

Review of Culminating Internship

Ryan Downie

LIS 4910: Culminating Internship

Professor Brown

University of Denver, Morgridge College of Education

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Introduction

My internship was conducted in Roseburg, Oregon at the Roseburg Public Library (RPL). It is a smaller library serving a town of over 20,000 people, the largest population in the county. As such, while RPL is incorporated into the city, it also serves patrons from the rest of the county for a fee, and informally cooperates with the handful of tiny libraries spread throughout the county for interlibrary loans. The library itself is staffed by only the director, a children's librarian, and I believe three part-time employees and more than a dozen volunteers. It has been the director who has operated as my field mentor, with most of my activities being done under her and the remainder being performed under the mentorship of the children's librarian.

The goals I set out for this term were composed as a result of my initial interview for the internship. At that time, I had expressed an interest in children's services to the director, who happily scheduled me to come in once a week on Wednesdays throughout the term since Wednesdays are when the children's storytime programs are. As such, one of my goals was to obtain more experience and comfort with children's services and events. Similarly, my other two goals of working on a weeding project and assisting with programming were a result of discussing the library's forthcoming plans with the director at my interview. Truthfully, I was more than a little trepidatious by the prospect of conducting outreach and programming events when it was first broached, yet that developed into one of the most satisfying aspects of the internship for me.

Outline and Discussion of Work Plan

Children's Services

My most consistent task was with the children's services. I began every morning by cleaning up the children's room, which entailed putting away puzzles and stuffed animals,

making the shelves presentable and orderly, putting thematic books (winter, spring, rain, snow, Valentine's Day, etc.) on display on the two wooden trees (see Appendix A, figure A1), and putting the seats down for the day's storytime. Finding books to be put on display was always the most time consuming portion of this task, both because there were only so many books on winter themes and we tried to avoid too much repetition, and also because children don't always return books to their appropriate place on the shelves.

Storytimes themselves constituted the majority of the time spent dealing with children's services. Beginning at 10:30 every Wednesday, the storytimes generally lasted for 45 minutes, with the arts and crafts sometimes concluding earlier or drawing on for longer. My role was largely to watch and learn how storytimes operate. However, I also took attendance and, after the second story of each session, distributed the arts and crafts supplies amongst the three tables while most of the children were distracted by the stories and songs. Once the children descended upon the paper and markers, I would wait and help with whatever was needed: parent's asking where to find a book, children unable to find a glue stick or certain marker color, there being a need for more of a certain craft item, etc. These almost always proceeded smoothly. Attendance, however, was actually an issue. The children's librarian told me that prior to December the weekly storytime generated approximately 20-30 people on an average day, with some days reaching forty. Over the previous ten weeks, however, I believe the lowest recorded attendance was 48, with the highest being more than 65. It's unclear why the sudden double-fold increase of attendance is happening, but it is, and, unfortunately, the library is not able to increase the frequency to twice a week due to limited staff availability.

Preparation for the weekly storytimes has also been something I was occasionally assigned to help with. This was mostly cutting paper, but it also involved at one point going

through boxes of donated children's books to remove any in good condition to use as rewards for the upcoming Summer Reading Program.

Programming

Programming was a larger part of my internship than what I was originally expecting. Even though there was comparatively not that much time devoted to it—replying to emails, creating posters on Canva, and creating press releases following a pre-set model—it was probably the most productive contribution. For each event, I created a poster and a press release following the city's format, with the posters being displayed in Appendix B. With approximately half of the events that I scheduled, created posters and press releases, and handled the emails for, I initiated the contact by locating the individual's contact info and reaching out to them. As for the remaining half of individuals, they were largely people who either are returning guest speakers for the library, or who the director had been communicating with before my internship began.

With February being Black History month and March being Women's History month and having St. Patrick's Day, I also created promotional content for them using relevant items in the library's collection. I collected between 10 and 15 books each from the adult, teen, junior, and easy readers and board book collections, and just 9 for St. Patrick's Day. These were then stacked in their respective age groups in a presentable fashion, photographed, and posted on social media. While these were and will be shared on the library's Facebook and Instagram pages, I also created a poster for Black History month on the biography of Letitia Carson, who was not only one of the first African Americans to live in Oregon, but also the only African American woman in the Oregon Territory to be granted land under the 1862 Homestead Act.

