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As Florence was a retirement community, over my 19 year tenure we lost quite a few of those regulars to the march of time. We had forged a relationship with each of them from years of reference and readers advisory services. When we lost a patron, they were missed. The absence was felt by all the staff. Library service in a small community is very personal.

The eleven years that I have worked at the Deschutes Public Library have been special. When I arrived here in 1997, the library had been underfunded for years, and was on the brink of losing all funding. I'll never forget working with a committed staff and legions of devoted volunteers—numbering in the hundreds—to solve the crisis by forming the library district.

It's been fulfilling to watch a library that had been in retreat for years evolve into one of the leading programs in the Northwest. It has been very rewarding to see the staff explore new ideas and develop new skills. The thousands of people who walk through the doors of the branch libraries every day is an ongoing affirmation that all those hours that library supporters spent making election phone calls in 1998 were worth the effort.

Libraries have been very generous to me. My first position formed my values and imbued me with an appreciation of learning and discourse. My work in libraries has helped me to understand the needs of those in crisis, the importance of community, and the power of ideas and ideals. And I met my wife at the library!

I'm looking forward to repaying this debt by joining the ranks of citizen library supporters upon my retirement on January 2nd.

May libraries be as good for you as they have been for me.

Michael Gaston
Library Director

The Deschutes Public Library

Bend Public Library
601 NW Wall Street
Bend, Oregon 97701
617-7040

Outreach Services
507 NW Wall Street
Bend, Oregon 97701
312-1035

La Pine Public Library
16425 1st Street
La Pine, Oregon 97739
312-1090

Redmond Public Library
827 SW Deschutes Avenue
Redmond, Oregon 97756
312-1050

Sisters Public Library
110 N Cedar Street
Sisters, Oregon 97759
312-1070

Sunriver Area Public Library
56855 Venture Lane
Sunriver, Oregon 97707
312-1080



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