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



**Volume 33**, Issue 4 - April 2023

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## AGENCY NEWS

# Oregon Center for the Book Selects 2023 Titles

*By Sadie Verville, Communications Analyst for Operations*

The time of year has arrived for the Talking Book and Braille Library to announce their 2023 selections for which books will represent the [Oregon Center for the Book](#). These books will travel with us to Washington, D.C., in August to the National Book Festival where they'll play a prominent role in promoting the literary scene of our state.

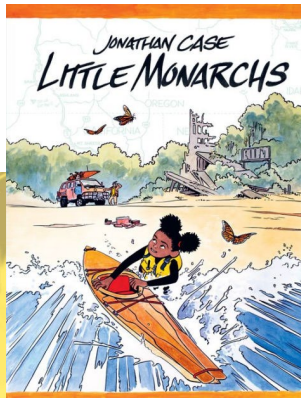
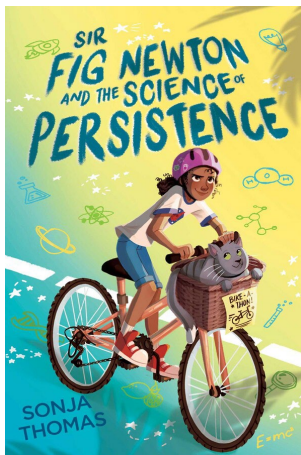
This year, there are three picks: a children's book, a young adult book, and an adult book. Read on for the Center for the Book's official selections!

***Sir Fig Newton and the Science of Persistence*** by Sonja Thomas  
(Children's)

“Twelve-year-old Mira’s summer is looking pretty bleak. Her best friend Thomas just moved a billion and one miles away from Florida to Washington, DC. Her dad is job searching and he’s been super down lately. Her phone screen cracked after a home science experiment gone wrong. And of all people who could have moved into Thomas’s old house down the street, Mira gets stuck with Tamika Smith, her know-it-all nemesis who’s kept Mira in second place at the school science fair four years running.”

***Little Monarchs*** by Jonathan Case (Young Adult)

“*Little Monarchs* is a adventure—one that look at the natural



new kind of graphic novel invites readers to take an intimate world and the secrets hidden within. Elvie and Flora’s adventures take place in real locations marked panel-by-panel with coordinates and a compass heading. Curious readers can

follow their travel routes and see the same landscapes—whether it be a secluded butterfly grove on the California coast or a hot-springs in the high desert. Through both comic narrative and journal entries, readers learn the basics of star navigation, how to tie useful knots, and other survival skills applicable in the natural world.”

***The Day I Die*** by Anita Hannig (Adult)

“Lyrical and lucid, sensitive but never sentimental, *The Day I Die* tackles one of

the most urgent social issues of our time: how to restore dignity and meaning to the dying process in the age of high-tech medicine. Meticulously researched and compassionately rendered, the book exposes the tight legal restrictions, frustrating barriers to access, and corrosive cultural stigma that can undermine someone's quest for an assisted death—and why they persist in achieving the departure they desire.”

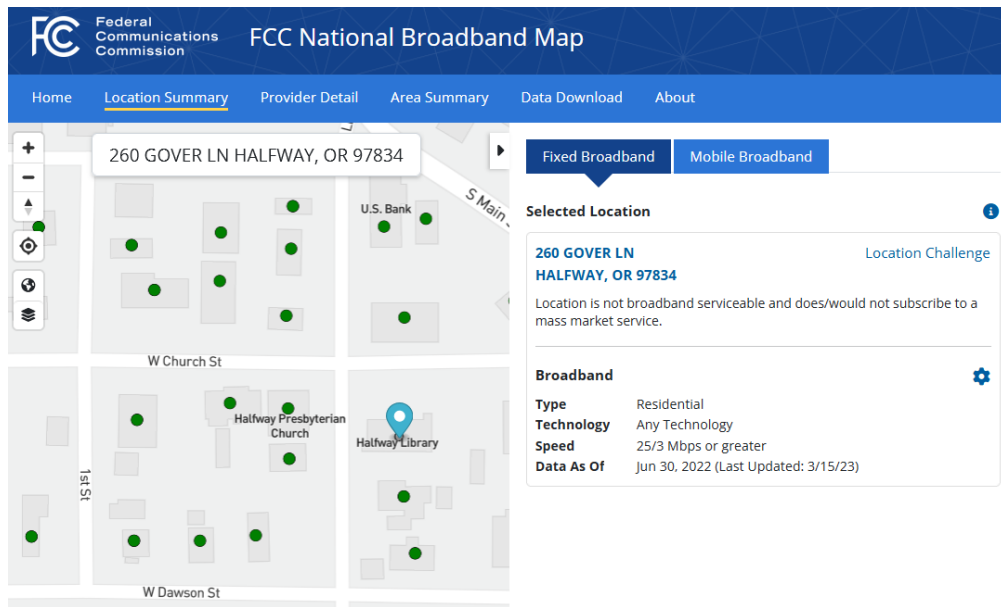
Congratulations to the authors of this year's selections! All three books will be made available on audiobook for registered Talking Books' patrons by the National Library Service. And, of course, your local school or public library may have the books, too.