The Women’s History month images I took are not yet published, as I was only able to make the list of books before having to leave for the day, and so another staff member will upload them closer to the time of publishing them. However, I did this same process to showcase some of the new children’s books that arrived in late February, as well. Both the Women’s History month images and the St. Patrick’s Day promotional image I took may have not yet been published, but the Black History month images and poster, as well as the new children’s books, are presented in Appendix A.

Weeding

RPL was already conducting a weeding of the entire adult fiction section of the library due to low circulations and an increasing need for shelf space. By the time that my internship began, the weeding had just concluded at N, at which point I took over the weeding. One of my goals for this internship was to work on this weeding project, for which I established arbitrary numbers as goals. While completing 50% of the weeding project was the best of the objectives, it is, in hindsight, not something which I was able to properly measure. Additionally, the other objectives of finding 50 books to save because of their DEI fulfilments and to weed 150 books to weed were definitely arbitrarily constructed numbers that were far too low, with the latter being exceeded within the first day.

Nevertheless, I did complete the weeding of a large portion of the library’s fiction collection, proceeding from O through to Z. I greatly enjoyed it, too. Many people have spoken about weeding as being a tedious and time-consuming process that is boring to the point of a headache, but I didn’t experience any of that. For me, being in the shelves and getting to handle the material was deeply satisfying, even when I had to place what looked to be a fascinating item on the cart to be removed from the collection. Admittedly, I was not involved in the final call for

the books, as once I filled a cart with books it would later be gone through by the director to double check the work and see if there was anything that should be saved, such as any classics.

There was one peculiarity that I noticed, however. One of the requirements for keeping a book was if it was an award winner, for which reason I checked the cover and initial pages of every book for information on any awards. Yet, throughout the process from the O's to the R's I found at most three or four books overall that had won awards. When I reached the S section, there were suddenly a flurry of awards, despite the number of S authors not being the largest contingent. The dearth of awards resumed once I continued on into the T's. It was a weird detail that really caught my attention.

Circulation

Aside from the weeding project I worked on throughout the term, I was also involved in creating book lists on the library's ILS. The main one which I was tasked with creating was a book list in preparation for Pride Month that was titled Read Pride, which is a list of books written by LGBTQ+ authors, and is currently still not public.

Miscellaneous Activities

From the fifth week onward I spent anywhere from approximately thirty minutes to an hour at the front desk helping patrons, which included checkouts, printing, public computer access, and general questions. Another more miscellaneous task was attending the biweekly Spanish Club in which my attendance was primarily just to gain experience by watching how a community event is held—though a representative of the library also had to be present, and I filled that role as well. The other major task I can think of was assisting in setting up for a book fair. I removed the excess chairs from the room, brought in and set-up the tables, set signs on

them, helped transport 240 boxes of books, and then helped in placing the books around in an accessible and visible way. Figure A7 in Appendix A shares an image of the book sale.

Theory to Practice

While I cannot think of any specific theories I utilized aside from the CREW Method in weeding the adult fiction collection, there has been significant recognition in the value of obtaining working experience in a library—and appreciation of it as well. All throughout my time in the LIS program I was frankly disappointed in the inundation of theories and frameworks which so many classes devoted their focus on, with there being what felt like a massive dearth of practical knowledge in the curricula's contents. At many points in the program I felt as though I had no idea what librarians actually do in their jobs, as everything covered by classes seemed to be conveyed as the theories that work processes are evolved from. However, obtaining experience actually employing facets of what I've learned has been invaluable, even if it has also put a spotlight on several courses and content focuses that, in hindsight, could very much have been devoted to teaching something more relevant and important. My field mentor also mentioned as early as my interview that having actual work experience in libraries will provide a significant benefit when applying to jobs. She herself has said that one can identify MLIS graduates who do and do not have applicable work experience based upon how they speak and act in libraries, which can be a make-or-break factor when applying to a position.

Strengths and Challenges

Challenges

Fortunately, I encountered very few challenges during my ten weeks of internship. The most common one was more of an inconvenience, and that was the fact that by me only coming in once a week, the email conversations I was engaging in were both buried under dozens of

other emails, and inherently proceeded at a slow pace. However, some people were so fast to respond that I was able to go from an introductory email to solidifying a day and time by the end of the day, whereas others responded so slowly that it wasn't until two weeks later that I was able to see their response. This didn't seem to cause any complications, fortunately, especially since all of the events were being scheduled out far enough ahead of time that a slow discussion wasn't inhibiting their completion.

