

BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Franklin Branch

Wednesday

November 19, 2025

Budget Workshop —2:00 pm

Board of Trustees Meeting—to immediately follow

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

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

Board Packet Contents

November 19, 2025

- Agenda – November 2025
- Minutes – September and October 2025
- Library Director's Report
- Budget and Finance Committee Notes
- Library Bills
- Holliday Gift Cards for Staff Action Item
- FY26-27 Proposed Annual Budget
- Monthly Statistics Report – October 2025
- Staffing and Workshop Report

**Blackwater Regional Library
Board Meeting
November 19, 2025**

Agenda

Franklin Branch

Call to Order

Adoption of Agenda – November 2025

Approval of Minutes – September and October 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

- Approval of Holiday Gift Cards for Staff
- Consideration of FY26-27 Budget

New Business

- Acceptance of FY25 Annual Audit

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Announcement of Next Meeting

- January 21, 2026

Adjournment

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES BOARD RETREAT MEETING MINUTES
September 17, 2025**

Present

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Charlene Herrala – Isle of Wight County
Pam Lease – City of Franklin
Kathy Lippard – Isle of Wight County
Margie McClenny – Southampton County
Karen Richardson – Sussex County
Kisha Watford – Southampton County
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County
Ben Neal – Library Director

Remote (via Zoom)

Absent

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin

Chair, Deborah Dawson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees Board Retreat to order at 1:07 p.m. at the Franklin Branch following the Board Retreat. She turned the meeting over to Mr. Neal, who talked about strategic planning and answered questions from the Board.

The board retreat adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
September 17, 2025**

Present

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Charlene Herrala – Isle of Wight County
Pam Lease – City of Franklin
Kathy Lippard – Isle of Wight County
Margie McClenny – Southampton County
Karen Richardson – Sussex County
Kisha Watford – Southampton County
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County
Ben Neal – Library Director
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager

Remote (via Zoom)

Absent

Ora Briggs – Sussex 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 2:13 p.m. at the Franklin Branch following the Board Retreat.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

None

Agenda

Ms. Herrala moved, and Ms. Lease seconded that the agenda be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Minutes

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

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Library Director's Report

Summer Reading Program 2025 was a success with over 1,000 children participating and over 22,000 children's books checked out system-wide. Over 100 programs were held with over 5,000 people attending.

Fully staffed as of 9.10.2025

BRL participated in multiple National Night Out events throughout the service area.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Ms. Lease – will have formal meeting the day of October Board meeting. Ms. Lease will confirm time via email.

Personnel & Policy – Mr. Neal – The committee did not have quorum at its meeting, but came to a broad consensus on an updated Travel Policy. The policy will fall under New Business.

Long Range Planning – Ms. Dawson – Committee will meet October 8th, Ms. Dawson will email details.

Accounts Payable

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

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Travel Policy – Personnel and Policy discussed details of this policy at length. The draft includes travel expense updates based on local governments and schools, and the Department of Human Resource Management. Ms. Herrala moved, and Ms. McClenny seconded that the policy be approved as presented, effective November 1, 2025. The vote was unanimous.

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Ms. Dawson – happy to see everyone at Board Retreat earlier in the day. Nottoway Indian Pow Wow is this weekend in Surry. BRL will attend on Saturday.

Ms. Watford – Delta Sigma Theta will host a Wellness Rodeo on Saturday from 10:00a – 2:00p in the Paul D parking lot.

Ms. Lippard – The Smithfield Branch Manager transition from Terry Andrews to April Watkins is going very well.

Ms. Richardson – The Waverly Farmer's Market was held on Tuesday.

Ms. Lease – Franklin Fall Festival is October 4th in downtown Franklin.

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be on October 15, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

Adjournment

Ms. Lippard moved, and Ms. Watford seconded the meeting be adjourned. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Ora Briggs, Secretary

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
October 15, 2025**

Present

Ora Briggs – Sussex County
Deborah Dawson – Surry County
Margie McClenny – Southampton County
Karen Richardson – Sussex County
Kisha Watford – Southampton County
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County
Ben Neal – Library Director
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager

Remote (via Zoom)

Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin

Absent

MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County
Sylvia Claggett – Isle of Wight County
Charlene Herrala – Isle of Wight County
Pam Lease – City of Franklin
Kathy Lippard – Isle of Wight County

Chair, Deborah Dawson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 3:10 p.m. at the Franklin Branch. There was not a quorum present.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

None

Agenda

No quorum

Minutes

No quorum

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Library Director's Report

One vacancy as of 10.7.2025

Several BRL staff attended 2025 Virginia Library Association conference; learning and sharing with other library professionals throughout the state.

