

BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Franklin Branch

Wednesday

June 18, 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.

Board Packet Contents

June 18, 2024

- Agenda – June 2024
- Minutes – June 2024
- Library Director's Report
- Library Bills
- Photo Citation Policy
- Election of Officers
- Monthly Statistics Report – May 2024
- Staffing and Workshop Report

**Blackwater Regional Library
Board Meeting
June 18, 2025**

Agenda

Franklin Branch

Call to Order

Adoption of Agenda – June 2025

Approval of Minutes – May 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

- Election of Officers for FY25-26

New Business

- Acknowledgement for Outgoing Board Members
- Photo Citation Policy

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Announcement of Next Meeting

- July 16, 2025

Adjournment

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
May 21, 2025**

Present

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Terri Hedgepeth – City of Franklin
Charlene Herrala – Isle of Wight County
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
Jennifer Cuthbertson – Southampton 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. Herrala seconded that the agenda be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Minutes

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

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Library Director's Report

Checkout of materials was almost 30,000 in April (+7% over comparable pre-pandemic period).

Staff has begun process of updating public computers in some locations. Will be adjusting number of public computers per branch to meet demand.

Marketing for Summer Reading is underway. A mailer will be sent to approximately 2,000 homes in new neighborhoods in Franklin and northern Isle of Wight, and to citizens along the 460 corridor (reaching IOW, Southampton, and Sussex).

Isle of Wight and Surry have approved budgets for FY2026 with full funding. BRL is fully funded in proposed budgets for Franklin, Southampton, and Sussex.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Ms. Moore – Please continue to monitor locality budgets for adjustments.

Personnel & Policy – Ms. Vaughan – committee met, but did not have a quorum. Background Check policy will fall under New Business.

Long Range Planning – Mr. Neal – The first community conversation is scheduled at StoreHouse Coffee in Franklin on June 12, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. These conversations will help assess community needs for the library's strategic planning process. Library of Virginia staff will assist.

Accounts Payable

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

Unfinished Business

Nominating Committee – Ms. Lease – The proposed slate of officers for fiscal year 2026 is Deborah Dawson, Chair; Pam Lease, Vice-Chair; and Ora Briggs, Secretary. The Board will vote on this slate at its June 18, 2025 meeting. Ms. Dawson stated that nominations from the floor will be accepted at that time.

New Business

Background Check Policy – Ms. Vaughan stated that Personnel & Policy met and discussed this policy at length. Mr. Neal stated that BRL has always conducted background checks on new employees, but did not have a policy. He asked BRL's attorney to draft a document, which the committee edited, and recommends for approval. Ms. Vaughan moved, and Ms. Claggett seconded the policy be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

FY2025-2026 Schedule of Board Meetings – Ms. Briggs moved, and Ms. Hedgepeth seconded the schedule be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Mr. Worsham – attended a men's breakfast in Sedley and heard lots of good things about BRL

Ms. Moore – Wakefield & Waverly book clubs are still meeting. Staff attended a great Spring Fling event in Stony Creek on 5/17. Staff is preparing for Summer Reading.

Ms. Claggett – Read to 1st graders at Carrollton Elementary on behalf of her sorority. Great experience!

Ms. Lippard – Smithfield sponsored a local authors meet and greet at Smithfield Arts Fest on 5/17, and has storywalks at the library and Browder's.

Ms. Wiggins – heard from a new Franklin patron. Very pleased with Franklin's customer service!

Ms. Briggs – Attended Waverly Farmers Market – great event!

Ms. Hedgepeth – Wonderful High School Art Show is up at RMA!

Ms. Dawson – Surry/Claremont are getting excited for Summer Reading!

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be on June 18, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Sylvia Claggett, Secretary



Franklin, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Surry, and Sussex
www.blackwaterlib.org

Director's Report

May 2025

Summer Reading Program



- The 2025 Summer Program – *Color Our World* will focus on engaging youth in art, literacy and educational activities to stem creativity throughout the summer
- Summer Explorers Story Time offers preschool children the opportunity to explore and expand their boundaries with dynamic early literacy activities

COLOR OUR WORLD™

**Summer Reading @
Blackwater Regional Library
June 23 - August 2, 2025**



Community Impact



Stony Creek Spring Fling



Derby Day at
Gatherings in SoCo



Donation of children's book to
CHIP office for distribution

24 Outreach Programs and Activities in the Community in May
reaching approximately 900 people

City of Franklin

- Franklin Library continued to host a Painted Lady Butterfly kit and children of all ages are returned to the library to see its development and evolution!
- Other programs such as StoryTime, Craftsy, and others continue to thrive
- Outreach staff gave out books and library information to recipients at Franklin Food Bank



Isle of Wight County

- Carrollton Branch hosted many fun events, including programming for IOWCS Special Education classes and a Children's Book Week display featuring book reviews from CES 2nd grade students.
- Smithfield Branch hosted a variety of fun programs, and partnered with Browder's Fresh Pickins to present a StoryWalk at their Strawberry Patch for field trips and agri-tourists to enjoy.
- Windsor Library had a busy May full of programs, outreach, and a fun celebration of Children's Book week featuring a special Dino-Story Time.

Between Outreach and In-House programming, 47 programs reaching over 700 members of the community were delivered in IOW County in May



Southampton County

- Courtland branch hosted a Squishmallow Fun Party at the Afterschool Program with canvas painting, marshmallow stack activities and crafts
- Little Explorers story time themes included Mother's Day, Butterflies & Bubbles with stories, songs, movement activities and crafts, including some outdoor activities!
- Craftsy participants learned to make beautiful bows as part of their monthly program



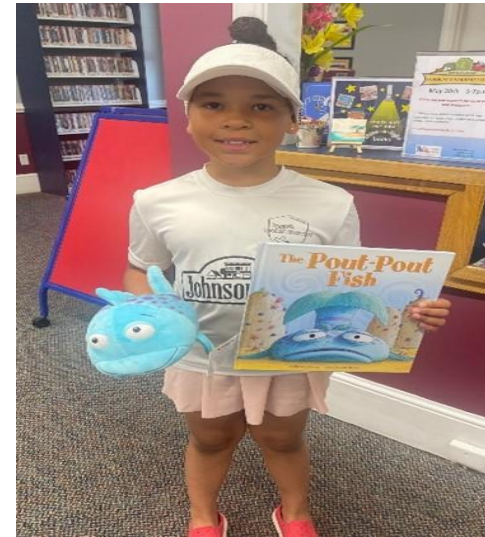
Surry County

- Surry Branch held a mother, daughter Tea Party in May! Everyone enjoyed tea, sandwiches, cakes, cookies, and fruit. Attendees made presents for their moms for Mother's Day and played games after the tea & food
- Storytime children continue to learn their letters, read, play, and craft!
- This month's STEAM was plant propagation with aloe, and was a fun & educational experience for all. Attendees were able to take home their new propagations home to grow!



