

# BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Franklin Branch

Wednesday

October 16, 2024

Board of Trustees Meeting—3:00 pm

**Budget & Finance Committee** *will NOT* meet



**Blackwater Regional Library  
Franklin Branch**

**280 N. College Dr.  
Franklin, Virginia 23851**



Franklin, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Surry, and Sussex  
[www.blackwaterlib.org](http://www.blackwaterlib.org)

Please notify Amy at 757-653-0298 x 304 if you are unable to attend or need directions.

# Board Packet Contents

## October 16, 2024

- Agenda – October 2024
- Minutes – September 2024
- Library Director's Report
- Library Bills
- Monthly Statistics Report – September 2024
- Staffing and Workshop Report

**Blackwater Regional Library  
Board Meeting  
October 16, 2024**

**Agenda**

Franklin Branch

Call to Order

Adoption of Agenda – October 2024

Approval of Minutes – September 2024

Public Comment

Correspondence

Director’s Report

Committee Reports

- Budget and Finance
- Personnel and Policy
- Long Range Planning

Review of Approval of Accounts Payable and File for Annual Audit

Unfinished Business

New Business

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Announcement of Next Meeting

- November 20, 2024

Adjournment

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES  
September 18, 2024**

**Present**

Deborah Dawson – Surry County  
Charlene Herrala – Isle of Wight County  
Pam Lease – City of Franklin  
Terri Hedgepeth – City of Franklin  
Kathy Lippard – Isle of Wight County  
Jessica Moore – Sussex County  
Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin  
Pam Vaughan – Isle of Wight County  
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County  
Bill Worsham – Southampton County  
Ben Neal – Library Director  
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager

**Remote (via Zoom)**

**Absent**

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County  
Ora Briggs – Sussex County  
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County  
Jennifer Cuthbertson – Southampton County  
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director

Chair, Deborah Dawson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 2:08 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

**Agenda**

Ms. Moore requested “Consideration of Fiscal Agent Contract” be added under New Business. Ms. Lippard moved, and Ms. Lease seconded that the agenda be approved as amended. The vote was unanimous.

**Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests**

None

**Minutes**

Mr. Worsham moved, and Ms. Harris seconded the minutes be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

**Public Comment**

None

**Correspondence**

None

**Library Director’s Report**

Roku device project launched in September to provide popular streaming services free of charge to our patrons. Mr. Neal demonstrated a Roku device, and explained it works.

Summer Reading Program 2024 was a success with over 1,200 children registered and over 22,000 children’s books checked out system-wide. 74 SRP programs were held with over 5,000 people attending.

BRL participated in National Night Out festivities in Surry, Stony Creek, Wakefield, and Windsor.

**Committee Reports**

*Budget & Finance* – Ms. Moore – The committee meeting was cancelled, but will be rescheduled very soon, to work on annual budget preparations. Mr. Neal will contact committee members with possible meeting dates.

*Personnel & Policy* – Ms. Vaughan – The committee did not meet. They typically meet the first Wednesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. New committee members, please let Ms. Vaughan know if those days do not work for you.

*Long Range Planning* – no report

#### **Accounts Payable**

Ms. Moore moved, and Ms. Vaughan seconded that the accounts payable be filed for the Annual Audit. The vote was unanimous.

#### **Unfinished Business**

*Committee Lists* - Mr. Neal will send updated committee lists to Trustees.

#### **New Business**

*Consideration of Fiscal Agent Contract* – Ms. Moore – Every three years, the Fiscal Agent contract needs to be renewed. The Fiscal Agent (currently Southampton County) holds funds, makes bank deposits, and is a signer on checks. BRL is also enrolled in Virginia Retirement System and purchases health insurance through Southampton County. Ms. Moore moved, and Mr. Worsham seconded to ask Mr. Neal to renegotiate the Fiscal Agent contract with Southampton County. The vote was unanimous.

#### **Board Member Comments/Announcements**

Mr. Worsham – Courtland needs volunteers. Please encourage people to volunteer at all branches.

Ms. Moore – Wakefield & Waverly Book Clubs resumed (September – May); the 9/17 Farmer’s Market was rained out, next one in October.

Ms. Dawson – excited about Roku devices; Nottoway Powwow is 9/21 – 9/22, BRL will be onsite.

Mr. Neal – Relay For Life of Franklin/Southampton is 9/21, BRL will be onsite with outdoor games and volunteers.

#### **Announcement of Next Meeting**

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be on October 16, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

