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Oyan Review

oregon young adult network

OASL Conference by, Kristy Kemper Hodge; Corvallis-Benton County Public Library

October 2017 was my first foray into OASL. It. Was. Incredible. There were amazing and inspiring authors, as well as passionate and inspiring librarians, sharing their expertise, secrets, and awesomeness.

Jason Reynolds Author Talk

On Saturday night, Jason Reynolds took the stage and regaled us with the story of how he went from an obstinate non-reader to the powerhouse he is to-

day. The story begins with a much younger Jason who grew up in a neighborhood that was dangerous and full of perils like gangs, shootings, drugs, and death. A neighborhood where young men walked on one side of the law or the other — dealing and gang-banging or keeping their heads down, going to school, and staying out of trouble. Jason was able to keep out of trouble, and focus on school, but he was no reader. Why read? Why bother when

there were no books about people who looked like him, talked like him, walked like him, or lived like him? What could books possibly offer?



Jason Reynolds takes the stage

Then came Queen Latifah, and thus began not only Jason’s lifelong love of rap music, but also of language, of words, and of writing. When Jason discov-

ered a rapper whose music spoke his life and his world, he couldn’t get enough. He listened, he learned the lyrics, and he decided then and there to become what he revered. He was going to be the next Queen Latifah. And he told his friends and family so.

Now we know Jason Reynolds as a prolific, very successful author who writes much-needed books about characters of color,

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Four Days in Pendleton by, Stephanie Goodwin; Klamath County Library

I have never been one to keep a bucket list of things I want to accomplish or experience in life, instead I choose to take advantage of opportunities as they land in front of me. Throughout my library career I have known several who have had the opportunity to attend various leadership trainings. Every time one of them went I was in-

trigued and would think how someday I’d like to go one myself. Then one day I saw an email about a new leadership training opportunity called [LIOLA](#) (Leadership Institute of the Oregon Library Association) I decided that this was my opportunity so I quickly submitted my application. I was delighted when I was accepted and began my hunt for schol-

arships. The [OYAN scholarship](#) was ideal. For anyone out there who is looking for scholarships to library trainings or conferences, this is an easy application. The only requirements are that the conference relates to serving young adults in Oregon and to do a brief report when you get back so others can get a glimpse of what you learned.

After receiving the scholarship I eagerly anticipated the approach of LIOLA by reading the book *Strengths Based Leadership* by Tom Rath and taking the StrengthsFinder 2.0 test. This was to help us all understand our individual strengths because it isn’t until we know our strengths that we can build up and effectively lead our team. Once in Pendleton, under the guid-

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OASL Conference, cont.

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and tough topics, like gun violence, domestic violence, police violence, racial violence, broken family relationships, and trying to figure out how to live in hard neighborhoods. I didn't know until I heard him speak was that he was nearly a college dropout. That after moving to New York, he very nearly gave up on writing after just one rejection. That he felt like teachers, librarians, and other adults failed him and so many others when those same grown-ups could have made a difference by handing them books that reflected his world at a much younger age. They could have promoted rap music as the much-needed answer to a magnificently huge gap in literature that expressed the life of young people living like Jason rather than declaring rap as a decline in culture and a danger to youth.

Thankfully there was Queen Latifah. Thankfully there was Dean Myers' son, who challenged and encouraged Jason to keep writing. Thankfully there was Jason's mom, who allowed him to move back home as he prepared to pursue his writing career. Thankfully there is Jason Reynolds writing the books he would have wanted to read about as a kid and teen. And thankfully there are OASL, teachers, and librarians everywhere, helping young people find Jason's books and stories to provide mirrors where some youth can see themselves reflected or windows for other youth to learn, empathize, and explore the experiences of their peers elsewhere.

Check out Jason's books for teens and middle grade readers:

- All American Boys
- As Brave As You
- Boy in the Black Suit
- Ghost
- Long Way Down
- Miles Morales: Spider-Man
- Patina
- Sunny
- When I was the Greatest

Stranger Things – Middle School Programming: Presented by Lori Lieberman, Library Media Specialist, West Sylvan Middle School and Da Vinci Arts Middle School (Portland)

I always appreciate a conference session that is both inspiring and actionable; where I can take away concrete ideas to implement as soon as I return to my library. Lori Lieberman's Stranger Things Presentation was just that! She presented all sorts of low-cost and awesome displays, programs, and games that she's successfully used with her middle school students. Here's a list (and some photos) of those ideas!

