

BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Franklin Branch

Wednesday

May 21, 2025

Board of Trustees Meeting—3:00 pm

Budget and Finance Committee will *not* meet



**Blackwater Regional Library
Franklin Branch**

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



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

Personnel and Policy Committee Packet Contents

May 21, 2025

- Agenda – May 2025
- Minutes – April 2025
- Library Director's Report
- Personnel and Policy Committee Meeting Notes
- Library Bills
- Background Check Policy Draft
- Schedule of Meetings Draft FY25-26
- Monthly Statistics Report
- Staffing and Workshop Report

**Blackwater Regional Library
Board Meeting
May 21, 2025**

Agenda

Franklin Branch

Call to Order

Adoption of Agenda – May 2025

Approval of Minutes – April 2025

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

- Nominating Committee

New Business

- Background Check Policy
- Schedule of Meetings FY25-26

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Announcement of Next Meeting

- June 18, 2025

Adjournment

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
April 16, 2025**

Present

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Terri Hedgepeth – City of Franklin
Pam Lease – City of Franklin
Kathy Lippard – Isle of Wight County
Jessica Moore – Sussex County
Pam Vaughan – Isle of Wight County
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County
Bill Worsham – Southampton County
Ben Neal – Library Director
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager

Remote (via Zoom)

Absent

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Jennifer Cuthbertson – Southampton County
Charlene Herrala – Isle of Wight County
Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin

Chair, Deborah Dawson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 3:01 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

None

Agenda

Mr. Worsham moved, and Ms. Briggs seconded that the agenda be approved as amended. The vote was unanimous.

Presentation by Scott Carr, Wells Fargo Advisor

Wells Fargo advisor Scott Carr gave a presentation on the status of the Rawls trust, which experienced a 13.7% gain in 2024, but is down 3.2% to date in 2025.

Minutes

Ms. Moore moved, and Ms. Lease seconded the minutes be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Library Director's Report

BRL celebrated National Library Week in early April with special programs and promotions.

There is one vacancy system-wide (PT Outreach Services).

Checkout of materials was almost 30,000 in March (highest March since 2017)!

Heading into the final quarter of the fiscal year, circulation +8%, new users +13%, and attendees per program +4% over same period in fiscal year 2024.

Mr. Neal gave a supplemental presentation on IMLS updates, and addressed questions from the Board.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Ms. Moore – Localities are presenting proposed budgets. Mr. Neal gave an update on current locality budget happenings.

Personnel & Policy – Ms. Vaughan – Director's Evaluation – Please return completed Director's evaluations to Ms. Vaughan, or send to Amy at the Central office as soon as possible.

Long Range Planning – Mr. Neal – The committee is working on planning community conversations in the near future.

Accounts Payable

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

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Ms. Hedgepeth – will resign from the Board, effective July 1. Her photos are on exhibit at Rawls Museum Arts!

Ms. Briggs – The Sussex Community Coalition and Masons will host an Easter Egg Hunt next week, and are involved in the 3k walk.

Ms. Dawson – expressed gratitude for Mr. Neal's article in the Sussex-Surry Dispatch and The Smithfield Times. She was able to use it for a school presentation.

Mr. Worsham – reminded Trustees of the importance of attending budget meetings to show support and advocate for BRL when necessary

Ms. Moore – expressed gratitude for Mr. Neal's work in the localities to get funding

Ms. Vaughan – expressed gratitude to Mr. Neal, Administration, and all staff for their hard work and the increase in circulation

Ms. Lippard – two people have contacted her in appreciation of Smithfield's Parkinson's Disease Support Group

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be on May 21, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

Adjournment

Ms. Moore moved, and Ms. Briggs seconded the meeting be adjourned. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Sylvia Claggett, Secretary



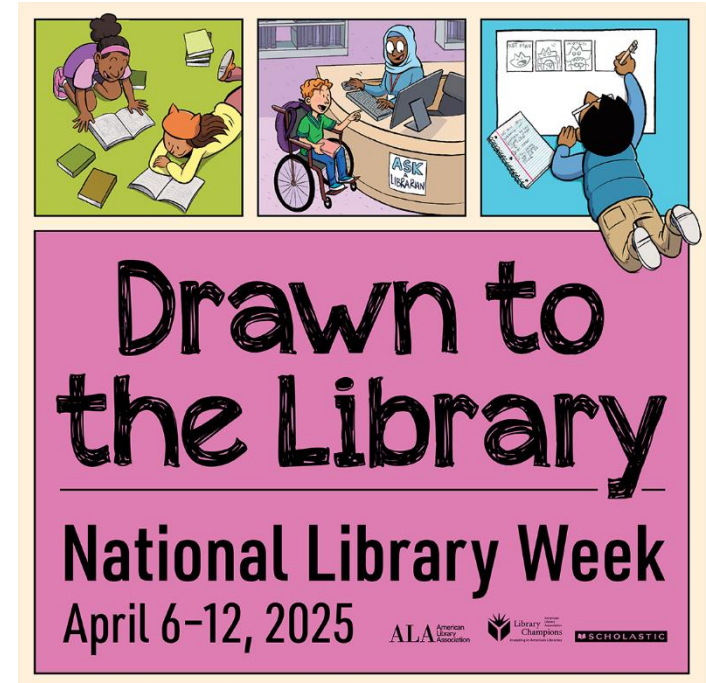
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Director's Report

April 2025

Central/System-wide Updates

- BRL celebrated National Library Week in early April; with special programs and promotions
- Checkout of Materials was over 30,000 in April (+7% over comparable pre-pandemic period)
- Starting process of updating public computers in some locations
- Marketing for Summer Reading underway