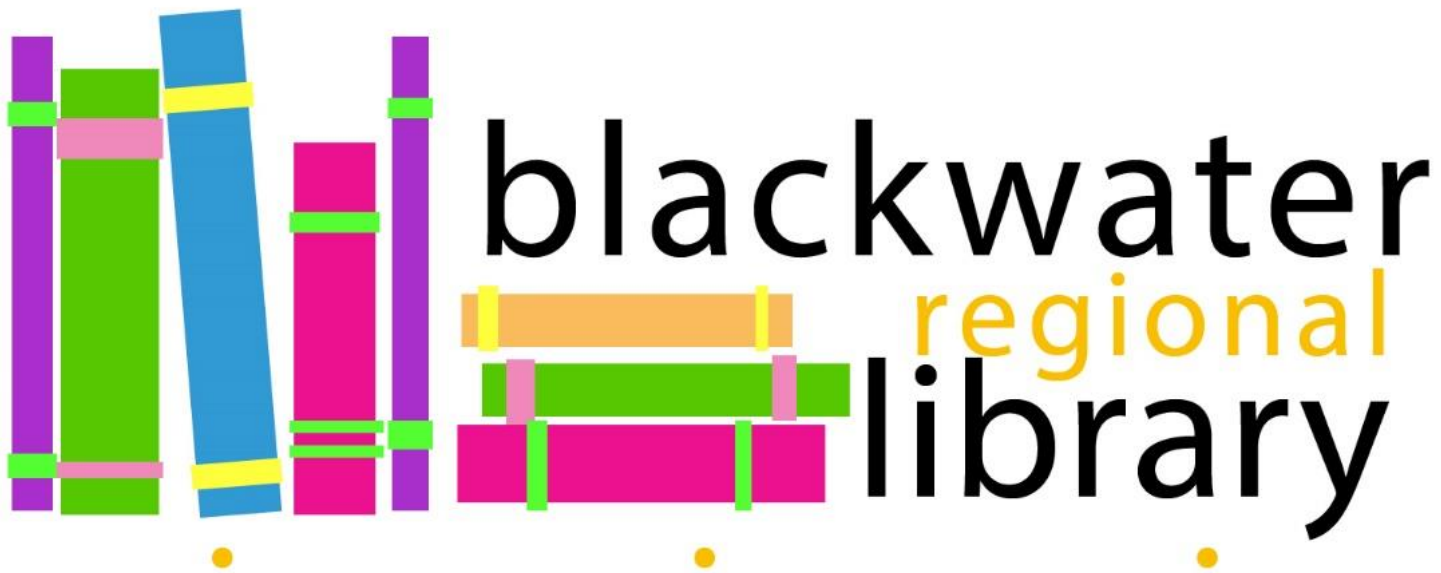
#### **Adjournment**

Ms. Lease moved, and Ms. Vaughan seconded the meeting be adjourned. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for  
Sylvia Claggett, Secretary



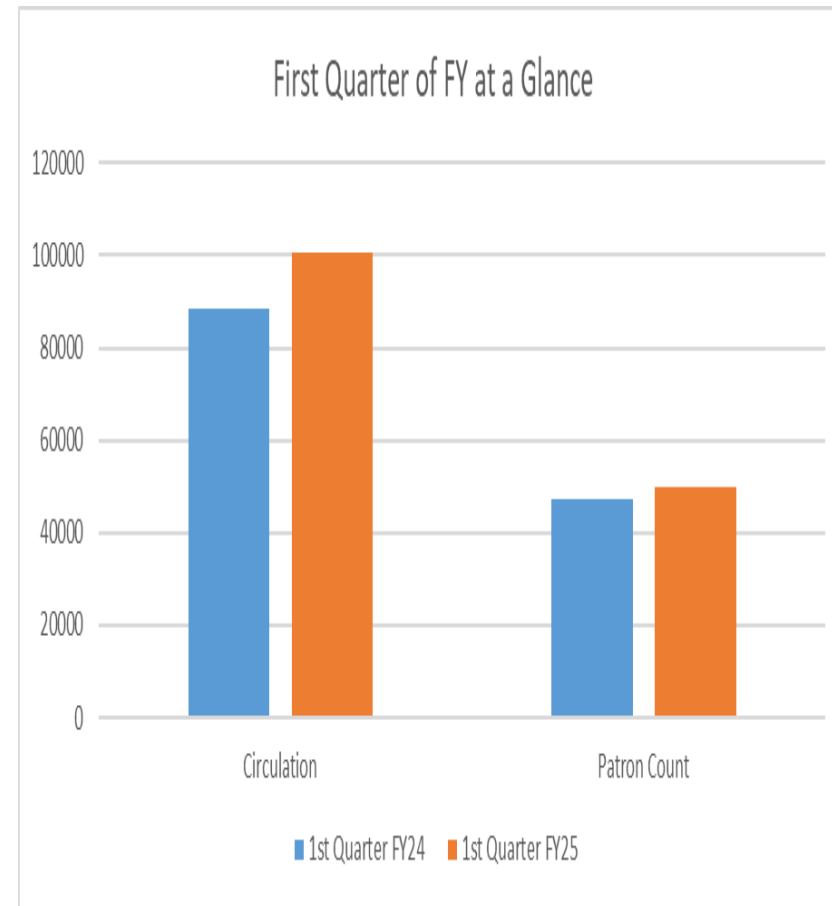
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# Director's Report

## September 2024

# Admin Updates

- Trying to fill three vacancies as of 10.7.24
- Roku Streaming Devices launch went really well and smoothly. Patrons have already shown a lot of demand for these devices
- Comparable data from previous year shows positive directional trends for community usage of the library



Compared to Same Period Last Year:  
Circulation +13%  
Visits +5%  
Active Users +2%



# BRL in the Community



YMCA Book Fair at  
Armory Park



Nottoway Pow Wow



Capron Community Day



# City of Franklin

- Programming started back up at the Franklin branch with good turnout, especially for youth programs
- Thanks to generous funding by the Camp Foundation, the Franklin branch has a new PLAY Touch Game loaded with educational games
- Franklin branch staff also presented fun outdoor games and library information to attendees at the recent Relay for Life event in Franklin



# Isle of Wight County

- Carrollton Branch hosted many programs, including their Chapter Chat series, where teens discussed the book “Emperanza Rising” and made yarn dolls that were featured in the book for Hispanic Heritage Month
- Smithfield Branch had another busy month with a highlight being the Lego Labs program where local students made Wind-powered Lego vehicles in this STEAM-heavy program
- Windsor branch featured a lot of fun programs, including Little Explorers Story Time, Craftsy for Adults, and a BRL Threads group that has been make hats, scarves, and socks for a non-profit to give to those at sea



