

June brings a Universe of Stories to your library

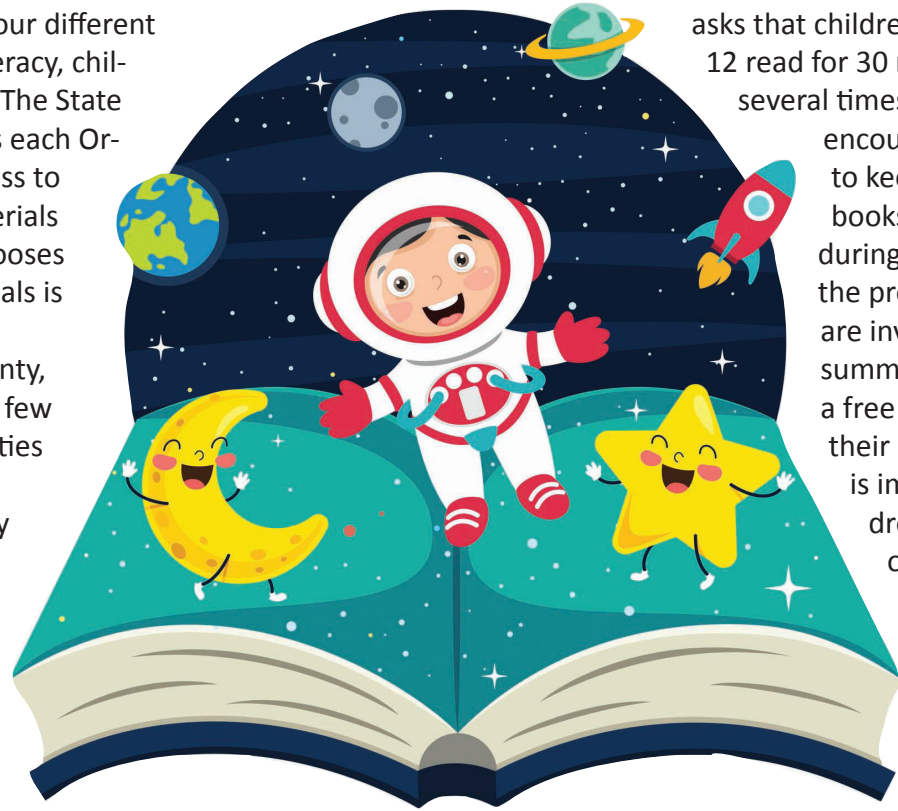
By JENNIFER COSTLEY

In 1987, 10 Minnesota regional library systems got together to develop a summer reading program. The intention was to choose a theme, create thematic artwork, and select incentives that libraries all over the region could incorporate. It was a way to help libraries offer a professional, creative summer reading program without overtaxing the staff.

Since then public libraries all over the U.S. have jumped on board. Themes have ranged from "Dino-saur into Summer" to this year's "A Universe of Stories." These themes are selected by committee and planned several years in advance. Planning so far ahead allows the committees to arrange for unified art, and create a manual of

program ideas for the four different patron groups: Early literacy, children, teens and adults. The State Library of Oregon offers each Oregon public library access to the year's themed materials but what the library chooses to do with those materials is up to them.

Here in Umatilla County, you can expect to see a few fun space-related activities for young and old. The Pendleton Public Library will be hosting a planetarium night on the front lawn, courtesy of the Children's Museum of Eastern Oregon. Kids who attended our 2017 space-themed event



asks that children under the age of 12 read for 30 minutes at a time, several times a week, while encouraging older kids to keep a record of the books they complete during the summer. At the program's end kids are invited to turn their summer reading log in for a free paperback book of their choosing. We feel it is important for children to have a book of their very own and were lucky to have the Lion's Club purchase incentive books for each child. Your library may distribute a differ-

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will recall the massive inflatable dome that stretched from floor to ceiling of the children's area. In addition to the planetarium, Pendleton, along with Weston, Athena, Helix, Pilot Rock, Hermiston and Stanfield, will be hosting the outreach team from the Museum of Natural and Cultural History. Each summer MNCH offers a summer reading-themed, hands-on experience to public libraries. Last year, to fit the "Libraries Rock" theme, they brought out rock and mineral artifacts and activities. This year the show will be called Our Place in Space and last approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Attendees can expect a short story reading, activity stations and touchable specimens.

These types of events help bring families into the library during the slow summer months but an important component of the program is requiring participants to track their reading. Pendleton

ent incentive so be sure and ask the details of the program when you register.

The summer reading programs combination of events and required reading is your public library's best effort to help reduce summer learning loss. We don't do it for the increased circulation, or because we like to throw parties (although we do like to party). We do it because when children leave school many of them lose access to books and the accountability of a teacher to encourage their reading journey. You can motivate your child to read over the summer by signing them up for the summer reading program. Please take advantage of this FREE, educational, entertainment opportunity for your child.

Jennifer Costley is director of the Pendleton Public Library and mother of two.