

# INTERCHANGE

Journal of the Oregon Association of School Libraries

Winter 2013

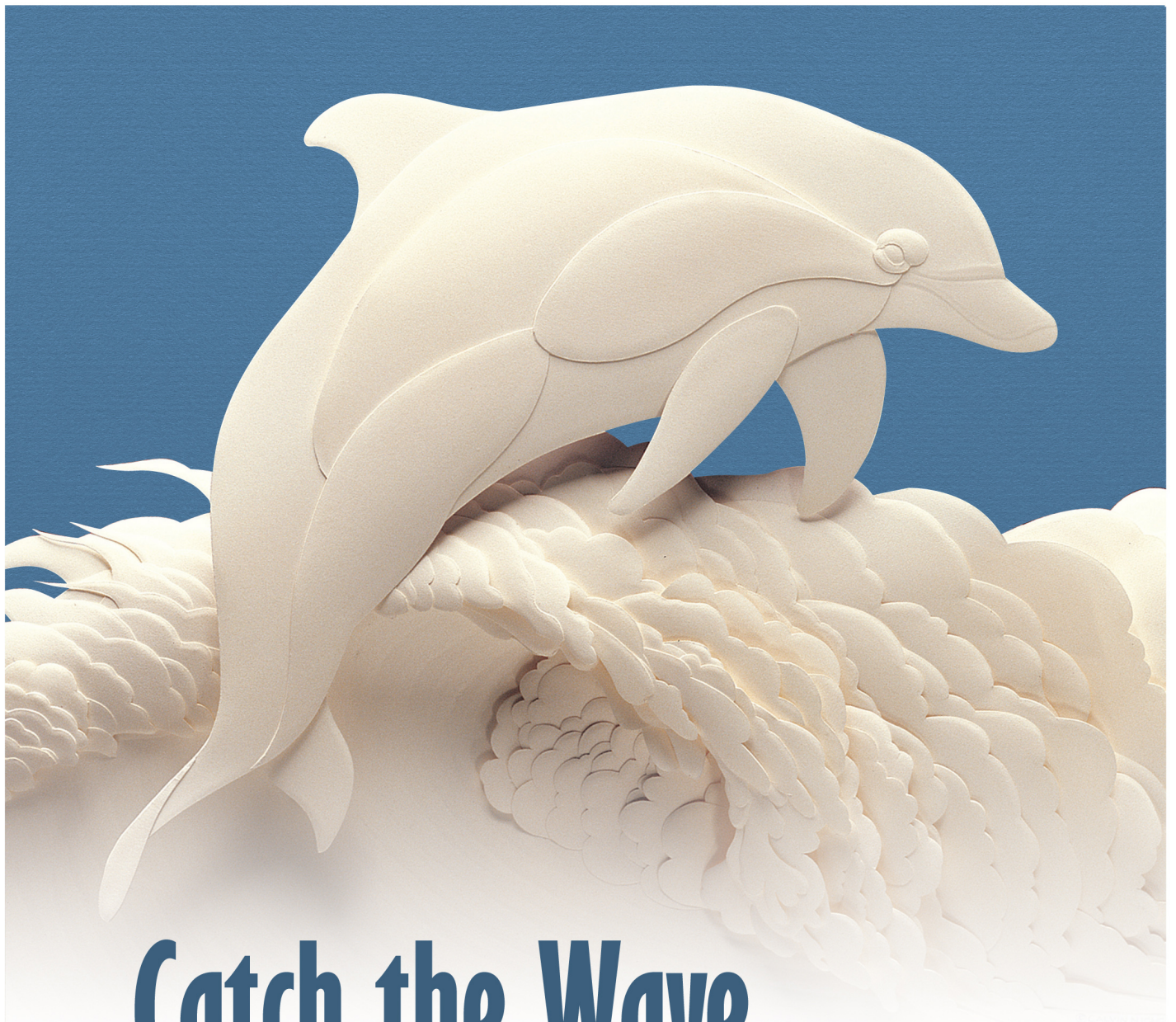
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## SCHOOL LIBRARIES: The Light of Literacy



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*Inspirational School Library Stories*



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# INTERCHANGE

Volume 41 Issue No. 2

Winter 2013

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Association of School Libraries

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**OREGON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES  
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*MISSION STATEMENT* OASL provides progressive leadership to pursue excellence in school library media programs by:

- advocating information literacy for all students;
- supporting the highest levels of library media services in schools;
- supporting reading instruction and enjoyment of literature;
- strengthening member professionalism through communication and educational opportunities;
- promoting visibility in education, government and the community

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## From the Guest Editor School Libraries: The Light of Literacy Inspirational School Library Stories *by Nancy Sullivan*



In a recent interview, I was asked, “What’s the best part of your job?” Though it may not be what you expect to hear at the high school level, here’s my quick answer: The best part of my job is when I’ve recommended a book to a student and they’ve come back into the library later, rushing up to me excitedly saying, “This is the first book I’ve read all the way through!” or “I didn’t think I was going to like this at first, but this book is awesome. Do you have another one like it?”

That one-on-one experience of matching a book and a reader really fuels me as a school librarian, and it is only one facet of what I really love about my job—creating a library program that offers a wide variety of entry points for kids with diverse backgrounds, perspectives and interests. Here are just some of the ways the library creates opportunities for engagement with reading and literacy at Madison.

- Library Read-In in celebration of Teen Read Week in October, where we fill up the school library with sofas, donuts, and kids reading their current favorite books. Students get permission from teachers to join us for a whole morning dedicated to enjoying a cozy reading experience together.
- Poetry Slam, an event where student poets compete by performing their own original poems that are judged on a numeric scale by local celebrity poet judges. The April (National Poetry Month) event draws in rappers, hip hop artists, spoken word performers, poets who’ve never performed their private writing before, and others for an evening of celebrating words.
- Library RATs (Readers And Thinkers), the library club, where students who like to read books, think about them, and talk about them, come together in the library during lunch monthly and share lively book discussions and cookies.
- Madison Reads, our all-community reading program where we encourage everyone—from students and staff to parents and members of the wider neighborhood—to read the same book and talk about it. We make books available through our library and bring the author for a visit as our culminating event. Kids tell me directly how much they enjoy reading the same book as their friends and teachers. I have often overheard upperclassmen recommending one of our books to underclassmen, “You should read this book. It’s awesome. We all read it last year (or a couple of years ago).” It is a shared experience like no other.
- Annual Banana Social where we serve organic bananas topped with chocolate sauce and peanuts for free with one string attached: students have to share the title of their favorite book in exchange for their treat. This year I was amazed by how many students cited one of our Madison Reads books as their favorite.
- ORCA, the Oregon Reader’s Choice Award, which, as you all know, is a fantastic opportunity for kids to read outside their preferred genre and discover books they might not otherwise read. We host a voting pizza party in the library in March to collect our ballots and send them in to see if our school favorites agree with the favorites statewide.
- OBOB, the Oregon Battle of the Books, an amazing program that brings teams of readers together to relate in new ways, and enjoy camaraderie and reading! We run our OBOB battles with the vision of a game show in mind. Kids get wrapped up in the excitement of friendly competition and being challenged to read texts very, very closely, while the audience of students hears about some great books to try (or test their memory of books they’ve read themselves). The winning team from our school competes at regionals, where they make friends from other schools miles away through the common language of the books they’ve all read.

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- The school library space itself providing a safe haven for kids who would not otherwise have a “place”... kids who could be considered outcasts, but in the library they are surrounded by books, which are their “friends,” other “geeky” readers like them, and the library staff. We’re their peeps!
- Outreach to families includes Storytime at the Halloween Fair, when I dress up and read scary stories to elementary school-age student from our feeder schools and they get to Trick-or-Treat in the main hall, and Pajama Nights where our high school students dress up in pajamas, play games, and read books with neighborhood kids in kindergarten through third grade.
- Author visits inspire kids to become writers and read interesting books. Books really come to life when students have the opportunity to meet and interact with living, breathing, published authors!

The reasons school libraries are inspiring are as diverse as our kids, and you’ll read about the many ways school librarians have inspired their students over time in this issue of *Interchange*. Student voices are represented here, as well as licensed school librarians, paraprofessionals working in school libraries across Oregon and even a piece from our former State Librarian. Cozy up on the sofa with your iPad or print copy, a cup of tea, and a couple of tissues. Then read about some of the moving ways school libraries across our state are the light of literacy.

*Nancy Sullivan is the 2012–2013 OASL President Elect and the teacher-librarian at Madison High School in Portland, OR. E-mail is the best way to reach her: nsullivan.pdx@gmail.com. See photos of MHS school library displays and events here: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/madisonlibraryrat/>*

## From the...

### President’s Device *by Susan Stone*



We live the definition of inspiration.

I think any one of us working in a school library has at least one, if not ten, stories of inspiration we could relate. We feel inspiration in small crannies between the stacks when we see a previously struggling reader turning the pages of a new book given to her as a congratulatory prize for increasing her reading score. I

felt inspired just last week, when in a concert hall filled with Portland Arts and Lecture ticket holders, I heard the 10<sup>TH</sup> grade student winner of last year’s spoken word contest, Verslandia, repeat her winning poem. The audience was there to see Barbara Kingsolver, but clapped so long and loud for this young woman, that I wondered if B.K. even needed to speak that evening.

It’s interesting that definitions of “inspiration” include

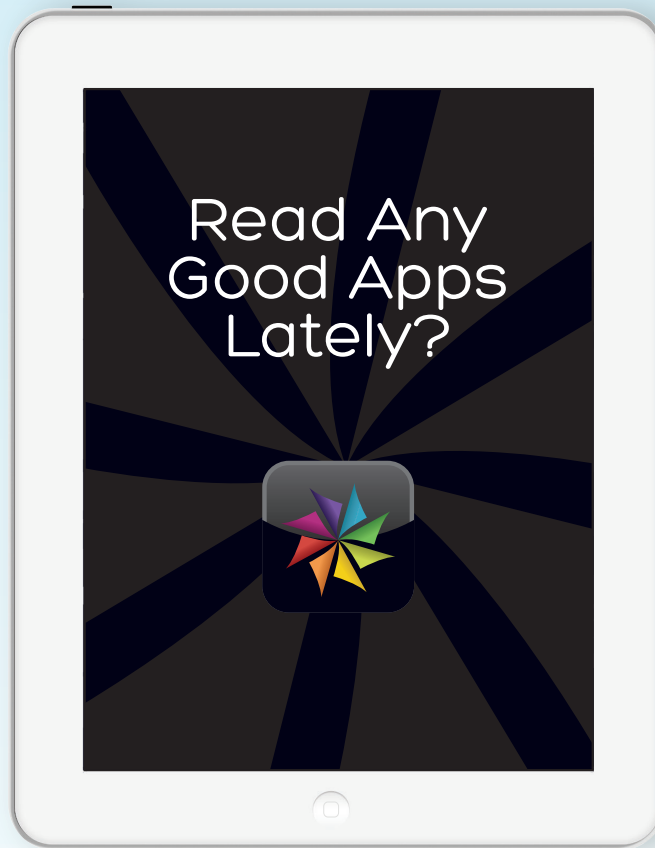
- the action or power of moving the intellect or emotions
- the act of influencing or suggesting opinions
- the act of drawing in; specifically : the drawing of air into the lungs

Isn’t that what we do? We do whatever we can to engage our students both intellectually and emotionally with our instruction, our displays, our reading promotions, our private conversations. We aim to influence our students’ literacies with the selections we make for our collections, and suggestions for resources to meet their individual needs. And we act to draw them in with carefully selected booktalks, choosing titles we know will hit the mark with a whole class, or sometimes even targeting just one student in a room of thirty.