Sussex County

- Both branches celebrated Children's Book Week with crafts and a drawing for a prize and free book!
- Waverly opened the Farmers Market season on Tuesday, May 20th. Attendance was good and the market has grown & attracted a couple new vendors



Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

May 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
360IT Partners				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-317.00
05/21/2025	Bill		CW274004	317.00
AFLAC				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		306897 5312025	-992.55
05/31/2025	Bill		306897	992.55
Amazon Capital Services				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11596	-5,262.54
05/31/2025	Bill		1X7N-RQ9K-PKDK	465.51
05/31/2025	Bill		1YLJ-311R-NNWX	4,797.03
Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		20079473	-8,744.00
05/21/2025	Bill		000869261F	8,744.00
Aspen Black Productions				
05/09/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		C517454467	
05/31/2024	Bill		SU 7.25.2024	250.00
05/09/2025	Vendor Credit		Visa C517454466	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11599	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill		20250725 (Claremont)	250.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11602	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill		20250724 (Wakefield)	250.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11601	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill		20250721 (Carrollton)	250.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11600	-500.00
05/31/2025	Bill		20250722 (Windsor)	500.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11598	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill		20250723 (Smithfield)	250.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11597	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill		20250724 (Surry)	250.00
AT&T				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11603	-3.39
05/31/2025	Bill		2080769143	3.39
Baker & Taylor				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		325324364	-3,899.79
05/21/2025	Bill		5019500206	3,899.79
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		326499609	-5,491.66
05/31/2025	Bill		5019527016	5,491.66

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

May 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Baker & Taylor - Laminate				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		325324865	-231.15
05/21/2025	Bill		5019499832	231.15
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		326502303	-843.99
05/31/2025	Bill		5019521408	843.99
Balloon Creatures By Susan				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11605	-175.00
05/31/2025	Bill		10513 (Wakefield)	175.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11604	-150.00
05/31/2025	Bill		10493 (Carrollton)	150.00
Bright Star Children's Theatre, LLC				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11606	-945.00
05/31/2025	Bill		INV-7621 (Franklin)	945.00
Cengage Learning, Inc./Gale				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11607	-147.77
05/31/2025	Bill		999100410544	26.64
05/31/2025	Bill		999100434674	37.01
05/31/2025	Bill		999100419749	32.79
05/31/2025	Bill		999100387667	24.69
05/31/2025	Bill		999100398235	26.64
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-5,961.30
05/21/2025	Bill		999100373871	5,961.30
Dominion Energy Virginia				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		4318345904	-1,937.08
05/31/2025	Bill			1,937.08
Harold B. Wood				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11608	-350.00
05/31/2025	Bill		25035 (Surry)	350.00
John Barnes				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11609	-500.00
05/31/2025	Bill		000547 (Franklin)	500.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11610	-500.00
05/31/2025	Bill		000549 (Rawls)	500.00
Jonathan Austin				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11611	-700.00

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

May 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
05/31/2025	Bill		Rawls 7.22.2025	700.00
Law Offices of Stephen R. Jackson				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11592	-1,290.00
05/21/2025	Bill		2005	1,290.00
Mad Science of Hampton Roads				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11612	-850.00
05/31/2025	Bill		7079 (Franklin)	850.00
Marlin Leasing Corporation				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		200256473857	-1,598.72
05/21/2025	Bill		40507134	1,598.72
Midwest Tape				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11613	-2,353.10
05/31/2025	Bill		507197275	2,353.10
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-1,731.75
05/21/2025	Bill		507146841	1,731.75
Old Cart Critters				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11616	-500.00
05/31/2025	Bill		072925 (Rawls)	500.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11614	-300.00
05/31/2025	Bill		062625 (Surry)	300.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11615	-375.00
05/31/2025	Bill		062625 (Wakefield)	375.00
Overdrive, Inc				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		cm6twey8	-4,241.83
05/21/2025	Bill		03100CO25141501	777.60
05/21/2025	Bill		03100CO25142059	102.50
05/21/2025	Bill		03100CO25152914	1,424.40
05/21/2025	Bill		03100DA25154146	510.49
05/21/2025	Bill		03100DA25147004	1,426.84
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		rt91ngpc	-2,558.76
05/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25166498	1,189.32
05/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25160620	1,151.44
05/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25164086	109.00
05/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25169201	109.00
Petty Cash				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11589	-498.14

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

May 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
05/21/2025	Bill		5.21.2025 Petty Cash	498.14
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11617	-725.60
05/31/2025	Bill		5.31.2025 Petty Cash	725.60
Quadient Postage				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		BH3796507571	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill		8140 0461 5.22.2025	250.00
Queen B's Cleaning Service				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11618	-877.20
05/31/2025	Bill		1814	877.20
Rainbow Productions, Inc.				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11620	-350.00
05/31/2025	Bill		i031925-12 (Waverly)	350.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11619	-790.00
05/31/2025	Bill		i021925-07 (Rawls)	790.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11621	-350.00
05/31/2025	Bill		i031925-08 (Wakefld)	350.00
Reptile Education of Virginia				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11622	-100.00
05/31/2025	Bill		202512b (Windsor)	100.00
Scott Wagoner Magic				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11625	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill		000556 (Franklin)	250.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11624	-150.00
05/31/2025	Bill		000541 (Windsor)	150.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11623	-150.00
05/31/2025	Bill		000545 (Waverly)	150.00
Sentara Health Plans				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		WAD2515429119	-15,218.00
05/31/2025	Bill		9888306	15,218.00
Southampton County				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		33451	-60.00
05/31/2025	Bill		Acct 46 5.15.2025	60.00
Southampton County (1)				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11626	-414.06
05/31/2025	Bill		2025-05 (May gas)	414.06