National Library Week
April 6-12th

Community Impact



Waverly Library's Easter Event



Franklin Spring Fest

Other events:

- Blue Sky Distillery in Smithfield
- Luter YMCA Healthy Kids Day
- Westside Elem. Career Fair
- Carrsville Elem. Bark in the Park
- IOWC Spring Break Camps
- Franklin & Windsor Food Banks
- Courtland Pre-K Touch a Truck

18 Outreach Programs and Activities in the Community in April reaching over 1200 people

City of Franklin

- Franklin Library is host to a Painted Lady Butterfly kit and children of all ages are anxiously returning to the library to see its development and evolution!
- Franklin staff represented the library during a very busy day at the Franklin Spring Fest
- Other programs such as StoryTime, Craftsy, and others continue to thrive



Isle of Wight County

- Carrollton Branch hosted local author Tracey Gilchrist for an engaging talk about her work
- Smithfield Branch hosted a variety of fun programs, and partnered with Browder's Fresh Pickins to do a StoryWalk at their Strawberry Patch
- Windsor Library continues to be extremely busy in its tight space with popular programs such as the new "Switch It On" program for Teens.

Between Outreach and In-House programming, 52 programs reaching over 1200 members of the community were delivered in IOW County in April



Southampton County

- Fun StoryTimes, including a special interactive Earth Day-themed StoryTime
- After-school program made Fairy Gardens in an engaging and educational program!
- Special Touch-a-Truck event for Southampton Pre-K students, which included a variety of community partners such as SCSO, CVFD, and others!



Surry County

- Many Surry residents took advantage of the nice weather and checked out the library's StoryWalk of the book "Dandy" by Anne Dykeman
- Library staff attended Surry Elementary's Career Day, where they had giveaways and encouraged all to visit the library to see more of what we do!
- Other programs such as Story Time and Craftsy continue to do well at both Surry County locations



Sussex County

- Library hosted Sussex Pre-K for a special in-door Easter Egg Hunt program
- The Waverly Branch held their annual visit with the Easter Bunny. Families enjoyed crafts, games, a StoryWalk and took pictures with the Easter Bunny



Blackwater Regional Library
Personnel and Policy Committee Meeting Notes
Franklin Branch
May 7, 2025

Present

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Terri Hedgepeth – City of Franklin
Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin
Pam Vaughan – Isle of Wight County
Ben Neal – Library Director
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Director
Amy Fisk – Administrative Services Coordinator

Remote (via Zoom)

Charlene Harrala – Isle of Wight

Absent

Michelle Blunt – Southampton County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight

Reviewed Background Check Policy Draft

The committee reviewed the Background Check policy and after some discussion, agreed to present the draft to the Board for approval.

Photo Citation Potential Policy

The committee agrees that the library should adopt a Photo Citation policy due to the rising use of photo citations to eliminate any question of who is responsible for the cost of the ticket. After reviewing some examples, they requested to see a draft of a policy and procedure that mimics the example provided by Isle of Wight County.

Closed Session

Reviewed the Performance Evaluations that were completed and returned from the Board.

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

April 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
360IT Partners				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11575	-8,169.98
04/30/2025	Bill		MSP274518	817.40
04/30/2025	Bill		MSP273915	6,111.58
04/30/2025	Bill		CW273330	99.00
04/30/2025	Bill		CW273327	1,142.00
04/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-438.00
04/16/2025	Bill		CW272507	371.00
04/16/2025	Bill		CW272719	67.00
AFLAC				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		946272 4.30.2025	-903.05
04/30/2025	Bill		946272	903.05
Amazon Capital Services				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11576	-507.91
04/30/2025	Bill		1Y9F-149W-FMNG	507.91
Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield				
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		20070687	-8,744.00
04/16/2025	Bill		000863166F	8,744.00
AT&T				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11571	-3.39
04/30/2025	Bill		1181218804	3.39
Baker & Taylor				
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		320623826	-4,029.63
04/16/2025	Bill		5019440559	4,029.63
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11577	-10,580.12
04/30/2025	Bill		5019467723	10,580.12
Baker & Taylor - Laminate				
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		320625340	-401.28
04/16/2025	Bill		5019441756	401.28
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11578	-505.44
04/30/2025	Bill		5019475703	505.44
Blackstone Publishing				
04/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-83.32
04/16/2025	Bill		2193122	41.66
04/16/2025	Bill		2192790	41.66

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

April 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Cengage Learning, Inc./Gale				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11579	-322.35
04/30/2025	Bill		999100360012	45.72
04/30/2025	Bill		999100360011	43.05
04/30/2025	Bill		999100346715	32.79
04/30/2025	Bill		999100311243	69.53
04/30/2025	Bill		999100311244	26.64
04/30/2025	Bill		999100344015	104.62
Dominion Energy Virginia				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		4261855852	-1,704.11
04/30/2025	Bill		3233130008 4.30.2025	1,704.11
H2O To Go				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11572	-32.75
04/30/2025	Bill		7825 4.30.2025	32.75
Library Furniture International, LLC				
04/03/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-2,592.00
04/03/2025	Bill		QT-4529 deposit	2,592.00
Marlin Leasing Corporation				
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		200239678763	-1,598.72
04/16/2025	Bill		40403336	1,598.72
Midwest Tape				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11580	-3,084.58
04/30/2025	Bill		507038968	3,084.58
04/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-954.73
04/16/2025	Bill		506973321	954.73
Midwest Tape (Hoopla)				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11581	-81,397.47
04/30/2025	Bill		507111677	1,397.47
04/30/2025	Bill		507074548	80,000.00
OCLC Inc				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11582	-866.71
04/30/2025	Bill		1000428512	866.71
Overdrive, Inc				
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		355hj5t3	-7,057.33
04/16/2025	Bill		03100CO25114510	2,057.18