The only other challenging thing I can think of is, unfortunately, a very normal part of working with patrons, and that is complications at the front desk. In one, the patron was in no way at fault and we both found humor in the issue of the new printer deciding to continue disgorging paper after the patron's items were completed. It took a few minutes of stubbornly pressing the "cancel" button as the printer expelled document after document that only had bizarre, random symbols and letters composed of a mix-mash of things. That was an easy issue to fix.

The most difficult patron experience I had was when a patron arrived with several dozen books she wanted to check out. This in and of itself wasn't an issue since the library allows fifty books to be checked out at one time. However, when I scanned the first item and had a screen of red come up, it quickly became apparent that not only did the patron already have fifty items checked out, but that they were all more than several weeks overdue. It then took myself, the other person at the front desk, and then the library director to explain and convince the patron that they already had the maximum number of items checked out, all of which were overdue, and once those were returned could they check out more. It was a mildly frustrating experience to handle someone who thought they were above the rules, as they were implying, but it was also a

good learning experience because that is something to be expected when working with the public.

Strengths

As for strengths, I was told that I operate with good agency and initiative by doing what I see needs to be done without needing to be told to do so. Additionally, I do not ask for permission or reinforcement for every decision. Instead, I proceed based on what I was told to do, making calls with what's needed as I work, and only when I don't understand something (which has twice happened at the front desk when some unexpected code comes up) or need further clarification do I ask for help. That is not to say that I am avoiding any individual nor other activity, however. Another strength I think I can claim is being able to accept when I make a mistake and not having an issue with correcting something I've already made. For example, I'm familiar with APA and MLA formats, but the library uses AP. As such, when creating press releases and posters, especially early on in the internship, there were a lot of formatting changes I had to correct due to the differences between the formats.

Working at a rapid, controlled pace is another strength of mine. Consistently I seemed to finish a project or activity to hear the director say, "Already?" Similarly, there have been times when she asks me to do something, and then tells me I can take my time with it. I don't believe I'm rushing and making mistakes, because no mistake has been pointed out to me in anything I've done aside from asking me to place things in a different place when I'm finished with them. Consequently, I think I've just been performing things more quickly than anticipated.

Contributions

My contributions are essentially laid out in the aforementioned outline and discussion of my work plan, with my involvement in the library's weeding project, programming efforts, and

other various tasks contributing to the library's operations. I was both told directly and given the impression by several individuals that me being present greatly helped with a multitude of things, some trivial and some significant. Nearly everything I did—such as creating posters, spending time at the front desk, weeding books, and taking photographs for social media promotions—simultaneously provided me with excellent learning opportunities while also providing the librarians with more time they could devote to other matters.

Professional Goals

The internship has definitely allowed me to gain experience that has adjusted what, exactly, I would like to pursue post-graduation. When I began the program, I was interested in archives and archives alone. Over time, however, I've drifted away from that towards an interest in academic libraries, which then shifted towards public libraries. At the beginning of this term, I was interested in public libraries, specifically children's services, teen services, and, to a limited degree, outreach. From both this internship and the Children's Services and Materials class I concurrently took, I've come to conclude that children's librarianship is not for me. Teen services, on the other hand, is still something I'm interested in, and outreach has unexpectedly been very exciting and satisfying for me. So much so, in fact, that I've already been in the process of looking for and applying to outreach librarian positions that I've found. While I'm a little less confident in my communicative skills when speaking verbally as opposed to written communications, I've nevertheless been very happy with the outreach experiences that I was able to accumulate through this internship.

Closing Comments

For what would have been the third week of my internship the library was closed while its boiler was replaced, with the necessary hours lost from that being completed in my ninth

week. In my final week of the internship, the library director was on vacation, and so everything that I did was under the supervision of the children's librarian Aurora, though I spent the majority of the day performing tasks left by the director. Overall, the majority of my activity was done under Director Wiley's supervision, with only the children's storytimes and a handful of other activities being done under Aurora's supervision.

Appendix A

Miscellaneous Photos of Activities



Figure A1. Front of the children's room.

