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**CONNECTIONS:** YOUR LINK TO THE  
State Library of Oregon



Volume 33, Issue 8 - August 2023

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## **Announcing the New Officers of the State Library Board**

The State Library is pleased to announce our two new officers on the State Library board for the coming year. At the start of each fiscal year, new officers are elected to act as vice chair and chair for the board. These two volunteer positions lead the work of the board, as all nine members set policy and determine the mission and vision for the State Library.

Yelitza Vargas-Boots, Bilingual Outreach Librarian at Hood River County Library District, will take over the position of vice chair for the board. She is the daughter and granddaughter of immigrant-migrant parents and would like to honor and acknowledge in this space the sacrifices and struggles her mother faced in order for her daughters to be here. Yelitza is passionate about library spaces, rural communities, food equity, and serving Spanish speakers and immigrant-migrant families. She has been supporting children and families from diverse backgrounds for over 11 years in Oregon. Yelitza believes in the process of building communities and community partnerships by empowering and uplifting community voices.

Greg Williams will take over the position of chair for the board. He has been working in and with public libraries for nearly two decades. After earning his Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Washington, Greg started his library career as an Adult Services Librarian (with a focus on technology) at the West Linn Public Library and then moved to

Clackamas County. After serving as Deputy Director for Clackamas County's Business and Community Services Department, Greg was selected as the Director of the Oregon City Public Library in 2020. In addition to his service on the State Library Board, Greg has also served on other statewide library boards and committees, including the Oregon Digital Library Consortium and the Oregon Library Association's Public Library Division. When not working, Greg loves tinkering with his home network, reading (science fiction, mysteries, music, and history), and spending time with his wife, Julia, and their 16-year-old son, Jake. He is a huge music fanatic who can easily spend hours perusing through the bins in a record store and has a special place in his heart for his all-time favorite band, the Ramones.

Thanks to both Yelitza and Greg for their service to the State Library and to libraries in Oregon!

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## **Bookmobiles Take to the Roads Across Oregon**

This summer has seen the introduction of several bookmobiles in communities across Oregon, including Salem, Beaverton, Jefferson County, and Woodburn. Earlier this year, Hood River debuted their van and brought it to the Oregon Library Association Conference where they shared their experience with library staff. Last year saw the debut of two more mobile libraries in Estacada and Pendleton. So, what's with all the bookmobiles?



*Estacada Public Library's bookmobile, featuring pets from the community in the design*

During the pandemic, the State Library received money from the American Rescue Plan Act through the Institute of Museum and Library Services. We distributed these funds to libraries across Oregon for projects that would serve their communities as they recovered from COVID-19. For some, that meant taking to the road and making library services more accessible to those who couldn't get out as much.



*Interior of Woodburn's mobile library*

Libraries have used those funds over the last couple years to purchase and customize an assortment of different vehicles. Each bookmobile is unique to that library's community and meets the needs of their patrons – some come with laptops, some with books in various languages, others with seating for people to hang out in, and some with board games. Not only are the interiors all very different, but the exteriors as well.



*Pendleton's mobile library*

Many libraries got community input on the design of their bookmobiles, sometimes even hosting competitions or a vote. Estacada incorporated pets from the community in their design, while Woodburn included "Bookmobile" written in English, Spanish, and Russian along the side. The types of vehicles vary as well. For example, Beaverton has a fully electric van they've aptly named "Evie the EV." Pendleton's bookmobile is a trailer that can be hitched to the back of a truck. And Woodburn's is a large box truck with string lights across the top of the interior.



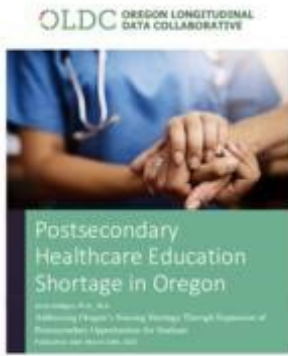
*Beaverton library's fully electric bookmobile*

These bookmobiles have made appearances at community events such as music in the park days, harvest celebrations, outdoor theaters, and more. Keep an eye on your local library – they might have some fun activities planned for their mobile libraries!

For questions about the grant or the project, please contact Tamara Ottum, [tamara.ottum@slo.oregon.gov](mailto:tamara.ottum@slo.oregon.gov).

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# OrDoc of the Month: Oregon Document Wins National Award



[Postsecondary Healthcare Education Shortage in Oregon: Addressing Oregon's Nursing Shortage Through Expansion of Postsecondary Opportunities for Students](#), a publication from the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission, has been selected for a [Notable Document Award](#) from the Legislative Research Librarians Professional Staff Association of the National

Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). The award recognizes documents that are innovative in providing substantive information on issues of interest to legislators. Award winners will be recognized at the NCSL Legislative Summit on August 15.