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

April 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
04/16/2025	Bill		03100DA25113610	656.41
04/16/2025	Bill		03100CO25104685	1,574.25
04/16/2025	Bill		03100DA25116308	84.99
04/16/2025	Bill		03100CO25112251	2,684.50
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11583	-2,354.07
04/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25120281	571.38
04/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25127247	623.48
04/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25132251	75.00
04/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25134640	1,084.21
Petty Cash				
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11568	-870.09
04/16/2025	Bill		4.16.2025 Petty Cash	870.09
Proquest, LLC				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11584	-7,756.88
04/30/2025	Bill		70875490	7,756.88
Queen B's Cleaning Service				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11585	-877.20
04/30/2025	Bill		1795	877.20
Securitas Technology Corporation				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11586	-285.00
04/30/2025	Bill		6004985001	285.00
Sentara Health Plans				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11573	-15,218.00
04/30/2025	Bill		9789998	15,218.00
Southampton County				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		32491	-60.00
04/30/2025	Bill		Acct 46 4.2.2025	60.00
Southampton County (1)				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11574	-401.84
04/30/2025	Bill		2025-04 (April gas)	401.84
Spectrum Enterprise				
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		0450718901	-106.11
04/16/2025	Bill		089740301040125	106.11

TowneBank/Card Services

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

April 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		C6EC0D9165	-14,443.17
04/16/2025	Bill		6457 0001 4.14.2025	14,443.17
Unique Management Services, Inc.				
04/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-209.70
04/16/2025	Bill		6137626	209.70
Verizon (1)				
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3114452, 3114471	-163.30
04/16/2025	Bill		935119692 4.9.2025	163.30
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3121548	-63.21
04/30/2025	Bill		624106825 4.22.2025	63.21
Verizon Wireless				
04/16/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3968542199	-2,840.71
04/16/2025	Bill		6110554595	2,840.71
WT Cox				
04/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11587	-1,834.05
04/30/2025	Bill		3147802	1,834.05

Background Check Policy and Procedure Blackwater Regional Library

All offers of employment at Blackwater Regional Library are contingent upon clear results of a thorough background check. Background checks will be conducted on all final candidates and on all employees who are promoted, as deemed necessary.

Background checks may include:

- **Social Security Verification:** validates the applicant's Social Security number, date of birth and former addresses.
- **Prior Employment Verification:** confirms applicant's employment with the listed companies, including dates of employment, position held and additional information available pertaining to the performance rating, reason for departure and eligibility for rehire.
- **Personal and Professional References:** calls will be placed to individuals listed as references by the applicant.
- **Educational Verification:** confirms the applicant's claimed educational institution, including the years attended and the degree/diploma received.
- **Criminal History:** includes review of criminal convictions and probation. The following factors will be considered for applicants with a criminal history: The nature of the crime and its relationship to the position.
 - The time since the conviction(s).
 - The number (if more than one) of the convictions.
 - Whether hiring, transferring or promoting the applicant would pose an unreasonable risk to the business, its employees or its customers and vendors.

The following additional background searches may be required if applicable to the position:

- **Motor Vehicle Records:** provides a report on an individual's driving history in the state requested. This search will be run when driving is an essential requirement of the position.

Blackwater Regional Library

Board of Trustees

Schedule of Meetings

July 2025 - June 2026

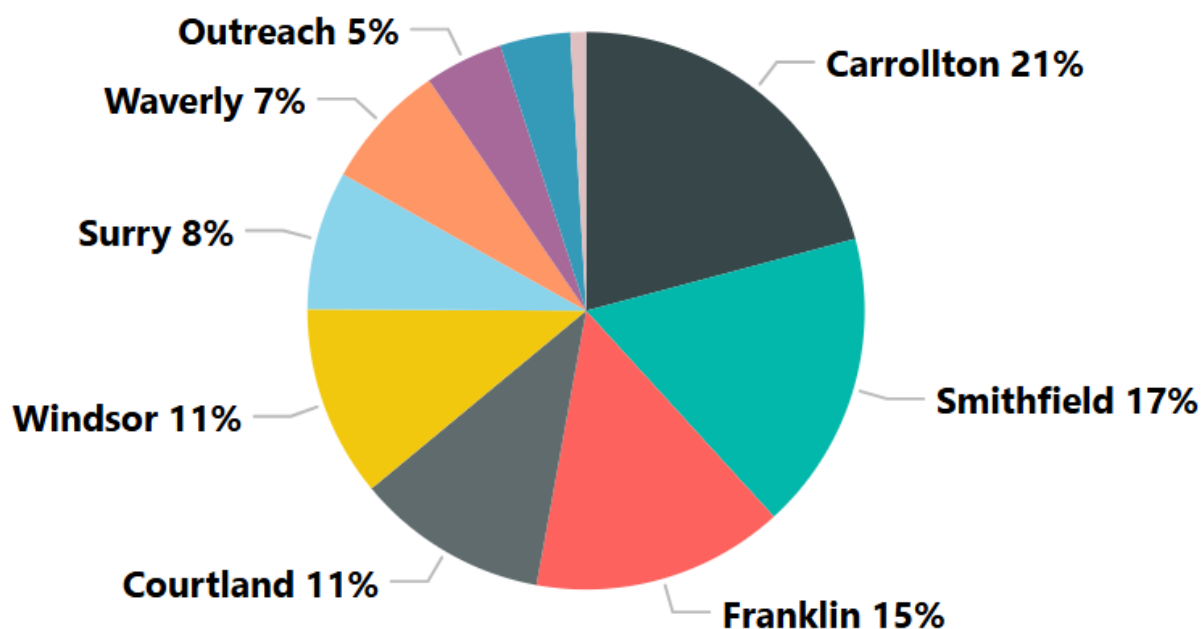
July 16, 2025	Board Orientation - 1:00 p.m. Meeting to follow	Franklin Branch
*August 2025 - No Meeting		
September 17, 2025	Board Retreat 1:00 - p.m. Meeting to follow	Franklin Branch
October 15, 2025	3:00 p.m.	Franklin Branch
November 19, 2025	Budget Workshop 2:00 p.m. Meeting to follow	Franklin Branch
*December 2025 - No Meeting		
January 21, 2026	3:00 p.m.	Franklin Branch
February 18, 2026	3:00 p.m.	Franklin Branch
March 18, 2026	3:00 p.m.	Franklin Branch
April 15, 2026	3:00 p.m.	Franklin Branch
May 20, 2026	3:00 p.m.	Franklin Branch
June 17, 2026	3:00 p.m.	Franklin Branch



