



**Volume 35, Issue 3 - June 2025**

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## **AGENCY NEWS**

### **Oregon Library Association 2025 Conference**

Every April, the Oregon Library Association (OLA) hosts a conference for staff in Oregon libraries. It's an excellent learning and networking opportunity. We had a great time exhibiting and presenting at this year's OLA conference in Eugene. Thank you to the planning team, all who joined us, and those who stopped by our booth to chat about all things Oregon library. We look forward to next year's conference in Portland!



Max H. Robinson, Recording Studio Coordinator for Talking Books, sharing some of the work of the studio at an OLA Poster Session.



State Librarian, Wendy Cornelisen and children's author Ana Velez pose with Ana's book *The Three Little Guinea Pigs and the Andean Fox*.

## LSTA Funds in Action

Historically, the State Library receives an allotment of federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds, and that money supports staff, programs, resources, and statewide and competitive sub-grants. With the current uncertainty of federal funding for libraries, the State Library has made the difficult decision to not issue competitive grant awards for the 2025-26 time frame. That said, it is important to highlight the impact the Library Services and Technology Act grants have had on Oregon over the years.

Some stories stick with you, not because they're big or flashy, but because they're full of heart. That's what we set out to capture when we created two short films about how LSTA grants have supported libraries and communities across Oregon.

What started as a simple idea turned into something special: a chance to highlight the real people and places supported by libraries. Working with the Woodburn Public Library and Oregon Historical Society, we were able to pause and reflect on the kind of work that makes a difference.

Watch the stories on our YouTube channel:



**LSTA Federal Funds in Action:**

**LSTA Funds in action: Woodburn  
Public Libraries Bookmobile**

**Oregon Historical Society's Yasui  
Collection**

In Woodburn, an LSTA grant helped launch a bright and cheerful bookmobile that brings the library directly to the community. This is more than a bookmobile; it's breaking down barriers to not only promote a love of learning, reading, and literacy but also to bring community together.

At the Oregon Historical Society, LSTA funding supported translating and digitizing the Yasui family and business papers, making local history available to everyone. The Yasui family, from their first generation in the U.S. were part of the history of the Hood River and Portland areas, and one of the first families to speak about being interned during World War II. The way history is being taught to the next generation is changing because of their preservation efforts and this digitization project. It's a chance to see how history lives not just on paper, but in the people who protect and share it.

The Oregon Historical Society's LSTA grant funded the first leg of this project and having that complete opened doors to continue this important work. In the continuation of this work, they developed an original exhibit *The Yasui Family: An American Story* opening Friday, June 13, 2025.

What makes these stories special isn't just the projects themselves; it's the people at the center. The families visiting the bookmobile, an Oregon family sharing their history, and the staff and volunteers who made it all happen.

## **Excitement Builds as Staff Gets First Look at New Talking Book Player**

The Talking Books team is buzzing with excitement after receiving our first demo of the new digital talking book player from the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS), part of the Library of Congress. This update to the standard player is a major milestone, and it gives our staff a firsthand look at the

future of accessible reading technology.

From the moment the package arrived, there was a ripple of curiosity throughout the office. Staff gathered around to see what the new player



Talking Books staff member with new Talking Book Player

looked like, how it felt, and how it worked. The first impressions were glowing.

“It’s so much lighter than the old one,” one staff member said as they held the sleek, updated player.

The new design is modern, more compact, and easier to hold. The controls are still familiar and tactile, which is great for those used to the classic player. But there are some clear upgrades too: staff immediately noticed new ports and features that hint at exciting future possibilities.

“Have you seen the new player yet?!” became a popular question around the office. Everyone wanted a turn to test it out.

NLS has been working hard to bring new technology to its network libraries, and this new player is a strong step forward. While we don’t yet know details around roll out, getting to see the first one in person is an inspiring sign of progress.

“It’s very exciting,” echoed across the staff meeting. This is a great example that NLS is thinking about meeting the needs of users in new ways.

We’ll continue sharing updates as we learn more. In the meantime, we’re simply thrilled to have this early glimpse at what’s ahead for our readers.

As always, our goal remains to support our users with the best service and technology available. We’re grateful to NLS for leading the charge and can’t wait to see where this new player takes us.

# A Note from the State Librarian

The last three months have been full of library news on the national level, which could impact every Oregonian.

In an [executive order](#) dated March 14, the current administration called for the elimination of the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and six other government entities, reducing the agency to its “statutory functions,” in the name of reducing “elements of the Federal bureaucracy that the President has determined are unnecessary.”

On April 4, Oregon's Attorney General, Dan Rayfield, joined with 20 other states to file a [lawsuit](#) seeking to reverse the executive order. There was a hearing on April 18, which detailed the harm that would be caused to libraries, and the people they serve, across the country.

On May 13, the judge issued a preliminary injunction that blocks the March 14 executive order to dismantle IMLS. The court ordered the administration to immediately take steps to restore the agency's employees and grant funding activities.

The State Library of Oregon continues to have access to LSTA funds, and has received a partial award letter for the funds that will be spent in the coming fiscal year. The full grant award notice is expected by the end of this month, which will confirm the total amount of the award.

As events continue to unfold, the State Library's [Updates page](#) is a great place to catch up on the latest information.

To learn more about the programs and services these federal funds support our libraries, and library users across the state, check out our page [Library Services and Technology Act \(LSTA\) Program in Oregon](#).

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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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