Circulation +8% through first quarter of fiscal year compared to same period last year.

Ms. Lauver gave an overview of new sensory kits available for checkout. She also explained changes to upcoming Winter and Summer Reading programs. Both programs will focus on reading goals.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Mr. Neal – Committee met prior to today's Board meeting, but did not have a quorum. The proposed FY2026 budget was presented. Please send questions to Mr. Neal, Ms. Dawson, and/or Ms. Lease. Staff holiday gift cards will appear on the November 19, 2025 meeting agenda.

Personnel & Policy – no report

Long Range Planning – Mr. Neal – committee met October 8th. There is a draft of Pillars, Goals, and Strategies in today's meeting handouts. Please send feedback/new ideas to Ms. Dawson and Mr. Neal. Staff will begin fine-

tuning strategies and goals. Further discussion planned for November Board meeting. BRL's current strategic plan expires December 31, 2025 – new plan to be adopted in January 2026.

Accounts Payable

No quorum

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Judge Harris – loving all the new ideas and creative programming offered at BRL

Ms. Dawson – Chippokes Fall Festival scheduled for 10/18. Happy to see BRL In-Service Day in Surry this year.

Plans for revamped Winter Reading and Summer Reading programs are great and timely.

Ms. Briggs – Fall Festival at Community Center scheduled on 10/25 to include a trunk-or-treat.

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be the Budget Workshop on November 19, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch. The Board meeting will immediately follow.

Adjournment

No quorum

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Ora Briggs, Secretary



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

Director's Report

October 2025

Admin Updates

- 2 current vacancies as of 11.11.25
- Staff attended Virginia Library Association and Association of Bookmobile & Outreach Services conferences for important continuing education
- BRL participated several National Night Out events in early October reaching over 700 members of our community
- Holiday School Supply Drive underway; collecting school supplies for those in need mid-way through the academic year



BRL in the Community



Early Childhood
Western Tidewater
Trunk and Treat



Jarratt Fall Festival



Smithfield National Night Out

22 Outreach Programs reaching over 4600 members
of our community in October

City of Franklin

- A fun month of programs for children including Halloween-themed StoryTimes, Pokemon Club, and Pumpkin Painting; as well as programming for adults including the monthly Craftsy program
- A lot of programs and events out in the community including StoryTime at Storehouse Coffee, National Night Out, and the Children's Center Fall Festival



Isle of Wight County

- Carrollton Branch hosted many programs for all ages, including the Vincent Van Gogh-themed Teen Paint Night!
- In addition to many programs for all ages, Smithfield staff coordinated two popular StoryWalks out in the community---one in Hayden's Lane and one at Browder's Fresh Pickins
- Windsor branch had a busy month providing programming to families including Pumpkin Painting, PAWS to Read, and the Switch It On for teen & tween gamers!

61 in-person programs in Isle of Wight County in October reaching over 1300 members of the Community



Southampton County

- Story Time was a big hit in October with a highlight being the Courtland VFD's special visit for our Fire Safety Week StoryTime
- One of our volunteers led an excited group on a Ghost Walk. The group walked through downtown Courtland and learned of ghostly sightings
- Staff represented the library at Boykins Pumpkin Fest and gave out free books to area families



Surry County

- Fall programming continues to be popular, especially StoryTimes at Surry branch
- Community Outreach was a priority in October with library presence at Community events, such as Chippokes Fall Festival
- Bacon's Castle and Chippokes were great hosts for BRL's Staff Training Day, as we explored local history and natural resources with an eye towards future VA250 programming



Sussex County

- Thanks to a donation from the Town of Waverly, the library was able to have to have pumpkin decorating for the kids at the Farmers Market and at our StoryTimes.
- Staff participated in the Halloween Trunk-or-Treat program at The Improvement Association. The library provided tote bags with treats and a free book to each child.
- Waverly Branch's Halloween Trunk-or-Treat was a hit again this year, with over 400 people attending. The event also served as the kick-off for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library for Sussex County.



