

The Abbey Echo ... Echo ...Echo

A monthly newsletter by and for the residents of Eugene Abbey - **February 2026**

We Abbey Folks Welcomed the New Year in Style



With Music, Food and Lots of Merriment

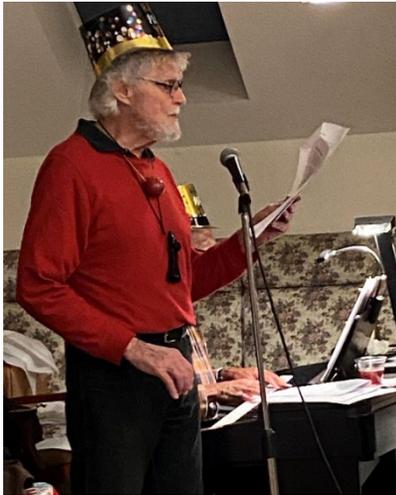
Bill W. started off the evening with this sentiment:

We offer this toast to our wonderful family here at the Eugene Abbey!

We are here this eve of a new year, not just as neighbors,
but also as a “family” brought together by our lives’ journeys.
The bond we share in our Abbey community speaks
to the warmth, resilience, and laughter that fills these halls every day.
We look out for one another,
We celebrate each other's joys,
We support each other during trying times.
We raise our glasses to

The stories we've shared,
The friendships that we've built,
And the vibrant spirit of this extraordinary group.
So, here's to many more days filled with joy, camaraderie,
and independence! Cheers to family, friendship,
and the gift of each other!

Nearly everyone joined in the festivities...



John Roy led us in song



with Stan on his Clavinova



and Donna, Sara and Wes on strings



Karen F, Gordon, Rose Mary (Phyllis W's niece), Linda G, Katherine



Judy, Smitty and Gordon



Maggie S. Anne, Janet



Sara, John Roy and Wes

continued...



Donna



Bill W.



John Roy



Maggie S, Anne, and Janet



Sara



Wes



Bill W. and Katherine



Karen F.



Bill McK



Phyllis E.

continued...



Judy and Smitty



Gordon and Stan



Robin, Dick and Chris



Donna and Bill W.



Jeanne, Donna and Dick



Karen Duncan

All of the above photos by Carolee and Betsy

Remember:

Even if you're on the right track,
you'll get run over if you just sit there.

Will Rogers



Masters of Puzzles and Brotherly Love

Bill McKenzie(R) and his brother Steve spend many hours each week together working on puzzles in our Solarium.

Bill W.

Violin Concert

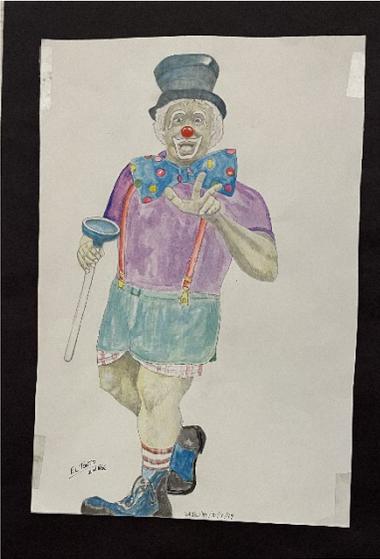
Saturday, February 7 ~ 11:30 a.m.

4th Floor Lounge

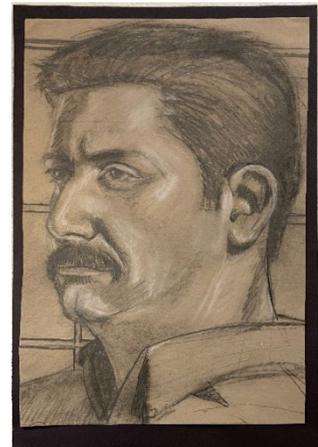
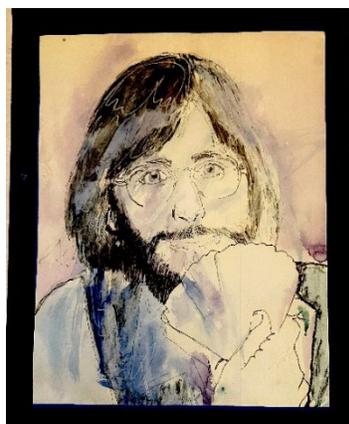
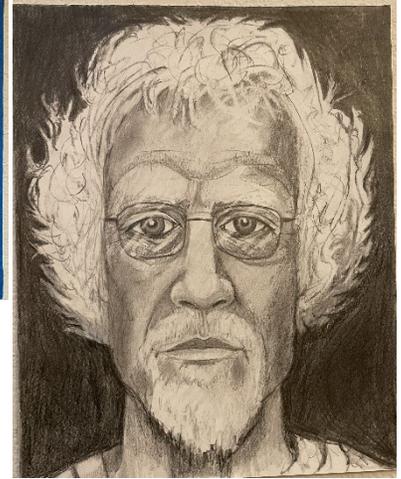
Featuring Violinist Yvonne Hsueh
and Her Young Friends and Students

