

GOT A LIBRARY CARD?

Milton-Freewater Public Library goes 'fine free'

By Heather Estrada

For Go! Eastern Oregon

Libraries around Umatilla County just wrapped up Library Card Sign Up month, but if you missed it you are never too late! You can get a free library card anytime at your local library. In most cases, libraries require only proof of address to get you signed up, and have limited access cards even if you can't provide an address.

Your library card is the key to unlocking a multitude of resources, activities and services.

The Milton-Freewater Public Library is joining many other libraries in Umatilla County this month by going "fine free." Like most other libraries in the Umatilla County Special Library District, the Milton-Freewater library, led by Director Lili Schmidt, finds dealing with fines is not worth the staff's time and is the biggest barrier to people, especially children and teens, continuing to use the library.

The library will still charge for items that are never returned or significantly damaged, so you still need to return borrowed items.

Chad Morris, the new city manager for Milton-Freewater, is fully behind this proposal of no late fines. Morris moved from Florida where he worked alongside



Contributed Photo

Have you visited the Milton-Freewater Public Library lately?

libraries for much of his life. He's also excited to offer this updated service to patrons in the hopes of making the library as accessible as possible to all people.

This latest service is one example of how library staff work to welcome people into their space and offer opportunities to learn and grow. At the Milton-Freewater library, for example, there are a minimum of nine activities for all age groups each month.

They have storytime Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. for preschoolers, an event aimed at tweens, and two events for school-age children.

Not to be left out, the staff also plan two adult activities — one activity or craft along with a book club.

Schmidt puts her master's degree in education to good use as she masterminds the library's overall vision to serve every citizen in her area. It is her desire, and the library's mission, to be a safe space in the community — a place to learn, to play, and to grow in knowledge, new skills and find joy.

SPECIAL EVENTS

October events include a visit from tarantulas and other arachnids for school-age kids on Oct. 11 from 3-4 p.m. There will be live arachnids to observe, a craft to do and lots to learn.

The library will host a Halloween party on Oct. 29 from 5-7 p.m. This is a popular an-

nual event that is always well attended, and the library loves the chance to interact with the community. It's not to be missed, with a new special guest to welcome you this year!

Still need an excuse to stop by the Milton-Freewater library, or the library closest to you? Here are some of the things you can do at your library or with your library card:

- Read the newest books ("The Woman" by Kristin Hannah; "Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby Van Pelt).
- Reserve books to be delivered from 77 libraries across Eastern Oregon.
- Listen to audiobooks on the Libby App (the entire Harry Potter series among others) all while doing laundry or taking a walk.
- Read from one of more than 5,000 magazines on the Libby App (The New Yorker, National Geographic).
- Go on a date with your significant other (or family) for free with a cultural pass to area museums and attractions (Tasmastlikt Cultural Institute and Maryhill Museum of Art are included).

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