

Umatilla Library: New names and new faces...

By Heather Estrada

For Go! Eastern Oregon

The library in Umatilla dates to 1916 or 1917 when a group of women staged a takeover of the city, gaining control of the City Council and ushering in some needed changes as well as creating the city's first library.

Since then, the library has been housed in multiple locations, including a tavern and the old telephone company building, before moving to a beautiful modern building that was completed in 2010.

The library shares space with the City of Umatilla and was the brainchild of the Umatilla Friends of the Library who originated the idea and initiated fundraising for the building. The Friends were later joined by the city to raise the funds.

The library is a thriving center of the community run by Library Director Susie Hansen, who has been at the Umatilla Library since 2017, not long after she first moved to the area.

Her dad encouraged her to apply for the job when he saw it advertised since "she loves to read and could read at work." Hansen applied and she's been at the library ever since (although it turns out she doesn't get to sit at work and read all day). She started as a part time employee, then moved to the full time children's librarian and has been the director since 2021.

Her favorite part of working in libraries is the connections she makes with the public, and the opportunity to provide needed services as well as new experiences and safe spaces for all. If you don't recognize her name, she got married in April!

Her greatest desire in serving Umatilla residents is to meet more needs. She's broadening services to Spanish speaking patrons, and last year purchased \$3,000 worth of books at the Guadalajara (Mexico) Book Fair through an Oregon program called Libros for Oregon.

This year she will be traveling to the same book fair in person to continue building the collection by purchasing books written in Spanish originally, not just translated copies of English books.

The Umatilla Library also hosts Connection de Madre (Mothers Connection) the last Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. to provide a space to support moms, regardless of what language they prefer.

The library offers a range of programs for adults, teens, and children. Check out their website at www.umatilla-city.org/library for all the details.

Those with children younger than five can go to craft time and meet another new face at the library, Miss Jenn. She is new to the Umatilla area, and new to the Umatilla Library, but not new to



Susie Hansen is director of the Umatilla Library.

libraries. She has tons of experience with libraries and tons of energy and ideas. Find more details at <https://forms.gle/CTPtR3zZcRFhQ6jCA>.

The Umatilla library, just like all the libraries in Umatilla County, has a sum-



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The Umatilla Public Library shares space with the City of Umatilla.

mer reading program, a district-wide passport program, and lots of activities to keep you and your kids busy this summer. If you haven't stopped by your local library lately, make time to do so very soon!

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