**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES
October 15, 2025**

Present

Deborah Dawson (Ex officio) – Surry County
Margie McClenny – Southampton County
Karen Richardson – Sussex County
Ben Neal – Library Director
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager

Remote (via Zoom)

Absent

Board Chair Deborah Dawson called the Budget & Finance Committee to order at 2:00 p.m. at the Franklin branch. There was not a quorum present.

Proposed FY2026 Budget

Mr. Neal reviewed the FY2026 operating budget, current salary scale, and tentative suggested adjustments to operational lines for FY2025.

- Mr. Neal recommends a 5% increase in the health insurance line. State plans are claim based, so premiums could increase or decrease for the upcoming year, based on claims processed in our group.
- Mr. Neal recommends salary scale adjustment to \$14.00/hour minimum and a 1.5% increase in order to stay competitive for current and incoming staff.
- Mr. Neal recommends increasing the annual draw from the Rawls Trust by \$10,000 to a total of \$106,500 to take pressure off our localities.
- The consensus was to present the FY2026 budget as proposed to the Board at the November 19, 2025 meeting.

Holiday Gift Cards for Staff

After discussion, the consensus of the committee was to recommend a \$30 holiday gift card for all permanent staff.

Ms. Dawson adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills September 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
AFLAC				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		606009 9.30.2025	-961.61
09/30/2025	Bill		606009	961.61
Amazon Capital Services				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11717	-3,940.05
09/30/2025	Bill		1LRF-R3P7-MJW1	599.23
09/30/2025	Bill		1LLH-Y4QK-KQPT	3,340.82
Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		12703086	-9,280.00
09/17/2025	Bill		000893268F	9,280.00
Baker & Taylor				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11718	-947.05
09/30/2025	Bill		5019664912	947.05
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3105008077172203940	-818.27
09/17/2025	Bill		5019656910	818.27
Baker & Taylor - Laminate				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3102005977173704250	-57.30
09/17/2025	Bill		5019656764	57.30
Cengage Learning, Inc./Gale				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11719	-182.14
09/30/2025	Bill		999101377322	18.19
09/30/2025	Bill		999101377321	65.58
09/30/2025	Bill		999101493737	32.79
09/30/2025	Bill		999101493738	32.79
09/30/2025	Bill		999101484104	32.79
Center Point Large Print				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11720	-33.95
09/30/2025	Bill		2202616	33.95
Document Systems, Inc.				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11721	-2,950.92
09/30/2025	Bill		148300	2,950.92
Dominion Energy Virginia				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		4538671500	-2,034.18
09/30/2025	Bill		3233130008 9.30.2025	2,034.18

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills September 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
MidAmerica Books				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11722	-574.80
09/30/2025	Bill		0074080	574.80
Midwest Tape				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11723	-1,734.32
09/30/2025	Bill		507757824	1,734.32
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		9104008777175605130	-503.97
09/17/2025	Bill		507696835	503.97
Overdrive, Inc				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		30sgf1gr	-4,216.33
09/17/2025	Bill		03100CO25274230	1,546.90
09/17/2025	Bill		03100DA25277657	891.73
09/17/2025	Bill		03100CO25277142	1,661.15
09/17/2025	Bill		03100DA25280866	116.55
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		9vrymwys	-2,984.37
09/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25286086	643.53
09/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25292879	798.53
09/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25295558	84.99
09/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25306418	1,457.32
PEAC Solutions				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		200316692902	-1,598.72
09/17/2025	Bill		40923115	1,598.72
Petersburg Alarm Company				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11724	-435.00
09/30/2025	Bill		215696	435.00
Petty Cash				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11725	-613.86
09/30/2025	Bill		Sept 2025 Petty Cash	613.86
Quadient Postage				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		BH3802621337	-250.00
09/30/2025	Bill		8140 0461 9.22.2025	250.00
Queen B's Cleaning Service				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11726	-1,096.50
09/30/2025	Bill		1902	1,096.50

