



## Staff Report

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**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:** Steve Powers, City Manager

**FROM:** Norman Wright, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:**

Summer Reading Club at Salem Public Library

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

**ISSUE:**

Information Report for Council on the 2018 Summer Reading Club program at Salem Public Library

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Information Only

**SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:**

- For the past 25 years, the Oregon State Library annually provides state-funded grants to Oregon public libraries, a portion of which is designated to assist libraries in providing summer reading programs for Children and Teens.
- Every year, Salem Public Library effectively leverages Ready to Read grant funds along with funding support from the Friends of the Salem Public Library and local businesses, to help fund all of the fun and learning of our Summer Reading program.
- For the past five years, the Salem Public Library has also run a parallel Adult Summer Reading Club with funding support from the Salem Public Library Foundation and the Friends of the Salem Public Library. Adults also love the supported literacy opportunities of Summer Reading

Club. Including an adult program also ensures that whole families get to participate in Summer Reading Club together.

## **FACTS AND FINDINGS:**

### Results:

In summer 2018, 6,600 children and teens participated in the “Libraries Rock!” summer reading club (SRC) at Salem Public Library, reporting having engaged in reading and/or listening to stories for nearly 98,000 hours. 625 adults also participated in the adult “Libraries Rock!” summer reading club at Salem Public Library. This figure doesn’t include the potentially thousands of parents and caregivers who read to their children all summer long!

- Over 3,600 participants finished, receiving a “Libraries Rock!” summer reading book bag, and several donated prizes for their reading achievements. Nearly 2,100 children and 610 teens also earned a prize book by completing early literacy activities or reading 20 hours or more.
- Elementary age children and teens also earned prize drawing tickets to try for one of the drawing prizes donated by our local business sponsors (120 prizes for children and 175 prizes for teens). Close to 5,000 food/activity prizes donated by local businesses were also awarded!

### Events:

The summer is one of the busiest times for programs during the year. Over 23,000 children, teens and their adults attended over 250 library programs held in conjunction with the SRC during the summer.

#### Highlights Include:

- Sing-along Surprise: Movie turnout for patrons of all ages surprised staff with their enthusiastic participation this year. The adult “Hamiltunes” program was especially notable.
- “Rock On!” success: Youth Services’ Tuesday craft activities typically attract about 100 participants. This year, the “Rock On!” program surprised staff with 300 eager attendees, who created a variety of rock art projects, including “Kindness Rocks,” in which participants were encouraged leave painted rocks around town for others to find.
- “Kidapalooza” ending party: An estimated 2,000 children and 700 adults attended the “Kidapalooza” party for children finishers, a huge increase from last year. This was truly a City-wide event, with representatives from Fire, Police, Public Works, Community Development

and Human Resources (through our great Facilities crew!), and behind the scenes IT provided support through the Summer Reading Database.

- Teens Celebrate after hours: 230 teens who read at least 20 hours during the summer celebrated with a Friday night “after hours” party hosted by Library staff and volunteers.

Outcomes:

- Staff received overwhelmingly positive verbal feedback from the thousands of patrons who came to the children’s and teen areas about storytimes, activity programs, performances and the summer reading club in general throughout the summer.
- Two written surveys in English and Spanish provided additional information on the summer reading program.
  - August 4, during the all ages Science Rocks! Program, about 25% of the 220 attendees completed the NASA @ My Library survey form. The program was overwhelmingly well-received. 95% of survey respondents indicated they learned about earth science and wanted to learn more about science, engineering, and space science in particular. One of the more popular tables was the Emergency Response Team.
  - The second survey about Summer Reading Club was available at the Youth “Ask Here” desk from August 7 through August 19. Although only a small fraction of participants completed surveys, of those responding:
    - Over 90% of parents indicated that the Summer Reading Club motivated their child to read more in the summer, and adults read more stories with their children because of the Summer Reading Club.
    - More than 80% of parents indicated that the Summer Reading Club helped their child maintain/develop reading/literacy skills.

Sarah Strahl  
City Librarian

**Attachments:**

None