And when we do hit the mark, when we do see the targeted student pick up the exact book we hoped he’d choose, we take a deep breath, a “drawing of air into the lungs”, and we expel that breath with a sigh inspired by the pleasure of our work. Yes, that’s exactly what we do. We inspire our students, and are inspired by them in return. Indeed, I was one in the audience clapping long and loud for the young poet in the concert hall. And I was clapping loud and long for the librarian I knew who had set the contest in motion, and perhaps even encouraged the poet to come out from that cranny between the stacks and share her poetry with us all.

Happy sigh.

*Susan Stone is the current president of OASL. She has been a school librarian in Portland Public Schools for 10 years and currently serves as the district’s TOSA for Library Services. Reach her at [ssstone@pps.net](mailto:ssstone@pps.net).*



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 EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

## What Do you Want to Be When you Grow Up? *by Linda Ague*

There are many occupations which seek to improve the state of the world. Most can see a direct connection between the job they do and the contribution they make. An inventor identifies a problem, focuses his or her creative inventive mind at that problem and can take pride in an important discovery. A doctor identifies the cause of an illness and provides an observable cure. A farmer plants a seed, harvests a crop and knows that someone will be fed. A teacher—well that’s another story.

The organized educator starts each day armed with scopes and sequences and core curriculum goals all finely honed into the perfectly timed lesson plan. All this perfection is then faced with THE CLASS. And while the individuals in THE CLASS may arrive each day with the same names, they are never the same individuals. They never know what they knew yesterday. They rarely seem to want to know what would logically follow from the brilliantly presented lesson from the day before. And when you remove the little structure provided by a course title like science or art and open the area of study to all possibilities you have the school library.

It is the delightful randomness of each day in the library that probably draws us to this profession to begin with. That one in a million chance that a simple question might lead to a possible line of inquiry that would result in something new, something good. The chance that the road from a simple stamp to a young man’s dream of a journey into space would begin in a school library.

The class assignment had the possibility of mundane written all over it. “What do you want to be when you grow up” was thinly veiled as “Explore an occupation which might interest you. What would you need to do to prepare? What are its challenges? What might be its rewards? Interview a person who is currently in that profession.”

That last requirement sent most of the class down the road of least resistance and they interviewed an easily accessible relative whether or not the occupation was the least bit interesting. A quick read of the appropriate section of the Occupational Outlook Handbook (we are talking low tech, pre-computer days), a chat with Mom or Dad—one and done—easy A. All except for little Jimmy Dutton.

Jimmy had no interest in easy. At just a sneeze over 4 feet, he played basketball. His regulation tucked-in jersey was so long it hung out from the bottom of his shorts. He was a part of a small group of students who hung out in the library waiting for the middle school bell schedule to catch up with them after returning from a high school math class. They could have used the time to begin that math homework but decided we should have a

book discussion group instead. It was almost 1984 so we read that book first, then *To Kill a Mockingbird* (one of the girls in that group named her first daughter Scout). Jimmy’s occupation of choice—astronaut.

*continued...*



*Jimmy is the second from the right—the little guy. This was taken as they left to get on the shuttle.*

**...a young woman tapped me on the shoulder and asked, “Aren’t you the librarian?” I responded that I was indeed a librarian, thinking maybe my sturdy shoes and the multiple versions of reading glasses hanging from my neck had given me away. “No, she said, “THE librarian—the one that was responsible for Jimmy being an astronaut.”**



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Jimmy and his dad spent many hours watching TV programs on space and space travel. He knew all about its challenges and could not imagine a reward greater than to be in space, maybe even to walk on the moon. The OOH was of little help in providing preparation information and there wasn't an astronaut to be found within a thousand miles. His teacher's advice—choose a different occupation.

Overhearing the conversation, I resisted the temptation to tell Jimmy to find a different teacher and instead suggested another approach. Why not write to NASA and see what they could tell him. His initial reaction to the possibility of actually communicating with NASA was as if I had suggested we get on the phone to God. However, once we located the address for NASA in something as simple as the World Almanac (remember, no computers), he began to see the possibilities. The teacher would have to back off on that interview requirement. We were on a mission.

He brought back the letter in an envelope the next day, dutifully filled out the address from the Almanac, and then discovered he didn't have a stamp. This letter could not wait one more day. I found a stamp, deposited the letter in the school mail so it would go out that very day and the rest is history—delightful history.

NASA answered. He figured that the chances of being named an astronaut were very small. You had to have an almost perfect high school record so you could be accepted to the Air Force Academy where again you had to have an almost perfect record. Jimmy liked a challenge.

He graduated from high school in 1987 with top honors. He was accepted into the Air Force Academy where at graduation in 1991 he won 15 of the possible 16 awards. He was on the cover of TIME magazine. In May of 2004, I got a call at school. "Ms. Ague," the voice said, "this is Jimmy Dutton. I did it. I am officially an astronaut." In April of 2010, at his invitation, I flew to the Kennedy Space Center and watched little Jimmy Dutton go into space.

In line at the space center, waiting to buy the official STS-131 Discovery T-shirt, wearing my Dutton supporter button, a young woman tapped me on the shoulder and asked, "Aren't you the librarian?" I responded that I was indeed a librarian, thinking maybe my sturdy shoes and the multiple versions of reading glasses hanging from my neck had given me away. "No," she said, "THE librarian—the one that was responsible for Jimmy being an astronaut."

Colonel James Dutton is a very generous person and in every interview cites that early library encounter as one of the reasons for his achievement. I think it really overstates my role. Maybe it was the typical librarian tendency to support a yes to all possibilities. But really, I think it was the stamp

*Linda Ague is a retired teacher librarian who is now free to read grown-up books and travel whenever former students go into space. You can reach her at [lindaague@gmail.com](mailto:lindaague@gmail.com).*

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## **OBOB Battles for Walt Morey Award**

*Letters submitted by Mary McClintock*

The Oregon Battle of the Books is now in its sixth year of successful operation. Last year 400 schools participated in this reading motivation and comprehension program which promotes teamwork and academic excellence. OBOB has become so popular with students, teachers, principals, and parents because the enthusiasm for reading and gains in reading skills are dramatic.

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The OBOB executive committee decided in light of the program's success to nominate it for a special category in the 2013 Oregon Book Awards. The Walt Morey Young Readers Literary Legacy Award is presented to a person or organization in recognition of significant contributions that have enriched Oregon's young readers. We think OBOB certainly meets this criteria. The awards committee permits submission of up to five letters of support which we sought from a variety of people and regions around the state. Excerpts from these letters are below. We think you will agree that these letters are quite inspiring.



*We are very familiar with the benefits that sports bring to our communities. They are an opportunity for children to learn the meaning of teamwork and commitment, as well as something that brings together other members of the community to watch, encourage, and support the progress and achievement of our children.*

*Oregon Battle of the Books works in much the same way but with more of an emphasis on a fun, positive, and enriching educational experience. It supports our schools, libraries, and the love of reading which is essential to a child's education, while still providing that aspect of community that we all enjoy about sports.*

Ann Serline, Parent  
Salem, Oregon



*I have attended the Roseburg Battle the last three years. I attended first as a spectator, then as a timekeeper and judge. My children are all long since grown, so I have not had a dog in any of these fights, but each year I have been thrilled by the excitement about reading that the Battle brings out in young readers and in their families and supporters.*

1. *The Battle gets young readers to read good books.*
2. *The Battle teaches young readers to read for content.*
3. *The Battle puts reading in a group context, so the young readers get the reward of interaction with others, while reading is otherwise so often a solitary activity.*
4. *The Battle lets young readers compete for their school and gives the young readers the kind of prestige that is found in sports.*
5. *The Battle lets young readers experience competition and sportsmanship and teamwork.*
6. *The Battle shows young readers that the community values reading.*

*Many of the teams had driven long distances in bad weather. All of the teams were excited and serious about their competition. All of the young readers who participated came away enriched and energized by the experience, with a more positive attitude about reading and with better skills for reading and learning from reading.*

Charles F. Lee, Attorney at Law and Roseburg School Board member  
Roseburg, Oregon

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*As a result of Battle of the Books, students' engagement and motivation to read is at an all time high in our district. During the weeks leading up to the competition, it is not uncommon to see groups of students gathered in hallways, libraries and playgrounds reading before and after school—a sight every educator enjoys.*

*The positive impact of the program has continued to grow steadily in our district since it began in 2008. Last year, more than 414 teams made up of nearly 1,700 Springfield students participated, up from 1,100 students in 2008. Participation continues to grow each year, especially as more high school teams join the program.*

Nancy Golden, Ph.D., Superintendent  
Paul Weill, Curriculum Coordinator  
Springfield, Oregon



*When the OASL was ready to create a statewide competition involving elementary schools and middle schools and eventually high schools throughout Oregon, the State Library was ready to help make it happen. That first year, 2007-08, we had 135 schools participate in regional competitions leading up to the first ever state tournament at Chemeketa Community College in Salem where we crowned the first state reading champions.*

*Since that time, the power of OBOB in motivating thousands of students to become serious readers, some for the first time, has become so evident that last year we had about 400 schools participate. That's about a third of all the schools in the state.*

*I remember happening by a rural elementary school outside of Salem and seeing on the sign outside the school in big letters "GOING TO STATE! OBOB." What a thrill it was to see that sign. It's great to be a state champion in sports, but to aspire to be the state reading champs is really something special. OBOB makes that possible.*

Jim Scheppke, Oregon State Librarian Emeritus  
Salem, Oregon



*What a joy it is as an administrator to watch students work in teams, sharing responsibility and their love for reading. This becomes a school-wide event as our school teams compete. Younger grades watch as the teams demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have gained over the past months.*

*Many of the benefits of this program are not directly observed during the competitions, but occur in every child who decides they want to be a part of the program. Students who have struggled in reading, students who have not previously enjoyed reading, or those who have a need to feel a part of something, now have a reason to read and be a part of a team. This is truly what the program is about.*

Jill Weber, Administrative Coordinator and former elementary school principal  
Roseburg, Oregon

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The *Walt Morey Young Readers Literacy Legacy Award* is named after Walt Morey (1900–1992), famed Northwest author of *Gentle Ben* and other wonderful books for young readers enjoyed worldwide. Past recipients of the award have included Carol Brown of Corvallis, former teacher and president of the Oregon Reading Council (2005), the Young Writers Association of Eugene (2008), and the Children’s Book Bank of Portland (2011).