# Southampton County

- Sheriff's Department staff presented a Pet CPR program to help demonstrate lifesaving measures that can be employed for pets.
- Local author Charles Qualls visited with our book club and talked about his latest book "Time Well-Spent at Bubba-Doos"
- Other programs such as PAWS to Read and Craftsy continue to do well





# Surry County

- Fall programming returned with a plethora of fun programs for all ages at both Surry and Claremont branches
- The library also continued to be a friendly, calm, and fun space for socializing with your family, others, or by yourself; especially with our activity stations like our coloring station.
- Library staff also represented the library at the Nottoway Pow Wow



# Sussex County

- A highlight in library services in Sussex County was the Waverly branch's first ever Free Produce Market in early September: in partnership with First Connections and Lulus Local Foods, and provided by a grant, this program was able to provide the community with wonderful produce, completely free of charge. There were no qualifications, everyone was welcome on a first come, first served basis.
- This was a successful event reaching about 120 people, and Outreach Services were there to offer free books and library cards



# Blackwater Regional Library

## Library Bills

September 2024

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
<b>360IT Partners</b>				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11257	-128.00
09/18/2024	Bill		CW259188-1	128.00
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11280	-6,751.80
09/30/2024	Bill		MSP260795	799.80
09/30/2024	Bill		MSP259655	5,952.00
<b>AFLAC</b>				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11281	-872.11
09/30/2024	Bill		647884	872.11
<b>Amazon Capital Services</b>				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11282	-1,658.16
09/30/2024	Bill		1H7Y-Y1MW-G3YK	1,071.82
09/30/2024	Bill		1K4W-LNTP-C6G3	586.34
<b>Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield</b>				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11258	-8,744.00
09/18/2024	Bill		000819674F	8,744.00
<b>AT&amp;T</b>				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11283	-3.30
09/30/2024	Bill		1180237787	3.30
<b>Baker &amp; Taylor</b>				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11259	-3,553.77
09/18/2024	Bill		5019092843	3,553.77
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11284	-6,928.82
09/30/2024	Bill		5019113949	6,928.82
<b>Baker &amp; Taylor - Laminate</b>				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11260	-296.27
09/18/2024	Bill		5019091816	296.27
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11285	-947.65
09/30/2024	Bill		5019108404	947.65
<b>Blackstone Publishing</b>				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11261	-97.72
09/18/2024	Bill		2169212	41.66
09/18/2024	Bill		2169102	56.06
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11286	-41.66
09/30/2024	Bill		2169332	41.66



# Blackwater Regional Library

## Library Bills

September 2024

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Cengage Learning, Inc./Gale				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11262	-98.37
09/18/2024	Bill		85337138	98.37
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11287	-65.58
09/30/2024	Bill		85693588	65.58
Charter Communications				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11263	-3,659.00
09/18/2024	Bill		177213501090724	3,659.00
Demco, Inc.				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11264	-733.46
09/18/2024	Bill		7528452	640.51
09/18/2024	Bill		7533829	92.95
Document Systems, Inc.				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11288	-2,919.31
09/30/2024	Bill		140768	2,919.31
Dodson Pest Control				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11265	-50.00
09/18/2024	Bill		957033523	50.00
Dominion Energy Virginia				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11289	-2,414.28
09/30/2024	Bill		3233130008 9.30.2024	2,414.28
EnvisionWare, Inc.				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11266	-1,218.66
09/18/2024	Bill		INV-US-72394	1,218.66
H2O To Go				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11290	-47.25
09/30/2024	Bill		Acct 7825 9.30.2024	47.25
Midwest Tape				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11267	-575.30
09/18/2024	Bill		506005366	575.30
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11291	-2,672.08
09/30/2024	Bill		506042653	2,672.08
OCLC Inc				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11268	-2,918.29

# Blackwater Regional Library

## Library Bills

September 2024

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
09/18/2024	Bill		1000202296	2,918.29
Overdrive, Inc				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11269	-3,440.33
09/18/2024	Bill		03100CO24258800	805.29
09/18/2024	Bill		03100CO24258801	1,123.99
09/18/2024	Bill		03100DA24267174	1,287.13
09/18/2024	Bill		03100DA24269586	223.92
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11292	-3,991.31
09/30/2024	Bill		03100DA24281148	1,498.67
09/30/2024	Bill		03100DA24291714	150.00
09/30/2024	Bill		03100CO24271783	1,755.68
09/30/2024	Bill		03100DA24274575	586.96
Petersburg Alarm Company				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11293	-435.00
09/30/2024	Bill		208964	435.00
Petty Cash				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11294	-752.72
09/30/2024	Bill	Sept 2024 Petty Cash		752.72
Queen B's Cleaning Service				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11295	-1,096.50
09/30/2024	Bill		1651	1,096.50
Sentara Health Plans				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11296	-15,218.00
09/30/2024	Bill		9125165	15,218.00
Southampton County				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11297	-61.60
09/30/2024	Bill	Acct 46 9.17.2024		61.60
Spectrum Enterprise				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11270	-98.70
09/18/2024	Bill		089740301090124	98.70
T & A Repairs, LLC.				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11298	-263.39
09/30/2024	Bill		35946	133.48
09/30/2024	Bill		35893	129.91