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

May 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Spectrum Enterprise				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		0456716689	-105.84
05/21/2025	Bill		089740301050125	105.84
T & A Repairs, LLC.				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11590	-128.92
05/21/2025	Bill		37950	128.92
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11627	-115.83
05/31/2025	Bill		38162	115.83
Talewise				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11628	-400.00
05/31/2025	Bill		20019 (Carrollton)	400.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11630	-400.00
05/31/2025	Bill		20481 (Windsor)	400.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11629	-725.00
05/31/2025	Bill		20434 (Franklin)	725.00
Terry Andrews				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11591	-276.44
05/21/2025	Bill		Reimb 5.6.2025	276.44
The Library Corporation				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11593	-299.00
05/21/2025	Bill		INV11003660	299.00
The Mariners' Museum and Park				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11632	-100.00
05/31/2025	Bill		2025/08060 (Clarmnt)	100.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11631	-100.00
05/31/2025	Bill		2025/08053 (Surry)	100.00
TowneBank/Card Services				
05/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		C517454466	-26,275.80
05/15/2025	Bill		6457 0001 5.14.2025	26,275.80
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		CBA872A0AE	-7,249.98
05/31/2025	Bill		6457 0001 5.31.2025	7,249.98
Unique Management Services, Inc.				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-139.80
05/21/2025	Bill		6138714	139.80

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

May 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Verizon (1)				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3129300 3129343	-163.30
05/21/2025	Bill		935119692 5.9.2025	81.65
05/21/2025	Bill		961660704 5.9.2025	81.65
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3134411	-63.21
05/31/2025	Bill		624106825 5.22.2025	63.21
Verizon Wireless				
05/21/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		4079545397	-2,839.37
05/21/2025	Bill		6113054306	2,839.37
Virginia Living MuseumEd Dept				
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11633	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill		MNRS25-156 (Clarmnt)	250.00
05/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11634	-250.00
05/31/2025	Bill		MNRS26-001 (Crrlton)	250.00

Photo Enforcement Citation Policy

Photo Enforcement Citation/Summons – When a Photo Enforcement Citation/Summons is issued to a driver of a library vehicle, the citation/summons is delivered directly to the central office. When the library receives a Photo Enforcement Citation/Summons for violation of motor vehicle laws while driving a library vehicle: 1. The Library will identify the vehicle driver subject to the citation/summons. 2. The identified driver shall A. Be responsible to pay the fine associated with the citation/summons by the due date shown on the citation/summons and to provide an official receipt for payment to the Administrative Services Coordinator, or B. If the driver wishes to contest the charges, the driver shall follow the procedure given on the citation/summons and appear in court as directed. Following court disposition, the driver shall provide either an official receipt for fine paid or documentation of dismissal of the citation to the Administrative Services Coordinator. 3. The Library Director will review the severity and circumstances of the violation and determine appropriate corrective action, if any. Corrective action may include, but is not limited to, loss of the privilege of driving a library vehicle, and/or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Election of Officers

At the Board's May meeting, the nominating committee presented the slate of:

Chair: Deborah Dawson

Vice-Chair: Pam Lease

Secretary: Ora Briggs

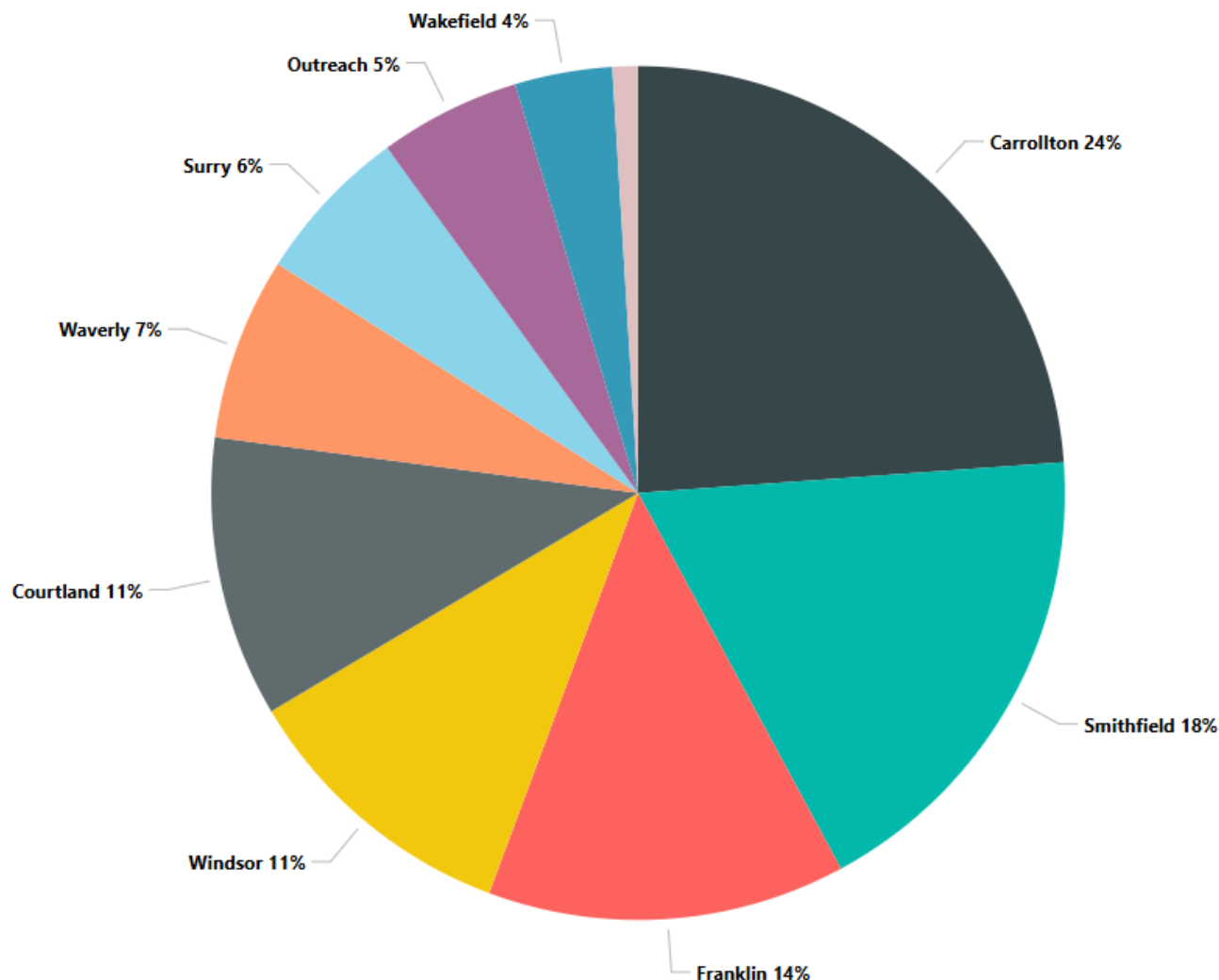
Other nominations are also welcome at this time.