We all see the incredible impact that the Oregon Battle of the Books has on our students every year, and know that—award or no award—this remarkable program contributes significantly to the literacy legacy of Oregon through the inspired efforts of teachers, parents, administrators, librarians and students across the state. We salute you all, and say thank you for making reading for competition a game where everybody wins.

To learn more about OBOB visit the wiki <http://oboblsta.pbworks.com>.

*Mary McClintock is a Library Media Consultant, member of the Oregon Battle of the Books Executive Committee, and OBOB Book Distribution Chair. She can be reached at [marymcclintock2012@charter.net](mailto:marymcclintock2012@charter.net).*

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## **Inspiring One Student at a Time** *by Carol Dinges*



Last winter one of our counselors brought a student in and said to him, “You tell her what you just told me.”

He began to explain that earlier in the year, his freshman language arts teacher told him that he had to go to the library to get a book to read. He didn’t want to—he hated reading and had never actually read a book. I had asked him what kind of movies he liked to watch and had then suggested the first book in the

Strongbow Saga series. He read the book jacket and agreed to give it a try—and even though he had to renew the book a couple of times, he did eventually finish it and loved it. He was able to finish the second book in the trilogy in just a couple of weeks, and then he read the third in less than a week. He loved them so much that he wrote an e-mail to the author asking if he was going to write more, and he had just received an e-mail back from the author answering his questions, including when the next book would be published. He was so excited that the author had actually written to him.

Brandon and I found more books for him to read, and he became a “regular” in the library. Now that I’m at the public library, I’ve seen him here during the summer as well.

While this story wasn’t all that unique, it particularly touched my heart because his counselor later explained that he’d been in foster care most of his life, moving from home to home. Most likely the reason he’d never really learned to read was that he’d moved from school to school so often. He’s a quiet kid, never causing trouble, but never really “connecting” with school. Connecting with an author and a series of books had changed that and, as he told me himself, had changed his whole life.

I’m really going to miss that.

*Carol Dinges, a former OASL President, is now the Library Services Manager for the City of Lebanon and can be reached at [cdinges@ci.lebanon.or.us](mailto:cdinges@ci.lebanon.or.us).*

**He’s a quiet kid, never causing trouble, but never really “connecting” with school. Connecting with an author and a series of books had changed that and, as he told me himself, had changed his whole life.**

## Warming My Heart by Linda Campillo



As a high school teacher-librarian, I often have former students who come back to visit and keep me abreast of their experiences after high school. In recent months, these visits have taken on new meaning for me. Since I live in the same neighborhood in which I work, I often run into students in the grocery store, library or local recreation center. Former students would usually ask, “Aren’t you the librarian at Wilson?” And I would reply affirmatively. This past summer however, I started encountering a different question. “Didn’t you used to be the librarian at Wilson?”

“I still am,” I answered to a student who graduated two years ago.

“Oh, that’s good to hear,” he said. “My dad works in Beaverton, and I heard what happened to all their librarians and I wondered if that was happening in Portland.”

The student, Dylan, continued to tell me what it meant to him to have someone in the library with the expertise to assist him when he needed it. He is now in college and indicated that he had learned a lot about doing research, which has been helpful for him. Of course, he made my day!

Then at the beginning of the school year, a former student who graduated about three years ago came into the library and surprised me with a giant hug. He explained that he had graduated about three years ago, and I was one of the people who supported him when he was thinking about dropping out. I have to confess that I didn’t remember this student’s name, but I did remember his face as someone who was often hanging out in the library. Eric continued his story by telling me that he wouldn’t have graduated except so many teachers were pulling for him, and that made a big difference. He is now in college and doing well, he told me.

I also recently made contact via e-mail with a student who moved away after graduating, and I asked him what it meant to have a certified librarian in his high school. He told me that the research methods elective I teach on an independent study basis was very helpful, and he thought it took a lot of effort on my part.

“I recall the library being an active part of language, literature, and social studies classes, likely due to heavy coordination with teachers,” he added. This particular student spent at least one period if not two in the library every day. He described all the activities he saw and what he knew I did on a daily basis, and I couldn’t believe how well he understood my work.

I’m sure my experiences are no different than other high school librarians, but I wanted to share them with my fellow teacher-librarians so we can all remember such gems together. My heart has been warmed by the appreciation of students who make my work enjoyable every day when I get to pick their brains while they are picking mine. I also realized now that although some people in the education system do not understand what a teacher-librarian does, the students that are here every day are watching and paying attention. They know us and understand what we do probably better than anyone. I hope that warms your heart too.

*Linda Campillo is the teacher-librarian at Wilson High School in Portland. You can reach her by e-mail at [lcampillo@pps.net](mailto:lcampillo@pps.net).*

**My heart has been warmed by the appreciation of students who make my work enjoyable every day when I get to pick their brains while they are picking mine.**

## Classified Inspirations

For Paraprofessionals In School Libraries  
By Laura Friesen

Inspiration comes in so many different forms. We certainly hope to inspire and be inspired by our students, but we sometimes overlook the impacts that we can have on each other as professionals. A woman walked into the library with a huge smile. “Thank you,” she said, “you taught me to read!” Clutching a copy of *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, she proceeded to tell me how using expression and different character voices had completely enthralled the listeners in the classroom. This former middle school teacher had “learned to read” from listening to stories in the library. This was an unexpected and gratifying confirmation of the value of school library read-alouds. In conversations with students, many of the replies were equally supportive of library story time.

Programs offered to students also inspire student achievement and participation. At Guy Lee Elementary, in Springfield, Oregon, Cindy Mathews runs a program called Second Chance Books. If a student forgets to return a library book on library day, they are still allowed to check out a book from the Second Chance pile. These books are not cataloged. However, large envelopes with barcodes are cataloged. The student chooses a Second Chance book, which is then put in the envelope, that barcode is scanned and the student then has something to read. The large envelope serves as a reminder for the student to return the regular library book. Books used for this are library discards, donations, or garage sale finds, so there is little monetary loss if the books are not returned. This is just another way to keep students engaged in the reading process.

Another story comes from Andrea Fox, one of our fifth grade teachers. “My mother, Paulette Thompson, was a librarian in the 4J School District for years, and also taught Children’s Literature at the University of Oregon. Our household was always full of books—library books on the living room table, books on shelves lining the family room, and favorite books in our rooms. We were never pressured to read, we just couldn’t resist all the tempting books!”

Better than books were the stories she told. “My mother is one of the best storytellers I’ve heard. If we had a sleepover, we would beg her to tell stories at bedtime. Our friends thought it was better than a movie: the images more powerful, the tales more intriguing. Each Christmas Eve Mom would make hot spiced cider and tell us stories. We didn’t have the money for many expensive gifts, but we felt rich. Now we are grown, and so are most of our children.” The traditions carry on though, as Paulette Thompson’s grandchildren grew up on books and storytelling too.



Andrea and Paulette

Even though Paulette retired from the 4J District many years ago, I still run into people who remember her. Students, teachers, and other librarians she worked with light up when I mention her name. They share what she taught them, read to them, gave to them.

To some, librarians just help people find books. To me, librarians inspire and even help change the world.

**A woman walked into the library with a huge smile. “Thank you,” she said, “you taught me to read!”**

*Laura Friesen is a paraprofessional at Bertha Holt Elementary in Eugene. You can contact her at [friesen@4j.lane.edu](mailto:friesen@4j.lane.edu)*

## Learn and Serve *by Peggy Christensen*



If you want to get inspiring extracurricular projects going in your library or school, consider a service learning program. Essentially, the program promotes students getting involved in helping their community. The Learn and Serve web site describes the ‘hows and whys’ of service community programs, which are essentially an integration of what is learned in the classroom with needed projects in the community.

From looking at the web site, one might get the idea that service learning involves huge projects, but that is not the case. It can involve a single student or groups of students doing large or small projects.

The Coos Bay School District is currently looking at how to increase literacy and school readiness skills of pre-kindergarten children who lag behind two or more years. They plan to implement a service learning project which pairs leadership clubs (National Honor Society students) with children in need of extra services. They call the program Teens2Tots.

Basically, this program is modeled after the Start Making A Reader Today (SMART) design, but involves teenagers working with children in need of help. The program will be overseen by a certified teacher who is responsible for making sure that the teens are adequately trained, identified learning targets are incorporated, meeting times are scheduled, and that data is collected.

If you have identified projects you would implement given enough help and resources, service learning might be the answer. According to the Learn and Serve website, service learning programs provide tremendous benefit to both student and the community. The site also links to grant support for school-community partnerships.

Access the Learn and Serve web site at: <http://www.learnandserve.gov/about/lsa/> and start getting inspired today!

*Peggy Christensen is a teacher librarian for Coos Bay Schools and can be reached at [peggyc@coos-bay.k12.or.us](mailto:peggyc@coos-bay.k12.or.us)*



## Even Higher, Indeed *by Maureen Milton*



As librarian in a small, independent school that serves children from kindergarten through eighth grade, I often find myself in need of materials geared for younger children that relay concepts, ideas, or information about curriculum in the older grades. For instance, when our seniors (6<sup>TH</sup>–8<sup>TH</sup> graders) study South Asia, they celebrate Diwali with the entire school. So, to familiarize the juniors (2<sup>ND</sup>–3<sup>RD</sup> graders) before the celebration, I read Sally Pomme Clayton’s beautifully illustrated, lively retelling of the Ramayana, *Rama and Sita: Path of Flames*, so that the younger children will have some notion of the ancient Indian epic. Not only do the younger children gain familiarity with lots of fascinating tales and traditions, they also bring their own wisdom to the stories.