# Blackwater Regional Library

## Library Bills

September 2024

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Terry Andrews				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11299	-163.45
09/30/2024	Bill		SM Disc reimb 9.24.24	163.45
The Library Corporation				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11300	-31,273.20
09/30/2024	Bill		INV11002379	31,273.20
The Library of Virginia				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11271	-7,125.52
09/18/2024	Bill		1045362	7,125.52
The Library Store, Inc.				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11272	-4,948.85
09/18/2024	Bill		706467	1,968.29
09/18/2024	Bill		705436	2,980.56
TowneBank/Card Services				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11273	-6,481.93
09/18/2024	Bill		6457 0001 9.18.2024	6,481.93
Treasurer of Virginia (1)				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11301	-45.00
09/30/2024	Bill		A Watkins 00295759	45.00
Unique Management Services, Inc.				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11274	-163.10
09/18/2024	Bill		6129794	163.10
Verizon (1)				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11275	-161.78
09/18/2024	Bill		935119692 9.9.2024	161.78
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11302	-61.91
09/30/2024	Bill		624106825 9.22.2024	61.91
Verizon Wireless				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11276	-2,840.71
09/18/2024	Bill		9973427900	2,840.71
Virginia State Police				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11303	-20.00
09/30/2024	Bill		J Hickman	20.00

# Blackwater Regional Library

## Library Bills

September 2024

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Womack Publishing Company, Inc.				
09/30/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11304	-56.00
09/30/2024	Bill		Acct 150150 9.25.2024	56.00
Xerox Financial Services				
09/18/2024	Bill Payment (Check)		11277	-2,238.33
09/18/2024	Bill		6222152	2,238.33

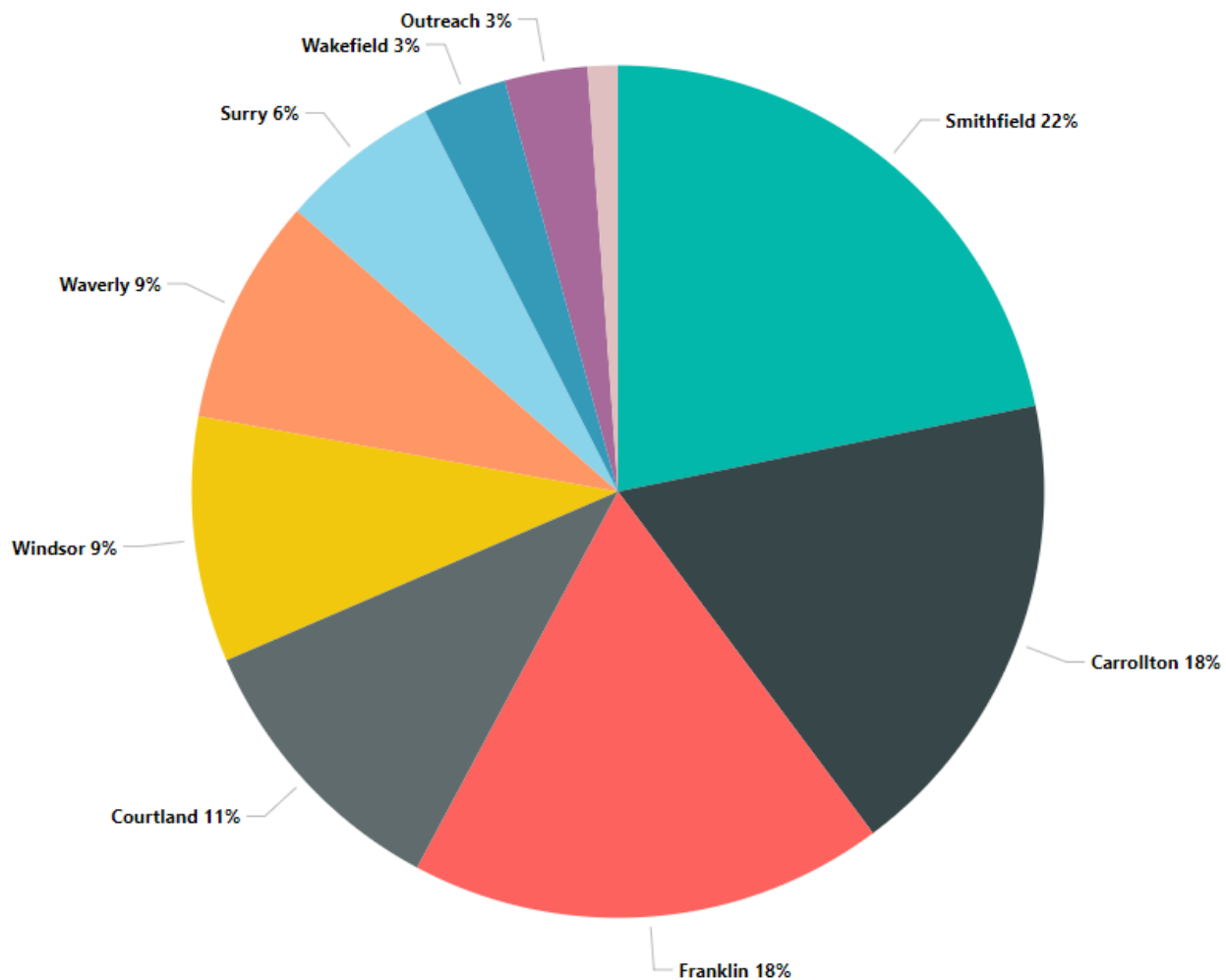


Franklin, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Surry, and Sussex  
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# September 2024