Franklin, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Surry, and Sussex
www.blackwaterlib.org

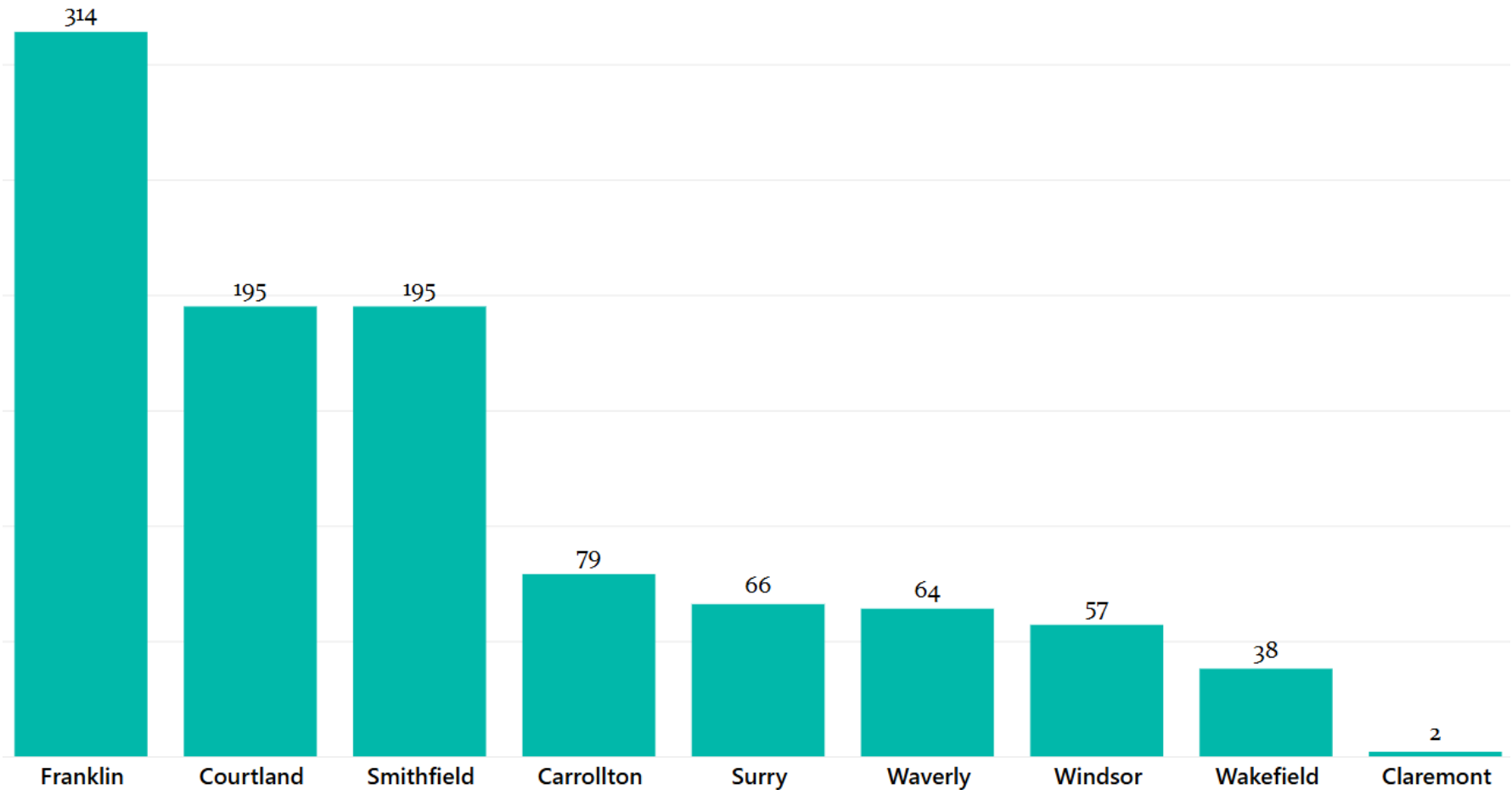
May 2025
Statistics

Monthly Report: Patron Count

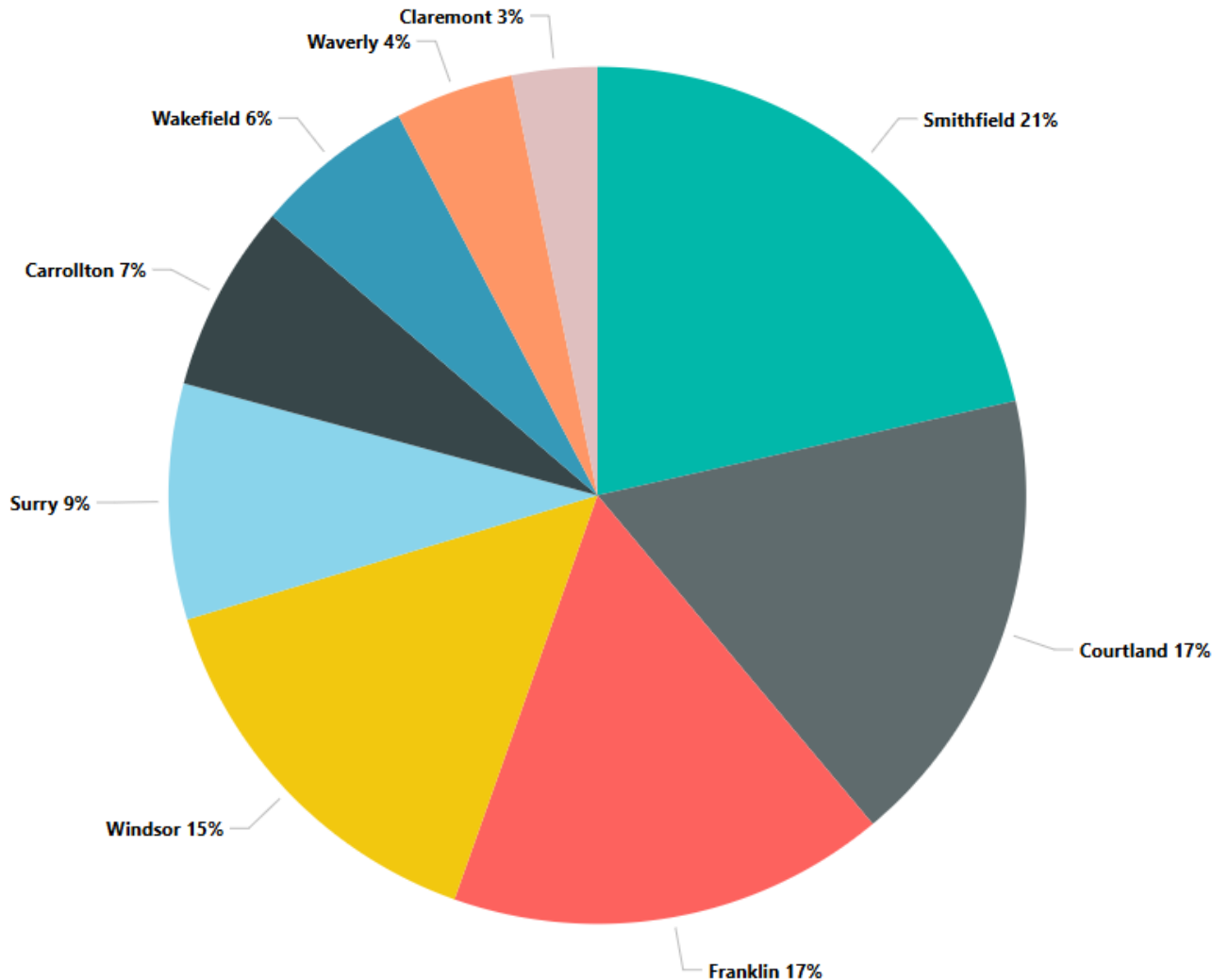


Branch	Patron Count
Carrollton	3598
Claremont	146
Courtland	1603
Franklin	2046
Outreach	808
Smithfield	2756
Surry	902