Recently, because some students were absent for Rosh Hashanah, we read Eric Kimmel’s adaptation of an I.M. Peretz tale “If Not Higher” (<http://www.galun.com/misc/ifNotHigher.php>), entitled *Even Higher: A Story for Rosh Hashanah*. In it, the pious and learned Rabbi of Nemerov seems to disappear during the days before the high holy days. People assume he goes to heaven to pray. A skeptical Jewish Lithuanian arrives and scoffs at the stories of the rabbi, deciding to see for himself. The skeptic hides under the rabbi’s bed. He sees the rabbi arise, put on a woodcutter’s clothes, then chop up some wood. He heads off with it into a slum where he, the learned rabbi, in the guise of a peasant, calls upon an old, infirm woman. He “sells” her the wood, assuring her that she’ll surely pay him later. The disguised rabbi then lights a fire and invites her to dance. At this point, the skeptic departs and becomes a lifelong follower of the rabbi. When people of Nemerov later claim that the rabbi goes to heaven before Rosh Hashanah, the skeptic-turned-disciple assents and adds, “Maybe even higher.”

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While this story itself nearly brought me to tears when I read it, I asked the children about the meaning of the title, *Even Higher*. There was quiet, and then 8-year-old Shane raised his hand and offered that, “The rabbi brings heaven down to the earth.” When I asked what he meant, he explained that the rabbi was bringing a little bit of heaven to the old lady, so then I had to cry a little bit more, which is awkward when one is reading aloud. What a boy!

When we choose meaningful multicultural books to share with students, each is an opportunity to inspire them to greatness. We try to broaden their viewpoints and bring pieces of the world in to them, but they often are the ones who end up inspiring us!

*Maureen Milton is the Librarian at Arbor School of Arts & Sciences in Tualatin, Oregon, and can be reached at [milton.maureen@gmail.com](mailto:milton.maureen@gmail.com)*

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### **They Paved Paradise** by *Adrienne Gillespie*



Starting this school year was extremely difficult. My job as a school librarian had been eliminated and I had opted to stay at my school. The transition was harder than I had expected. I thought I had mourned the loss, but once school started, I realized the grieving process was not over. I’m still working through my loss, but I have realized that my colleagues have also experienced loss because we no longer have a certified library media specialist in our school.

Our half-day kinders are not part of the specialists’ wheel and I was always sure to include them in my library schedule. It is not so this year, and one of our kinder teachers told me this: “Because of the lack of a librarian, the half-day kindergarten students do not have a time for library. We are hoping that this will be resolved; however, with the schedule there is not time for these students to check out library books. Also, we used to have library books checked out to our Kinder classes to go along with our reading themes. We now have to find them ourselves. There are no inter-library books to share from the other schools. I find that I need to go to my public library to find some of the books that are not at our school library. I am very frustrated that we have lost our expert librarian!” Almost every morning, two of our first grade teachers came into the library. They both clearly feel we have lost more than just a job. One writes: “Losing a librarian at our school has felt like we have lost our heart. In past years, I have interacted and consulted with our librarian on a daily basis. Whether I was looking for materials to support my instruction, looking for book advice or just wanted to hear the latest book news, the librarian was always there to help. But with the recent budget cuts in Beaverton, I’m not able to do this anymore. Sadly, not only have these cuts hurt my ability to provide quality instruction, they have hurt my students as well. They are the real losers in all of this change. They don’t have an expert to help them find good-fit books, teach them research and library skills or to just share a wonderful book with them.”

The other first grade teacher told me, “I have always considered the school library the heart of the school, so when our librarian/media specialist positions were eliminated, I was very sad and confused. I love books, and I love the joy they bring into the classroom. Going into our library and having Adrienne help me was a part of my morning routine. All I would have to do was tell Adrienne what we were learning, and she would have a wealth of knowledge and ideas that I could have never come up with on my own. I often have to remind myself to leave Adrienne alone this year, as her position has changed, and I do not want to overwhelm her, but I miss her as our librarian. The students are missing out in the classroom and during their specials time, they are losing out on skills that are necessary for their future. I hope that the school library will become the heart of the school again soon.” I was a fourth grade teacher before becoming a library media specialist, and I have always had a special place in my heart for my former colleagues, one of whom said, “The loss of our librarians has impacted all of us greatly! I feel that it is a tragedy that our students now go to the library and receive no instruction whatsoever in how to use resources, write reports, find

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appropriate books for their reading abilities, and learn to love books. Our librarian provided valuable instruction to students that teachers have no time to teach in their classrooms. In addition, they supported classroom instruction throughout the year. Our librarian pulled collections of books for my classroom on a variety of topics as we explored and learned about them; she helped kids with their research and exploratory writing projects, and she instilled in them a love of learning. I feel that the loss of our librarians will have a serious and negative effect on the educational achievement of our students for years to come. It is such a shame to have these wonderful book-rich libraries in each of our Beaverton schools, yet students are being denied the very people who help them access all that there is for them.”

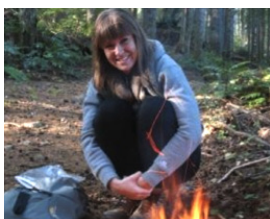
Our counseling office was off the library and the counselor often saw me teaching, and she used the resources I was able to offer her. “As a counselor I would go into the library often to find books that would supplement the counseling lessons that I teach. Within seconds the librarian would either point to the shelf where the book is located, while giving me a quick summary of the book she was recommending. This year I do not even attempt to ask for books because I know the media assistant does not have the knowledge of the subject matter and is not a trained librarian. Librarians have a special way of connecting books with students and their interests. For some students this is the only enjoyment that they have at school. I have also observed the librarians teaching skills, like research skills, Internet safety, and how to use online resources. Our students are no longer being taught these skills.”

Joni Mitchell sang, “Don’t it always seem to go that you don’t know what you got ‘til it’s gone. They paved paradise and put up a parking lot.” The teachers at my school are living it. They appreciated me in the past, but I think now they truly understand what I did, and what they and our students have lost.

*Adrienne Gillespie is currently a fourth grade ESL & Title I teacher at William Walker Elementary School in Beaverton, OR. She is serving her third year on the Oregon Readers’ Choice Committee. In her spare time, Adrienne knits, volunteers with Oregon Basset Hound Rescue and dreams of getting her library job back one day soon.*

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## **Digital Inspiration** by Jenny Gapp, Teacher-Librarian, Peninsula K8, Portland Public Schools



Digital literacy is not something students are born with. On the other hand, to quote one of my recent students, “It is all just common sense.” For some students, it is a no-brainer that walking across the street while texting is not a good idea. For more subtle digital conundrums, such as website authenticity and the creation of “original works,” the amount of critical thinking required multiplies.

As a certified teacher-librarian, I talk with my students about digital literacy every day. I start taking students into the lab environment at 3<sup>RD</sup> grade, and for the 6<sup>TH</sup>, 7<sup>TH</sup>, and 8<sup>TH</sup> grades, I teach a Media Arts class. As a school librarian, an information professional, I have been called upon to serve as my school’s Site Technology Coordinator and webmaster in addition to my teaching and library administration responsibilities. Every other Wednesday, I have been hosting a professional development hour for staff on technology issues and integration. I have been averaging about four staff members out of 30. This PD is completely voluntary, and with as many pressures as my classroom teachers face, I consider a voluntary attendance of four a success.

My students are a source of inspiration to me. Students, in turn, are highly motivated when technology is integrated into any curriculum. This year, my 3<sup>RD</sup>–5<sup>TH</sup> graders have been registered in Common Sense Media’s online digital literacy curriculum called “Digital Passport.” (<http://digitalpassport.org>) Students complete five different modules on the issues of communication, privacy, cyberbullying, search skills, and creative credit. If they pass a module with 60% or better, they receive a certificate of completion. The modules are completed independently in a lab environment. Modules include a video with peers talking about their experiences with these topics, an educational

*continued...*

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game, and a written reflection piece asking students to implement the skills they've learned in a creative way. In an assessment of their experience after completing two modules, my students responded to three prompts: 1. Write one new thing you have learned from Digital Passport; 2. Write one thing you already knew about. 3. Rate digital passport on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the most frustrating and 10 being the best experience.

Among student responses Nai'Shawn, a 5<sup>TH</sup> grader, wrote the following:

1. I thought that not having your name being your password [was important] because lots of people already know your name.
2. One thing I already know about is that don't leave [any] kind of account logged on because somebody can hack you.
3. I think that I had a good time on Digital Passport and it teaches me some things that I did not know so I give it a 10.

Older students in the Media Arts class Google themselves, create their own online safety rules, assess the authenticity of websites, and use digital programs like GIMP, SketchUp and Scratch to create original works. A few examples of these activities are included here.

Digital literacy is most successful when literacy skills are integrated into math, science, social studies, and language arts. While Media Arts is an isolated elective class, students pick up skills that help them become better researchers, presenters of information, and creators of original content across the content areas. I'm inspired by how my students are blossoming into socially responsible users of digital media in the twenty-first century.

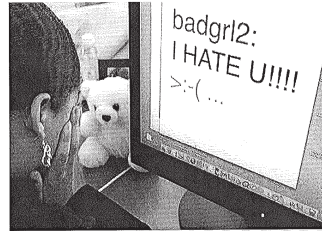
*This is Jenny's ninth year as a teacher-librarian. She has a teaching license in Library Media K-12, and a Masters in Library Science. Jenny also dabbles in working at Oregon City Public Library as an on-call librarian. Contact Jenny at jgapp@pps.net.*

Digital literacy programs listed in this article are all freely available downloads from the web.

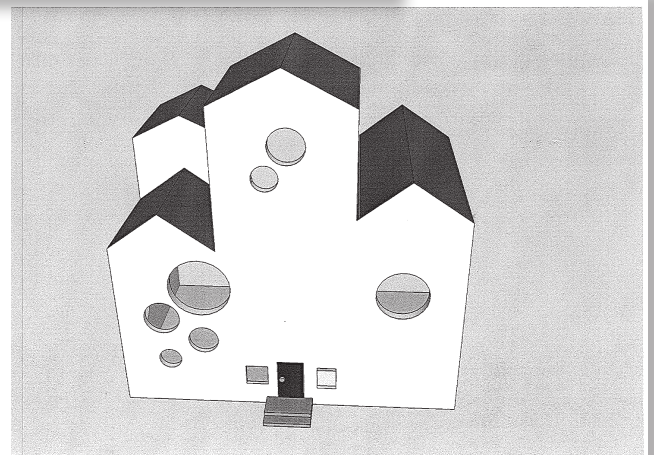
Jeremiah  
October 24 2011  
Media arts  
Mr. Timmons

Safe internet rules

1. no cyber bullying
2. no swear words
3. dont meet with strangers
4. don't give out personal info out
5. dont send pictures
6. you can make friends on a social network
7. you can play games
8. don't go on sites you shouldn't be on
9. do have fun
10. do be safe



SketchUp by, Larah



Name: Brian Website URL or name: Dog Island Free Forever

Is This a Hoax?