## Statistics

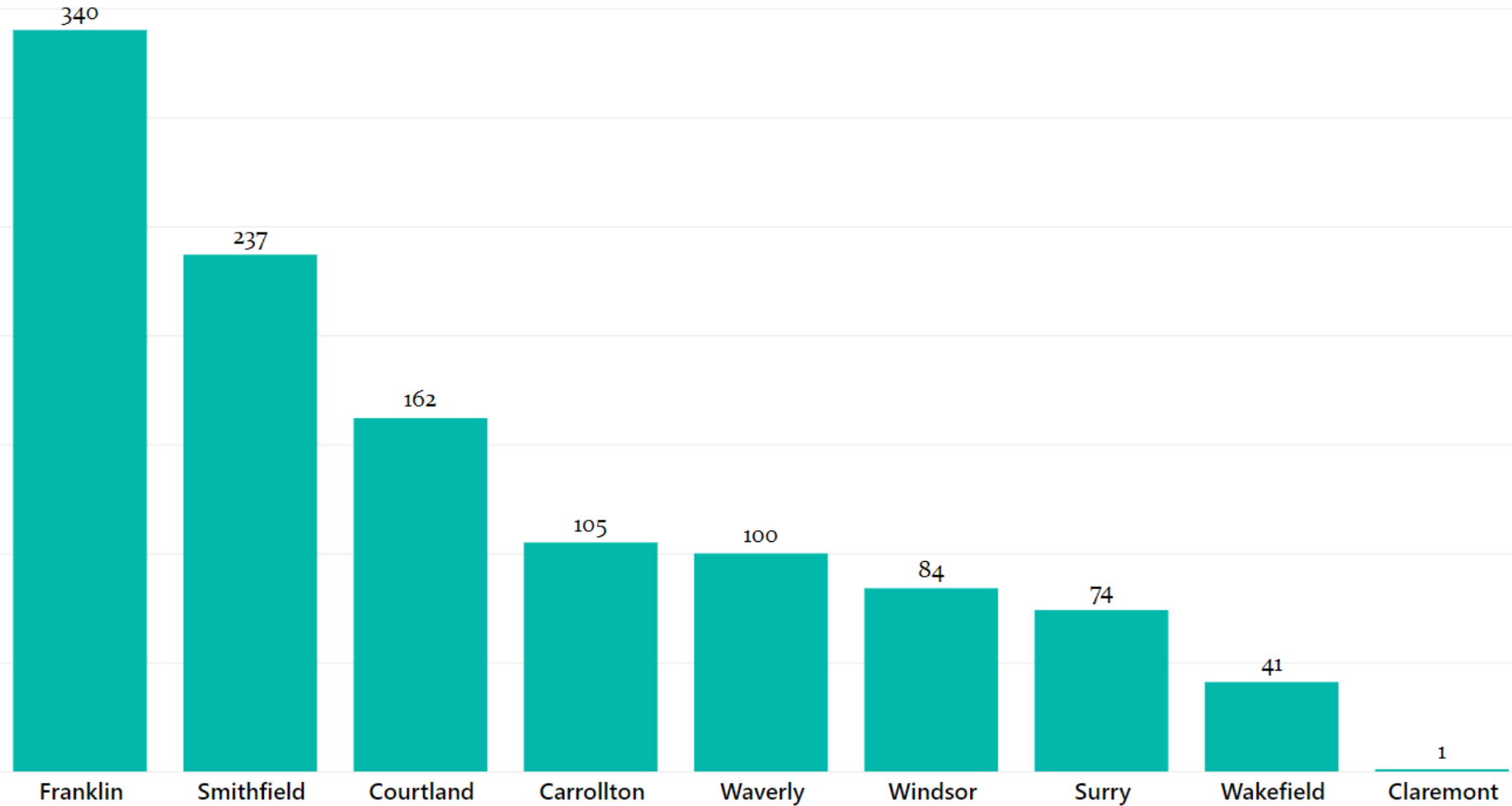
# Monthly Report: Patron Count



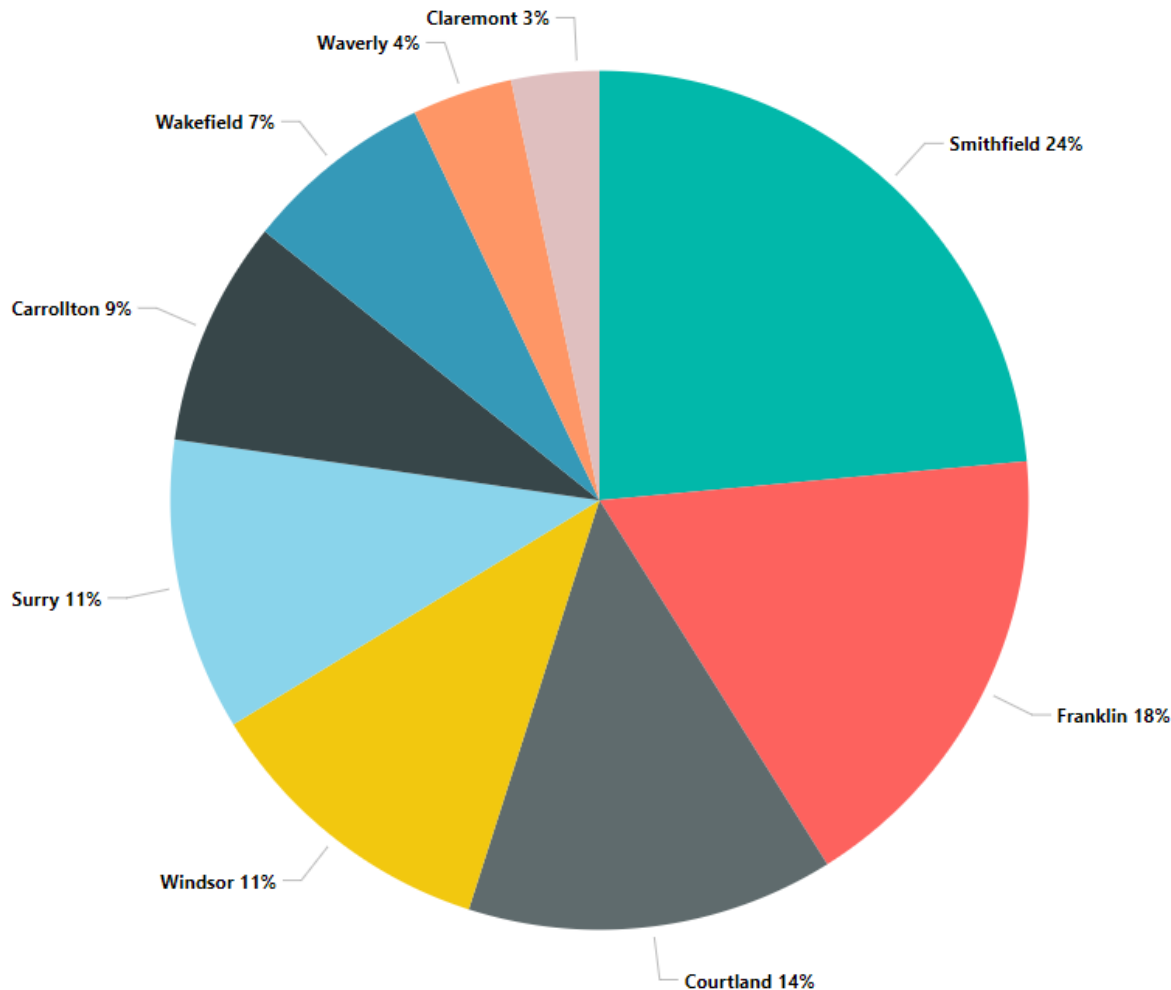
Branch	Patron Count
Carrollton	2479
Claremont	157
Courtland	1472
Franklin	2479
Outreach	433
Smithfield	2994
Surry	838
Wakefield	437
Waverly	1183
Windsor	1282