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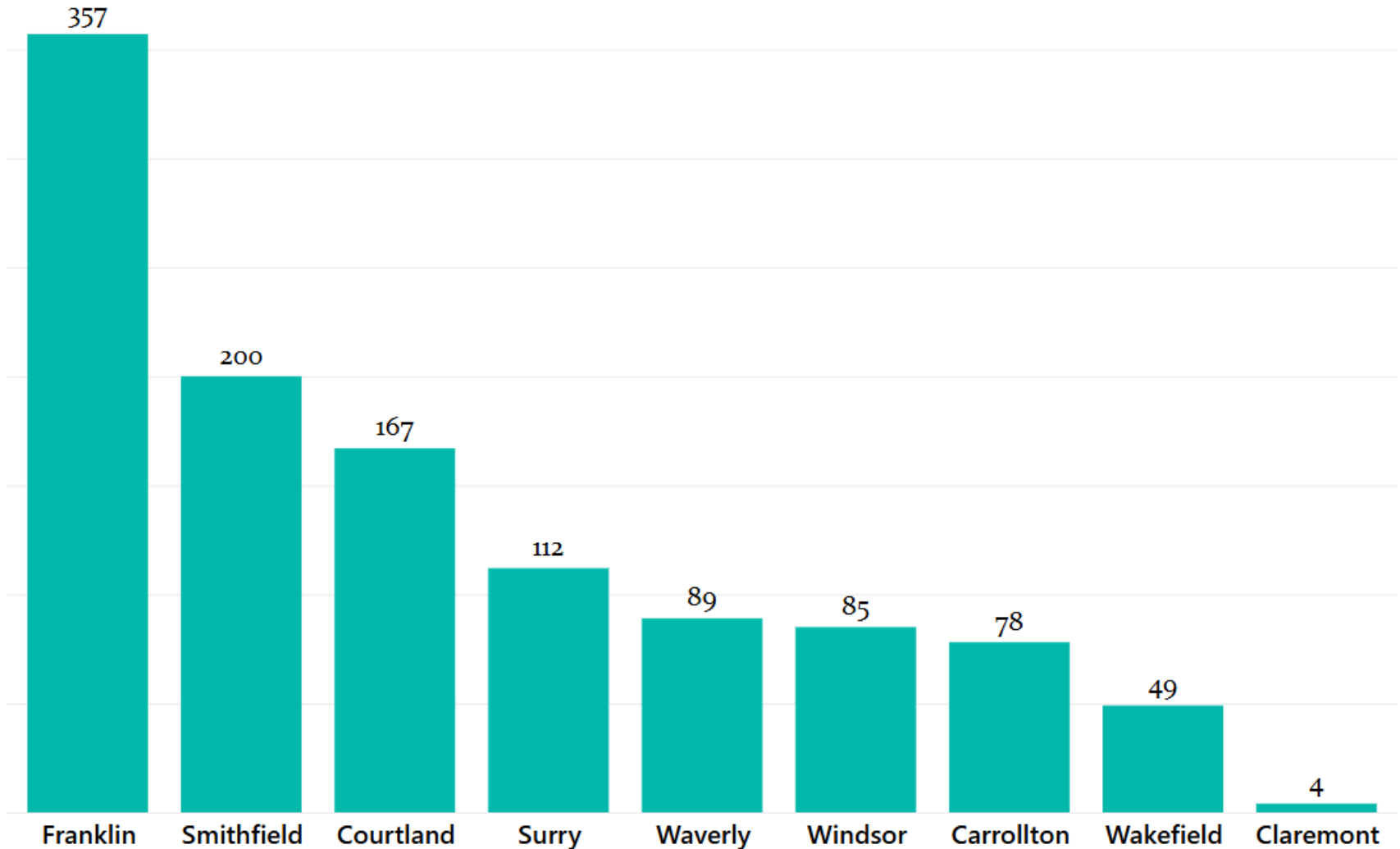
April 2025
Statistics