1. Scan the perimeter of the page and look for answers to these questions, using the 5 W's of Cyberspace	
Who created the page?	Who? Min??
• Is there an "about us" section?	• YES
• Do they list credentials?	• NO
• Is there contact information?	• NO
• Who is the intended audience?	• Dog owners
What information are you getting?	How are dogs act on the island are given info.
• Are there multiple points of view represented?	• NO
• Does the author use OPINION words, such as always, never, least, greatest, best, worst, all, none, should, or most?	• NO
• What is the tone? Is it serious? Does it contain elements of parody, satire, or irony?	• Humour possibly some sarcasm
• Can the information be verified through other sources?	•
When was this article posted?	4/11/2003
• Is it current?	• NO
• Has it been updated recently?	• NO
Where is this webpage located?	• YES
• Look at the URL. Is this a personal page or site?	• Com
• What is the domain (.com, .org, .net, .edu, .gov)?	• Com
Why would I use this site as a source of information?	Trustworthy
• Can I verify this information?	• NO
• Why was this site published? Was it to entertain, to inform, to explain, to persuade, to sell, or some combination of these things?	• I want to use to entertain all users but a book.
2. Look for quality, asking yourself the following questions:	
Does the overall design look professional?	Yes
Are there any spelling mistakes or other writing errors?	No
Are links credible or broken?	Credible
Are there any advertisements?	Yes

continued



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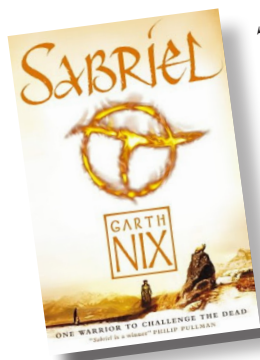


## Be Inspired by Students Who Want to Share Their Love of Books!

### Book Reviews by Madison High School Students

*White is for Magic and Blue is for Nightmares*, by Laurie Faria Stolarz

Both of these books are amazing. They grab you right away and from then on you won't want to put these books down. These are well written and easy to follow. But there are parts that made me as well as my friends cry, laugh, gasp, and scream. The endings of both are actually unexpected. I had no idea that was coming! I recommend these books to anyone who enjoys reading, being scared, involved, and on the edge. Because that is exactly how it is through these books. Have fun reading! — *Amber C.*



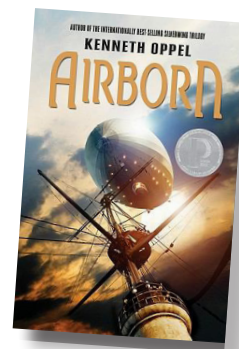
*Sabriel*, by Garth Nix

The story starts off with a girl living in a boarding school and soon after you see that she is not normal. From her pale complexion to the spells she can pull from the charter, she is no normal teenager. And when a messenger from the Old Kingdom gives Sabriel her father's sword and bells, she knows that something has gone wrong. She must become the Abhorsen to save the Abhorsen (her father). In Garth Nix's thrilling tale of Sabriel, she must step into her father's role and keep the dead from returning, as well as save her father from his own death. I would recommend this to everyone and more specifically to all who have an imagination out of this world, because it can be truly captured in *Sabriel*, by Garth Nix. — *Vanessa H.*

*Airborn*, by Kenneth Oppel

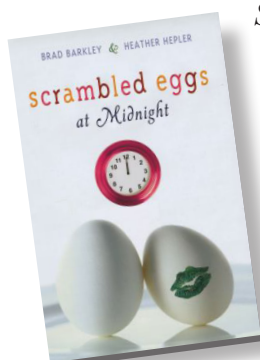
*Airborn* is a story of a young man named Matt Cruse, who works as a lookout for The Aurora, an airship that is lighter than air and is filled with passengers. What makes it float is an imaginary element gas called hydrim. This book is filled with action, mystery, pirates, love, danger, and a lot of imagination. An undocumented air balloon is found, the conductor is nowhere to be found, and a journal is found with drawings and documentation of animals that don't exist, or do they?

I like this book because of its imaginary content, and creativeness. One of my 8<sup>TH</sup> grade teachers recommended it to me, and now I am recommending it to you. — *Brittany F.*



*Scrambled Eggs at Midnight*, by Brad Barkley and Heather Hepler

*Scrambled Eggs at Midnight* is very well done. It was very hard for me to put down. As the book progressed, I just couldn't stop reading. This book put me in the life of the characters. I felt how they felt and understood why they were so sad. There was also a lot of humor in the story. This book would be an easy read for any teen who is into romance and family relationships. — *Michelle F.*



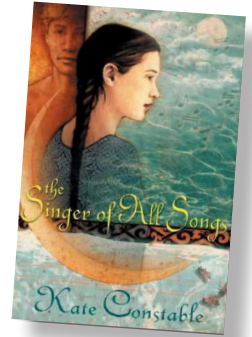
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*Chanters of Tremaris Trilogy*, by Kate Constable

Book 1: *The Singer of All Songs*; Book 2: *The Waterless Sea*; Book 3: *The Tenth Power*

This is a really cool series. If you like fantasy and magic then these are definitely the books for you. The series is about a girl who lives in a world surrounded by magic. The people who use the magic are called chanters. Calwyn lives with other girls who sing the songs of ice. Her life is quiet but Calwyn wants to see beyond the Ice Wall. Her life turns upside down when a stranger breaches the great Wall and brings with him trouble. Soon Calwyn is on an adventure of her life looking for chanters all around the world to defeat the evil that pursues them. But the world is not what she expected. It is cruel and chanters are hunted and feared. Around Tremaris, Calwyn and her new friend Darrow go looking for answers to questions that follow them everywhere they go. The books take you across the enchanted world of Tremaris with Calwyn as she meets new friends and tries to uncover the secrets of the Singer of All Songs and the Tenth Power. —Sharena K.

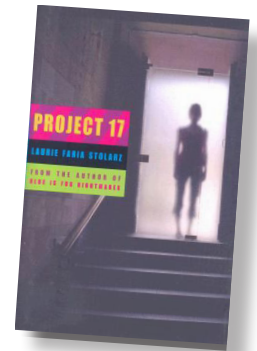


*Paranoid Park*, by Blake Nelson

This book is very unique. You can tell that local author Blake Nelson used his imagination because he makes you believe it's from the view of a murderous, terrified teenager. It takes you on a wild ride, unstoppable until the end, because, just like a good movie, it keeps you on the edge of your seat and leaves you guessing. —Saba S.

*Project 17*, by Laurie Faria Stolarz

*Project 17* has you on the edge of your seat throughout the entire book. When six teens venture into an abandoned insane asylum only hours before its demolition to make a documentary for a reality TV contest, they do not expect to find much. You get to see through the eyes of Derik, Liza, Greta, Chet, Mimi, and Tony, and their expectations behind agreeing to this terrifying expedition. I would recommend everyone to read this book. It has action, humor, horror, and romance. It's a "can't put down" book. But I will warn you, if you're reading this at night, you might want to keep a few lights on! Other books Stolarz has written are *Bleed* and *the Blue is for Nightmare* series [also reviewed in this article]. All are worth the read.—Kaylyn P.



*The Wereling Series*, by Stephen Cole

If you like action, romance, or comedy, then Stephen Cole's *The Wereling* series is a great read for you. It has a great balance of action, humor, and occasional romance without throwing the reader out of the storyline. The three-book series is an amazing read that you can't put down. It's like watching a movie. The main character, Tom, is 16 and stuck going on this camping trip with his parents. He soon wanders off for some alone time and ends up swimming in a river. Before he can even react, the rapids start to pull him away, smashing him into all sorts of things, eventually knocking him out. When Tom comes to, he's in Marcie Foland's (a retired nurse) private resort with her family who was kind enough to save his life. Little does he know that this whole family is a pack of werewolves and that he was slowly being turned into one, to later be forced marry the daughter of the pack, Kate! In this rendition of a werewolf story, females born wolf will not activate until they have mated with a male wolf. Kate's using that to ensure she never becomes what her mother is, much to Marcie's chagrin. These three books are a thrilling read and I would recommend them to anyone.—Aristide F.

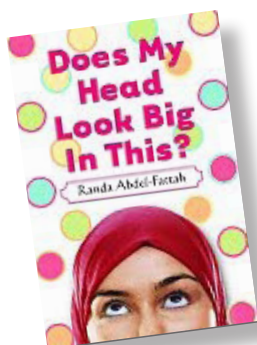
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*The Chronicles of Vladimir Tod 1–5*, by Heather Brewer

A boy that is half human and half vampire tries to blend in with the humans and avoid being killed by an evil vampire that wants his power. I liked this book because it was funny and thrilling. I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in action and vampires.

—Ameritia C.F

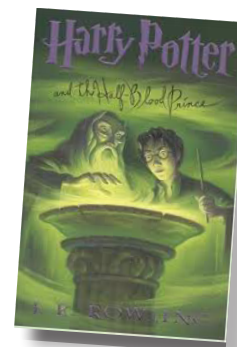


*Does my Head Look Big in This?*, by Randa Abdel-Fattah

The setting of this book is Australia. The main themes are conflict with own self and religious decisions. The plot of the book is the main character deciding to wear her head scarf full time, while in high school. I really liked this book because I could identify with the main character, but I feel this book would be good for almost anyone. —Keiyo Y.

*Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, by J.K. Rowling

In this book Harry finds out he is the chosen one. The main theme of this book is to believe in yourself. I liked this book because it fills in so many pieces of the puzzle that have been coming together in the Harry Potter series!! I think anyone who likes *Twilight*, but has not read *Harry Potter* yet, should read this book! —Jhanna M.



*The Kite Runner*, by Khaled Hosseini

The setting changes throughout the book; it starts in Afghanistan but it ends in America. The main themes of the book are forgiveness, love and redemption. I liked this book quite a lot because I learned more about Afghanistan. It was beautifully written; I loved every page because of the author's writing style. This book reveals a lot about the expectation of their society based on status and fear. Everyone should read this book because it gives the reader a lesson on how the smallest pleasures in life can sometimes be the ones that bring us closest together. I also learned that we should not take people for granted in life as one never knows who holds us in higher esteem than anyone else. —Monique G.

*The Last Song*, by Nicholas Sparks

This book tells the story of a rebellious teen, Ronnie, whose parents are divorced. When her mom sends Ronnie and her brother, Noah, to her estranged father's house for the summer, she is less than thrilled. Ronnie ends up having a summer to remember filled with her first love and a greater understanding of her father. I originally read this book because I saw the movie, and let me tell you the book is 10 thousand times better! I loved it! This book is great for people who like young romance stories and for people that can take a little drama because some parts are sad. —Michele M.