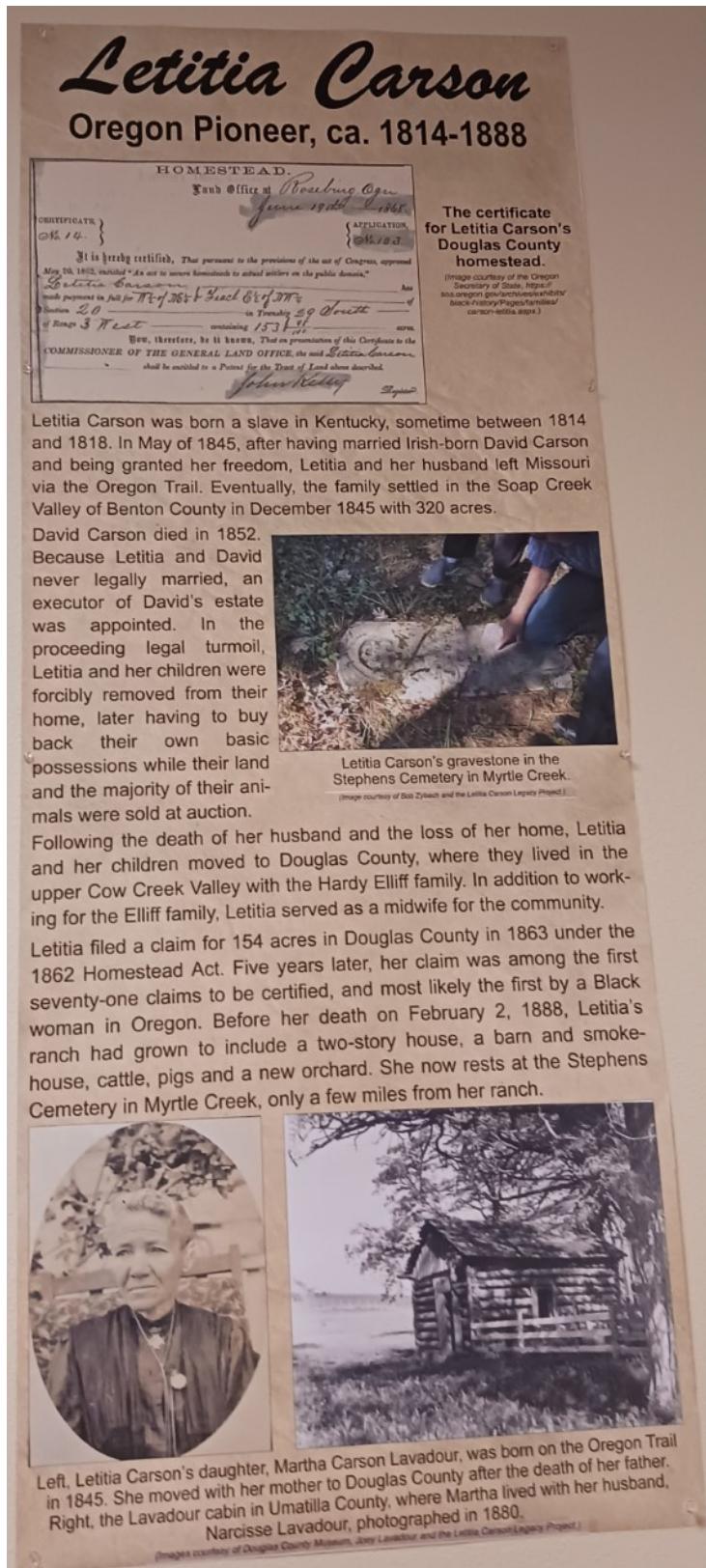


Figure A2. Letitia Carson's biography poster.



Figure A3. Image of new children's books for social media.



Figure A4. Black History Month books.



Figure A5. Black History Month's junior books.



Figure A6. Black History Month's teen books



Figure A7. The library book sale.