For a second year, Principal Second Violinist of the Oregon Mozart Players and member of the Eugene Symphony, Yvonne Hsueh will perform for Abbey residents. Several of Yvonne's students will share their musical talents as well. Please join your neighbors for this wonderful afternoon of friendship and music.

John Roy Wilson, in addition to being a talented magician, clown and song leader, is a multi-talented person in the graphic arts; as demonstrated by this sample of his drawings, painting, pottery, sculpture and carvings. Some of his work is in the current Pub Art Exhibit and and in the pub foyer.



These are John Roy's hands, as drawn by John Roy.



continued...



John Roy is holding a clay mask that he made of his face .

John Roy shares some thoughts:

“All children are artist. The challenge is/remains one as we age into adulthood.”

-

- Picasso

First, I want to thank the Art Committee for encouraging me and displaying these images and objects. Like most children, I drew and made up “toys” that I would fit into my imagination games. I was recognized as having ‘artistic talent’ and it was encouraged by my mother and some teachers. It was getting the teaching position at the Oregon School for the Deaf, in Salem, as the Art teacher that pushed me to focus on skill development in drawing, painting and 3D works That happened when the previous art teacher died suddenly during my first year teaching middle school. I was offered the position...because I said that I thought I could do it. For 25 years I was an ‘in-classroom art teacher” and taking every studio art class at the local Community College.

As the youngest of three boys, making my older brother laugh was (and still is), a way to deescalate, redirect attention, and bring some Joy into a world in need of a good laugh. I started formal classes and workshop when I was asked to start a drama class and I started by taking a Clowning class at the same community college where I took art classes. I have gone to the Patch Adams Clown workshop in Mexico City 4 times.

I was a medic/nurse in the Army ('66-'69) I was assigned to a M.U.S.T.* hospital, in the E.R. from Jan.'68 until February. '69. I used B & W photos for most of the drawings from that time.

M.A.S. H.= Mobile Army Surgical Hospital. (Korean War)

M.U.S.T. = Mobile Unit Surgical Transportable (Vietnam War)

“Cultivate the merry heart, develop the happiness habit,
and life will become a continual feast.”

Norman Vincent Peale

A report from the Abbey Writers Group:

Come Write With Us!

Would you come to the Abbey Writers Group, if only you had time to write anything? Here's a secret: Those of us who come regularly sometimes haven't had time to write anything either. Sometimes we might bring nothing at all or we bring one of our earlier writings. So we're trying a new approach to our meetings.

We will continue sharing our writings, as we always have. Part of each meeting, however, will be devoted to just writing. If you know what you want to write, this is a time designated to work on it. If you don't feel inspired, you can look at our collection of "prompts" or suggestions to give the brain something to start on. The result might just be practice with stringing words together. But sometimes the exercise turns more productive as you continue practicing. The proportion of sharing to writing will vary at each meeting, depending on how inspired we have been recently.

The Writers Group meets in the fourth floor lounge the second and fourth Mondays of each month, from 3:00 to 4:00 or so. February meetings will be the 9th and 23rd. March meetings will be March 9th and 23rd. Writers who often come to the meetings are Dick G, Janet B, Wes B, Maggie S, and Bonnie (Carolee) H. Other writers come occasionally.

Come try it out. Bring something to write with – paper, pen, pencil, crayons, markers, finger paint, chocolate sauce, or electronic device – whatever is handy and works for you. Just come.



Betsy was up early on 27 January, and caught this gorgeous sunrise.

He's Abra-Ca-Dabra, Have-a-Banana?