Game Apps

- Kahoot! and Quizzizz Apps – free quiz-game apps, can be played on a multitude of devices, users can make their own quiz games or use already-created ones. Quizzizz ties in memes! We downloaded, installed, and used these in the session – they were easy

and fun!

Lunchtime Programs

- Whatcha Got Wednesdays are open-mic events in the school library. Teens sign up for 3-minute spots where they dance, sing, read poetry, tell jokes, rant, play an instrument, juggle and perform tricks.

The set-up: speakers and mic, clipboard with sign-up sheet, timer

The rules: no recording, and audience must be respectful of teens at mic; no grown-ups may sign up for a spot or perform (teens only)

- Fantastic Fridays are a series of rotating speaker presentations; speakers are scheduled to talk about something interesting and do a Q&A with the teens for 20 minutes during lunch.

- Books and Smores are read-aloud events with snacks! Lori reads a story to the teens while they eat marshmallows, chocolate, and graham crackers. For example, she read Finding Winnie, a longer picture book, and the teens enjoyed it.



Passive Programs and Displays

- Post-it Note Q&A: Hang a poster with ques-

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Libraries in Profile: Athena Public Library by, Kristen Williams; Athena Public Library

Athena is a town of 1,300 people nestled in the wheat fields near the Blue Mountains by the Washington border. There has been a public library in Athena for



The view in Athena

more than 100 years and almost 15 years ago the town came

together to build a beautiful new library. Our new building has some of the only public meeting space in town, it has a cozy reading room with soft chairs in front of a welcoming fireplace. And, unlike the old building, it has dedicated spaces for children and young adults. Athena is understandably proud of the new library building. In fact, even though it's been nearly a decade and a half since the building was completed, when someone new comes to town you're likely to hear people asking them if they've "seen the new library."



The "new" library

Life in a rural library presents some challenges, such as a limited budget. We are an autonomous city library but we are also a member of [Umatilla County Special Library District](#). Through this county-wide taxing district we receive half of our annual funding and also some programming and cataloging support. In addition, we are a part of the [Sage Library consortium](#). Sage has 77 member libraries in 15 counties in Eastern and Central Oregon. Being a part of Sage offers very tangible

benefits to our customers in terms of access to resources we couldn't provide on our own.

I started as Library Director in November of 2017 and was able to work side by side with the previous Director until her retirement. That time of transition was so good, both for me and for the town. There was a lot concern about the previous librarian's retirement. Change is difficult for library users of all ages and can be especially difficult in a library with only one full time librarian. The time of overlap was useful in reassuring customers that the library would remain open and that, for the most part, the things they loved about it would stay the same.

There has been a thriving program for children for a long time. We have a long standing toddler storytime on Monday mornings that well attended. We have an excellent collaborative relationship with the local preschool that helps us reach the younger kids in our community and we have a great relationship with our local elementary school. There is no librarian in our school district, so last school year I provided library instruction at the elementary school library and I'm hoping to do something similar this year.

A main part of my goal planning for this year is our lack of teen programming. We have a core group of teens who use the library on a regular basis but I'd

really like to build on that. I started working toward this goal by including teens more intentionally in our Summer Reading Program. We have offered some library activities and have also created some volunteer opportunities for teens within our elementary and preschool programs. The hope is that these opportunities will help build a feeling of ownership in the library. At the beginning of this



Library Director, Kristen Williams, figures this whole thing out

school year we will launch a teen advisory board to give teens a voice in programming, collections, and leadership in our community. We're also planning to letting them redecorate the teen space. We hope to use this core group of teens to help us better serve the other kids in our community.

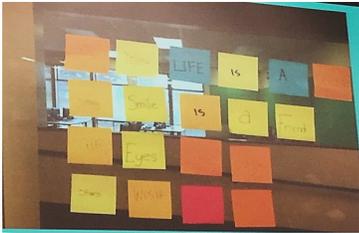
I feel like a big part of this first year as Library Director has been about getting to know the community in my new role. I have lived here in town for ten years and have fairly deep connections but telling someone you've lived in a small town like this one for ten years is the same as telling them you moved to town yesterday. I'm still introducing myself to people and trying to ease in to new ideas. I do regularly remind myself to slow down and not to force things. Athena Public Library is in a season of growth and change and it's really exciting to plan for the future.

OASL Conference, cont.

(Continued from page 2)

tions and provide post-it notes and pens so teens can write answers.

- Post-It Note Poems:



Create magnetic poetry style post-it notes by writing a single word on each post-it note and encourage teens to rearrange the notes into poems on a designated wall, window, or other display space in the library.