Appendix B

Programming Poster Samples

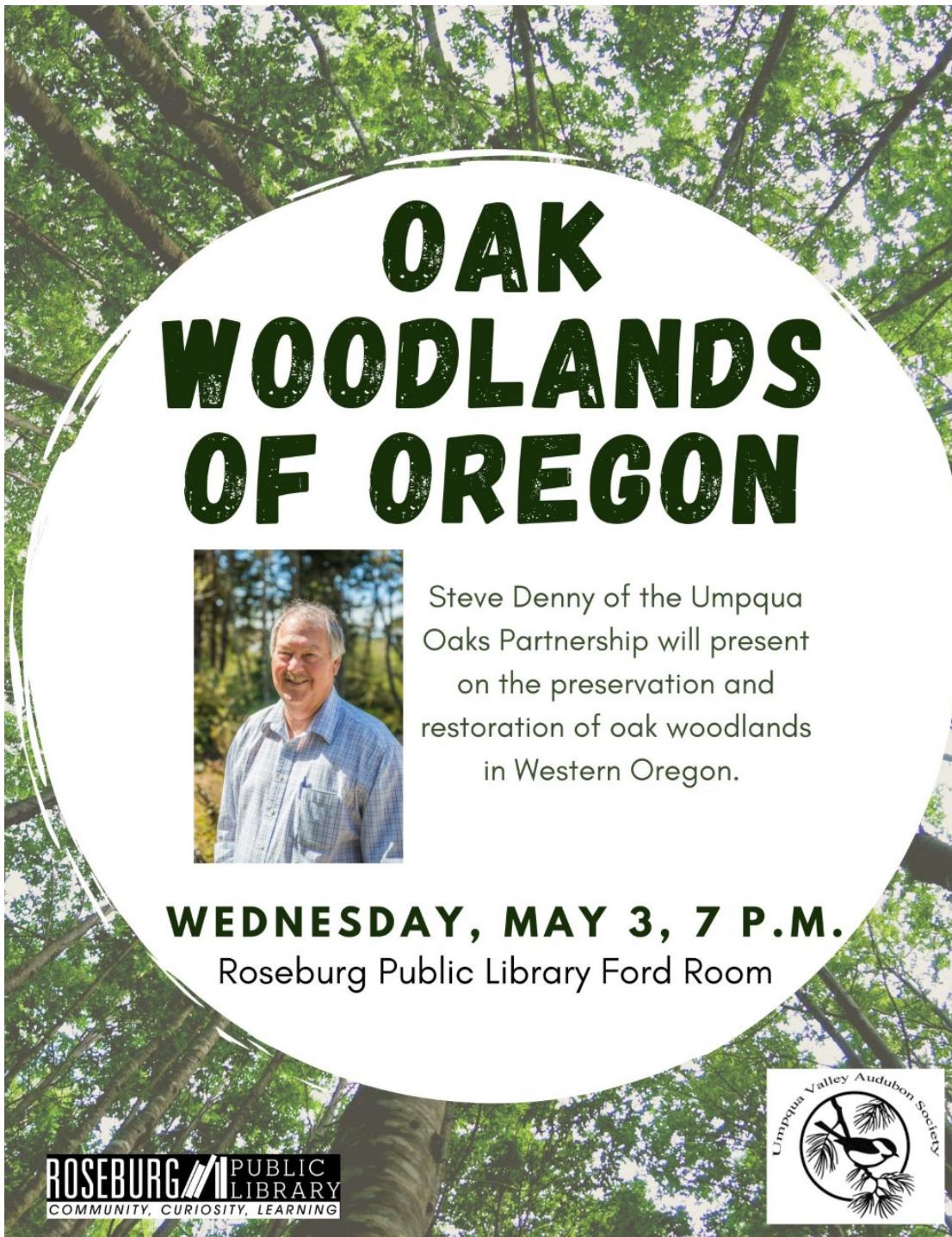


Figure B1. Promotional poster for a presentation by Steve Denny.

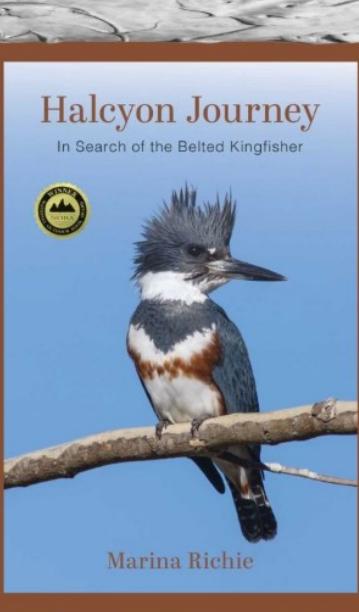
The poster features a dark brown background with white text and graphics. At the top left is the Roseburg Public Library logo with the tagline "COMMUNITY, CURIOSITY, LEARNING". To its right is the Umpqua Valley Audubon Society logo, which includes a circular emblem with a bird perched on a branch. Below these logos is the title text: "Nature writer, journalist, environmentalist" followed by a large, bold, white sans-serif font title "Marina Richie". The central image consists of two side-by-side photographs. The left photo shows Marina Richie from the waist up, wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and a bright blue patterned scarf, standing outdoors with her arms crossed and a slight smile. The right photo is the book cover for "Halcyon Journey: In Search of the Belted Kingfisher" by Marina Richie. It features a Belted Kingfisher perched on a branch against a blue background. The book cover has a small yellow circular logo in the top left corner. Below the photos, a descriptive text block reads: "The Bend, Oregon-based author will read book excerpts and delve into the secretive behaviors of North America's beloved fishing bird." At the bottom, there is a large, bold, white sans-serif font text block: "Wednesday, February 8 | 6:30 p.m." followed by "Facebook Live at facebook.com/roseburglibrary".

ROSEBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY
COMMUNITY, CURIOSITY, LEARNING

Umpqua Valley Audubon Society

Nature writer, journalist, environmentalist

Marina Richie



Halcyon Journey
In Search of the Belted Kingfisher

Marina Richie

The Bend, Oregon-based author will read book excerpts and delve into the secretive behaviors of North America's beloved fishing bird.

Wednesday, February 8 | 6:30 p.m.
Facebook Live at facebook.com/roseburglibrary

Figure B2. Promotional poster for a presentation by Marina Richie.

****Zoom only online presentation and discussion****

OREGON JEWISH MUSEUM AND CENTER
FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION PRESENTS
**Resistance and Rescue
During the Holocaust**



THURSDAY, MARCH 23 | 6:30 P.M.



Email library@cityofroseburg.org
for the Zoom link.

Figure B3. Presentation by the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education.

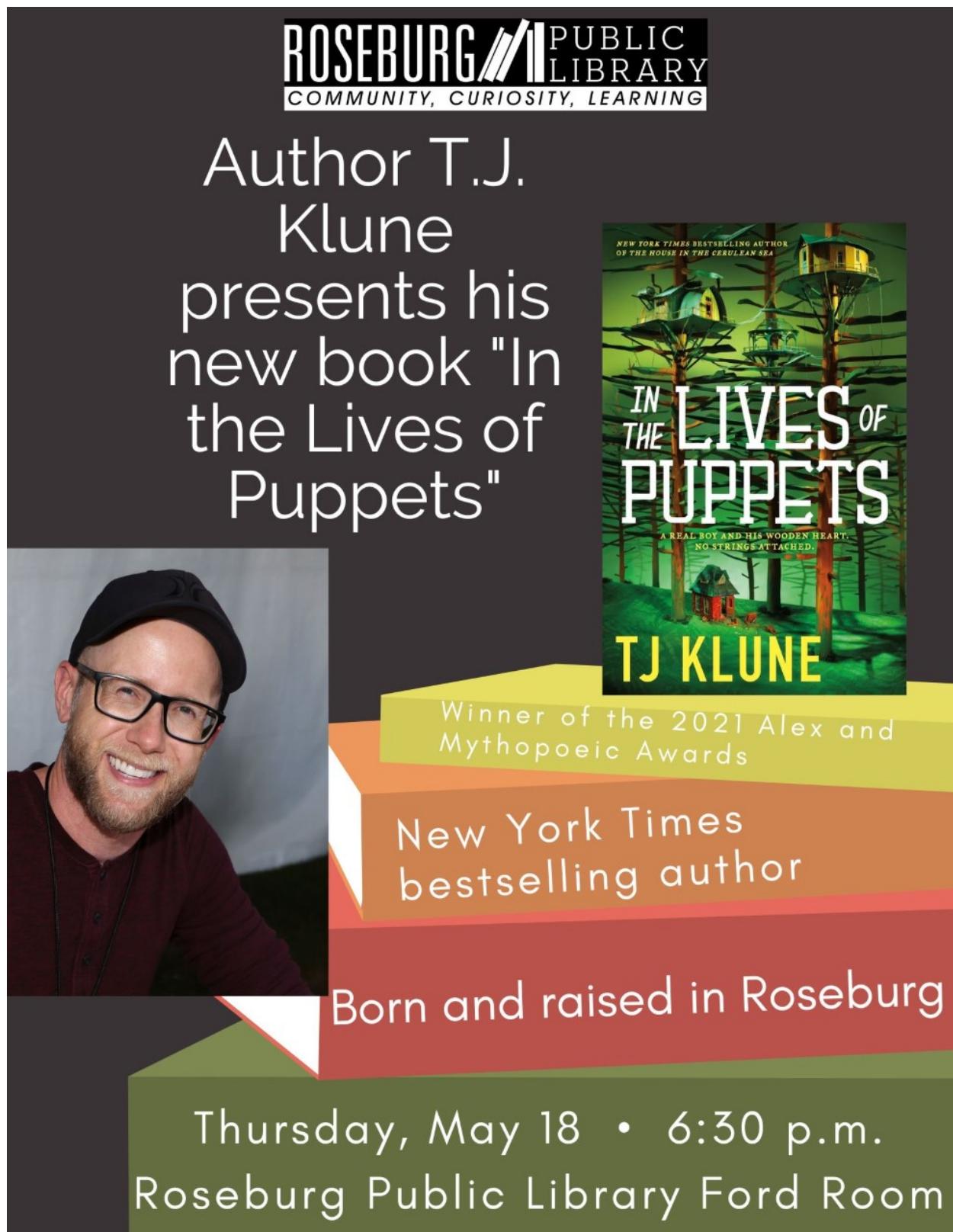


Figure B4. Poster for T.J. Klune's book tour.