Monthly Report: Patron Count

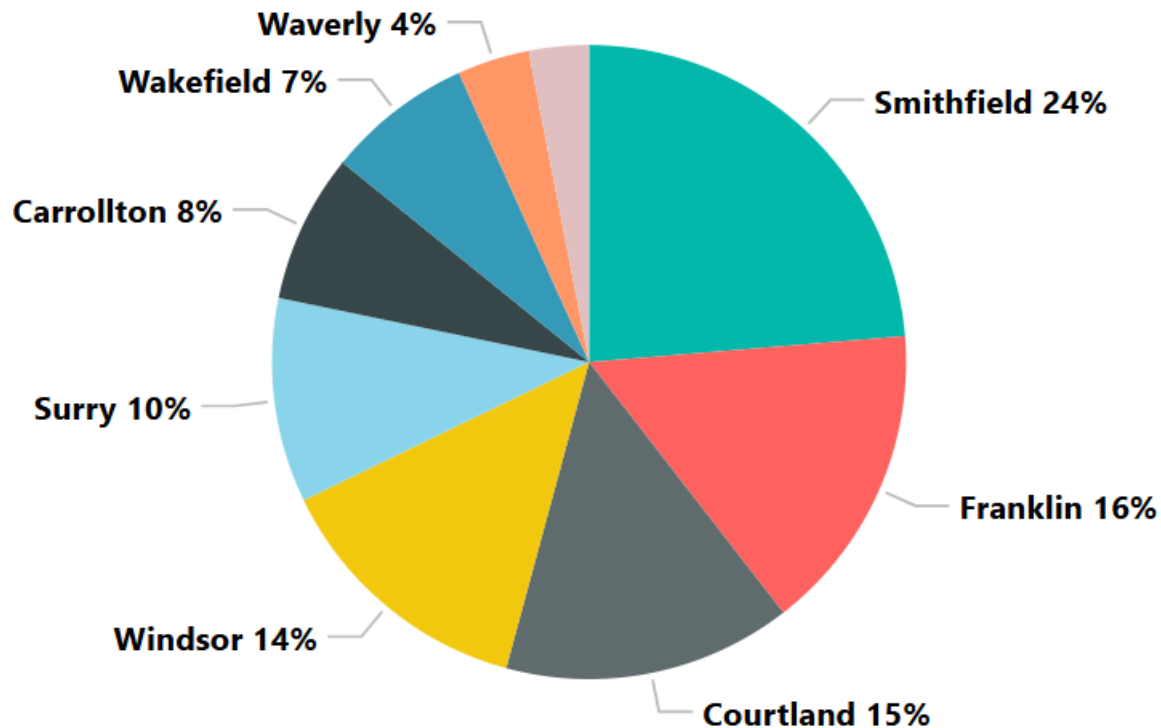


Branch	Patron Count
Carrollton	3338
Claremont	146
Courtland	1784
Franklin	2343
Outreach	728
Smithfield	2784
Surry	1290
Wakefield	652
Waverly	1174
Windsor	1777
Total	16016