Wakefield	556
Waverly	1045
Windsor	1627
Total	15087

Monthly Report: In-House Internet



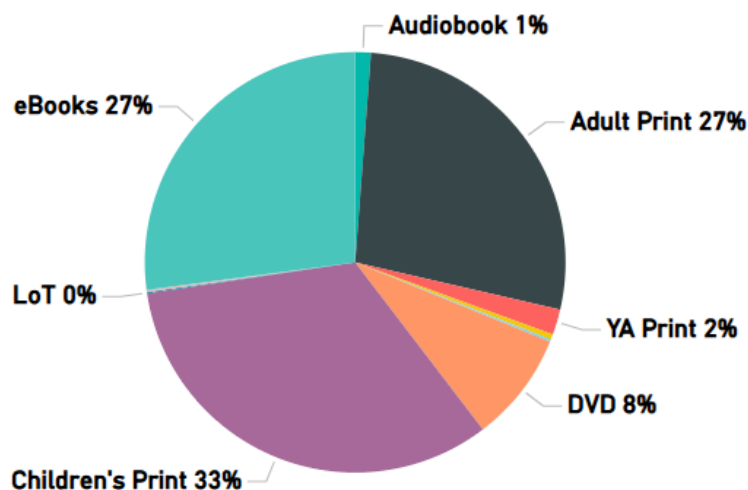
Monthly Report: WiFi Use



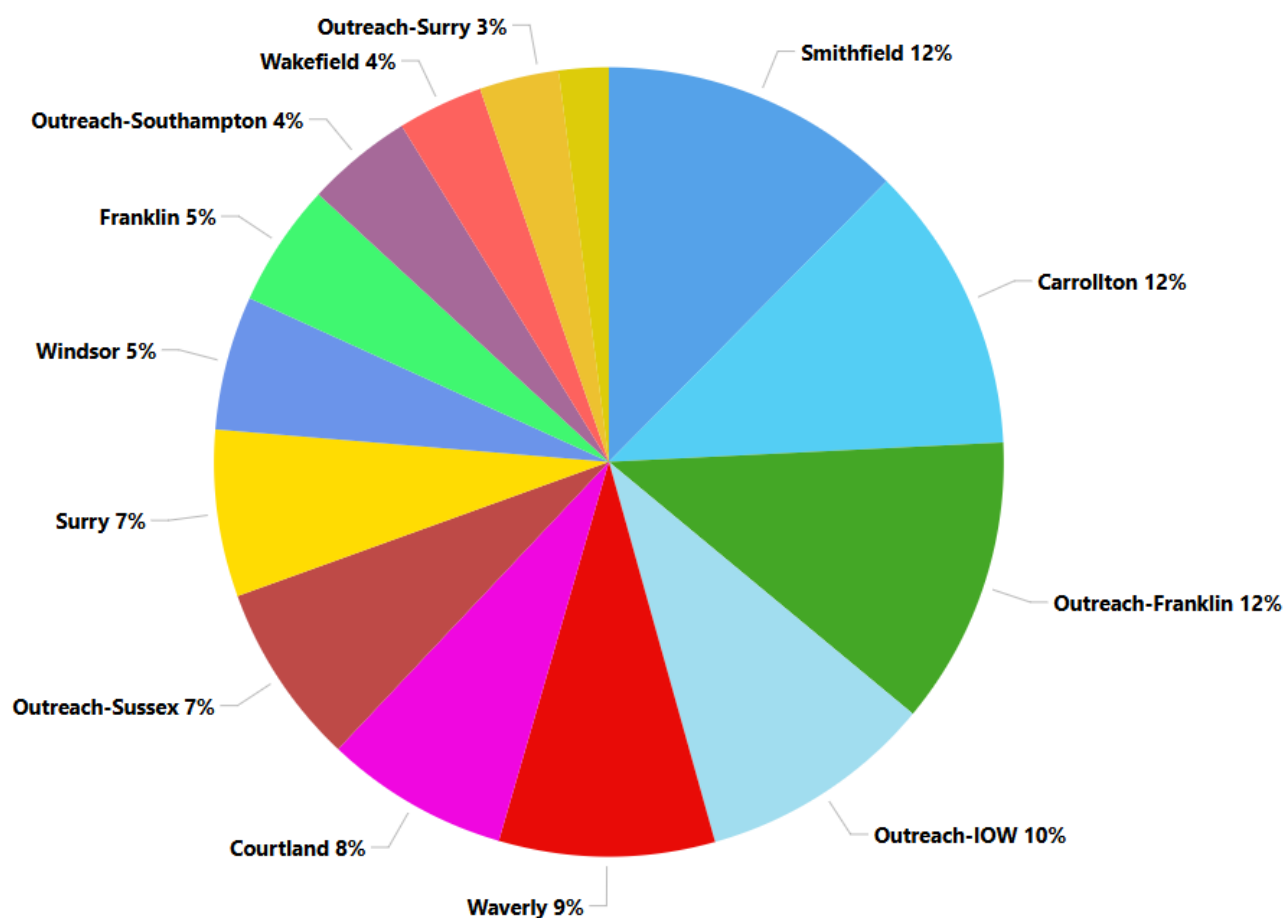
Branch	Wireless Internet Usage
Carrollton	106
Claremont	48
Courtland	261
Franklin	247
Smithfield	321
Surry	133
Wakefield	90
Waverly	67
Windsor	223
Total	1496