First, the magic words, then pour the water into a cup dump the water on unwary assistant, then..

Voila! He's still dry!



One recent Sunday afternoon, about forty residents, families, and friends passed up TV football. Instead, they chose to risk being soaked, threatened with snakes, and flummoxed by Magician Larry and his able assistant Leo. Luckily, the trick that works 97.4% of the time was successful this time, so we did not have to call the EMTs.

The audience was suitably impressed.

Larry has been sharing his magic since boyhood, when he learned his first trick from his grandfather. After retiring from IBM, Larry taught math and magic performance to middle school students. For years he has volunteered regular twice-monthly performances at the PeaceHealth Behavior Health Center, and finds other ways to pass along the joy of magic to multiple generations. If you missed this show, be sure to attend the next opportunity.

Thank you to the Activity Committee for bringing Larry's performance to the Abbey. And thank you to Daphne and Joseph for refreshments.

- by Bonnie Hirsch



Brava, Christina!

On the afternoon of Sunday January 18, Christina Norris hosted her last movie event for us in our Fourth Floor Lounge. It was the stellar film, “Amadeus”. (Perhaps it could have been dubbed.) “the Last Picture Show”!

Prior to starting the film, the Movie Night “regulars” honored Christina for her devoted practice of offering classic and iconic films over the years, by presenting her with a lovely bouquet and a card signed by all. Here’s Christina, receiving the bouquet from Bruce Bonine. Thanks to Merlene and Katie Babits, who provided the popcorn for this special event.

Christina went on to share her early experience with films. Her passion for great films was ignited back in the 70’s. She discovered a dearth of creative films on TV, with more sitcoms than dramas, and characters who weren’t exactly good role models. That inspired her to delve into the exciting world of films with strong actors. We have been the lucky recipients of her explorations for several years now.

She has been diligently searching, curating, previewing, publicizing, and hosting countless Movie Nights, plus showing the Ken Burns documentary series on Monday evenings. And more recently, she initiated and hosted the First Annual Poetry Reading. May that tradition continue!

Profuse thanks, Christina, for sharing your lifelong passion with us and enriching our lives and inspiring us, one Movie Night at a time. We’ll miss you so much! ~

Sara Mitchell

A Reminder about the Abbey Bulletin Boards

You may have noticed that there is a notice on each board stating that notices must be dated and signed by the person posting the notice, and that notices must be removed after **two weeks.**

This requirement is to allow each resident fair access to the boards.

Warm Hugs are Good!

A new study finds the reason for why warm hugs feel so good. It could shape future mental health treatments.

From GoodNews.com, 7 January 2026

You certainly don't have to be a snowman named Olaf to like a warm hug. In fact, a recent study from researchers at Queen Mary University of London has found why exactly those hugs feel so good.

It has a lot to do with temperature.

For most of academic history, temperature has been seen purely as a physiological signal, but researchers Dr. Laura Crucianelli and Dr. Gerardo Salvato wanted to dive into "thermoception," or our perception of changes in skin temperature and how those changes influence how strongly we experience our bodies as "our own."

There's plenty of anecdotal evidence to suggest that temperature changes how we feel in our bodies; think of your flushed cheeks on a cold winter day or the tingly feeling you get after warming up after being outside in the snow.

Crucianelli and Salvato's latest research, published in the journal "Trends in Cognitive Sciences," reviews decades of research in neuroscience, psychology, and clinical science to expand the understanding of bodily self-awareness to include temperature.

This work reveals a "previously overlooked pathway through which the body communicates with the brain," a press release from Queen Mary University stated.

"Temperature is one of our most ancient senses," Dr. Crucianelli also said in the press release.

"Warmth is one of the earliest signals of protection — we feel it in the womb, in early caregiving, and whenever someone holds us close. It keeps us alive, but it also helps us feel like ourselves. By studying how the brain interprets warmth and cold, we can begin to understand how the body shapes the mind."

The contribution of thermosensory signals to body ownership. Researchers know that altered bodily awareness is present among many mental health conditions, like eating disorders, depression, anxiety, and trauma-related conditions. People might feel a sense of detachment, disconnection, or dysphoria in their bodies.

The scientists went into their research wondering if disruptions in temperature or perception of temperature may also accompany disturbances in "body ownership."