Monthly Report: In-House Internet



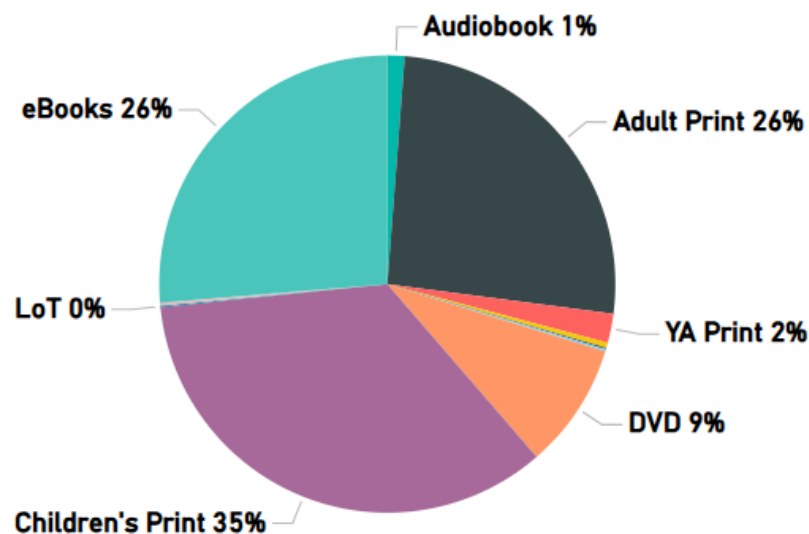
Monthly Report: WiFi Use



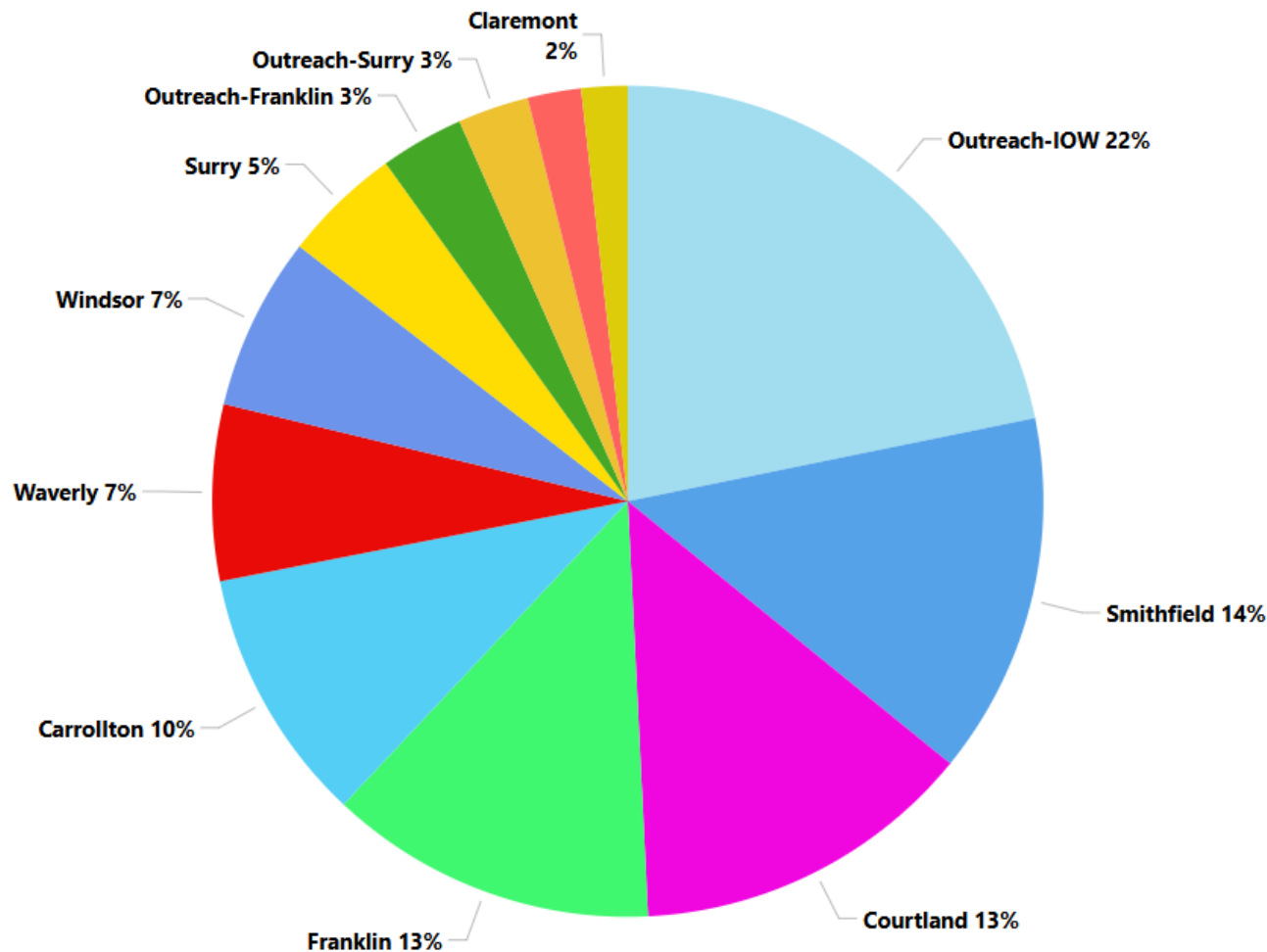
Branch	Wireless Internet Usage
Carrollton	6017
Claremont	2431
Courtland	11675
Franklin	12544
Smithfield	18806
Surry	8273
Wakefield	5900
Waverly	2915
Windsor	10803
Total	79364

Circulation Report: Type by Branch

Location	Adult Print	Children's Print	DVD	Audio-book	Kits	YA Print	Music	LoT	Magazines	eBooks	Streaming Devices/ Hotspots
Carrollton	1262	1843	432	51	6	154	3	4	0	1775	14
Claremont	277	34	97	0	2	3	0	0	5	67	4
Courtland	915	1316	369	136	0	57	0	6	0	862	24
Franklin	1485	1679	532	82	10	118	19	2	16	1467	13
Outreach	95	75	8	0	0	6	0	1	0	60	1
Smithfield	2016	3153	579	51	4	173	10	7	40	2206	10
Surry	459	352	228	2	3	22	0	3	1	488	28
Wakefield	278	548	88	5	3	28	0	0	0	206	0
Waverly	464	584	140	4	11	10	0	4	0	155	7
Windsor	681	1078	248	44	11	59	0	3	6	781	12
Total	7932	10662	2721	375	50	630	32	30	68	8067	113

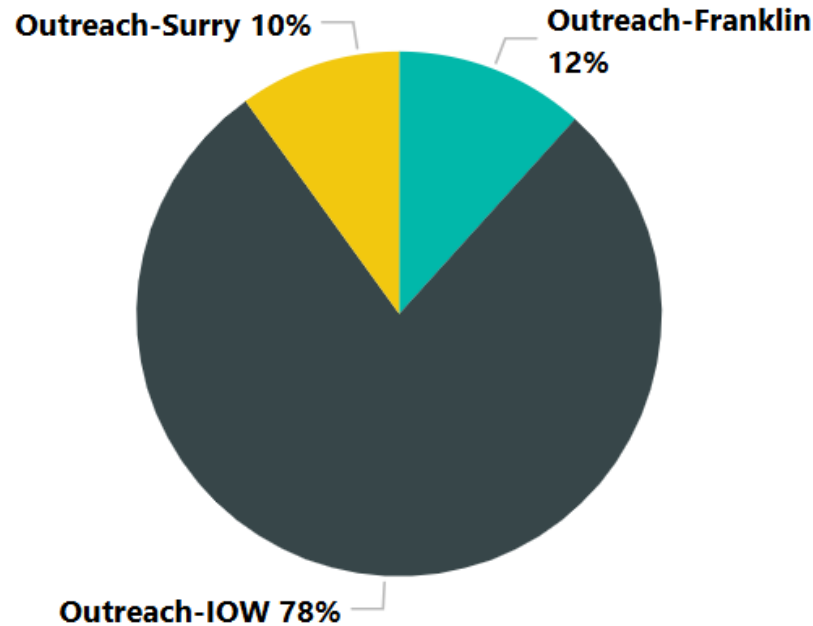


Program Report: Total Participation



Location/Branch	Count
Carrollton	287
Claremont	52
Courtland	386
Franklin	369
Outreach-Franklin	94
Outreach-IOW	630
Outreach-Surry	80
Smithfield	407
Surry	133
Wakefield	60
Waverly	198
Windsor	195
Total	2891

