

Reading *from A1*

"A Universe of Stories," a space-oriented program which will offer reading materials, movies and storytelling revolving around the mysteries and marvels of the universe. The program is provided through the Collaborative Summer Library Program, a consortium of states aiming to empower libraries to foster deeper community involvement.

The reading program aspires to incentivize all ages to read and engage library facilities through a reward system tailored to different age groups.

Cottage Grove

"We had a lot of fun. It was kind of like a tasting menu of what we're going to be doing for the summer," Arnoux said of the kick-off party. "We had our volunteers helping us at the summer kick-off and we couldn't have done it without them."

The all-ages party included a station for stop-motion movie making, board games, face painting, puppet shows, role-playing games and storytelling while Umpqua Bank provided ice cream. Children who signed up for the program also received a free book.

Arnoux specializes in aspects of the summer program targeting the age groups of babies through teens.

"We have a special early-literacy reading log, essentially for zero to three, and that really focuses on the fundamentals of early literacy," she said.

The reading log incorporates reading, writing, playing, singing and talking from a game card that encourages a variety

of interactive assignments.

"Playing helps you process as well and there's a lot of repetition in playing and reading books and all of that is super important for early literacy," said Arnoux.

Completing the list of activities, which includes "read a book with your kiddo" and "talk about sounds you hear as you go for a walk together," rewards participants with a free book.

Arnoux added that one goal of the reading program is to create positive experiences in the library.

"A big part of wanting to continue reading and enjoying reading is having a positive experience with books and reading," she said.

Participants who sign up for the summer reading program will receive reading logs to complete for weekly entry into prize drawings starting June 29 and separate programs run for middle and high school students.

Wide support from the community and beyond has enabled the library to launch the program.

Stickers for the reading logs were donated by Sarah Rose Tumpane, Shanna Trumbly and Eugene businesses Down to Earth and Farmers Union Coffee Roasters.

The library is also on the lookout for people from the community who want to tell stories for its all-ages story time event July 24.

Additionally, Arnoux said the Oregon State Fair has donated tickets, giving every child who signs up free entry while offering a two-for one deal to adults.

At the end of the summer program, prize tickets will be

raffled off to sponsors such as the Oregon Coast Aquarium, Wildlife Safari, the Oregon Zoo and the Lane County History Museum.

Overall, Arnoux hopes that interactions like these with the library and its exhibits will encourage more general library engagement.

"I think just getting people in the library and having those positive experiences, even if you don't have kids, it'll be a place where you feel welcomed," she said. "There are so many genuine, great relationships I think, formed at the library."

Drain

Meanwhile, excitement for the program was evident even in the small town of Drain.

"It was really well-received," said Candy Vickery, district librarian of the North Douglas Library District. "And we're really pleased with the young adults, with how many have signed up already."

The Mildred Whipple Public Library in Drain officially opened as a public library last November, making this its first summer program in its new capacity.

As well as an educational service, Vickery sees it as a practical opportunity to establish the library as a community hub.

"Literacy is number one," Vickery said, "but it is a big promotion for the library just as a place to be and place that's a real resource for the community."

Between the Oregon State Library Ready to Read Grant, the Friends of the Mildred Whipple Library and North Douglas High School's Community 101 Grant, the library has been able to invest in book bags, t-shirts,

flyers and other materials for the summer.

"It's close to a \$3,000 budget we've been able to put together for this year, which is really nice," said Vickery.

The summer reading program in Drain partly mirrors that of its Cottage Grove counterpart, providing reading incentives and materials to various age groups. For Vickery, the focus on youth is an important one.

"I taught for 30 years. There's a lot of loss over the summer if kids don't read," she said. "So what this does, is it gives them incentive to keep their reading skills up."

Including the June 19 kick-off party, the summer reading program will comprise of 10 events that will see a rocket launch, movies, a BBQ and a tie-dye workshop among others.

Each week, every age group will have a chance to earn a ticket that will go into the final raffle at the end of the summer and participants receive free books for signing up and attending events.

The Mildred Whipple Public Library's list of ticket sponsors for the raffle include the Oregon Zoo, the Oregon Coast Aquarium, Wildlife Safari, Enchanted Forest, the Eugene Science Center and the North Douglas Parks and Recreation swimming pool.

Additionally, The Bookmine in Cottage Grove has donated gift certificates for books for the adult reading program.

Upon registration, different age groups receive a particular collection of materials and instructions on how to win raffle tickets and prizes.

Library assistant Katrina

Johns is helping to create events oriented toward teens.

"What we're trying to do is get more teen involvement in the library," she said.

One teen event, "Don't Judge a Book by its Movie," will compare books to their on-screen versions and will examine stories such as "Ender's Game" and "The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind."

Young adults will also be asked for input about the library's teen space.

"I think it's really important because it gives them something to do during the summer that keeps them engaged and learning," Johns said. "If you're reading during the summer, then you're still learning."

The summer reading program isn't limited to children and young adults, however.

"Our adult program is really simple, but we've had four or five adults sign up already," Vickery said.

One prize geared toward the teens and adults is a private space-themed party in the library after hours in which the winner can bring five friends.

"And that seems to be a really hot item as a prize," said Vickery. "So, there's something for everybody. That was our goal, was to have some sort of reading incentive, visit your library incentive, for every age group."

Johns and Vickery reiterated that creating a space for the community makes up a large part of their motivation.

"There's so much more to libraries than just books," said Johns.

Opportunities to sign up will continue throughout the summer up until the day before the wrap-up event.

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