"For example, we now know from experimental studies that thermal signals play a fundamental role in clinical conditions," Dr. Salvato said.

continued...

“People with altered temperature regulation and temperature perception, due to a brain stroke, may develop pathological conditions according to which they do not recognize part of their bodies as belonging to themselves”.

The connection of thermal signals and the “skin-to-brain” dialogue, therefore, also contributes to possible sensory-focused interventions for mental health.

In addition to somatic psychology, this research also unlocks the potential for sensory rehabilitation among neurological patients, and may even inform the design of prosthetics that feel more natural.

And when it comes to everyday mental health maintenance, a nice, long hug really could have a major impact.

Hugs increase our sense of body ownership. “When we hug, the combination of tactile and thermal signals increases our sense of body ownership, so we are more connected to our embodied sense of self,” Dr Crucianelli explained.

“Feeling warm touch on the skin enhances our ability to sense ourselves from the inside and recognize our own existence. We feel, ‘this is my body, and I am grounded in it.’” Scientifically, warm interpersonal contact engages thermosensitive pathways that facilitate brain activity associated with safety and affective regulation. Combined with oxytocin release and reductions in stress, hugs support social bonding and enhance our connection to our bodies.

“Warm touch reminds us that we are connected, valued, and part of a social world,” Dr. Crucianelli concluded.

“Humans are wired for social closeness, and hugs briefly dissolve the boundary between ‘self’ and ‘other.’”

Thanks to Bill Winkley

“What we know is a drop,
what we don’t know is an ocean.”

Isaac Newton

“I can’t go back to yesterday; because I was a different person then.”

Lewis Carol

“The best way to cheer yourself is to try to cheer somebody else up.”

— Mark Twain

Meet Cami, the Very Good Dog Whose Cuddles Saved Her Owner's Life

Cattle dogs are known for their intense intelligence and limitless loyalty, so it should come as no surprise that one named Cami is credited with saving her owner's life.

Cami is a blue heeler cattle dog trained to stay by her owner's side. (Photo: Lane County Sheriff's Office)

As if we needed another reason to love dogs, now we have the privilege of meeting Cami, a devoted cattle dog hailed as a hero after saving her elderly owner's life.



Donned in a purple puffy coat and red flannel shirt, Karen Davis, 82, went for an afternoon walk on December 29, 2025, with her blue heeler cattle dog. The pup, named Cami, is known to stay by the grey-haired woman's side in case she falls.

But Davis failed to return home in **Elmira, Oregon**, about 30 minutes west of Eugene. Authorities acted swiftly, issuing an urgent public alert and launching a search in the woods near her home.

People can become hypothermic even in moderately cool temperatures if they're wet or sweaty. Elderly people, in particular, are at higher risk of exposure because they generally have thinner skin and less efficient blood flow, according to AARP. And with temperatures set to drop into the thirties that evening, quickly finding the missing woman became all the more important.

Around ten volunteers from the Lane County Sheriff's Department set out to find Davis, spending several hours scouring the woods near her home. What alerted them to her location wasn't footprints or a cell phone ping, however, but rather the sounds of her steadfast pup, Cami.

Rescuers found Davis awake in rough terrain past the dead end of a forest road. Cami was spread across her legs, her body warmth likely helping her owner live. A dog's body temperature runs a couple of degrees warmer than our 98 degrees, and their body heat can transfer to a cold person, keeping them warm and potentially saving their life. Plus, cuddles from a furry friend can help keep a lost person awake and ease their anxiety.

Rescuers initially treated Davis for hypothermia before carrying her through the brush to an awaiting ambulance. She was later brought to an area hospital. As for Cami? She's now heralded as a hometown hero.

"Cami kept her warm and signaled to Lane County Sheriff's Search and Rescue volunteers as they searched the area," Lane County Sheriff's Search Office wrote on Facebook "Thanks to area residents and Lane Fire Authority for their assistance on this search, and to Cami for being such a good dog!" *Published January 6, 2026, Outdoor magazine*