Outreach Report: Programs



Location/Branch	Outreach Programs	Attendance
Outreach-Franklin	2	94
Outreach-IOW	8	630
Outreach-Surry	1	80
Total	11	804

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Staffing Update May 2024 Blackwater Regional Library

New Hires

Promotions

Transfers

Separations

Vacancies

- Senior Library Assistant – Outreach Services

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Training Sessions – April 2025

City of Franklin staff completed a total of 2 trainings

Isle of Wight County staff completed a total of 5 trainings

Surry County staff completed a total of 2 trainings

Sussex County staff completed a total of 1 training

Central Office staff completed a total of 4 trainings

4/8/2025 – Cataloging and Metadata - This training went over new features on OCLC cataloging and metadata services, including new ways to streamline certain workflows in technical services.

4/8/2025 – How to Make Your Library’s Collection” Visible” - This presentation went over ways to increase your collection’s visibility with World Cat Visibility to help with our mission to market to the library to the community

4/8/2025 – Resource Sharing - How can you best optimize this valuable resource for your patrons and staff? Sharing best practices and fresh ideas to enhance ILL services at your library.

4/8/2025 – Booklist’s Summer Reading & Series Non-fiction - The one-hour webinar from booklist went over several non-fiction series titles that incorporated the theme for summer reading of “Color Our World”. It was a very informative webinar that took a closer look at titles available from different publishers. Representatives from different publishers went over the titles. Good information for collection development.

4/11/2025 – New VOX Books for your Library - Presented by Margo Wallace and Grace Larochelle.

VOX books capture the attention by combining picture books and early chapter books with audio recordings. They are used for improving reading comprehension and for learning time. Available in several languages including English, Spanish, Mandarin, Japanese to name a few. VOX Books in new languages will also be released including Creole and Navajo. 105 new titles will be released this season for VOX Books. Martina the Beautiful Cockroach is one of the many new titles coming. Several in the chat brought up how fragile some of the books are when it comes to the binding and how the binding will break before the audio portion of the device.

4/12/2025 – Don’t Manage Change – Embrace It - As a person who does not like change it helped me look at change in a different way. Instead of looking at it as causing anxiety and shame, it can improve your strengths and cause excitement and opportunity. It does take a change of mindset to deal with change. Believe your mindset can grow.

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

It helps people deal with change when they are informed and consulted from the start of a change.

Be inspired by a positive vision of change because change is everywhere and constant.

4/14/2025 – Handling New and Awkward Customer Behaviors - The presenter, Andrew Senderbeck provided helpful and applicable words, phrases and techniques to effectively respond to anxious, irrational, flirtatious and other unprofessional situations.

I found the phrase, “is there anything library related I can help you with.” To be helpful to redirect the conversation when the topic is inappropriate for the library setting. The presenter recommended that it is better to not engage with the inappropriate conversation and to instead redirect the conversation back to library matters. I found this webinar to be very helpful and I would recommend it to library staff who regularly deal with patrons.

4/16/2025 – Back to Basics: Book Displays - Back to Basics- Book Displays presented by Lila Denning

Jo Flick opens the Chat and facilitates discussion and/or comments on chat

Book displays are a part of the reader’s advisory. Help someone find their next great read from fiction – audio – DVD- info or entertainment.

The reader’s advisory can be active or passive, including book displays, wide variety; planned out, big and small publishers; personal favorites and unknowns.

Why do people love book displays? They offer smaller nuggets of suggestions, new ideas, point in a certain direction, introduce a new author or favorite author.

Offering a curated collection that someone can look and possibly find what they are looking for-

Great books are hidden in lots of books just shown by the spine- showing off the cover may help books find its readers

Use what the publisher developed. Where should you put them? Put them in a central walkway; unexpected places, such as a book cart that can be wheeled around to different places.

How to find ideas? Holidays, calendars, your programs and services.

Examples: Me Made May- are yearly sewing challenges – patrons may find in the 700’s- Show a piece that was made and display books that were used to help create the product.

Also piles and piles and piles of books make good displays so that the patron can see and touch the books.

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Focus on books and not decorations. Use simple signs, a few words to increase the likelihood of patrons reading the signs. The focus is on the books, a marketing tool for your collection.

If you like {this author}, read these {to discover new books}

Lots of sub genres you can focus on examples: medical thriller displays, Midwestern authors, your book clubs.

Some basics to remember: mix-up genres people who love mysteries also love thrillers, horror, and suspense.

Nonfiction, fiction, oversize, children, and young adults can make a mixed display. Don't put up dirty books, but rather books in great condition.

Use your programs to market your collection. Literary awards make great ideas. Archive your displays. Use Novelist to find read-alikes. Always have a back-up plan. Always know what your libraries policy, rules, and challenges are. Enjoy connecting with your patrons and sharing books on display.

4/16/2025 – What Would Walt Do? Quality Customer Service for Libraries - This webinar I do like. It comes from the customer service from the Instructors going to a "Quality Service" of Walt Disney Corporation. As you know Walt Disney has a high concentration of Customer service.

4/16/2025 – Enhancing Your Energy and Enthusiasm - The workshop focuses on our mindset, self-talk, physical engagement, and lifestyle choices. All of these things play into our process of engaging with jobs/family/friends.