<b>Total</b>	<b>13754</b>



# Monthly Report: In-House Internet



# Monthly Report: WiFi Use

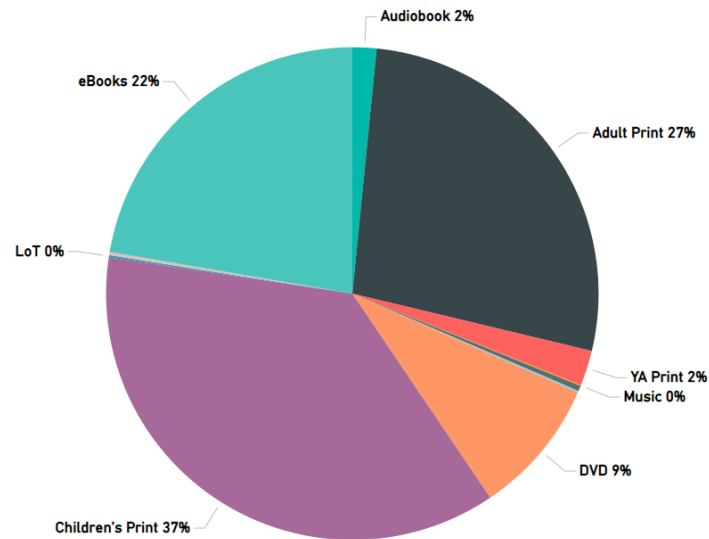


Branch	Wireless Internet Usage
Carrollton	126
Claremont	49
Courtland	205
Franklin	260
Smithfield	349
Surry	163
Wakefield	106
Waverly	56
Windsor	168
<b>Total</b>	<b>1482</b>