Quote of the Day

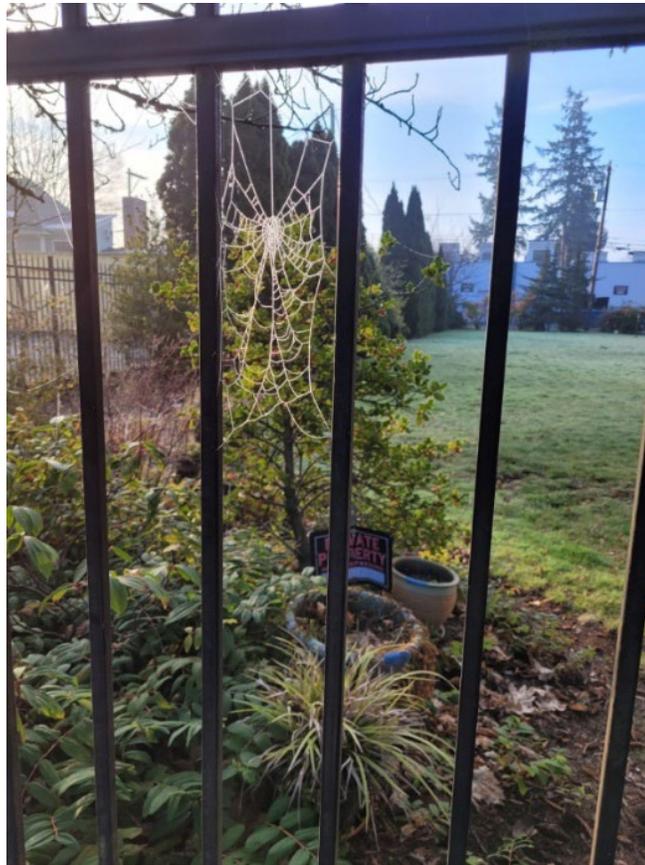
“Have a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires, and a touch that never hurts.”

– Charles Dickens , *OUR MUTUAL FRIEND*

Words to Inspire:

Darkness cannot drive out darkness. Only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

Martin Luther King, Jr.



Carolee “caught” this neat spider web on/in our garden fence.

A Valentine for the Grim Reaper

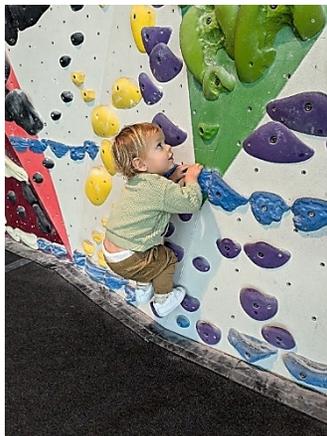
Mr. Reaper is actually quite kindly,
just overworked. We call him Grim,
but his modern job title is Sorter.
He manages transit stations like ours, between
the working world and wherever he sends us next.
He'll call us when it's our turn, but we don't know
when our turn will be. It's not First In, First Out.

Procurement and distribution. Supply and demand.
High demand for Kindness, Love, Respect.
He takes our friends away before we want to lose them.
Maybe they're going to Paradise. We can't know.
Oversupply of Meanies, Whiners, Greed.
He'd love to shove them along
but there's no room in Hell for them.
He has to wait for a vacancy.

An unappreciated bureaucrat trying to do his job,
who never gets a valentine.

by Bonnie Carolee Hirsch, 2026

And, just because I can:



Here's a photo of my 22-month old Great Grandson, Alden Brown, climbing a wall.
He takes after his great grandpa – no ropes.

Jim Mc

Bikes and Balms

By Jeanne Armstrong

Old Town Eugene is a goldmine for fascinating encounters with interesting people who just seem to pop up every few steps. But as the rain falls and the weather cools, serendipitous encounters spark different, more nuanced conversations, as with Jeremy and Jasmine.

Jeremy

Like in the Nat King Cole trio song, *I was walking along, minding my business when out of the blue, flash, bam, alakazam*, a biker in his leathers popped a wheelie onto the sidewalk right next to me.

Ooh, sorry...didn't see you there. Are you okay?

No damage. I wasn't touched. Is that some kind of motorcycle?

No...no...it's an electric tricycle.

But the tire is so big!

You have to have a tire like this for stability, but you have to get used to it and learn how to lean.

Lean? You have to learn how to lean?

If you don't want to fall off, you do.

Can you go anywhere with it?

I can take hills...any terrain...wherever I want to go.

Did you build it yourself?

Not exactly...no. I kind of helped design it. Only thing I wish I had now is a logo from my old Chicago Schwinn.

What is a Chicago Schwinn?