Keep an eye out for our Talking Book and Braille Library at the National Book Festival this August. There might even be some fun swag!

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## **Why Broadband Maps Matter**

*By Buzzy Nielsen, Program Manager, Library Support and Development Services*



*The Halfway Branch of the Baker County Library District is one of 168 Oregon library facilities that are inaccurately identified on the FCC broadband map.*

In November 2022, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a [new draft map](#) showing where high-speed broadband is – and, more importantly, isn't – available in the country.

Broadband? Maps? Sounds kind of boring, right? Even if FCC maps aren't your favorite discussion topic among friends (understandable!), they're nonetheless vitally important. They're used to make decisions on which communities receive funding to upgrade their broadband infrastructure, and sometimes even to get broadband for the first time ever.

The COVID-19 pandemic put in stark relief how access to high-speed Internet affects whether people can participate in our increasingly online society. As everyone from state and federal agencies to local schools and churches had to suddenly shift to online activities, access to broadband made the difference between who could be involved and who was shut out, literally and figuratively.

In recent years, federal and state policymakers have recognized this stark digital divide and passed legislation to help close the gaps. Efforts such as the [Capital Projects Fund](#); [Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment \(BEAD\) Program](#); and [Digital Equity Act](#) will distribute over \$40 billion around the country to help bring communities up to speed. The agencies running those programs will rely on the FCC's broadband map to allocate funds to each state and territory.

With so much funding at stake, it is essential that FCC maps are correct. Inaccuracies in the FCC's mapping data are [not uncommon](#), unfortunately. At the State Library, we're primarily concerned about how the maps affect public libraries. Public libraries are one of the largest sources of free, no-purchase-required Wi-Fi in the country. In 2021-22, Oregon's public libraries reported a minimum of 7.3 million sessions on their Wi-Fi and library-provided computers, a figure that is almost certainly an undercount. Wi-Fi at public libraries is crucial for folks who don't have access to or cannot afford Internet at home, rely solely on mobile phones for Internet access, don't have homes at all, or generally are from communities that are underserved and under-resourced.

Our staff found that nearly 75% of the 227 public library facilities in Oregon are "not broadband serviceable and [do]/would not subscribe to mass market service," according to the FCC map. While that statistic does not mean that these libraries lack access to high-speed Internet, it does mean that they could be overlooked in projects that seek to increase broadband availability and speeds. Most public libraries rely on the same Internet packages that are sold to residences and businesses, and it's crucial that the FCC's maps accurately reflect that reality.

Fortunately, the FCC maps are a living document. The Library Support and Development Services division is working with relevant entities, including the [Oregon Broadband Office](#), to ensure that libraries are included in discussions about broadband and that their important function in promoting digital equity is

recognized. You can also do your part by notifying the FCC about inaccuracies on the map about your home or business. See “Help Improve the Map” on [this FCC webpage](#).

If you have further interest regarding broadband, there are several bills under consideration in the Oregon State Legislature. These include [House Bill 3201](#), requiring the Oregon Business Development Department to provide financial assistance to support broadband access, affordability, and adoption; and [Senate Bill 885](#), appropriating funds to the State Library to facilitate access to and match funds for federal broadband opportunities for public libraries, such as the [E-Rate Program](#).

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## Staff: The Backbone of a Library

*By Wendy Cornelisen, State Librarian*

Libraries are an essential part of their communities, providing access to knowledge, education, and entertainment. But what makes a successful library is the team of dedicated and knowledgeable people who work there. Library staff are the backbone of any library and are critical in ensuring that the library is a welcoming and accessible place for all. April 25 is National Library Workers Day, a time to recognize the hard-working folks at your local library.