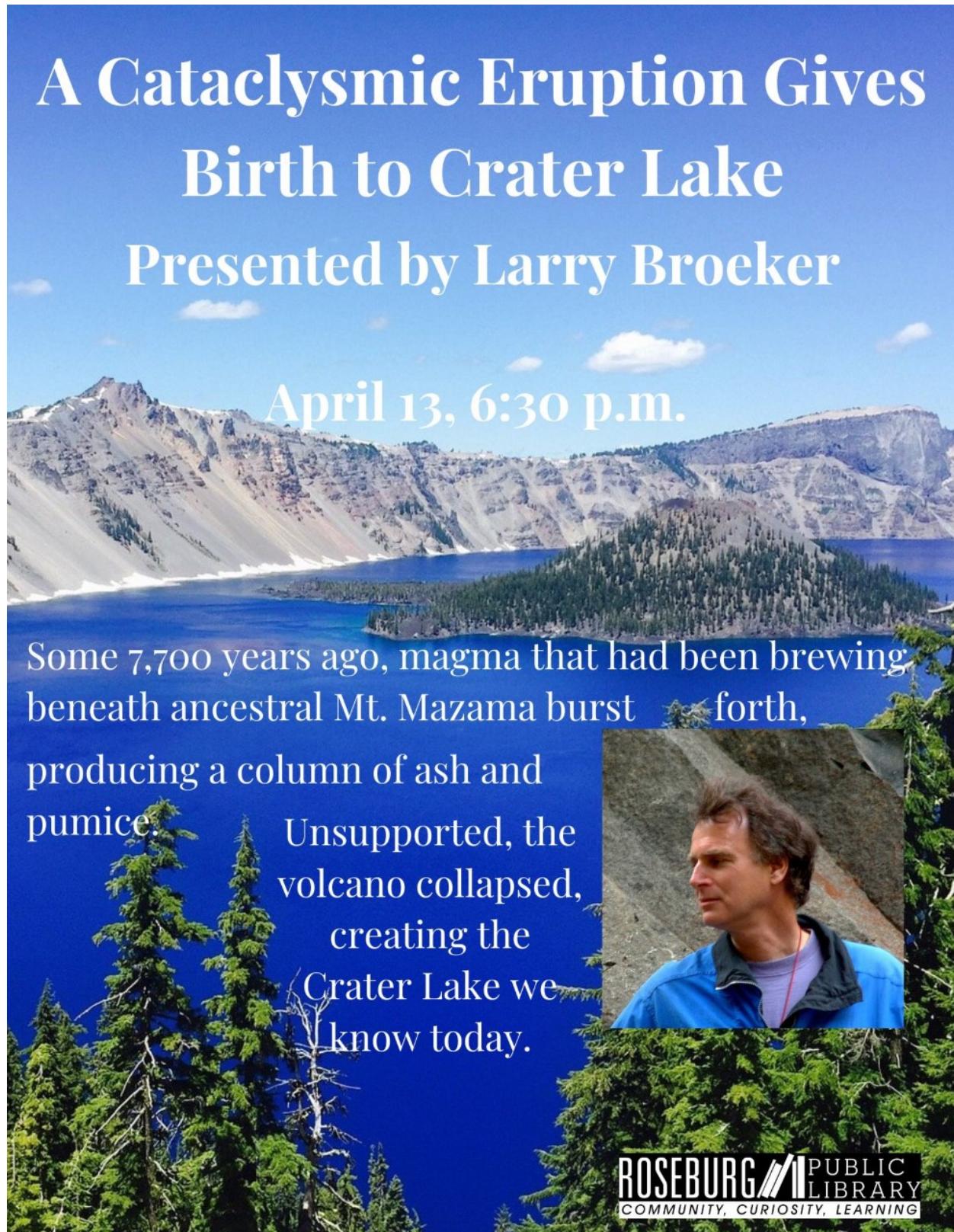


Figure B5. Poster for a talk by Larry Broeker.