It's a heavy-duty bike that would last out the kind of kid I was. I had a Manta Ray with a decal that had one of those round "Schwinn Chicago" logos on the down tube.

What's a down tube?

It's the thing that goes down from the handlebars to the pedals. If I had that bike today, I could get big bucks for it.

What are you doing on the sidewalk? You made me jump a foot!

Sorry. Going right there. (He pointed to a tattoo parlor.)

You're getting a tattoo?

Yes, a tattoo of my mother's name. She died recently.

Oh, sorry to hear that. Hope the needles don't hurt too much!

They never do.

"They?" I pictured hearts or eagles, or maybe "Live to ride" hidden under the arms of his leather jacket. We said our goodbyes. Jeremy locked up his rig next to the building, and headed in as I took off down the street with my contraption.



continued...

Jasmine

Jasmine was seated at a vendor's table in the narrow aisle across from the nuts-and-grains at Kiva. I needed to grab a jug of OJ from the refrigerated case just past her, but couldn't squeeze by with my walker. She seemed distracted or maybe just bored and, at first, didn't look up.

Excuse me, could...

(She had awakened to her task.) Welcome to Kiva!

What are those things? (I noticed some small, cylindrical tubes, arranged on tiered display trays, like at a tea party.)

Those are "Botany Babe" lip balms. They have all flavors and colors. Smell this one. It is spice, my favorite...here, try this one, too. She has awakened to her task.

Where do you get these things?

We make them on our farm. Every single color and fragrance comes from calendula that we grow on our family farm in a town just north of the California border on the coast.

What town is that?

A small town you probably never heard of. (I wondered what else might be growing there.)

I did a smell test of the various cylinders she handed me. Each had a unique waxy fragrance. Jasmine pulled out her phone to show me photos of fields of colorful flowers and one of a figure rototilling between the rows.

That's my daughter. She's 15 years old. (She resumed her spiel.) Our balms celebrate plants and bees both. We use only organic beeswax (Isn't all beeswax organic?) and active botanicals and essential oils.

Where did you learn how to make a product like this?

I studied botany in college, but my most recent job is with a federal government agency. I want to get out of the Feds and back to farming full time. (That was quite a segue from balm to the Feds.)

Why? Why do you want to get out of the Feds?

She was speaking very quietly now.) There are some things I want to do, but I am not quite formally finished with the Feds yet, and there are some things you can't do while you are working for the Feds.

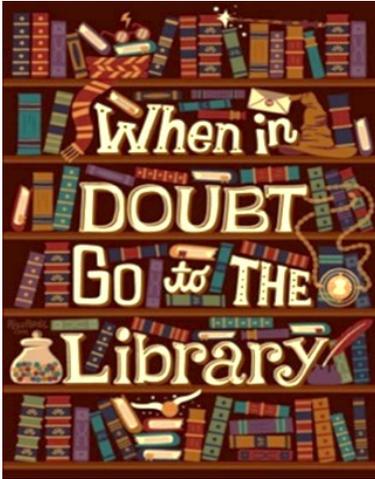


Jasmine, perhaps realizing that she had veered off topic, snapped to and returned to her litany about the attributes of calendula. This plant seems to have it all: soothing properties for skin, anti-inflammatory properties, wound healing, flavonoids that may fight cancer, and more, or (winding up) you can just have it for a plant in your garden if you want.

The spendy \$8.00 per tube apparently is justified by the extent of its properties. Since I seem to have led her off task, I purchased a tube with spice fragrance. The next morning, when I picked up the tube for a first use, it turned out to be one of the opened testers that various customers had been smelling all day! And she seemed so nice.

Jeanne Armstrong

Library Report



Survey, New Books Begin 2026

The Abbey Library is here for you, especially if you've made a 2026 resolution to read more. The Library Committee welcomes Abbey residents to reach out to us (see names below) if you'd like a tour, reading recommendations, or have questions. Look for a survey in your door clip to help us ensure we're offering the books you most enjoy. Attend a Book Talk (held twice a month), led by Sue Wineland, for an informal time of book sharing with other residents. Guest speakers throughout the year are also a highlight. As background, the library book collection is curated by the committee. Sections include fiction; mysteries; nonfiction; poetry; inspirational; and humor. The large print section is a catch-all of titles, including mysteries. Most books are arranged alphabetically by author. There are also Lane County/Oregon materials and coffee table books. Binders of articles on Abbey residents and historical background, organized by resident Jim McConnell, are also in the library. The "Eugene Abbey and Its People" binder is located next to the magazines on top of the table under the west window. To borrow a book(s), there's an open notebook on the desk with a form to fill out. There are no due dates. Please return books to the bin on the first bottom shelf as you enter the library, and the committee will reshelve them.