Selective Insurance Company

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills September 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11727	-697.00
09/30/2025	Bill		0000101941 9.16.2025	697.00
Sentara Health Plans				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		WAD2527632086	-16,574.00
09/30/2025	Bill		10315177	16,574.00
Southampton County				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		36368	-65.00
09/30/2025	Bill		Acct 46 9.16.2025	65.00
Southampton County (1)				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11713	-450.37
09/17/2025	Bill		2025-08 (August gas)	450.37
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11728	-402.33
09/30/2025	Bill		2025-09 (Sept gas)	402.33
Spectrum Enterprise				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		O915909330	-71.97
09/17/2025	Bill		089740301090125	71.97
T & A Repairs, LLC.				
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11729	-20.00
09/30/2025	Bill		39322	20.00
The Library Corporation				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11714	-32,836.86
09/17/2025	Bill		INV11004308	32,836.86
TowneBank/Card Services				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		C4FE877CB6	-10,159.26
09/17/2025	Bill		6457 0001 9.17.2025	10,159.26
Unique Management Services, Inc.				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3107008777171302860	-174.75
09/17/2025	Bill		6143169	174.75
Verizon (1)				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3177188/3177189	-163.78
09/17/2025	Bill		935119692 9.9.2025	81.89
09/17/2025	Bill		961660704 9.9.2025	81.89
09/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3184191	-63.05
09/30/2025	Bill		624106825 9.22.2025	63.05

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

September 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Verizon Wireless				
09/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3689531941	-2,840.71
09/17/2025	Bill		6123063770	2,840.71

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

October 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
AFLAC				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		928775 10.31.2025	-961.61
10/31/2025	Bill		928775	961.61
Amazon Capital Services				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11749	-10,533.31
10/31/2025	Bill		16CR-LVYP-TLDD	433.02
10/31/2025	Bill		16CR-LVYP-YKWT	10,100.29
Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11731	-9,280.00
10/15/2025	Bill		000899049F	9,280.00
Baker & Taylor - Laminate				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11750	-76.87
10/31/2025	Bill		5019667392	76.87
Barnes, Brock, Cornwell & Painter PLC				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11751	-10,000.00
10/31/2025	Bill		81254	10,000.00
Ben Neal				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11752	-364.00
10/31/2025	Bill		PLA 2026 Reg	364.00
Blackstone Publishing				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11732	-47.06
10/15/2025	Bill		2212867	47.06
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11753	-338.48
10/31/2025	Bill		2215537	88.78
10/31/2025	Bill		2214537	101.32
10/31/2025	Bill		2214532	50.66
10/31/2025	Bill		2214525	47.06
10/31/2025	Bill		2214423	50.66
Cengage Learning, Inc.				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11733	-65.58
10/15/2025	Bill		999101571631	32.79
10/15/2025	Bill		999101571632	32.79
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11754	-484.58
10/31/2025	Bill		999101493716	32.36
10/31/2025	Bill		999101491841	32.79
10/31/2025	Bill		999101464429	29.59

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

October 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
10/31/2025	Bill		999101444732	32.79
10/31/2025	Bill		999101408166	63.20
10/31/2025	Bill		999101408162	30.40
10/31/2025	Bill		999101375900	34.76
10/31/2025	Bill		999101284897	67.14
10/31/2025	Bill		999101608474	65.58
10/31/2025	Bill		999101547460	32.79
10/31/2025	Bill		999101633306	32.79
10/31/2025	Bill		999101581810	30.39

Dataprise LLC

10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11734	-8,683.56
10/15/2025	Bill		MSP53323	761.50
10/15/2025	Bill		MSP53216	6,300.06
10/15/2025	Bill		CW54706	1,174.00
10/15/2025	Bill		CW54705	448.00
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11755	-7,024.78
10/31/2025	Bill		MSP58058	6,241.78
10/31/2025	Bill		MSP58565	783.00

Dominion Energy Virginia

10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		4600618744	-1,614.94
10/31/2025	Bill		3233130008 10.31.2025	1,614.94

EnvisionWare, Inc.

