Open Data Portal is that it makes it easier for libraries to access their own information. Using the [Oregon Public Library Snapshot page](#), which is connected to this open portal, libraries can get a high-level snapshot of their services, such as charts displaying library cardholders vs. non-cardholders, types of materials checked out, revenue, and more. The State Library has plans to create additional tools and data visualizations similar to the Snapshot in the near future, which will allow libraries to continue improving their services in their own communities.



Overall, making this information more accessible on the open data portal increases transparency and accountability for all. Our hope is that this can be used to build stronger relationships among library users, library funders, and the libraries themselves.

For any questions, please contact Ross Fuqua, Data & Digital Projects Consultant, at [ross.fuqua@slo.oregon.gov](mailto:ross.fuqua@slo.oregon.gov).

## OrDoc of the Month: Kids and Gardening

OREGON AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE  
EXTENSION SERVICE

SCHOOL AND HOME GARDENING FOR  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN OREGON

BY

M. O. EVANS, JR.



*By Jey Wann, Oregon Documents Coordinator, Government Information and Library Services*



Gardening is a popular pastime in all parts of Oregon. Not only do Oregonians garden at home, many grade schools include a garden. [Oregon Harvest for Schools](#) publishes a wide variety of pamphlets, posters, and videos about the kinds of crops that grow in Oregon gardens.

Gardening with school children isn't a new idea. In 1914, Oregon Agricultural College (now Oregon State University) published [School and Home Gardening for Elementary Schools in Oregon](#). Based

on a successful program in Portland, the brochure recommended that a teacher and an expert gardener at each school should coordinate a school garden and advise students about setting up a garden at home. Not only would this produce healthy food, it would help student performance: "Many pupils, ordinarily indifferent to study and wasteful of time in the classroom, get their lessons with alacrity if they are given school periods two or three times a week to do garden work, the penalty for poor lessons being the loss of such privileges."

Whether you garden at home or visit a local farmers' market, we hope you enjoy Oregon's bounty of produce this summer!

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## Mission

The State Library of Oregon cultivates, preserves, and delivers library and information services to foster lifelong learning and community engagement.

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