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For Immediate Release

1,600 COUNTY KIDS READ UP AND “GO BUGGY” AT CITY LIBRARIES

The Umatilla County Special Library District (UCSLD) Summer Reading Round-Up across the county reports a total of 1,600 Umatilla County kids participated this year. The Summer Reading theme this year was “Catch the Reading Bug” and was available free at all city public libraries. Ken Reading, District Coordinator says this total is the equivalent of about 53 classrooms of kids. Summer Reading programs normally run about 6-8 weeks starting around mid June and ending around mid August. Summer reading is very important to kids because it helps them maintain and improve their reading level during the summer months until school starts again.

Marie Baldo, Library Director at Hermiston Public Library says “children seem to love the idea of a summer reading program. They have witnessed kids actually RUNNING to the library to check out books and participate in the activities. Not only do they check out books, but when they participate in our activities they also have to read, problem solve, sharpen their observation skills and of course socialize.”

Summer Reading programs provide kids with incentives for tracking and reporting total books read or hours spent reading depending on their local city library program. Again this year, City Libraries are reporting thousands of books read and hours spent reading by kids who register for Summer Reading. Reported incentives this year included program T-shirts, new books, loads of small prizes, weekly events and performances, even new bicycle prizes at some city libraries.

Jennifer Riley, Milton-Freewater Public Library Children’s Librarian and a School Librarian says, “the biggest benefit of summer reading is the reading! Kids that read during the summer don’t take a giant step back in their reading scores when school resumes. As a school librarian I can always tell which kids have been reading and which ones haven’t.”

Weekly Summer Reading events reported this year across the county included activities such as Buggy Fear Factor Food sampling, book talks, painting wooden bugs, bug scavenger hunts, live reptile performances from Hart’s Reptile & Bug World, bug movies, guest storytellers and puppeteers, a visiting entomologist, a Ronald McDonald visit, OMSI’s Bug Me Program and program ending picnics with lunch, games and prizes, etc.

As more kids join Summer Reading programs community support for it across the county continues to grow. A growing number of 52 local sponsors also think highly of Summer

Reading programs because they make noticeable, positive differences in the lives of kids, communities and schools. The list of known sponsors this year included all 12 City Libraries in Umatilla County, Umatilla County Special Library District, Oregon State Library Ready to Read Program, local City Friends of the Library groups, Athena Auto Parts, Gordon's Electric, Oregon Wheat Growers Association, Pendleton Flour Mills, Farm Equipment Headquarters, Pendleton Electric, Hamley & Co., McLaughlin Landscaping, Pendleton Underground Tours, Umatilla County Fair, Pacific Power, Northwest Farm Credit Services, C & C Tarps (Athena), Adams Ladies Club, Doug Keller (Echo), Yancey P. Winans Foundation (Walla Walla), Oregon Library Association, Pendleton Kiwanis, Round-Up Kiwanis, Altrusa of Pendleton, Pediatric Specialists of Pendleton, Master Printers NW (Pendleton), Vision Source Pendleton, Walmart Foundation, Wildhorse Foundation, Main Stylin' Nook (Stanfield), Main Street Market (Stanfield), Washington Group, Elephant's Trunk (Stanfield), Banner Bank (Umatilla), Hermiston Drug, G & J Dairy Freeze (Umatilla), Bi-Mart (Hermiston), Safeway (Hermiston), Carlson's Umatilla Drugstore, Athena Baptist Church & Summer Daycare, Karate Center (Walla Walla), Entomologist Dave Lybbert (Athena).