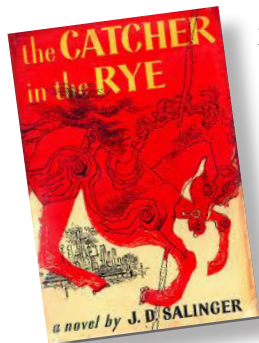
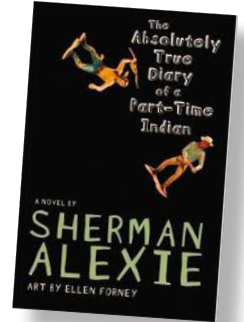


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*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, by Sherman Alexie

The story of this book is about a teenage Indian named Arnold Spirit, or “Junior.” Because of a series of events that are caused by Arnold acting up in class, he is relocated to a new high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. The main theme of the book is to hold on to hope. I liked the book because it was funny and dramatic, and I related to the main character. This book has some swear words and mature humor; there are also some adult themes. It is also very sad at various points, so if you don’t like this kind of book, I would recommend you read something else. —*Jacob T.*

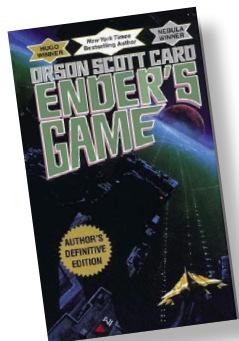
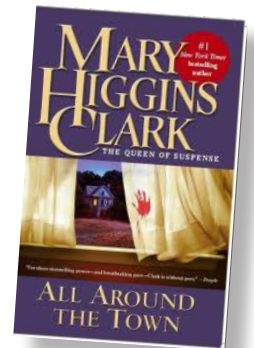


*The Catcher in the Rye*, by J.D. Salinger

When I was in 8<sup>TH</sup> grade I read a piece of literature that blew my mind. I read *The Catcher in the Rye*. The book takes place in New York in the 1950s and depicts the story of Holden Caulfield as he goes through an adventure of self realization and maturation. I found the book very relatable and believable; I felt very close with the character. I think everyone should read this book! —*Max L.*

*All Around the Town*, by Mary Higgins Clark

This book takes place in Ridgewood, New Jersey. It is about a girl who was abducted when she was six and now suffers from multiple personality disorder. Her abductors are near her and are watching her every move, playing sick mind games with her to make her believe she is suicidal. Later, her English professor is killed and she is accused of the murder. She is found with the murder weapon but cannot remember a single detail about the night. I loved this book because the characters were so realistic. I felt as if I knew them and the places and events are described so well at times I felt as if I was there with the characters. Also, the author makes the characters seem so realistic: she even points out their flaws, accenting yet again the realism of the book. I loved the ending because it was so surprising; I didn’t see it coming. People who love suspense and adventure would love this book. Also anyone who loves a quick read. —*Gaby E.*

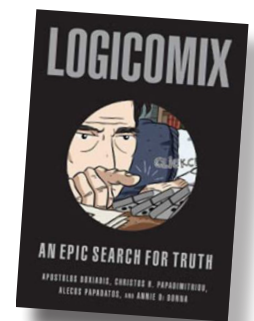


*Ender's Game*, by Orson Scott Card

Ender Wiggin lives in a world where generals are trained from birth. In fact, Ender himself is one such individual. A genius among geniuses, he quickly rises up his combat school’s hierarchy. But will that be enough to prepare him for the impending Bugger invasion? Recommended for Sci-fi fans. —*A.J.*

*Logicomix*

*Logicomix* tells the “epic tale” (as the cover describes it) of Bertrand Russell and his search for the foundations of mathematics. Although presented as a biography of Russell, it stretches out and is, at the same time, a quest for a cold calculating mathematical purity and a very emotional, human tale of life. Recommended for math people. —*A.J.*





## OASL 2012 District Librarian of the Year Speech

by Jenny Takeda

Thank you for this tremendous honor. I am so touched that my Beaverton colleagues whom I admire and respect so greatly nominated me for this recognition. When I think about the themes of this conference: Making Connections, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Collaboration and Communication, I see these attributes in the library colleagues I've worked with on a daily basis. I'd like to thank the OASL community for offering me opportunities to grow and contribute. Finally, I'd like to thank my family for supporting my development as a voracious reader in my early years (yes, I would even read a book while practicing piano!) and for understanding my need to be part of a professional community today.

As I've been reflecting upon this award and the opportunity to share my thoughts with others, I realized I wanted to convey a message about the importance of school libraries and encourage our community members to advocate for stable and sufficient funding for public education in Oregon. I hope my audience can reach beyond these walls. I plan to submit the following words to local newspapers for a letter to the editor or guest editorial piece. This week I created a draft website with additional resources about school libraries to include in the letter. The QR code in this article will take you to the site which is <http://learnforlife.info>. Please email me at [jenny@learnforlife.info](mailto:jenny@learnforlife.info) or tweet me if you have suggestions for the site. Leave it to a librarian to feel compelled to provide as much information as possible!



Email: [jenny@learnforlife.info](mailto:jenny@learnforlife.info)  
Twitter: @jennytakeda

<http://learnforlife.info>

Here's the letter:

### Oregon's School Libraries

October is Information Literacy Month in Oregon. What is information literacy? It is the ability to find, evaluate, use and produce information effectively and ethically. Why is it important for students to learn these skills? As of June 6<sup>TH</sup> 2012, CNN Money reported that: "The Internet now has 340 trillion trillion trillion addresses." Does anyone know how many zeroes that is? (37 according to a Wolfram Alpha search). With the ever-increasing tsunami of available information, students now more than ever need to learn how to identify the best information resources, sort through that information, evaluate it for bias and reliability and synthesize it into their own work.

The following excerpts from the Information Literacy Month proclamation signed by Governor Kitzhaber explain the importance of these skills in education and in the workforce:

"Individuals who are comfortable working with the information resources available in the digital world are able to seek highly skilled jobs and compete at high levels in the global economy; and

"Information literacy is a crucial part of education, and if taught as early as kindergarten, will expose students to analytic and research practices that will better prepare them for changing technologies...."

Licensed school librarians are trained to equip students with information literacy skills so they can be independent researchers, critical thinkers and effective communicators using a full range of media and technology tools. Unfortunately, due to ongoing school funding constraints, many Oregon schools have lost their licensed school librarian positions over time. According to the 2011 "QEM and Libraries" report published by the State Library, the number of licensed school librarians in Oregon had fallen in 2009 by 61% since 1980 (from 818 to 319 librarians). That percentage is even higher today with cuts to licensed school librarian positions in Salem-Keizer and Beaverton since that time. This report also outlines the minimum criteria for quality school libraries as defined by the 2008 Quality Education Commission. These criteria include licensed school librarian staffing, school library support staff and school library materials expenditures. Only five of the 1,303 Oregon school libraries in the 2009–2010 school year met these guidelines. When school librarian positions are cut, the teaching of these critical information literacy skills often falls by the wayside because classroom teachers have so many other demands on their instructional time.

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Last spring a fifth-grade student in Portland spoke during a school board meeting regarding proposed budget cuts and asked “What did we do wrong to deserve this?” Susan Nielsen, Editorial Writer for The Oregonian, followed with a column in which she stated:

“My kids don’t deserve this. They deserve a full school year, a full week of Outdoor School and a full platoon of librarians, music teachers and counselors. They deserve the sun and moon and stars, or at least a school with a working drinking fountain.”

...So this week, I’m searching for a more hopeful question for the grown-ups to ask. Instead of, “What did we do wrong to deserve this?” How about, “What can we do differently, today, to improve this?”

Educators working in Oregon schools have experienced budget cuts year after year. It’s not about tightening our belts anymore because any “extras” have long since disappeared and there aren’t any notches remaining to tighten. Rather than fall into easy rhetoric about schools not spending money wisely, please commit to spending some time volunteering in schools to experience first-hand how hard teachers and other educators are working to do the very best for students despite making do with less each year.

Our students deserve a quality public education. They deserve sufficient and stable funding for public education. They deserve moderate class sizes. They deserve high-quality school libraries as a piece of the complete educational environment preparing them to become our future doctors, scientists, teachers, engineers, and community leaders. I urge parents, grandparents, and community members throughout Oregon to advocate on behalf of students for the full educational experience they all deserve. For more information about how well-funded and staffed school library programs contribute to student achievement and specific examples of high-quality school library programs, please visit <<http://learnforlife.info>>. This website also includes links to Oregon school library standards for students and citations for sources appearing in this letter.

Thank you again for this honor.

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## **Libraries are the Centerpieces of Healthy Schools**

*by Rebekah Averette OASL Paraprofessional of the Year 2012*

I can think of no better place to reflect on the importance of school libraries than Powell’s City of Books on a rainy, Saturday afternoon. Entering a book store or library, I invariably experience a feeling of peace and possibility.

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Surrounded with the beloved, slightly dusty smell of books, I am filled with anticipation for new characters and stories I am about to discover. For many students, entering their school library is a very similar experience.

One of the greatest privileges of my job is witnessing students working and reading in our library on a daily basis. Whether they are curled up on couches reading, gathered around a table with peers, or working on computers, I love to imagine where books, conversations, or screens have transported them. What new scientific tidbit have they just learned? What book character's mind do they inhabit? Are they sailing the high seas on a pirate ship? Are they finally working up the nerve to ask out their secret crush? Have they just found out the identity of the ghost stalking the halls? Are they fighting alongside Katniss? Filled with anguish over the death of Severus Snape? Regardless of where they are, what they are experiencing is magic.

For some students, getting lost in a book allows them a safe place to take a break from the angst of middle school for a while. Others students will find characters and situations they can identify with, situations which will help them make sense of their own daily experiences. For some, the thrill of discovering a new world allows them an outlet for their imagination. I know, as I watch them, that some of these students could be the next James Dashner, Laurie Halse Anderson, or Rick Riordan.

As library professionals, we encounter all manner of readers, from reluctant to passionate. Seeing a reluctant reader's face light up when she finally discovers a book, series, or genre she can be passionate about is one of the most gratifying experiences of my day. Witnessing a student gasp when he finally gets his hands on a long-awaited sequel fills me with joy. These are the moments that remind me just how vital libraries are within our schools. Libraries are essential places of discovery and learning, and library staff the guides.

I recognize that to survive down the road, school libraries must continue evolving. That lovely, musty book smell will become less common as e-readers become more common. As technology advances, the way students gain information literacy will advance with it. However, what will not change is the importance of the library professionals who help students unlock and open their minds to the world of knowledge they have at their fingertips.

It is heartbreaking to see more and more school libraries disappear each year. But it is also heartening that some districts, such as my own (West Linn-Wilsonville), continue to value and support their school libraries and recognize them for the essential part of the schools they are. I sincerely hope that in the next few years, the troubling trend of many districts viewing libraries as expendable begins to reverse and that they are again seen as the centerpieces of healthy schools that they are.