The work pages offer ways to identify/make choices for one or two ways to make changes. Exploring how we feel and where we feel these experiences, including ways of tracking or measuring improvement.

Laura also touched on how the following come into play:

Mind and body connections

Food choices

Exercise

Sleep

Understanding and recognizing the importance of identifying our intentions, self-talk and follow through are important as well. When we are engaged in the moment and complete a task we usually feel better about our interactions. Positive memories of engagement make us want to repeat the process.

She also touched on setting goals, being authentic, personal cycles and rhythms, procrastination and a growth mindset. I can see how all of these choices are not only important

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in customer related jobs but our personal lives as well. I personally feel better when I enjoy my day and the people I spend it with.

4/23/2025 – The First Amendment and Libraries -

- I. The First Amendment: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or of the press or the right of the people to peaceably assemble and to petition the government for redress of grievances.
 - A. Applies to all states through the due process clause of the 14th amendment
 - B. Applies to all persons, adults and minors equally.
 - C. Applies only to government entities not private.
 - D. Is applicable to all speech unless designated as unprotected speech by the Supreme Court.
- II. Unprotected speech- decisions about what is unprotected speech reserved for courts of law
 - A. Obscenity (must pass the Miller Test)
 - B. Child sexual abuse material
 - C. Defamatory speech
 - D. Fraud and perjury
 - E. True threats
 - F. Fighting words
 - G. Speech integral in criminal conduct
- III. Public Forums for protected speech
 - A. Traditional- open spaces such as public parks
 - B. Designated or limited public spaces- created specifically for use as public forums such as theaters and meeting rooms.
 - C. Non public spaces- such as airport terminals and military bases can be reasonably restricted as long as it is not discriminatory and is content neutral
 - D. Libraries can create public forums
- VI. Libraries as public forums- meeting rooms available to the public
 - A. Can have restrictions through policies
 - B. Subject to reasonable use with the right to restrict behavior and access
 - C. Must make sure policies are clear and specific
- VII. Library public forum restrictions
 - A. Content based restrictions are subject to strict scrutiny
 - B. Viewpoint restrictions are not permitted
 - C. Time, place, and manner restrictions must be content neutral and reasonable
- VIII. Library nonpublic forums include rooms designated for staff.
- IX. Removal of resources or restricting access to information
 - A. Someone removing or restricting items from the library because they disagree with them is a violation of the 1st amendment.
 - B. Putting an extra burden on patrons to access information is unconstitutional.
 - C. Putting materials in a restricted section is unconstitutional.
- X. What should a library do to protect their patrons?

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- A. Consult legal counsel
- B. Review state and local laws and policies from the ALA
- C. Update, understand, and use mission statement
- D. Update policies and use objective and defined language
- E. Provide appeal process
- F. Clearly post policies
- G. Ensure consistent application and enforcement from all staff.

4/24/2025 – Back to Basics: Book Displays - The purpose of this webinar was to learn how to craft displays that are effective in promoting the theme or message behind the display while also gaining tips on making these tools include those titles which could benefit from more attention.

Learning Objectives

- Understand what are the features of a great book display and how to craft them with a focus on marketing your collection.
- Discover ways to use book displays to promote services, ongoing and special programs and events while also bringing attention to titles that have been overlooked
- Identify opportunities to fit in book displays all over your building, even in smaller libraries with limited space.

Book displays are part of readers advisory either active or passive, they can include a wide variety of authors, characters, experiences.

People love book displays because they are a smaller choice of books. Spines aren't always enough to catch someone's attention, regardless of how wonderful the book is.

Where to put book displays?

- Central walkways
- Move things to unexpected places – children's books to other parts of your library
- Book carts

How do I find ideas?

- ALA Celebratory weeks
- Holidays – real and imaginary
- Pop culture – TV shows, movies, cultural trends, video games
- Internet culture - #MeMadeMay
- What are you or your friends talking about?
- Hobbies
- Book Awards
- Programs and Services your library offers

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- Topics in the news
- Subgenres
- Book club books
- Celebrities in the news
- Literary awards
- Novelist
- Gibsons bookstore in Concord, NH archives their book displays on their website

Things to remember

- Mix up genres
- Non-fiction, fiction, children's, young adult
- DVD's, audiobooks
- Highlight upcoming programs
- Bookmarks in books that advertise programs or services
- Include things that represent all sorts of people
- NO GROSS or OUTDATED BOOKS ON DISPLAY! Weed them and find something else
- Keep signage simple – focus on the books
- Anything can be a book display
- Plan displays in advance

4/28/2025 – Show Up for Our Libraries - The American Library Association's "Show Up for Our Libraries" presentation was an excellent webinar that highlighted the importance of joining together as a community to advocate for our libraries during this time of uncertainty. Cindy Hohl, ALA president, alongside Larra Clark, deputy director of ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office, discussed the latest updates in the timeline of the administration's attempt to dismantle the IMLS. As of April 4th, 21 state attorney generals have sued the administration for their illegal attempt to dismantle the IMLS. On April 7th, ALA has followed alongside AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) in joining the lawsuit. On April 10th, ALA's attorneys filed a preliminary injunction against the administration.

Larra Clark is encouraging all libraries to seek legal counsel if grant termination directly affects your library services. It is crucial to engage with your congressional offices, and express the importance of the incredible contributions your local and state libraries make to their communities. You can do this by writing letters to the editor, sending in photos to your local government's social media platforms highlighting your services, or even organizing "advocacy days" at your state capitol to meet with legislators. Your Friends of the Library group or Board of Trustees can even get involved by visiting "United for Libraries" (<https://www.ala.org/united>) for further resources.