Books on Display

February is Black History Month, which in 2026 celebrates the theme of "A Century of Black History Commemorations." It is also the theme of the Library Committee's curated selection for Books on Display, which is located under the window at the top of the stairs on the first level. To borrow these book(s), please use the open notebook on the library desk.

Public Library Book Loan

The new selection of Eugene Public Library books has arrived! Since 2013, the library on a quarterly basis loans the Abbey at no charge 100 regular and large print books. They're located on the first-floor landing book shelves, across from the elevator. Please use the check-out form on the adjacent desk, and return books to the bin on the bottom shelf for committee members to reshelve.

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New Acquisitions

Abbey residents donated *Good Lord Bird*, by James McBride; *Neither Wolf nor Dog*, by Kent Nerburn; *The Black Wolf*, by Louise Penny; and *Giving Up Is Unforgivable: A Manual for Keeping a Democracy*, by Joyce Vance, a former U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Alabama. *Red Clay*, by Charles B. Fancher, and *The Lager Queen of Minnesota*, by J. Ryan Stradal, were purchased locally from Smith Family Bookstore with book sale proceeds.

Library Donation Policy

If you'd like to donate books of general interest to the library, thank you. First, please read the Donations to Abbey Library guidelines on the wall as you enter the library. An addendum clarifies the guidelines: If you have donations of more than three books, contact Library Committee Chair Chris to ensure space is available and your collection is relevant for our readership. Surveys show residents prefer mysteries, recent fiction and biographies. Other considerations are type size and density of type. If your books meet those qualifications, please place them in the designated bin for possible acceptance. As new books are received, current books may be sold at our book sales, donated or recycled.

Magazines

Magazines, donated by residents, are available in both the library and laundry room. Current, select magazines, including the popular *Smithsonian*, are located on the table under the window. They may be read in the library or checked out for a week. Magazines in the laundry room are giveaways. Read them while doing laundry, or take them home for reading or crafting. If you'd like to donate magazines, please put them in the Donations Box in the laundry room.

Resource Rack

New to the Resource Rack are the Winter-Spring 2026 City of Eugene Recreation guide of activities and The John G. Shedd Institute for the Arts events schedule. As a reminder, Oregon Talking Book & Braille Library application packets are also available. The Oregon Talking Book & Braille Library connects readers who have difficulty using regular print books with free audiobooks, Braille materials, and programs. Applications may also be downloaded from the Oregon library's website at TalkingBooks.Oregon.gov. For more information, call 800-452-0292 or email talkingbooks.info@slo.oregon.gov.

Book Talk Schedule

Sue Wineland leads Book Talk, an opportunity to briefly share what you've been reading, on the first and third Thursdays from 4-5 p.m. in the Downstairs Lounge, B Floor. All are welcome, even if you don't have a book to share. This month's Book Talks are February 5 and 19.

—Library Committee: Chair Chris, Jeanne, Sue (Wineland), Wes, Linda (Gordon), Cindy

Welcome to the Better Hearing Forum:

We are pleased to announce the formation of a new group for residents, the Better Hearing Forum (BHF). Hearing loss is a community issue! Hearing loss affects us all; many of us have hearing loss ourselves, or we are challenged when communicating with others with hearing loss, or both. It's a significant factor contributing to social isolation. And social isolation increases the risk of dementia.

The BHF's purpose is to offer support to Abbey residents dealing with hearing loss. We'll be offering educational events and materials, and sharing ideas for improving our acoustic environment. So please stay tuned for new developments.

We'll be meeting regularly. All are welcome; those with hearing loss and those who want to be supportive of them. Our next meeting is on **Wednesday February 25, 1:00-2:30, in the Fourth Floor Lounge**. We hope you'll join us!

~Sara Mitchell and Wes Brown

Quote of the Day

“Curiosity is the wick in the candle of learning.”

William Arthur Ward

Remember:



Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old.

Franz Kafka