Circulation Report: Type by Branch

Location	Adult Print	Children's Print	DVD	Audiobook	Kits	YA Print	Music	LoT	Magazines	eBooks	Streaming Devices/ Hotspots
Carrollton	1375	2130	375	58	3	103	0	1	0	1741	21
Claremont	311	50	118	0	0	7	0	1	10	63	5
Courtland	1059	1328	371	106	1	93	0	8	0	898	27
Franklin	1514	1550	460	115	11	101	0	2	21	1555	12
Outreach	116	35	5	0	0	6	0	0	0	61	0
Smithfield	2080	2968	508	47	1	171	0	12	25	2357	8
Surry	598	374	242	0	7	17	0	1	0	521	26
Wakefield	344	319	156	7	6	16	0	0	0	224	3
Waverly	340	540	158	1	17	17	0	1	0	197	11
Windsor	778	962	235	39	10	79	0	3	0	799	12
Total	8515	10256	2628	373	56	610	0	29	56	8416	125

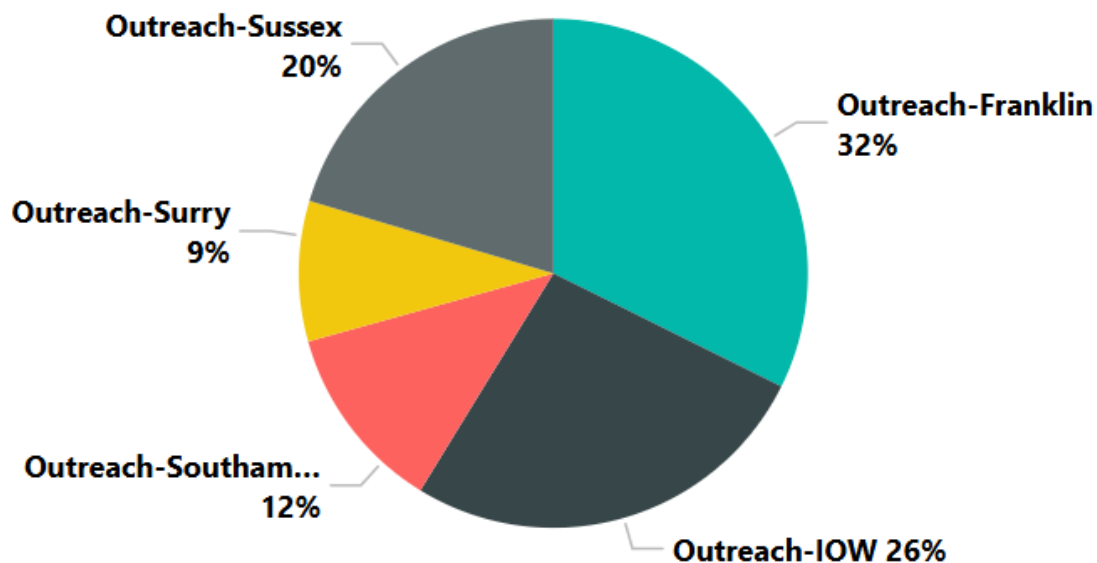


Program Report: Total Participation



Location/Branch	Count
Carrollton	290
Claremont	50
Courtland	185
Franklin	124
Outreach-Franklin	290
Outreach-IOW	237
Outreach-Southampton	107
Outreach-Surry	80
Outreach-Sussex	183
Smithfield	305
Surry	168
Wakefield	86
Waverly	217
Windsor	135
Total	2457

Outreach Report: Programs



Location/Branch	Outreach Programs	Attendance
Outreach-Franklin	5	290
Outreach-IOW	6	237
Outreach-Southampton	3	107
Outreach-Surry	1	80
Outreach-Sussex	3	183
Total	18	897

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Staffing Update June 2024 Blackwater Regional Library

New Hires

Promotions

Transfers

Separations

Vacancies

- Senior Library Assistant – Outreach Services

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Training Sessions – May 2025

Isle of Wight County staff completed a total of 3 trainings

Southampton County staff completed a total of 2 trainings

Surry County staff completed a total of 1 training

Sussex County staff completed a total of 2 trainings

Central Office staff completed a total of 10 trainings

5/7/2025 – Getting Started with AI in Teams, Foundations, Ethics & Practical Prompts - AI is a field of computer science that focuses on creating machines capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence.

Question First: Majority believe AI is potentially useful, but still unclear but is here to stay and will only grow. The growth rate has been faster than expected.

AI existed since the 1950s. AI is already in daily life, example: Google, Amazon, Pandora, email, mapping, & PayPal.