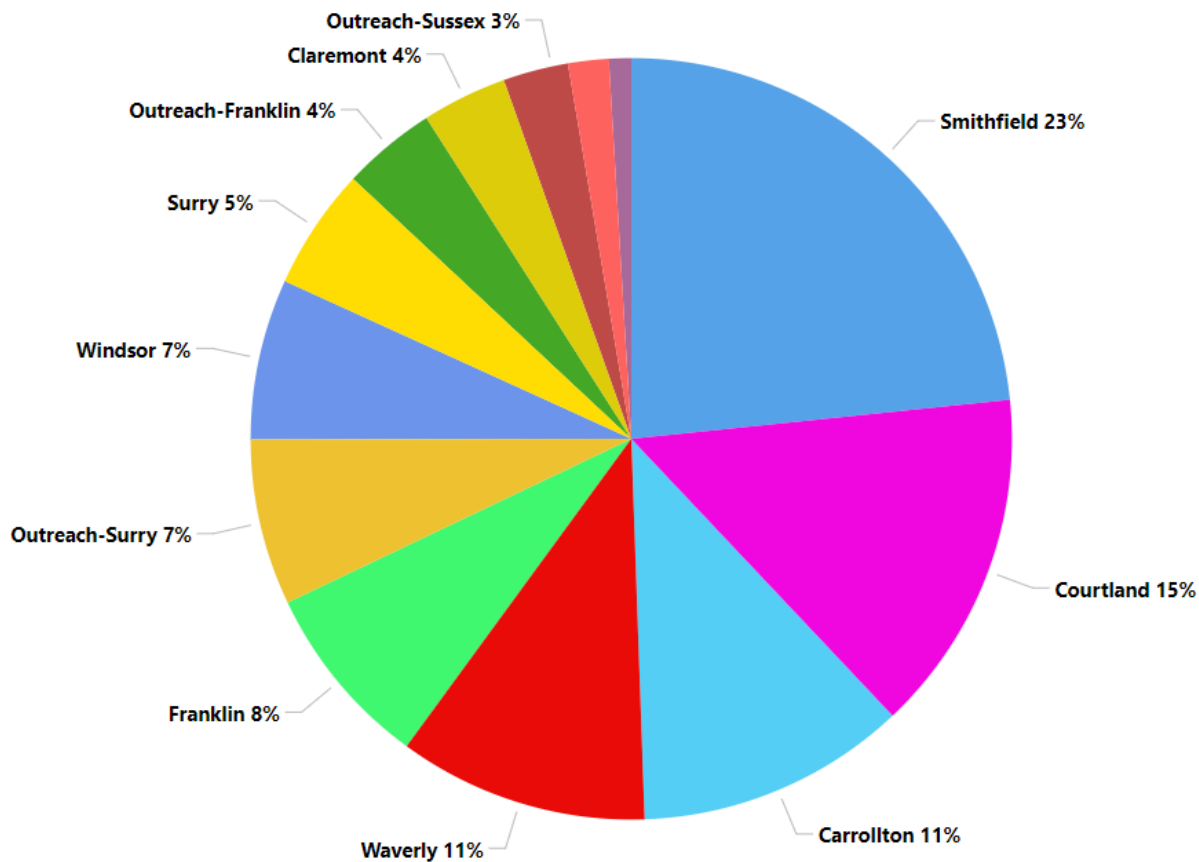


# Circulation Report: Type by Branch

Location	Adult Print	Children's Print	DVD	Audio-book	Kits	YA Print	Music	LoT	Magazines	eBooks	Mobile Hot Spots
Franklin	1395	1820	592	151	2	168	0	6	10	1218	12
Courtland	1058	1320	314	107	2	62	0	11	2	626	24
Carrollton	1459	2299	388	100	11	154	0	10	0	1548	14
Smithfield	2168	3477	577	67	1	152	14	7	43	1827	12
Windsor	646	963	298	19	11	84	0	0	0	626	13
Waverly	318	433	133	15	0	30	0	1	1	140	7
Outreach	188	61	15	9	1	6	0	3	0	48	2
Wakefield	251	103	61	6	1	11	0	0	4	190	1
Claremont	241	44	100	2	0	3	0	0	8	49	2
Surry	476	595	227	1	5	32	0	2	0	455	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>8200</b>	<b>11115</b>	<b>2705</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>6727</b>	<b>106</b>