*Rebekah Avarette is the paraprofessional at Athey Creek Middle School in West Linn.*

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## **OASL Secondary Librarian of the Year Award Speech** by *Jessica Lorentz Smith*



This award is bittersweet for me because I am receiving it in Seaside where things started for me. It was my first OASL conference, then fondly referred to as OEMA, in 2004. I had started the school year at Bend Senior High where I had graduated high school just five years before. After I applied for the job, I was interviewed by my former AP US History teacher, who made it the most comfortable interview I had ever been in. After I was hired, the office manager handed me the keys to the library and said, "See you in September". When I showed up for work I asked if there was anyone who could give me an idea of what to do, and they all stared at me with blank faces. Fortunately, no one had ever gotten rid of anything in the library either. So I went back through files and found useful information from 1995, the last year my school had had a certified librarian.

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She kept immaculate files with passwords and explanations of processes. So, it took me the first two weeks of going through three file cabinets before I discovered how to even check out books.

Then my district had their first library staff meeting after about six weeks of school. Our part-time district librarian, Joy, personally came to BSH to invite me to it and make sure that I knew to go. It was like a gathering of hens, all these women talking books and chirping about staff members disrespecting library policies and assigned times. But there was also an underlying passion for books and libraries that started to shine through after the initial gripe fest. It was here that Joy brought up the upcoming fall conference in Seaside and encouraged everyone to go. I was still floundering to figure out what was expected of a media manager, so I jumped at the opportunity to learn from other professionals in charge of a high school library. On Friday of that first conference, I opted to attend the three-hour B&B book feast of young adult books talks. Boy, was I pleasantly surprised! Then when I walked the exhibit floor I found Karen Wedeking at GFU. I had no idea that I could take a class on collection development and actually learn the process of being a true librarian. My work ethic has always been to be the best at what I take on and now that I knew I could take classes to be the best, I signed up.

I truly believe that things happen for a reason and I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time. Two years after being hired as a classified employee, my district was going to re-implement certified librarians into each of the high schools. My principal knew I was working on my credential and that was all the proof he needed. I got hired as a teacher my third year and the rest has been sweet history.

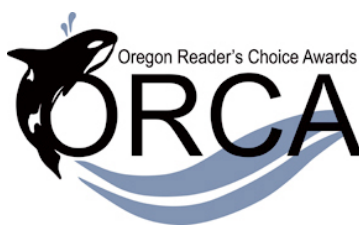
Now I am able to be the teacher librarian that I am because of the people who attend the OASL conferences and make presentations. I am really good at stealing those ideas and recreating them in my own library. It is the network of other passionate people that has largely contributed to me becoming the librarian I am today. These people are the reason that I became a part of the conference committee in 2005 and tackled conference chair in 2010. I believe in paying it forward and that is a huge part of my daily motivation.

Now I also have daily interactions with two men who don't ever really say "no" to me. The first is my husband, whom I will get back to in a minute. The second is my principal. While he regularly heckles me and makes me convince him about every positive response I receive, my requests to him are so justifiable and beneficial to my students that he can't really say no. Whether it is creating QR codes to enter contests to win free books, to which HD responds, "who would ever want free books?" or proving that I need to be the one of two staff people chosen to attend a district training to teach other teachers, so HD will say, "why do you think people will listen to the librarian?" he ultimately agrees and allows me to proceed how I want. I know I am very fortunate to have that kind of support from a principal who not only lets me argue for what I want, but also challenge him with new ideas. Thank you H.

Back to my husband, sitting at my table here in the room. This is a man who in 17 years together (we have been dating since freshman year in high school at BSHS) has never once said no to me. Instead he makes suggestions of alternatives or asks me if I have ever thought about something from a different perspective. Not exactly saying no, just asking me to think differently. He has always been a huge advocate for me and what I want to do. He even works really hard every summer driving a hay bailer in Christmas Valley to make enough money to invest in a reading chair for me. We have two little girls and it isn't practical for me to escape into the next room to read. Instead we now have a comfy reading chair in the living room facing away from the TV so that I can still be a part of the family, but also get my work done. As a part of ALA for the last four years, we have also had to make some family sacrifices. Instead of family vacations, we go to ALA annual conference and figure out what each new city has around its convention center so that I can work and Nick can entertain the girls. I don't know many men who are that willing to do that, and I so appreciate his continued support of my passion for young adult literature, and me constantly taking on one more thing. He really is my biggest cheerleader.

So thank you for this recognition, but I am really humbled by this award as I feel like it belongs to everyone in OASL who has shared both successes and failures with our colleagues, but also allowed me to steal ideas.

*Jessica Lorentz-Smith is the teacher-librarian at Bend Senior High School in the Bend-LaPine School District. You can reach her at [jessica.lorentzsmith@bend.k12.or.us](mailto:jessica.lorentzsmith@bend.k12.or.us)*



### **Oregon Reader's Choice Award** *by Stuart Levy*

The ORCA process is well underway. If you haven't jumped on the bandwagon yet, it is not too late to encourage your students to participate. Students simply need to read 2 books in order to vote. There are 3 divisions: Junior (upper elementary), Intermediate (middle school), and Senior (high school). There are 8 books in each category, and they are all appropriate content for those levels. They are a great resource of popular student books from a variety of genres. Students who have read at least two books in any category can vote in March for their favorites. To get a list of the titles plus other resources, you can visit the ORCA homepage at [www.olaweb.org/orca](http://www.olaweb.org/orca) or the ORCA blog at [oregonreaderschoiceaward.wordpress.com](http://oregonreaderschoiceaward.wordpress.com).

#### **2012–13 ORCA Junior Division Books**

*Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword* by Barry Deutsch

*The Incurable Children of Ashton Place: the Mysterious Howling* by Maryrose Wood

*Jimi Sounds Like a Rainbow* by Gary Golio

*Meanwhile: Pick Any Path, 3,856 Story Possibilities* by Jason Shiga

*Moon Over Manifest* by Clare Vanderpool

*One Crazy Summer* by Rita Williams-Garcia

*The Strange Case of Origami Yoda* by Tom Angleberger

*Turtle in Paradise* by Jennifer Holm

#### **2012–13 ORCA Intermediate Division Books**

*Countdown* by Deborah Wiles

*Fever Crumb* by Philip Reeve

*Foiled* by Jane Yolen

*The Grimm Legacy* by Polly Shulman

*Heart of a Samurai* by Margi Preus

*The Red Umbrella* by Christina Diaz Gonzalez

*Smile* by Raina Telgemeier

*A Tale Dark and Grimm* by Adam Gidwitz

#### **2012–13 ORCA Senior Division Books**

*Clockwork Angel* by Cassandra Clare

*Finnikin of the Rock* by Melina Marchetta

*For the Win* by Cory Doctorow

*Hold Me Closer, Necromancer* by Lish McBride

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot

*Please Ignore Vera Dietz* by A. S. King

*Ship Breaker* by Paolo Bacigalupi

*Will Grayson, Will Grayson* by John Green & David Levithan

Starting in January, the ORCA committee will be accepting nominations for the 2014 ORCA titles. Stay tuned for an email to include the weblink for people to nominate books that were first published in 2011. (That is the one requirement for the 2014 ORCA titles.) Thanks for supporting reading!

# Oregon Battle of the Books 2012-2013 Titles

For Further Information: <http://oboblsta.pbworks.com>

## 2013 OBOB 3-5 DIVISION

Castle Corona by Sharon Creech

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory  
by Roald Dahl

How to Steal a Dog  
by Barbara O'Connor

Journey to the River Sea  
by Eva Ibbotson

The Lemonade War  
by Jacqueline Davies

The Maze of Bones  
by Rick Riordan

The Mysterious Howling  
by Maryrose Wood

The Night Fairy by Laura Amy Schlitz

One Crazy Summer  
by Rita Williams-Garcia

Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper

Ray and Me by Dan Gutman

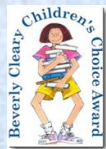
Rowan of Rin by Emily Rodda

Star in the Forest by Laura Resau

The Strange Case of Origami Yoda  
by Tom Angleberger

Turtle in Paradise by Jennifer L. Holm

Zapato Power: Freddie Ramos Takes Off  
by Jacqueline Jules



## 2012 OBOB 6-8 DIVISION

Al Capone Does My Shirts  
by Gennifer Choldenko

Also Known as Harper  
by Ann Haywood Leal

Artemis Fowl  
by Eoin Colfer

Charlie Joe Jackson's Guide to Not Reading by Tommy Greenwald

Claudette Colvin, Twice Toward Justice by Phillip Hoose

Fever Crumb by Philip Reeve

The Girl Who Could Fly  
by Victoria Forester

Incarceron by Catherine Fisher

The Lab by Jack Heath

The Red Umbrella  
by Christina Gonzalez

Seedfolks by Paul Fleischman

A Tale Dark and Grimm  
by Adam Gidwitz

Tangerine by Edward Bloor

Three Days by Donna Jo Napoli

Under the Blood Red Sun  
by Graham Salisbury

## 2013 OBOB 9-12 DIVISION

Between Shades of Gray  
by Ruta Sepetys

The Complete Persepolis  
by Marjane Satrapi

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien

Hold Me Closer, Necromancer by Lish  
McBride

I am the Messenger  
by Markus Zusak

Marcelo in the Real World  
by Francisco X. Stork

Night Hoops by Carl Deuker

Secret Life of Bees  
by Sue Monk Kidd

Ship Breaker  
by Paolo Bacigalupi

The Six Rules of Maybe  
by Deb Caletti

Trickster's Choice  
by Tamora Pierce

Unwind by Neal Shusterman



The Oregon Battle of the Books (OBOB) is a statewide program for reading motivation and comprehension sponsored by the Oregon Association of School Libraries in conjunction with a Library Services and Technology Act grant. The goals are to encourage reading for enjoyment, broaden reading interests, increase reading comprehension, and promote cooperative learning.



*This is a special Intellectual Freedom report for this issue.*

## **Celebrating the Freedom to Read in Oregon 2012 Report** by *Candy Morgan* **Information on Celebrating the Freedom to Read**

**What is it:** a statewide project celebrating the freedom to read

**When:** the last week in September during Banned Books Week (BBW) or when it best fits into the library, school, or bookstore schedule.

**Purpose:**

- To create a state-wide recognition of BBW and the importance of the freedom to read for all ages and
- To encourage libraries and bookstores that had not done so before to participate and to provide support for those who regularly participate.

**History:** This project began in 2006 as a celebration of both the 50<sup>TH</sup> anniversary of the ACLU of Oregon and the 25<sup>TH</sup> anniversary of Banned Books Week.

