

Youth Find Their Voice in Books
Aurora Ropp and Kris Wiley for The News-Review

Roseburg Public Library's Summer Reading Program continues through Aug. 26, and with a theme of Find Your Voice, we encourage young people to read books featuring strong characters.

Picture Books

"Jovita Wore Pants: The Story of a Mexican Freedom Fighter" written by Aida Salazar and illustrated by Molly Mendoza is an excellent nonfiction picture book about a strong young woman who stands up for her people.

Jovita wears long skirts in 1910s Mexico and hates how they get tangled up when trying to run, climb trees and explore the land. She tucks her skirts up so that she can move freely when she gets out of her parents' and elders' sight.

While she is growing up, her father and brother fight in a revolution so that people can continue practicing their Catholic faith. Her father and brother die, and Jovita takes her brother's pants, cuts off her hair and continues the fight for freedom. She is a courageous leader who guides her people to fight for justice.

The book has beautiful illustrations depicting action without being too intense. This story is inspiring to children and grown-ups to do your best and stand up for yourself and others, even when it goes against societal norms.

Middle Grades

I enjoy Alan Gratz's books, which put tweens in the middle of a historical event or current topic. The point of view shifts between three young people living in different parts of the world, and they always have a connection that is revealed at the end. The plot is fast paced with lots of action, and the young people use their voices to stand up for themselves and what's right for them.

In "Two Degrees," Gratz tackles climate change from the perspective of Akira, whose Sierra Nevada, Calif., home is engulfed in a wildfire; Owen and George, who have to fight off a polar bear in thawing Churchill, Manitoba; and Natalie, who is separated from her mom and neighbor when a hurricane decimates their home in Miami.

If you like the I Survived series by Lauren Tarshis, Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales or the Ranger in Time series by Kate Messner, I encourage you to pick up Alan Gratz.

Young Adults

Angeline Boulley's "Warrior Girl Unearthed" is a worthy follow-up to the award-winning "Firekeeper's Daughter," both of which feature young Native American women coming of age on Sugar Island, Michigan.

Boulley's mysteries focus on themes such as the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, generational trauma, family and community bonds, and the beauty of traditional ways.

"Warrior Girl" also examines repatriation from the perspective of Perry Firekeeper-Birch, a reluctant participant in a summer internship until she realizes the extent of the theft of her Anishinaabe people's bodies and belongings that has occurred over hundreds of years.

Those serious subjects are wrapped up in a fast-past plot that finds Perry organizing a group of friends and elders to pull off an epic heist that has unintended consequences.

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

This Month's Youth Programming

9 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday, July 3 through Saturday, July 8 - StoryWalk® at Quintus Park

10 a.m. every Tuesday (except July 4) – Grab-and-go craft kits while supplies last at library

10:30 a.m. every Wednesday (except July 5) – Storytime with Aurora at Stewart Park Pavilion

1-2:30 p.m. Thursday, July 6 – Teen program: Beads and bracelets at library

10:30-11:30 a.m. Friday, July 7 – Children's program: Crafts and watercolors at Stewart Park Pavilion

9 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday, July 10 through Saturday, July 15 - StoryWalk® at Micelli Park

1-2 p.m. Tuesday, July 11 – Children's program: Native Storytime with Karen Kitchen (Osage Nation) at library

1-2:30 p.m. Thursday, July 13 – Teen program: Virtual reality and video games at library

10:30-11:30 a.m. Friday, July 14 – Children's program: Alka-Seltzer rockets at Stewart Park Pavilion

9 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday, July 17 through Saturday, July 22 - StoryWalk® at Beulah Park

1-2 p.m. Tuesday, July 18 – Children's program: Detective Day at library

1-2:30 p.m. Thursday, July 20 – Teen program: Tie dye at library

10:30-11:30 a.m. Friday, July 21 – Children’s program: Weaving at Stewart Park Pavilion

9 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday, July 24 through Saturday, July 29 - StoryWalk® at Thompson Park

1-2 p.m. Tuesday, July 25 – Children’s program: Legos at library

1-2:30 p.m. Thursday, July 27 – Teen program: Virtual reality and video games at library

10:30-11:30 a.m. Friday, July 28 – Children’s program: Learn about Roseburg Parks with City Horticulturalist Hailey Malone at Stewart Park Pavilion

10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Saturday, July 29 – Harry Potter Day: Participate in Harry Potter-themed activities, dress up as a wizard, and answer trivia at library

9 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday, July 31 through Saturday, August 5 - StoryWalk® at Sunshine Park