One of the most significant values of library staff is their commitment to serving the public. Library staff members are passionate about their work and are dedicated to making the library a welcoming and inclusive place for everyone. They are often the first point of contact for patrons, greeting them with a smile and helping them with any questions or concerns they may have.



Library staff members are also crucial in supporting literacy and education. They work with teachers, faculty, and other educators to develop educational programs for all ages, from toddlers to graduate students. They also provide outreach services to schools, academic departments, and community organizations, bringing the resources of the library to those who may not be able to visit in person.

There are many library staff members essential in preserving our cultural heritage. They are responsible for collecting, cataloging, and preserving materials that are of historical and cultural significance, ensuring that future generations have access to these resources. They also work to digitize materials, making them accessible to a wider audience and preserving them for posterity.

The expertise of library staff members is also key to making a library the best it can be. Professional librarians and other trained library staff work together to help patrons navigate the vast array of materials available, making it easier for them to find what they need. Other library staff members are dedicated to the finances, operations, or administration of the library. It takes all kinds of skills to run a library!

The value of library staff cannot be overstated. They are experts in their field, committed to serving the public, and essential to building literacy of all kinds for all ages. Without their dedication and expertise, libraries would not be the valuable resources that they are today.

As we celebrate National Library Workers Day on Tuesday, April 25, I hope you take a moment to celebrate the people who keep your local library running. A few words of gratitude can go a long way!

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# The Great Recording Booth Move of 2023

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

Moving is an interesting life event. As I write this article, my home is mostly in boxes, and tomorrow is the big day to load my life into a truck and transport everything to a newer, bigger, better location! Meanwhile, on the morning of March 16, a team of handy volunteers from Operations and Talking Books took on the task of moving the State Library's recording booth from the basement to its own space on the second floor (space that was formerly a storage area). This too, would improve upon the State Library's usage of space, optimizing both the recording experience of staff and volunteers in the new second floor studio and the book-mending experience of staff and volunteers in the basement. With Joel Henderson's expert direction, the seemingly gargantuan task of disassembling and reassembling the entire "Vocal Booth" studio was completed safely and efficiently, something I can only hope will be similar for my own home move.



Now that the recording studio is happily settled in its new home, we can reflect on the purpose of the booth for all State Library employees and make good on the promise of appropriate space usage. This quality recording experience can now be utilized for a plethora of uses including creating local books for the Talking Book library, designing trainings for all divisions, and even providing a quiet space to take a break. Right now, as Talking Book's newly minted Administrative Specialist and Recording Booth Coordinator, I am working on getting up to speed on using the current Pro-Audio programs and getting back to my roots from my undergraduate work in audio production. I'm excited for all the possibilities these new, both professional and personal, spaces will afford. Let's get recording!

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## **Fact or Fiction? School Libraries Are Obsolete Because Everything is Online => Fiction!**



*By Jen Maurer, School Library Consultant, Library Support and Development Services*

*“Students in secondary and post secondary schools use ‘almost exclusively’ online resources that are available outside of a library. Very few print and off line media resources are used in research today. Because of this most students need to be able to use these online components and classroom teachers are the most qualified people to teach these skills as they have had to do online research. I love them but traditional media and library resources are out-moded and even most elementary schools use some form of e-books for their reading anymore!”*

That comment is from a school district-level administrator in response to an anonymous survey that the State Library of Oregon and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) collaborated on. The collaboration was a first step in ODE’s response to a legislative mandate to study the appropriateness of Oregon Administrative Rule 581-022-2340: [Library] Media Programs, and ODE’s [report](#) to the Legislature was posted in December 2021. From that report came [Senate Bill 1075](#), which seeks to add a School Library Specialist at ODE.

Unfortunately, the sentiment that school libraries are obsolete because “all of the information is online” is not rare. In Oregon public schools, [library staffing and budgets](#) have been on the decline since the 1980s – for several reasons beyond the scope of this article. Most Oregon public schools do not have a [licensed school librarian](#) on staff, and some schools have such limited hours or extra duties for classified library staff that the library is often closed during the school week. Additionally, some schools’ library budget is zero dollars, and staff must rely on book fair profits or grants to purchase materials for the library. In fact, [Oregon ranks](#) in the bottom three to seven of all U.S. states for school library staffing and other criteria according to results of the [SLIDE project](#), a national ongoing study of school libraries. All of these conditions and metrics mean that some students, parents of students, classroom teachers, principals, and district administrators have no experience with a strong school library program. Often decision makers’ understanding of the role of libraries in schools is based on misperceptions instead of being based on experience with a strong school library program and knowledge of the [school library impact studies](#) that connect strong programs with increased student achievement.