The Oregon Documents Group was proud to nominate this document for this national honor.

Congratulations!

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## New Librarian Solves an Old Mystery: Wallet Returned to Owner after 36 Years





On the second floor of the State Library, a vault was opened for the first time in years. No curses were released (that we know of). Instead, staff found old cassette tapes, personnel files, and, oddly enough, a wallet. The first question asked, of course, was... what if we could find the owner? New-to-us librarian Emily Johns took up the search.

It's no secret that librarians are some of society's greatest sleuths, and Emily proved this to be especially true when she found the owner after only a couple hours of detective work. She reached out to who she believed was the owner on Facebook, asking if she'd been to the State Library sometime in the late 1980s. Emily mentioned that she didn't know if she would get a response – had she received a message like that, she would have assumed it was yet another internet scam. To her surprise, the person responded.

Julie Bochsler had been trying to get an internship with the library in the late 1980s while she was in college, but the timing never worked out with all her classes. Despite that, she still spent a lot of time in the building doing research into her family's genealogy. When Emily reached out to her on Facebook, Julie was surprised – she didn't remember losing the wallet, but it was immediately familiar to her.



After confirming some information to verify her identity, a meet-up was scheduled for Julie to be reunited with her possessions. “She was very excited,” Emily says. “She was giddy about it.”



Going through the wallet was a trip down memory lane. Included in the findings were an old key, paystubs, and a receipt for paid fines at Salem Public Library. Nowadays, of course, Salem Public is fine-free.

“Opened and looked through the wallet artifacts this morning with a friend – surprises and discovery... for the life of me, what did that key go to?” Julie says. “And a receipt from Jack’s IGA that was across the street from Konditorei on Commercial [street] long gone, once my go-to store (I lived in the neighborhood). Fun stuff! Thanks for finding me!”

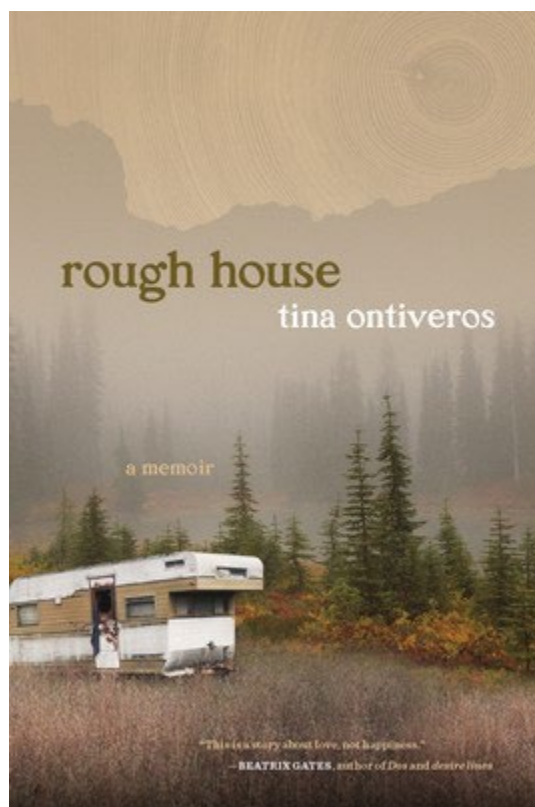
## **Welcome Emily Johns!**

The Government Information and Library Services division is delighted to announce Emily Johns as the new Digital Preservation and Special Collections Librarian. Her focus will be on the State Library's Special Collections, which includes providing greater access to items within this collection. She will also provide reference services to state employees and will assist in selecting a new digital preservation management system. Previously, she worked as the Archivist and Cultural Collections Coordinator at Pacific University. Outside of work, she enjoys reading (no surprises there), hiking, road trips, and spending time with her family.

We're lucky to have her expertise on the team, and we're eager to see the work of Special Collections grow! Keep an eye out for some of the exciting projects she's working on!

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**New to the Catalog: Coming Full Circle  
with *rough house***



As longtime library users are well aware, one of the most exciting features of our Talking Book and Braille Library is the in-house recording studio that's used to professionally record Oregon interest titles such as [Oregon Book Award](#) finalists and [Oregon Battle of the Books](#) selections. This August marks the completion of one such title – [rough house](#) by Tina Ontiveros, which was a 2022 Oregon Book Award finalist.