**Participants** (the numbers represent locations including branches)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Academic	13	19	22	24	23	23	27
Public	56	93	99	107	99	99	115
School	4	83	109	122	109	86	108
State Library		1	1	1	1	1	1
Bookstores		1	10	10	10	12	13
	73	197	241	263	242	221	264

### **Support Provided to Participants**

An ACLU Board member kicked off the project in 2006 by donating 3,000 small bright yellow “I Read Banned Books” pins to distribute to participating institutions who were encouraged to use them in any way they thought effective. In various libraries and bookstores, they have been used in displays, worn by staff, distributed to teachers, used as prizes in contests, given to patrons who checked out books in displays, and given to patrons or bookstore customers who visited the library that week. The ACLU also distributes them at events they sponsor. Most importantly, the pins communicate a state-wide message about the importance of the freedom to read.

In 2012 we distributed nearly 15,000 newly designed red & blue pins. Participating libraries and bookstores and their patrons love the buttons, and that aspect of the project has received the highest praise in the reports submitted to us. A number of participating locations related that the buttons were responsible for multiple conversations about the freedom to read, challenges to books, and intellectual freedom in general. School libraries are frequently used as meeting rooms for parent groups, and we have learned that these community members notice and discuss BBW exhibits.



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### **Information on Books Challenged or Banned in Oregon**

The Oregon Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee has worked with the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse at the State Library to compile a list of books and other library and school materials that have been challenged in Oregon beginning in 1976. This list is posted on the ACLU of Oregon website at <http://www.aclu-or.org/bannedbooks>. The annual report of the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse on books challenged in Oregon as well as information on responding to challenges is posted on the Clearinghouse website: <http://www.oregon.gov/OSL/LD/Pages/intellectual.aspx>. In addition, Concordia and Pacific University Libraries, with the assistance of student interns from Emporia State University School of Library and Information Management, have digitized and indexed clippings from Oregon newspapers collected by the State Library concerning challenged books and school materials beginning in 1946. The index will soon be available on the Pacific University website.

### **Ideas for Celebrating the Freedom to Read**

Each year participating academic, school, and public libraries and bookstores have provided information and photos describing what they did to celebrate the freedom to read including displays, public programs, publicity, and instructional activities they have developed. The Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse has posted this information on its website

[http://www.oregon.gov/OSL/LD/Pages/intellectual.aspx#Banned\\_Books\\_Week\\_Planning\\_Resources](http://www.oregon.gov/OSL/LD/Pages/intellectual.aspx#Banned_Books_Week_Planning_Resources).

Thank you school librarians and library assistants for all the work you do to alert the next generation about threats to and the importance of the freedom to read. If you would like to participate in the Celebration to Read in Oregon next year, send an email with your school name and address to:

Candace Morgan [cd\\_df\\_morgan@msn.com](mailto:cd_df_morgan@msn.com)

*Candy Morgan is the coordinator of Celebrate the Freedom to Read in Oregon, an ACLU Board Member, a member of the Oregon Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee and an OASL member. She is also an adjunct faculty member at Emporia State University. You can reach her at [cd\\_df\\_morgan@msn.com](mailto:cd_df_morgan@msn.com)*



## **Call for Submissions**

If your district is like most of the districts in the state, the drum beat of “Common Core” has been going on for some time. What have you learned while implementing the Common Core into your library curriculum, or on a district-wide level? What’s worked? What hasn’t? Have you found a particularly helpful resource or resources? The rest of us would like to know!

The spring *Interchange* will be publishing your Common Core stories. Please begin thinking about your challenges and successes, and plan to share them with us. Submit your story ideas to the spring guest editor, Mike Weidlich, [weidlicm@coho.net](mailto:weidlicm@coho.net).



## **Common Core: Text Complexity, Lexiles, & Periodicals Databases**

Oregon adopted the Common Core State Standards for mathematics and English language arts & literacy in the content areas in 2010. By the end of the current school year, all instruction must align to the Common Core, and by 2014-15, the more rigorous Common Core Standards will be reflected in state assessments. For the ELA standards, there are six major shifts ([bit.ly/T3Hkgy](http://bit.ly/T3Hkgy)) in instruction or curricula, including an emphasis on informational text, which is a subset of nonfiction, and a focus on reading increasingly complex text.

### **What is Text Complexity?**

Common Core uses a three-part model to define text complexity. The qualitative dimension relates to text aspects such as purpose and levels of meaning – that which the reader can determine through analysis. The second element is quantitative, which relates to word and sentence length, for example, and can be measured by software. The last area of the model is identified as that which relates specifically to the reader (including the student's motivation), and the task (such as the kind of questions the teacher asks). Read more about the model starting on page five of Appendix A (<http://bit.ly/ZMo3kY>) of the Oregon Department of Education's (ODE) document about the ELA standards.

### **What are Lexile Measures?**

With a greater importance given to students reading and interpreting increasingly complex text, there is a greater need to identify the reading or difficulty level of text. A popular way to determine that quantitative measure is through Lexile ratings. For those not familiar with Lexiles, think of the Fry readability formula except that with Lexiles, reading measures can be assigned to the reader and not just the text. A common way in Oregon for readers to ascertain their Lexile measure is via the state reading assessment.

Once students have a Lexile measure, denoted with a number followed by a capital L, they are encouraged to read within a range (<http://bit.ly/fotDX5>) of that, often 100L below to 50L above the actual measure. Or, teachers can challenge students to read text even a bit further out of their comfort zone, all the while providing support by building background knowledge, encouraging students to reread, and more.

Publishers can pay to have MetaMetrics, the company behind Lexiles, analyze their texts and assign a Lexile measure. On [Lexile.com](http://Lexile.com), anyone can search for the Lexile level of books that have assigned Lexiles. For example, *Bark George*, a picture book by Jules Feiffer, has a 130L while Russell Freedman's *Lincoln: A Photobiography* comes in at 1110L.

### **Lexiles and Periodicals Databases**

However, it is not just books that have Lexile ratings. Periodicals databases are a goldmine of informational text, and much of that text has assigned Lexile measures. Everyone in Oregon has access to the Gale databases, and some libraries subscribe to additional periodicals databases. This is something to share with teachers and administrators, some of whom are struggling to find enough resources to meet the demands of Common Core.

Since Gale is available statewide, thanks to the Library Services and Technology Act ([www.imls.gov/programs/](http://www.imls.gov/programs/)) grant, or federal dollars for libraries which flow through state library agencies, I will explain how to find Lexile ratings in a couple of Gale database interfaces. Think of these as transferrable skills, a concept to teach students. This feature likely exists in another vendor's databases, as well, but you will have to take a moment to figure out where. Not finding Lexile measures? Ask your vendor rep if Lexile displays have been turned off or if they only function in particular databases.

*continued...*



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With Gale, Lexile ratings only exist for periodicals content—newspapers, magazines, and journals—but Gale is working on adding Lexiles for reference works and other informational text. Note that Lexiles appear in different places depending on the database interface. For example, three popular K12-relevant databases use the In Context interface: Student Resources in Context, Opposing Viewpoints, and U.S. History. With In Context, Lexile measures appear at the publication type results level—the bucket of magazine results, for example—and the article level but not at the topic page level. Hover over the colored shape (<http://tinygaleurl.com?9nkp4hq>) to see the Lexile measure. There will always be a shape, which indicates a general reading level, but there may not always be a numeric Lexile rating, which indicates a specific reading level. Or, use the advanced search feature to limit search results by Lexile range.

## 12. All about Amelia.

[Aviation History](#). 20.3 (Jan. 2010) p21. Word Count: 480. Reading Level (Lexile): 1520.

For the InfoTrac interface, which many of the Gale databases use, including InfoTrac Student and Informe, the Lexile rating is clearly labeled at the search results level (<http://tinygaleurl.com?oodky1r>) but does not display at the article level. Another option is to use advanced search to limit by Lexile score or range. This can be done in combination with search terms or without entering any terms at all.

### Amelia Earhart, found and lost

 The New York Times, June 10, 2012 

In conclusion, here are a few cautions about Lexiles. Readability formulas are not perfect, so teacher and student judgment is still required. Plus, we know lifelong readers are created when students have a choice in what they read. Do your library checkout limits allow for students to have more than assignment-based books? Do teachers honor the power of interest and self-motivation that allows some students to comprehend texts which are above their Lexile range? Lexiles are one tool to help educators wrangle with text complexity, and much of the informational text in periodicals databases already has Lexile ratings. Ready. Set. Search.

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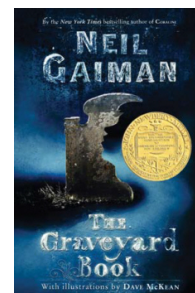
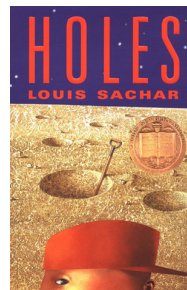
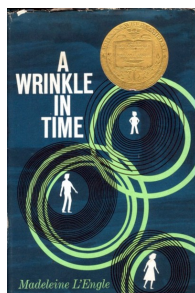
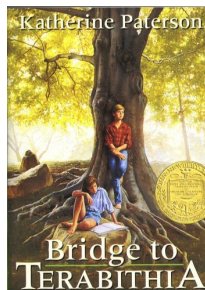
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# THE 90-SECOND NEWBERY FILM FESTIVAL



The Newbery Medal is the biggest award in children's literature. In its honor, James Kennedy (author of *The Order of Odd-Fish*) and Betsy Bird of the New York Public Library announce a contest, open to anyone: **make videos that compress the stories of Newbery award-winning books into 90 seconds or less.**

See your videos on the big screen at the **90-Second Newbery Film Festival** at the Multnomah Public Library in Portland, Oregon February 24, 2013!

Want to make your own 90-Second Newbery video for the 2nd annual film festival? Details, and the inaugural entry (a very silly 90-second *A Wrinkle in Time*) here: <http://www.90secondnewbery.com>

## Making a video? Here are the rules.

1. It should be 90 seconds or less.
2. It has to be about a Newbery medal or honor winning book.
3. *We don't want book trailers. We want full-on dramatizations that tell the entire story of a book in an ridiculously short amount of time.*
4. Upload video to YouTube or Vimeo. Send the link, with subject line "90 SECOND NEWBERY", to [kennedyjames@gmail.com](mailto:kennedyjames@gmail.com).
5. Deadline for Oregon entries is February 1, 2013! See below for exciting news about seeing your entry in a public screening!

**Top Oregon entries will be seen on the big screen at the 90-Second Newbery Film Festival at the Multnomah County Library in Portland, Oregon 2/24/13**

The 90-Second Newbery Film Festival was founded by James Kennedy (author of the *The Order of Odd-Fish*; visit him at <http://www.jameskennedy.com>) and Betsy Bird of the New York Public Library. Complete details of this contest, and links to exemplary entries, at <http://www.90secondnewbery.com>. Follow us on Twitter at @90secondnewbery.

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