Sentiments about school libraries being obsolete are simply not correct. In fact, the opposite is true. The Oregon Association of School Libraries developed the [Oregon School Library Standards](#) and a [Strong School Library Rubric](#) to guide the work of school librarians but

also to help decision makers know what to expect from a library program. From both resources, one can determine that a strong school library program does many things, such as helping students develop reading skills and the habit of reading (less than 50% of Oregon students are [proficient in English language arts](#)); licensed school librarians teaching students the research process, including lessons on topics such as identifying mis- and disinformation in online resources (addressing a national problem); and library collections being built after analyzing data and considering many factors, such as the print vs. online, curricular, and recreational reading needs of the school community.

Let's break down the quote about school libraries being obsolete because everything is online.

- Yes, online resources are available outside the walls of the school library. That includes content-area databases and e-resources that librarians evaluate, subscribe to or purchase, and promote on behalf of the school or district. Why do that? Because not everything is available on the Internet, and not everything that is available is free, high quality, or grade-level appropriate.
- Yes, in many cases, students prefer online resources when doing research. However, since not everything is available on the Internet or to purchase for online access, strong school library collections that are tied to the curriculum also provide print resources to support annual research projects and classroom instruction. Additionally, a library collection also supports students' reading skill development and the habit of reading. For recreational reading, some students prefer print books, some comprehend better when reading print text versus reading online, some do not have quality devices or stable (or any) Internet access at home, etc. It's about balance and responding to needs.
- Yes, some classroom teachers are qualified to teach students about online research. However, there is more to research than just finding information. A student who is information literate recognizes when information is needed and knows how to locate, evaluate, organize, use, and produce information – whether that information is in print form or online. Licensed school librarians are specialists in information literacy and are qualified to teach that subject to students based on their licensure coursework. Also, many classroom teachers are overloaded with subject areas to cover. And importantly, some college and university staff who work

with Oregon freshmen indicate that the students are not prepared for that level of research (see p. 14 of the ODE report).

- Yes, some Oregon schools have purchased or subscribed to e-books. Who in the school system understands that landscape – which platform/s to use, that some e-books must be purchased again after a certain number of checkouts, that not all print books are available as e-books, that e-books are more expensive than print books, which titles to select, etc.? For sure, a licensed school librarian understands.

As always, the public is encouraged to know what is going on in their local schools.

Consider asking questions about the library, especially during April's [School Library Month](#).

On what schedule is it available to students? Who staffs the library – licensed librarians, classified staff, or both? What instruction takes place through the library program? Is there a budget to support development of the library's collection? How does the school balance print vs. online needs? What help do library staff need? It's very likely that good things are happening. School libraries are not obsolete, but a library program's potential is expanded or limited by its staffing, budget, and decision makers' expectations for it.

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## **Government and Information Services Welcomes Crystal Grimes!**



The Government Information and Library Services Division is excited to welcome Crystal Grimes as our new Cataloging Assistant on our Technical Services team. She is currently working on the Federal Documents short records project as well as cataloging Oregon Documents.

Crystal didn't come to Government Services from very far away. She has worked for the Talking Book and Braille Library downstairs for the last 10 years. She started as a Circulation Technician, and then was promoted to Patron Accounts and Customer Service Coordinator.

Crystal has lived in Oregon her whole life, and she graduated from Emporia State University's online program with her Master's in Library Science in 2012. As a matter of fact, Crystal even did an internship with the State Library's Library Support and Development Services division and the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse while at Emporia. Her career at the State Library was clearly meant to be!

In her free time, Crystal loves reading, playing video games, and going to the coast.

We are happy to have you "upstairs" on the Government Services team, Crystal!

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# This Old Library: You Can't Get There from Here

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

Since the State Library Building opened in 1939, hundreds of staff and volunteers have worked within these marble walls. It's likely that most of those people had some shared characteristics: curiosity, love of learning, and a belief in the importance of libraries in Oregon. But working in the building may have resulted in some shared experiences, too. Most especially, getting lost.

