

MONTHLY REPORT TO COUNCIL

Meeting Date: April 16, 2025
Prepared by: Suzanne Bishop, MSLIS, Library Director
Department: Library
Division: N/A
Reporting Period: March 2025
CC: City Administrator John Walsh



1. General Operations

- March building use:
 - Library-only: 2,920
 - Columbia Center (hallway, meeting rooms, Makerspace): 1,454
- March hours open: 188
- March staff hours: 848
- March programs attendance:
 - Children's storytimes
 - Baby lapsit: 32
 - Toddler storytime: 76:
 - PreK storytime: 59
 - Monthly Adults and Crafts (Spring Tree Watercolor): 17 attended, 3 on wait list
 - Monthly Book Club: 9
- March Makerspace users: 78
 - 4 x Maker Monday (drop-in hours)
 - 4 x Maker Friday (drop-in hours)
 - Junior Makers (ages 10 – 14) Tinkercad: 13 attended
 - Maker Kids (ages 6 – 10) Dash Robots: 3 attended
 - Teen Makers (ages 13 – 18): 8 attended
- Hallway display: PEEPS™ show: patron-created dioramas using small boxes, PEEPS™, and other craft supplies

2. Staffing & Personnel

- Library Director serves on State Library of Oregon Library Science and Technology Act (LSTA) Advisory Council. Attended the April meeting to review competitive grant applications for Federal Fiscal Year 2026 and receive an update on Federal and state funding from State Librarian Wendy Cornelisen.
- Staff conducted their annual earthquake and fire drill.

3. Projects & Initiatives

A. Ongoing Key Projects

- **Summer Library Challenge** (June 16 – August 9): planning is underway for this major program, which 500+ youth, teens and adults will register and participate. Led by Youth/Makerspace Librarian Jana Wiersma and Library Technician Nicole Woodruff, eight adult, eight youth and two teen programs will be presented. Three will be invited performers, the rest of the programs will be presented by library staff. Currently staff is planning events, purchasing and preparing booklets, prizes and other materials, and coordinating with community partners and performers. City communications staff is collaborating with Library Assistant Michele Karmartsang to design and produce print collaterals and community outreach.
- **Coordination with the Recreation Department:** planning collaborations during the Summer Library Challenge.
- **Weekly communications meetings:** Library Director meets weekly with communications staff to plan, coordinate and execute outreach. Current focus is ongoing promotion of library events and activities, National Library Week and Summer Library Challenge.
- **Local history room:** Donated shelving for the local history collection was acquired from the North Bend Public Library. The room has been furnished, and the recording equipment installed. Staff is inventorying and cataloging local history materials so they can be shelved and available for public use. Public Services Librarian Brenda Herren-Kanaga has established regular open hours.
- **New Makerspace:** A deep clean is underway. We coordinated with Columbia Learning Center board and Habitat for Humanity to remove un-needed furniture and office equipment. Tables and chairs, rolling shelves, and static storage have been installed. Fundraising is ongoing for updated and specialized tables, chairs, plumbing and flooring installation. Public Works is assisting with electric, shelving and plumbing installation.
- **Library board:** The board is conducting a review of the 2023 – 2028 strategic plan. A subcommittee is overseeing this work with staff gathering supporting data. The first stage is alignment of library work with Goal 1, Initiative 1: “Develop a transformation plan for City Council consideration which reflects the evolving nature of libraries and will shape the Library to meet current and future community needs. The transformation plan will include: (1) a long-term vision for the Library including options to maximize service to the community; (2) rebranding proposal; and (3) funding considerations and options.”
- **Board member communications/Federal funding:** Library Director sent five emails to library board members to keep them apprised of possible funding changes due to the Trump administration’s proposed changes to the Institute for Museum and Library Services.
- **Community service safety initiative:** distributed approximately 20 NARCANS, 100+ COVID-19 tests and 20+ masks. Items come from the Columbia County Public Health Department.
- Library director attended **GRO Greater St. Helens leadership team meeting.**
- **Building maintenance:** overhead lighting was replaced and repaired in the hallway, library and new Makerspace room. The HVAC system spring cleaning was completed.

One of the six building furnaces was repaired. Seeking bids for repair or replacement of auditorium drapery.

- **Statistics:** Brenda Herren-Kenaga produced a large body of statistics for the library budget narrative and reports to the library board.
- **Friends of the St. Helens Public Library:** Staff attended their monthly meeting. The organization committed funds for the Summer Library Challenge invited performers and support for the Columbia County Biennial Conference. They are planning their May book sale.
- **Volunteers:** Library Assistant Dan Dieter gave orientations to five volunteers in the past 30 days. Volunteers served 111 hours in March.
- **Seed Library:** In collaboration with OSU Master Gardeners, it was launched in mid-March. The gardeners created seed packets, produced an inventory, selected and prepared gardening tips for various types of plants, and instructions for harvesting seeds. The library, through the city communications team, promoted the program on social media and in print materials. The gardeners used their monthly newsletter and other outreach to promote the program.

B. Upcoming Projects

- **Teen intern:** Hiring is underway for a summer teen intern, who will be tasked with assisting staff during Summer Library Challenge and creating a Teen Library Council, which will advise library staff, engage their peers, and do some library-related projects. This is a paid position, funded by LSTA through the State Library of Oregon.
- **Columbia County Reads 2025:** the library will join all Columbia County public libraries (Scappoose, Vernonia, Clatskanie, Rainier and Columbia City) in a program encouraging citizens to read “The Horse” by Portland author Willy Vlautin. Author events will be held in September in Clatskanie and St. Helens/Scappoose (location TBD). Other events are in the planning stages. The program is funded by a grant from Oregon Humanities.

4. Upcoming Events & Important Dates

- National Library Week: April 6 - 12. Featured on St. Helens Public Library Facebook page.
- Take Your Child to Work Day: April 24. Participants will have a brief tour of the library and do a project in the Makerspace.
- Library Board meetings: April 10, May 12
- Friends of the St. Helens Public Library book sale: May 9 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and May 10 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. The Garden Club sale will be May 10 from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm
- Makerspace expansion soft open: mid-May
- Summer Library Challenge: June 16 - August 9
- Columbia County Biennial Conference “Many Lands Many People”: September 19 - 20.
- Willy Vlautin author talk: date TBD