Production of *rough house* started back in February of this year with volunteer narrator Jennifer M. Imai, who has logged over 50 hours recording the book. Jennifer is a longtime volunteer with the State Library, having recorded hundreds of hours of books for us outside of her other work with Audible and [Learning Ally](#). During the pandemic when production in our own studio came to a halt, Jennifer graciously offered her professional skills to record and edit titles in her in-home studio, which she continues to do to this date.

The final run time for *rough house* is currently at seven hours and 28 minutes, which comes out to just over 10% of the actual work time Jennifer spent recording, editing, and mixing. “I really enjoyed narrating *rough house* – not because it was a happy story; it was actually quite sad at times, and if I hadn't been reading it for [the State Library], I probably would not have chosen to read it,” says Jennifer. “But Tina Ontiveros structured it so well that I was glad I read it. She had a very clear throughline that conveyed so well her father's love for her and hers for him – even though he was a difficult man to love. I recommend it, especially to folks who grew up in the Pacific Northwest in the 70s and 80s.”

The work itself has a special place in the hearts of many State Library staff. Last summer, *rough house* was selected as one of the first titles for our internal equity, diversity, and inclusion book club. The memoir was picked for its portrayal of poverty in logging communities around the Pacific Northwest, which deepened our understanding of rural communities and their complex history in Oregon. Readers should be advised: content includes graphic depictions of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and animal cruelty.

Tina Ontiveros attended a discussion group hosted by State Library staff and talked about the book and her life since the end of the memoir. Currently, she is a professor of writing and literature at [Columbia Gorge Community College](#) and has [written for other publications](#).

Finishing *rough house* for our Talking Book users is an exciting chapter in the recording booth's history. Max Robinson, [previously a Library Consulting Assistant](#), recently took over as the Recording Studio Coordinator and is working to expand the studio's collection development and overall operation. We're excited to have Max on the team, who comes to the State Library with a background in radio and audio production and uses that experience to train new recording booth volunteers.

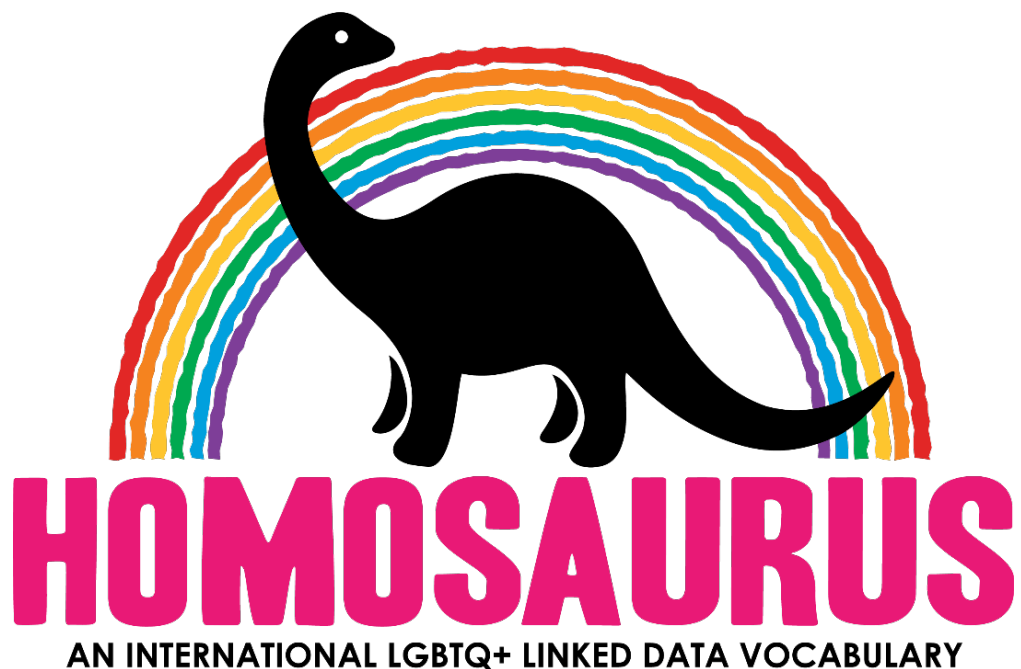
Stay tuned for more book announcements – Max will be sharing future Talking Book releases in a series titled “New to the Catalog.” Exciting things to come! In the meantime, here is an excerpt from the text of *rough house*:

*“Though I always lived in or near the woods with Loyd, this was my first real nature hike. I’d heard you could see Goat Rocks from the lake and was hoping to find some of the mountain goats said to climb the peaks. Layers of fallen pine needles made the path soft under my feet and the sun passing through the canopy created a green glow that colored my brother’s face beautiful. We climbed gently through old-growth western red cedar and Doug fir. Dogwood, salmonberry, and Oregon grape grew close to the path. The air was rich in animal chatter and the sweet smell of warm cedar. The whole forest sang and twinkled. Everything was talking, gentle, to everything else.”*

(Ontiveros, 2022, p. 100)

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## **State Library Adopts Homosaurus in Cataloging Work**



In the ever-changing and evolving world of cataloging, library staff make it a priority to use terms that are not only respectful but also supportive of marginalized communities. It goes without saying that labeling records correctly is essential in supporting members of these communities – not only does it show solidarity, but it makes resources more easily discoverable and therefore accessible in libraries. One of the latest tools catalogers at the State Library have adopted in order to better support these communities is [Homosaurus](#), an international linked database of LGBTQ+ terms.

What exactly is a linked database? It's a list of linked terms in an [expansive and ever-growing list](#). As of this article's writing, the list starts with "17-beta hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase 3 deficiency" and ends with "Zme/Zmyr/Zmyrself (Pronouns)." Terms are comprehensive and link to descriptions, broader terms, dates updated, and more. Currently, the State Library uses 94 out of the 2,838 listed terms. Libraries don't have to adopt the

entire list but can select the terms helpful for their materials; starting small is a much more manageable way of approaching the tool.

Here at the State Library, staff use this database as a companion to broad subject term vocabularies, such as the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), a common system used in libraries everywhere to catalog their resources. Including these additional terms in records enhances access to them, especially online. For example, anyone searching for materials from the State Library’s [digital collections](#) on “LGBTQ+ Youth” will now find things that were previously only under the LCSH heading “sexual minority students.”

Below are some examples of the differences and updates in the terms we use:

Date	Title	LCSH	Homosaurus
2023	Supporting LGBTQ2SIA+ students in Oregon	Sexual minority students	LGBTQ+ youth
2008	Registering births under Oregon's domestic partnership law: fast facts	Same-sex parents	Domestic partnerships LGBTQ+ parents
1988	Living the spirit: a gay American Indian anthology	Indian gays Indian lesbians	Indigenous LGBTQ+ people Native American LGBTQ+ people

The staff at the State Library are excited to continue to increase access with this tool. It’s a great way to support folks in these communities, and staff look



forward to helping other libraries learn how to enhance their own records for their patrons.

For any questions, please contact Heather Pitts at

[heather.pitts@slo.oregon.gov](mailto:heather.pitts@slo.oregon.gov).

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## Supporting EDI Training and Beyond



Back in December, guest contributor Christina Fuller-Gregory [wrote an article](#) about upcoming equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) trainings offered by the State Library. We're excited to report that the four-part spring series taught and facilitated by Christina herself was a great success!

Beginning in February 2023, the State Library of Oregon offered two learning cohorts focusing on EDI in Clackamas County and the northern Oregon Coast. The training was designed to provide comprehensive EDI education and skills for library staff, volunteers, and advocates. Groups were regional and were kept to about 20 people, focusing on skills and best practices that are critical to introduce lasting and successful EDI initiatives in small, rural, and conservative communities.

The training championed the importance of understanding and incorporating EDI efforts into all aspects of library services and challenged participants to identify ways in which they could build their skills as strong allies and collaborators. Work in the cohorts was based on the Oregon Library Association's EDI & Antiracism Committee's [Anti-Racism Toolkit](#), which provided opportunities for participants to learn, practice, and apply the concepts presented during the training in their own libraries and communities.

The training culminated in each participant creating a professional goal tied to a final implementation project and sharing that with the group at the final session. “[...] this training helped me to examine my own attitudes that I probably take for granted. How do my attitudes impact others? How can I change them? What parts of my job do they impact?” said one participant.

This work will continue to reach libraries and their communities across the state in the next year, hopefully with a lasting impact. We’ll continue to support this valuable work by offering additional trainings for new participants this fall, a follow-up training for all previous participants in the spring of 2024, and a multi-day session in June 2024 specifically for school library staff. Fall cohorts will take place in McMinnville and Eugene from September through mid-November 2023.

If you’re interested in learning more or you have any questions, contact Darci Hanning ([darci.hanning@slo.oregon.gov](mailto:darci.hanning@slo.oregon.gov)). Additional information on the training and application process will be made available via the State Library’s website and social media platforms.

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# Mission

The State Library of Oregon cultivates, preserves, and delivers library and information services to foster lifelong learning and community engagement.

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