Appendix C

Time Log

9-10:30	Cleaned and set up the children's room.	Overseen by Director Wiley
10:30-11:30	Children's Storytime	Overseen by Aurora
11:30-3	Front desk work and programming	Overseen by Director Wiley
3-4	Instructional videos and library policies	Overseen by Director Wiley
4-5	Weeding	Overseen by Director Wiley

Table C1. January 4th, 2023 timelog.

9-10:30	Cleaned and set up the children's room	Overseen by Director Wiley
10:30-11:30	Children's storytime	Overseen by Aurora
11:30-1	Programming and event promotion	Overseen by Director Wiley
1-5:30	Weeding, shelf maintenance, and some programming	Overseen by Director Wiley

Table C2. January 11th, 2023 timelog.

9-10:30	Cleaned and set up the children's room, started on press releases, set up arts and crafts	Overseen by Director Wiley
10:30-11:20	Children's storytime	Overseen by Aurora
11:20-12	Programming	Overseen by Director Wiley
12-4	Created promotional images of books for Black History Month	Overseen by Director Wiley
4-4:45	Spanish Club	Overseen by Aurora
4:45-5:30	Continued setting up books for photos and tidied up shelves	Overseen by Director Wiley

Table C3. January 25th, 2023 timelog.

9-9:30	Set up children's room	Overseen by Director Wiley
9:30-10:30	Uploaded the library's event calendar to the city's new website; created social media posts	Overseen by Director Wiley
10:30-11:30	Children's storytime	Overseen by Aurora
11:30-1:30	Weeding	Overseen by Director Wiley
2-3:45	Created wall poster for the Letitia Carson exhibit	Overseen by Director Wiley
3:45-4:30	Prepared arts & crafts supplies	Overseen by Aurora
4:30-5:30	Revised poster to include heading and a specific photo; created instructional pamphlet for the new scanner	Overseen by Director Wiley

Table C4. February 1st, 2023.

9-10:30	Set up children's room; programming and emails	Overseen by Director Wiley
10:30-11:30	Storytime	Overseen by Aurora
11:30-12:15	Programming	Overseen by Director Wiley
12:45-1:30	Front desk work	Overseen by Director Wiley
1:30-4	Worked with the children's librarian to process donations for books suitable for including in the collection or use as reading prizes; discussed summer reading programs and event prep	Overseen by Aurora
4-4:45	Spanish club	Overseen by Aurora
4:45-5:30	Front desk	Overseen by Director Wiley

Table C5. February 8th, 2023.

9-10:30	Set up children's room and prepped storytime materials	Overseen by Director Wiley and Aurora
10:30-11:30	Storytime	Overseen by Aurora
11:30-12	Front desk work	Overseen by Director Wiley
12:30-1:30	Weeding	Overseen by Director Wiley
1:30-5:30	Worked on the Pride Month book list; front desk work	Overseen by Director Wiley

Table C6. February 15th, 2023.

9-11:30	Weeding project	Overseen by Director Wiley
11:30-1	Programming and front desk	Overseen by Director Wiley
1-1:30	Collecting and photographing new children's books for social media posts	Overseen by Director Wiley
1:30-4	Programming, front desk, and book lists	Overseen by Director Wiley
4-4:45	Spanish club	Overseen by Director Wiley
4:45-5:30	Front desk	Overseen by Director Wiley

Table C7. February 22nd, 2023 (storytime was canceled as a result of the children's librarian being out sick).

9-10:45	Weeding	Overseen by Director Wiley
10:45-11:15	Programming	Overseen by Director Wiley
11:15-1	Prepared arts & crafts to-go kits	Overseen by Aurora

Table C8. February 27th, 2023.

9-9:45	Cleaned children's room	Overseen by Director Wiley
9:45-10:30	Deconstructed winter display in the building's entryway	Overseen by Director Wiley
10:30-11:15	Children's storytime	Overseen by Aurora
11:15-12:20	Processed books by removing their "new" stickers	Overseen by Director Wiley
12:50-4:30	Set up the bookfair	Overseen by head volunteer
4:30-5:30	Worked on library book lists	Overseen by Director Wiley

Table C9. March 1st, 2023.

9-10:30	Weeded	Overseen by Aurora
10:30-11:15	Children's storytime	Overseen by Aurora
11:15-1:30	Weeded	Overseen by Aurora
2-4	Collected and photographed books for social media posts	Overseen by Aurora
4-4:45	Spanish club	Overseen by Aurora
4:45-5:30	Completed social media posts; finalized some minor activities	Overseen by Aurora

Table C10. March 8th, 2023 (Director was on vacation for this week).