One major source of potential confusion is the stacks, the internal shell of five floors (known as "tiers") that house the physical collection. The public and office spaces of the building are housed in the basement and three main floors. The stacks contain five tiers, which do not necessarily correspond to a floor in the rest of the building. Tier 1 is in the basement. Tier 2 is on the first floor. Tier 4 is on the second floor. Tiers 3 and 5, however, are another... storey. Tier 3 is between the first and second floors. Tier 5 is between the second and third floors.

The only way to get out of Tier 3 is to either go down to Tier 2 or up to Tier 4. The only way to get out of Tier 5 is to go down to Tier 4.



As you can imagine, the structure of the stacks is confusing! Staff members report

confidently going into the stacks to retrieve an item, and then not being able to figure out how to get out again. It's doubly confusing if the fire alarm goes off, since it automatically closes the doors into the stacks stairwells, making them harder to find.

The stairwells connecting the tiers themselves are dark and narrow. Some staff, when doing tours, refer to them as "The Submarine Stairs" since they seem to belong in a World War II navy movie.

The configuration of the stacks also caused some difficulty when a new freight elevator

was installed in the late 1990s, as you can see from the picture of the control panel. Extra labels were added to ease confusion about which tier corresponded to which floor.

Of course, there are other stairways in the building. The main stairs, on the north end of the building, are wide and well lit, with an attractive terrazzo floor and metal railings. To keep people from accidentally ending up in the basement in an emergency, there is a gate between the first floor and basement. One staff member reports not realizing that the gate opened, and thinking for a long time that there was some reason for not taking those stairs to the basement.

No one has ever been so lost in the building that they never came out again... as far as we know.

If you'd like to delve more deeply into the building, you can take a look at [these 1937 blueprints](#) in the [Oregon Government Publications](#) digital collection.

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## CARES Act Spending Report Released

Early in the pandemic, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to provide funds to various institutions as support for the economic fallout. Of these funds, \$381,108 were allocated to the State Library through the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The State Library elected to offer non-competitive subgrants to public, community college, and tribal libraries located in counties of highest need and to pilot two regional digital inclusion projects.

Forty-two libraries across the state received funds, and they used the money to support their communities in creative and innovative ways as the pandemic continued to shift and cause new challenges. The work they did had a lasting impact on Oregonians by increasing digital access during a time when no one could go into libraries in person. The [CARES Act Report \(oregon.gov\)](#) highlights some of these projects and demonstrates how

Oregon libraries effectively used the funds they received to better serve their communities.

For questions about the report, please contact the Library Support and Development Services division at [library.support@slo.oregon.gov](mailto:library.support@slo.oregon.gov).

## OrDoc of the Month: For the Birds



*Flight's End:* Home to migrating and wintering birds

*Flight's End* is a unique place, steeped in history and rich in the wetland habitats that serve as a stopover for migrating birds on the Pacific flyway. In 2013, the 100-acre property was acquired by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and became part of the Sauvak Island Wildlife Area.

It is prime habitat for migrating and wintering birds and is important for chinook, chum and coho salmon and steelhead and Pacific lamprey.

The area's wetlands, grasslands, riparian forests, lakes and cultivated fields provide food and shelter to more than 250 species of birds—clay-colored Canada goose, pintail, green-winged teal, common yellowthroat, Western pewee, bald eagle, osprey, great blue heron, great egret, and more.

Previously, the area was operated as a private duck hunting club.

Partners in the restoration will include the Bonneville Power Administration, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and ODFW.

**the OREGON CONSERVATION STRATEGY**

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Figure 1: Flight's End Proximity

Legend

- SAUKVAK ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA
- SAUKVAK ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA
- SAUKVAK ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA
- SAUKVAK ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA

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

As the weather warms up, opportunities for outdoor activities increase, including birdwatching. Whether you're planning a major birding expedition or

just curious about the birds in your backyard, the [Oregon Government Publications](#) digital collections has some useful items.

Different kinds of birds live in different types of forests, as [this poster](#) from the Forest Resources Institute illustrates. The Department of Fish and Wildlife helped restore [an area of Portland's Sauvie Island](#) for migrating birds. Summer Lake in Lake County is also an important area for migrating birds, as [this video](#) shows.

Enjoy the spring weather (when it comes!) and spend some time with our feathered friends.

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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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