

Honor Women's History Month Through Literature
Aurora Ropp and Kris Wiley for The News-Review

March is Women's History Month, and we encourage youth to learn about amazing women by reading books about their contributions to history, culture and society.

Picture Books

A great picture book to share with young readers is "Dolly! The Story of Dolly Parton and Her Big Dream" written by Robyn McGrath and illustrated by Ellen Surrey. The story starts with Dolly Parton's interest in music as a child. She would rhyme words, clap out beats and pluck instrument strings to make her own songs. Music spoke to Dolly. She sang in her father's church and loved to listen to the Grand Ole Opry on the radio. The story shows Dolly working to perform at the Grand Ole Opry herself and starting her career.

"More about Dolly" at the end of the book talks about Dolly's entire career, her accomplishments and her commitment to literacy with the Imagination Library program, which gifts free books to kids. (Learn more about our local Imagination Library program at <https://roseburglibraryfriends.org/imagination-library>).

This book is well laid out for younger readers with short paragraphs on each page and a simplified view of Dolly Parton's early life and career. I highly recommend it for talking about the lady who sends books from Imagination Library.

Middle Grades

Author Alda P. Dobbs based "Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna" on the experiences of her great-grandmother, who escaped her village in 1913 during the Mexican Revolution.

Petra is 12 years old, and she helps her grandmother, younger sister and baby brother on their dangerous journey to Piedras Negras, Coahuila, across from Eagle Pass, Texas. They are running from the Federales, who destroyed their village and conscripted the children's father, and hope to cross into the United States.

The family receives aid from folks in similar situations and finally connects with the revolutionaries fighting against the Federales. Petra's ingenuity and devotion impress the capitana, who invites Petra to join the resistance. Will Petra continue to the border with her family or stay and fight in her homeland?

I was swept up in this survival story with a fast-paced plot and engaging protagonist, and I think tween readers will root for Petra just as much as I did.

Teens

"I Could Not Do Otherwise: The Remarkable Life of Dr. Mary Edwards Walker" by Sara Latta is the captivating biography of a lifelong activist.

Dr. Walker was born in 1832 in upstate New York to parents who encouraged her progressive ideas. As a young woman, she became a proponent of dress reform, eschewing fashionable petticoats for trousers. She supported equal rights for women and people of color, and she divorced her husband upon discovering his infidelity.

When the Civil War began, Dr. Walker volunteered her services because the government would not hire a female doctor. She served at a number of battlefield hospitals and became a favorite among the wounded soldiers.

Throughout her life, Dr. Walker was a champion of a woman's right to vote, although her outspokenness led to a rift with well-known feminists such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

I highly recommend "I Could Not Do Otherwise" to teens interested in learning about a woman with strong convictions who made a difference.

All of these books are available at the library. Place holds at roseburg.biblionix.com, or contact library staff at library@cityofroseburg.org or 541-492-7050 for assistance.

This Month's Youth Programming

10:30 a.m. every Wednesday – Storytime with Aurora

10 a.m. Tuesday, March 7 – Grab-and-go craft kits while supplies last

4-4:45 p.m. Wednesday, March 8 - Club de Idioma Español | Spanish Club for 4th through 8th graders

3-4:30 p.m. Thursday, March 9 – Teen Drop-In Hangout

3:30-4:30 p.m. Thursday, March 16 – Children's Drop-In Activity

10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Saturday, March 18 – Read with Astra Teens

10 a.m. Tuesday, March 21 – Grab-and-go craft kits while supplies last

4-4:45 p.m. Wednesday, March 22 - Club de Idioma Español | Spanish Club for 4th through 8th graders

3:30-4:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 28 – STEM program for elementary-age youth