

CONNECTIONS: YOUR LINK TO THE
State Library of Oregon



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AGENCY NEWS

State Library Building Scheduled to Reopen

The State Library Building is scheduled to reopen to the public on Wednesday, September 1st. As state buildings prepare to welcome the public back, please remember things are going to be a little different, especially the way services are delivered. Also, unless changes are made before September 1st, [masks are required for all people in state buildings](#), regardless of vaccination status. We encourage you to call ahead and make an appointment if you need to access in-house only materials or are wanting to pick up a new Talking Book and Braille Library cartridge. Many of the services our library provides can be accessed through our [website](#), and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

LIBRARY SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Jackson County Uses CARES Act Grant to Break Technology Barriers

Jackson County Library Services (JCLS) in Southern Oregon is excited to announce one of their newest services: DART (Direct Access to Resources and Technology)! DART is a converted 2020 Ford Transit van that serves as a mobile hotspot with a 300ft radius. This mobile technology van started “darting” around Jackson County on June 19, and to date has already served more than 500 members of the community in one way or another.

When COVID-19 shut down libraries across the nation, many people found themselves without internet connectivity in the moment they needed it most. However, when JCLS did eventually re-open to the public, they realized that the true barrier to internet access was outside the library buildings.



So JCLS began asking, “What else can we do?” In November 2020, JCLS applied for the State Library of Oregon CARES Act grant to get funds for a mobile technology van that would provide access to laptops, tablets, and the

internet outside of their libraries. CARES Act grants come from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and are administered in Oregon by the State Library. The grant was approved, and their staff immediately got to work on planning.

Community members have been excited about the new service. One area with the greatest potential for impact is Housing Authority apartments that have limited to no internet access. Without internet access at home, families have to carve out time to come to the library to print vital documents, apply for jobs, and more. DART is scheduled to go to a different location each week to break this barrier to access.

Southern Oregon was also the site of several massive fires in September 2020 that destroyed thousands of homes. DART can now also be of service to those who are still unhoused or living in temporary housing. Each week, it is on site at the Phoenix Fire Resource Center to aid those most effected by the fires.

In addition to providing internet access, other goals for DART are to provide digital literacy programs for seniors, work readiness workshops for job seekers, and general library instruction for all patrons. In their first month of service, JCLS DART visited eighteen sites, including the inaugural Juneteenth Celebration in Medford, OR, three free lunch sites for students, and the Phoenix Talent Fire Relief Center. JCLS looks forward to providing more exciting DART programs as this awesome service expands!

**Getting to Know the Library Support and Development
Services Division**

Featured staff: Ross Fuqua (he/him)



Ross Fuqua joined Library Support and Development Services at the State Library of Oregon in 2017. As the Data & Digital Projects Consultant, Ross coordinates the [Oregon Public Library Statistics program](#) as well as the new [Northwest Digital Heritage program](#). Until recently, he also served as the Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA) Coordinator, an important role now filled by his

amazing colleague, Tamara Ottum.

The Oregon Public Library Statistics program centers mostly around an annual [Statistical Report](#), a census of service measures the State Library has gathered every year since 1903. Much of this data is in turn contributed to the [National Public Library Survey](#), a robust dataset from public libraries across the US and territories, coordinated by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) since the late 1980s.

Using library data, Ross recently created the [2020 Oregon Public Library Snapshot](#), an interactive tool to help libraries make informed decisions and tell their stories. It is a major goal of the Statistics program to create more data analysis and visualization tools like this one.

In May, Ross was honored to help launch a new (but long-envisioned) program, [Northwest Digital Heritage](#) – a partnership between our State Library, the

Oregon Heritage Commission, and the Washington State Library. Northwest Digital Heritage operates a new Service Hub for the [Digital Public Library of America](#) (DPLA), and has already helped include over [85,000 records](#) in DPLA from participating organizations in Oregon and Washington. With our partners, Ross plans to provide a range of digitization support and consultation to Oregon libraries and their communities as the pandemic recedes.

When not working, Ross enjoys grilling homemade pizzas with his wife and their first-grader (who is already a voracious reader!), playing and listening to music, and exploring gravel roads by bicycle.



GOVERNMENT INFORMATION & LIBRARY SERVICES

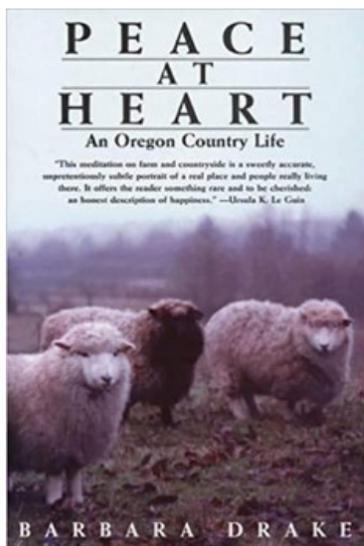
COVID-19 Digital Collection Documents Pandemic and Oregon's Linguistic Diversity

When the pandemic began in March 2020, Oregon state agencies began producing publications to help Oregonians understand what was happening and stay safe. As part of its role of providing permanent public access to these publications, Government Information and Library Services created the [COVID-19 Digital Collection](#), which contains over 12,515 items and is still growing. Documents include pamphlets explaining best practices for various activities, guides to doing business with state agencies whose buildings were closed to the public, and reports on the impact of the pandemic on various groups.

We are very excited to announce our first full-length, Oregon interest book has just been uploaded to BARD!

Right before the pandemic hit, the Talking Book and Braille Library was ramping up to start in-house recording of local-interest books with the help of volunteer narrators. The State Library had acquired a recording booth, and we were ready to start producing books that could be added to the NLS's collection. The State Library's Volunteer Coordinator, Cam Amabile, and our Studio Manager, Joel Henderson, had even lined up two volunteers and had selected a book for each of them to narrate. Then COVID closed the building and put everything on hold indefinitely.

By early 2021, however, as the building closure continued to stretch on, Joel and the Talking Book and Braille Library Program Manager, Elke Bruton, decided to test the option of having volunteers remotely narrate books. Luckily, one of the volunteers they had lined up before the closure, Jennifer Imai, had been patiently waiting for us the whole time. She had experience narrating books for other organizations and had an adequate home-recording set-up to warrant giving the idea a try.



In March, we started the remote narration pilot. The book selected for Jennifer to narrate is *Peace at Heart: an Oregon Country Life* by Barbara Drake. We selected the book for a couple of reasons: it was an Oregon Book Award finalist in 1999, and its rustic content is widely popular amongst our users. Jennifer was an excellent pilot volunteer. Her narrations were consistent and lively, and she worked at a goldilocks pace: not too fast, not too slow, but just right.

This being his first full-length book to produce, Joel appreciated the slow and steady pace of the pilot. He was able to methodically work through each step of the process from start to finish, solving problems and adding important details to his documentation along the way. In all, it took four months for Jennifer and Joel to record, edit, mix, review, correct, mark-up, produce, and upload Peace at Heart. With the process mostly smoothed out, we look forward to when our building reopens and we can welcome volunteers back in to start a more steady recording schedule.

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Connections is published monthly by the State Library of Oregon, and was formerly known as *Letters to Libraries Online*.

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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