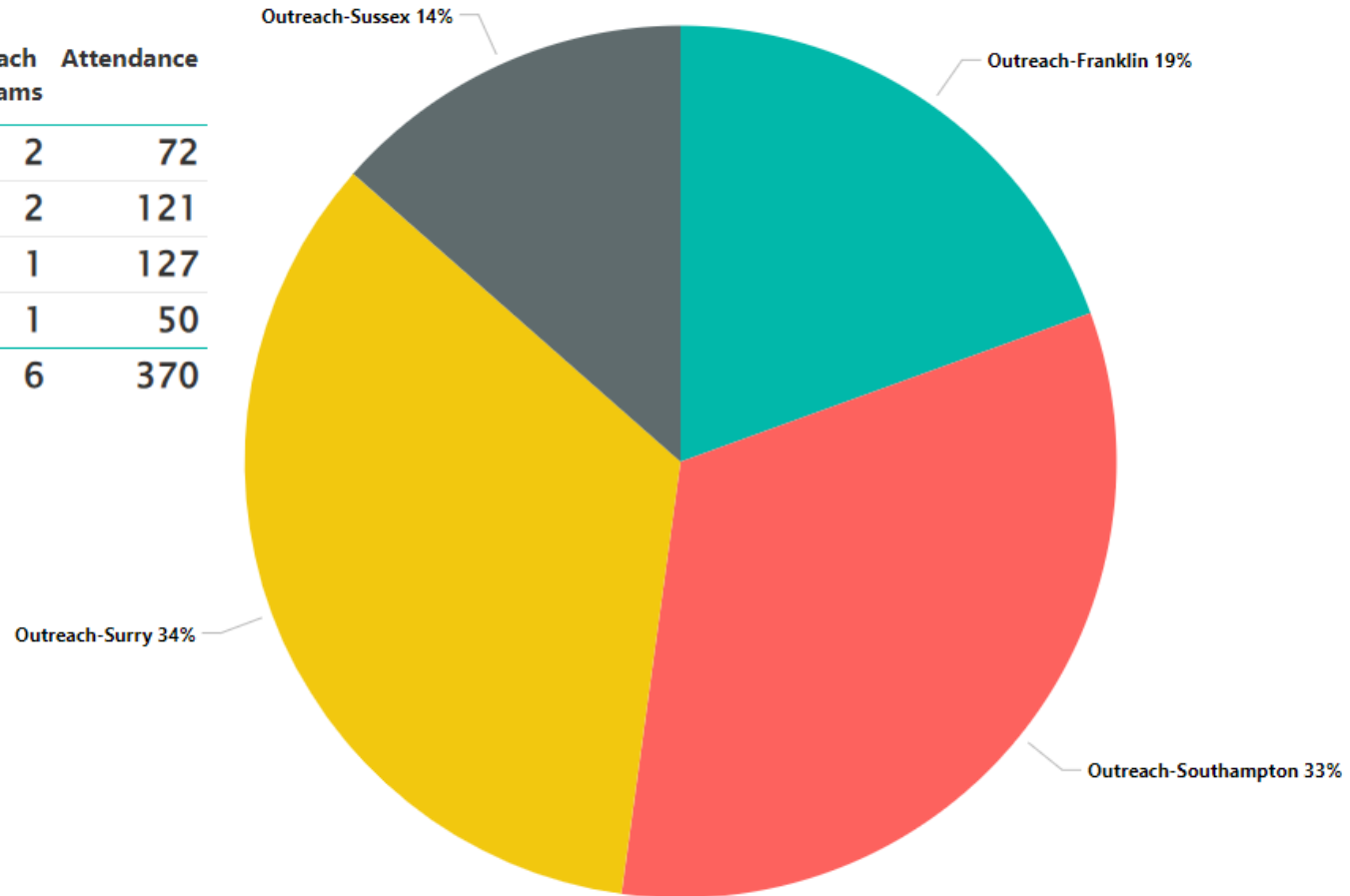
# Program Report: Total Participation



Location/Branch	Count
Carrollton	207
Claremont	65
Courtland	263
Franklin	142
Outreach-Franklin	72
Outreach-Southampton	17
Outreach-Surry	127
Outreach-Sussex	50
Smithfield	421
Surry	93
Wakefield	31
Waverly	191
Windsor	123
<b>Total</b>	<b>1802</b>

# Outreach Report: Programs

Location/Branch	Outreach Programs	Attendance
Outreach-Franklin	2	72
Outreach-Southampton	2	121
Outreach-Surry	1	127
Outreach-Sussex	1	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>370</b>





# STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

## Staffing Update October 2024 Blackwater Regional Library

### New Hires

- Joanne Hickman – Substitute Library Assistant
- Amanda Trosen – Substitute Library Assistant

### Promotions

### Transfers

### Separations

### Vacancies

- Library Assistant – Windsor branch
- Library Assistant – Sussex branches
- Youth Services Programmer – Carrollton and Smithfield branches

## STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

### Training Sessions – September 2024

**Isle of Wight County** staff completed a total of 2 trainings

**Surry County** staff completed a total of 1 training

**Central Office** staff completed a total of 2 trainings

#### **9/7/2024 - Foster Social Connections: Responding to the Epidemic of Loneliness & Isolation -**

This webinar talks about social connections and some of the strategies libraries can help people in their communities deal with loneliness and isolation such as programming, community outreach even as simple as letting someone talk to you.

It also discussed the detriments to our health that comes with loneliness. Trauma, illness, aging, differences and modernity are some of the things that lead to isolation. We can help fight it by promoting awareness, reducing stigma and activating programming.

**9/10/2024 – Extreme Customer Service, Every Time -** Excellent customer service is not a list of tasks to complete, but it's a mindset. We have to want to provide good service. Most of us say we do, but our patrons may not agree.

All interactions can exceed great expectations. Meaning, you may have an expectation of what would be good, great, or amazing customer service, generally just expecting good service, and we want patrons to feel they were treated above and beyond what they expected.

Where do you fit in? A great experience I have had is when the staff member showed a sincere interest in helping, was knowledgeable and able to help me reach the goal I had for service. Being kind and sincere are super important.

Six elements of ECS are: convenience, comfort, hospitality, quality, trust, and WOW. I learned more about each of these characteristics through examples of each starting with convenience, that time is very important to care for when you are helping a patron.

Trust your patrons and each other. For WOW service, go above and beyond what's expected.

Do not judge our patrons, come to service with a humble attitude.

We are all librarians to our patrons if we are standing in the library to work. Customers have expectations that you will know the answer or be able to find the answer.

When delivering service: focus your attention, be sincere, smile, be approachable, trust, take responsibility, take initiative, and care.

Humility- you have to WANT to GIVE service.

## STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Some obstacles include attitude and fear. We all make mistakes. Demonstrate awareness, acknowledge, apologize, act, provide additional generosity (like offer a free cup of coffee to a patron if the library has a coffee shop or something of similar kind)

**9/16/2024 – Hoopla Resources Center Training** - This video is not geared for a Library Assistant but more for Central. It was interesting to see Hoopla's marketing resources available to libraries such as posters, bookmarks, flyers, etc. helping to promote Hoopla.

It did remind me about programs, books clubs, etc. so I am more versed and able to explain their offerings to our patrons and to promote Blackwater's digital collection as "always open" when the branches are not.

**9/18/2024 – Leadership: Improving Staff Morale & Reducing Turnover with the 5 Languages of Appreciation** - In spite of employee recognition and incentive programs, keeping employees engaged is difficult and turnover is high (especially for remote team members). Learn how to communicate authentic appreciation in the ways that are meaningful to your team through research-proven, easy-to-implement tools and practical actions.

Participants will:

- understand the difference between employee recognition and authentic appreciation
- what the 5 languages of appreciation look like in daily life
- learn the core components necessary to communicate authentic appreciation effectively

**9/24/2024 – Elements of Data Visualization and Design** - This session will introduce basic data visualization and design elements based on best practices from current visualization research. Participants will be introduced to a story-based design method that emphasizes the target audience's information needs to create effective data visualizations. Tools for color, chart selection and accessibility will be presented and participants will gain practice doing a visualization 'makeover'.

Learning Outcomes:

- Participants will be able to identify the key steps in creating a data-informed visualization
- Participants will have increased confidence in choosing the right chart or graphic to effectively display data
- Participants will be familiar with basic design principles that enhance comprehension and accommodate accessibility needs