AI such as ChatGPT or Microsoft Copilot is bad for environment due to energy needed.

A successful use of AI would be data or interviews in several different languages and bringing it back to English.

Caution of things to be careful of for Non-profit use.

- Accuracy
- Confidentiality
- Transparency
- Inclusivity
- Alignment
- Verification
- Originality
- Community Representation

5/7/2025 – Creating a Culture of Yes - The Course was on creating an inviting environment for the patrons, as well as new and innovative ideas on ways to enhance the library's appearance from the welcome sign, furniture, book displays, and also with the new books in the library. The webinar also spoke about having dialogue with the patrons regarding ideas, suggestions, and ways to improve their library experience as well.

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5/14/2025 – Dealing with Complaints about Library Materials -

1. Why we built diverse collection:
 - a. Stories are important to people's lives
 - b. Each person reads a book in their own way.
 - c. The library needs comfort reading at different times in their lives.
 - d. We need diversity that reflects all members of the community.
2. Listen to people's complaints
 - a. Be prepared
 - b. Remain calm
 - c. Staff should be on the same page, and give consistent response.
 - d. If you're less reactive you'll get less defensive.
3. Build Relationships/ Who are our gate keepers
 - a. Religious leaders
 - b. School administration
 - c. Local government
 - d. Civic organizations
 - e. Local Media

Before something happens build relationships
4. What you need to be ready
 - a. Trained staff who understands how to deal with difficult situations
 - b. Collection Policy
 - c. Reconsideration process
5. Handling Complaints
 - a. Stay Calm
 - b. Let them vent their concerns
 - c. Use active listening skills
 - d. Content is what they are saying
 - e. Meaning is what they are trying to say
 - f. Feeling is not to interrupt
 - g. Listen to the whole question instead of trying to come up with a solution while they're taking.
 - h. Don't try to fix it right away
 - i. Thank them
 - j. Paraphrase their concerns it gives them a chance to think about what they said.
 - k. Don't agree
 - l. Notify Boss
6. Closing the conversation
 - a. Thank them for sharing

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- b. Find something they are interested in
- c. Notify the management

5/15/2025 – Library of Virginia ChatGPT - A very good introduction to ChatGPT. ChatGPT can answer questions, generate data, analyze data and even code. The webinar explained what it is and how it compares to traditional search engines. It gives suggestions of ways to optimize the use of it, how to write effective prompts etc... I would recommend the webinar for those who like myself are a bit AI illiterate.

5/15/2025 – Responding to Law Enforcement Inquires - There are times when law enforcement officials may come to the library for information. When this happens, some library staff may feel conflicted. They might want to cooperate with an investigation, but they are also responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of library users. This short training details how to respond to law enforcement inquiries such as subpoenas, search warrants, and emergencies.

5/15/2025 – Reading with Feeling: Using Library Collections and Reading Groups to Foster Connection - This session was basically how to plan, prep, advertise, and run a book club. While the information was good, she really needed to connect this to working with specific communities. The information was too elementary for the crowd that was participating. She did hit on good points regarding how to manage book club discussions that veer in a direction that's too personal or someone is "trauma dumping" and ideas for different formats for book clubs, but I really wish she had centered the presentation on this.

5/15/2025 – Addiction and Recovery Through the Lens of Harm Reduction - This session was an overview of harm reduction, understanding the history/foundations/principles of harm reduction as policy, engaging with drug users, and how the Kansas City Public Library instituted harm reduction principles in their community engagement.

Side note: Casey Johnson does free, virtual trainings and is very willing to work with public libraries on programs/policies/trainings, etc.

5/16/2025 – It's Not in the Book: The Promise and the Shortfall of Bibliotherapy and the Power of Human Connection - Covered what is Bibliotherapy, the history of it, why librarians should NOT be practicing this unless in collaboration with a licensed mental health counselor, and how bibliotherapy can be useful. To be honest, this presentation was a hot mess. The presenter was clearly knowledgeable, but she didn't do a good job of specifically connecting libraries partnering to offer bibliotherapy for those in recovery or family/caregivers, etc. It would have also been nice to see examples of successful bibliotherapy programs in public libraries (if they exist).

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5/16/2025 – Libraries and Social Connection - Covered the growing issue of social isolation, community-led programming, and many examples of library programs

5/16/2025 – A Lifeline in the City: The Role of Kansas City Public Library in Addressing Mental Health and Homelessness - Overview of how Kansas City Public Library focused on addressing mental health issues, substance abuse, and homelessness by engaging with community resources and peer navigators.

5/19/2025 – Technology for Littles: Internet Safety Essentials for Young Children - Children are accessing & using technology more than ever. Littles are learning from the internet before they can even talk. This will have a big impact on our children's lives, education & relationships as they grow.

Healthy Habits:

Starting at the age of 3 to 4, children are playing games & I really see 2yr olds watching cartoons & looking at pictures even sooner. 1 in 4 children have a personal phone by the age of 8. Covid helped increase the use of Tablets. More child friendly apps & parental controls are helping to fuel this age market.

Developmental Stages:

Developing Brains & technology. Children under the age of 3 will not easily transfer video to real life. Children learn from being talked to.

Language Development

Self-Regulation

Middle School: learning to type can affect their studies & reports. If testing is offered on a PC there could be a gap in knowledge. Children learn to be bored, unhappy etc. to get through these times, they learn to cope on their own. Very important! Encourage them to make choices. Playing games (waiting their turn) magical thinking, real vs imagination or make believe. By the time a child is 6 their brain is 90% size of an adult. Using voice control is very important. Use a child's head phone instead of an adult one to protect hearing loss.

Narrate parenting when using your device. "I am checking the weather to see if we need a coat today" or "I am paying the bills"

Kids are growing up differently and faster than we did. Around the age of 4 children begin to understand the concept of time. Implement & enforce rules for technology use at home.

Always be aware of the content that your children are accessing.

5/19/2025 – Public Library Staff Certificate -

Gale – Elementary: Overview, Accessibility features – ie. Dyslexia, e-books, newspapers/ book articles (reference), downloading and printing

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Gale – Legal Forms: Frequently requested forms, VA Forms (divorce, wills, estates, small business, landlord/ tenant, family law). Articles, Q&A, Legal Dictionary. Search and category tools.