- March Madness: You can work from SLJ's Battle of the Kids' Books or host your own Tournament of Books. Start by identifying

the 16 most circulated books in collection. Then ask teens to vote on their favorites, setting up a bracket-style voting schematic.

- Books to Movies: Display a poster with covers of books becoming movies. Lori, the presenter, also gives a presentation at her schools about books being made into movies.
- Family Night Event Activities: on Family Nights, Lori provides STEM activities in the library, including light saber card making, remote control car racing, Lego challenges, and computer games.

Fireplace DIY



- Bring in an old CRT TV with a built-in DVD player, cover in brick paper, with a looping DVD of fireplace, and dog pillows as floor cushions laid out in front. (Cushions can be purchased inexpensively at Winco or Bi-Mart).

Other Misc. Ideas

- Move a piano into library for the teens to play (rules: No Heart and Soul and No Chopsticks!)
- Manual typewriter at counter for teens to use
- Tech-Free Fridays – put out Legos and board games for teens to use instead of computers for computer games

Four Days in Pendelton, cont.

(Continued from page 1)

ance of a coach and our mentors we spent three days exploring the four different types of strengths—including the ones we possess. We worked on understanding our differences, going through the process of change, and setting goals for ourselves and our team.

When the week was over and I had to get back to the “real” world, I spent time reflecting on what was discussed. It was interesting to step back and try to

figure out the strengths of those I supervise. As I did this I realized why some react the way they do to situations and why some appear to have more conflicts than others. After analyzing them I had to take a step back to analyze myself and discover what each of them need from me and figure out if I was giving it or not. Upon returning home I found the change process to be the most helpful. Understanding that sometimes what comes across as resistance to trying something new could

actually be fear on the part of the employee helped me try to change how I introduce change. Granted some days are easier than others. But I think by taking what I learned and adjusting my outlook and behavior have helped to create a stronger team with stronger goals. After all the motto of the week was “For the collective to thrive, the individuals must be strong.”

OYAN: Finding great reads for Oregon teens!



Your OYAN Executive Board

Chair

Julie Jenmard, Cottage Grove Public Library
email: youthservices@cottagegrove.org
Phone: 541-942-3828

Vice-Co-Chair/Co-Chairs-Elect

Angela Arena, Tillamook Public Library
email: aarena@co.tillamook.or.us
Phone: 503-842-4792

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Bobbie Hernandez, Multnomah County Library —
Kenton Branch
email: bhernand@co.tillamook.or.us
Phone: 503.842.4792

Violeta Garza, Multnomah County Library —Troutdale
Branch
email: violetag@multcolib.org
Phone: 503.988.4182

Secretary

Amy Grimes, Lake Oswego Public Library
email: agrimes@ci.oswego.or.us
Phone: 503.697.6580

Publications Managers

Keli Yeats, Multnomah County Library —
Rockwood Branch
email: kelly@multcolib.org
Phone: 503.988.3596

Gretchen Kolderup, St. Helen's Public Library
email: gretchenkolderup@gmail.com
Phone: 503-397-4544

Susan K. Davis
email: susacatd@gmail.com

Web Editor/CSLP Liaison

K'Lyn Hann, Newberg Public Library
email: klyn.hann@ci.newberg.or.us
Phone: 503.544.7732.7323

Collaborative Summer Reading Library Program Liaison

K'Lyn Hann, Newberg Public Library
email: klyn.hann@ci.newberg.or.us
Phone: 503.544.7732.7323

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nominations for this year's Graphic Rave are due Wednesday August 1st. Eligible nominations must be published between May 1, 2017 and April 30, 2018. Manga nominations are especially needed. Send nominations to: tracig@multcolib.org

The Nature Generation is offering NatGen Seed Grants of up to \$1,000 for projects inspired by a Green Earth Book Award book that will make a direct impact on the environment

Check out the most current grants available through IMLS

We welcome all your comments, articles, photos, book reviews, ideas, and suggestions for future OYAN Review newsletters! Please submit to oyanpublications@gmail.com.

Upcoming Meetings

Table with 3 columns: Meeting Period, Location, Date/Time. Rows include Summer 2018 (Downtown Bend Library, July 27th), Fall 2018 (Wilsonville Public Library, October 19th), and Winter 2019 (TBD).

OYAN [Oregon Young Adult Network] exists to provide a network for communication and growth among people who provide library services to teens, to increase awareness of teen library services in the state of Oregon, and to promote cooperation between school and public libraries.

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