Small Business Resources: formal documents, premade letters and notices, licensing and agreements, technological privacy

Support for general patrons: Wills and estates, civil actions, selling real estate, home inspections, tenant-specific documents. Forms are updated regularly in the system.

Financial spreadsheets

Anything extremely high stakes, perhaps consult an attorney as well.

Even a letter to Santa.

Gale Team Help

MasterFILE & Explora: Interface vs Database.

Journals, Videos, Magazines, e-books.

Search and filters

Mobile capabilities

Access Video – Just For Kids: Ad-free, fun, kid-safe video streaming platform.

PBS, Reading Rainbow, Sesame Street.

Unlimited streaming and simultaneous usage

Storybooks online

Westin Woods Classic Storybooks, Animated Storybooks

Truly educational option for kids (Netflix ie. has too much going on. Sounds, lights, etc.)

Create an account for additional features. Create a playlist, + Admin (run reports, uploads)

NoveList Plus:

Recommendations – Genres, popular reads lists, series books. Sort, filter, and search tools are pretty in depth!

In-House – Create displays, saved searches, create lists, folders

Making your own appeal list (to obtain a carousel of recommended titles and add books to folders).

Accel5:

Summaries and articles

Sign up for weekly newsletter

Employee/ Management resource – Public speaking, diversity, virtual presentation capabilities,

Homework HelpNow: Brainfuse Writing Lab. Nothing is provided. Feedback is provided. Skill Surfer.

Groups Divided By Age Group, Practice Tests, Various School Subjects, Standardized Test Practice Tests, College Entrance Test Prep, College Application Process Help, Research & Presentation Skills.

Adult Learner Resources. Language Lab. Brainwave.

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JobNow & VetNow:

Career coaching, practice tests for career skills, career skill help

Transparent Language:

Online language learning resource will 100+ languages (including not-as-common ones), but unlike other sites, offers English as well.

Activities including typing and writing

Universal Class:

Course classes, certificates for completing courses, keep track of the courses you have taken and want to take. i.e. Computer, Accounting, Science, Writing. Literally everything – Cooking, Fire Safety, Photography, Wellness, Healthcare...

5/19/2025 – Beginning Readers 101: Emergent Literacy Made Easy - This webinar focused on helping the families that contain our youngest readers in selecting beginning reader titles / materials within the library. A history of these types of readers from their inception in 1957 up to the present time was given.

There are basic four stages that young readers ages 5-8 go through: Emergent Readers –Early Readers – Transitional Readers – Fluent readers. Each child progresses at their own rate of course.

Information was given on the features to look for when selecting beginning reader books for the collection:

Font size/ words used / simple sentences / illustrations that assist in understanding text

More selection criteria for these books: short declarative sentences/ contain sight words/words contain no more than 5 letters/contain repeated phrases and words/ 18 to 20 point font/ lots of white space/ new sentences begin on new lines.

The problem with these leveled readers is that each publisher's leveling guidelines are different. In some cases, even books from the same publishers have discrepancies in the noted reading level. This makes it hard for patrons (and staff) to locate appropriate materials. Other than opening each book and looking through it, there is no way to accurately predict which stage the book is appropriate for.

Great ideas were given (that seemed doable) for libraries to create their own labeling system within their own collection.

Option #1 - Specific Labeling by color coding the different levels of readers. Each of the four levels were given a unique color label making it much easier for patrons to find what they need. The downside to this option is that is very labor intensive at the beginning. Each book in this collection needs to be assessed by knowledgeable library staff. (The webinar presenter noted

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that when they did it took a good 6 months to get all the books finally labeled). There was one color per shelf. Books are organized by spine label within each color.

Option #2—Equivalency Charts (“cheat sheets”) to alert patrons and staff to reading levels between publishers. Also labor intensive and still hard for patrons and staff to locate the books.

Option #3—Staff education consists of training all staff about the book levels, different publishers, how to assess a books level etc. This creates information overload for staff more than likely. Probably not very effective in the long run. Every new staff member would need to be trained.

TIPS & TRICKS

Stock the classics

Replace back list titles with new covers (as that does affect checkouts in children’s books)

Go for series and shelve them together (reading about familiar characters and settings helps build reading confidence!)

Weed for items that do not check out to assess whether they are in the proper collection.

Ultimately we are trying to create a section where kids can easily look for books that they can read by themselves.

I would recommend Option #1 to any library that has a separate space for Beginning Reader Books. (We have ours separated at this branch.) I feel like this is a very doable project and one that would benefit children, parents, and staff. I hope it can be done here—such a great idea.

5/19/2025 – New Approaches for Time Management - The webinar I chose to review was New Approaches for Time Management. It discusses the best ways to manage your time and avoid distractions. The time management strategies they discussed include creating strict boundaries, intentional disconnection, and attention management. It is important to find time management strategies that work best for you. I enjoyed this webinar because it gave me tips and skills that I am able to use at work and my everyday life.

5/19/2025 – Understanding Income and Poverty Statistics - Do you use income statistics to administer a program, apply for grants, or target community outreach? In this session, a statistician will share tips to help you find the numbers you need and use them to further your goals. We’ll review terminology and basic concepts, touch on pitfalls to avoid when aggregating statistics, and use data to tell compelling stories. This is NOT a statistics class full of complicated formulas - we’ll use a fun, interactive group activity to explore income measures in an imaginary community and observe how government policies impact real-life situations.

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5/20/2025 – Older Workers, Digital Literacy, and the Future of Employment - This session discussed employment and digital literacy for older adults. How to identify barriers to employment, and discuss methods that have been successful in eliminating those barriers. Also discussed was ageism in employment, and engaging with public and private employers to promote employment for older adults.

5/20/2025 – Adapting to Changing Workplace Demographics and Sustaining the Workforce - Tips, trends, and strategies for adapting to and sustaining an aging workforce. Interactive sessions with experiences shared.

5/28/2025 – REVIVE Basic Lay rescuer Training- Ann-Marie Byrd and Raymond Barnes, Peer Recovery Specialists with VA Dept of Corrections led Basic Lay Rescuer Training that covered the basics of substance abuse, identifying an overdose, and how to administer Narcan. They were excellent facilitators, answered a ton of questions, and gave great information about local resources. They also mentioned they would be willing to come speak with library staff if we were ever interested in providing the training.