10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11735	-5,433.75
10/15/2025	Bill		INV-US-78411	5,433.75

Library Furniture International, LLC

10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11756	-15,342.44
10/31/2025	Bill		2026-1078-dep	15,342.44

Midwest Tape

10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11736	-872.09
10/15/2025	Bill		507812786	872.09
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11757	-2,495.87
10/31/2025	Bill		507885078	2,495.87

Nancy Naigle

10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11737	-300.00
10/15/2025	Bill		20251106	300.00

Overdrive, Inc

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

October 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11738	-2,182.62
10/15/2025	Bill		03100DA25316648	84.99
10/15/2025	Bill		03100DA25315710	70.00
10/15/2025	Bill		03100DA25313552	2,027.63
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		618005pv	-2,172.09
10/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25330785	84.99
10/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25327754	438.50
10/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25320661	1,100.19
10/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25318702	160.00
10/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25336681	80.99
10/31/2025	Bill		03100CP25339877	25.49
10/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25335235	281.93
PEAC Solutions				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11739	-1,598.72
10/15/2025	Bill		41036891	1,598.72
Petty Cash				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11740	-510.49
10/15/2025	Bill		10.15.2025 petty cash	510.49
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11758	-665.82
10/31/2025	Bill		10312025 petty cash	665.82
Quadient Postage				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		BH3804582572	-580.97
10/31/2025	Bill		8140 0461 10.22.2025	580.97
Queen B's Cleaning Service				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11759	-877.20
10/31/2025	Bill		1922	877.20
Sentara Health Plans				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		WAD2530932956	-16,574.00
10/31/2025	Bill		10414815	16,574.00
Southampton County				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		37547	-65.00
10/31/2025	Bill		46 10.16.2025	65.00
Spectrum Enterprise				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11741	-71.97
10/15/2025	Bill		089740301100125	71.97

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

October 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
T & A Repairs, LLC.				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11760	-143.23
10/31/2025	Bill		39544	143.23
The Library Corporation				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11742	-1,010.99
10/15/2025	Bill		INV11004482	1,010.99
TowneBank/Card Services				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		C24769F3D3	-18,156.86
10/31/2025	Bill		6457 0001 10.31.2025	18,156.86
Treasurer of Virginia (1)				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11743	-45.00
10/15/2025	Bill		T Wagner 00388289	45.00
Unique Management Services, Inc.				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11744	-221.35
10/15/2025	Bill		6144297	221.35
Verizon (1)				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11745	-164.76
10/15/2025	Bill		961660704 10.9.2025	164.76
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3196574	-65.63
10/31/2025	Bill		624106825 10.22.2025	65.63
Verizon Wireless				
10/15/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11746	-2,840.71
10/15/2025	Bill		6125548439	2,840.71
Womack Publishing Company, Inc.				
10/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11761	-56.00
10/31/2025	Bill		150150 (SU) 10.8.2025	56.00

Holiday Gift Cards for Staff

Action Item: The Finance and Budget Committee came to the consensus of continuing tradition of Library Board approving \$30 gift cards for all library staff. While this expense is planned and budgeted for, it still requires action by the Board to formally approve.

BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY BUDGET 2026-2027

LOCAL - 14.00 minimum - **DRAFT**

proposed

LOCAL OPERATING EXPENSES	2026-2027	2025-2026
--------------------------	-----------	-----------

PERSONNEL

Salaries	1,328,158	1,277,638
FICA	107,821	103,957
Health Insurance	332,149	318,769
VRS	161,834	157,469
Unemployment	2,000	3,000
TOTAL PERSONNEL	1,931,962	1,860,833

OPERATIONS

Advertising	1000	1000
Automation	73875	73875
Audit	10000	10000
Childrens Programming	6000	6000
Computer Replacement	5000	5000
Contractual Services	6940	0
Headquarters Bldg Maint/Utilities (50% shared)	32000	32000
Dues	3000	2500
Fiscal Agent Compensation per Contract	16000	16000
Insurance	38000	38000
Internet (E-Rate)	7895	53661
Legal	3000	2500
Library Administration	8500	8000
Direct Deposit/Bank Fees	6000	5420
Office Supplies	12000	12000
Postage	5500	2000
Staff Training/Travel	9500	9500
Telephone	22000	22000
Vehicles (gas & maintenance)	9000	9000

TOTAL OPERATIONS	275,210	308,456
-------------------------	----------------	----------------

TOTAL PERSONNEL AND OPERATIONS	2,207,172	2,169,289
---------------------------------------	------------------	------------------

CREDITS FROM INCOME

Fees	30000	32000
Johnson Trust	5000	4000
W. C. Rawls Trust	106500	96500
E-Rate Income	432	41882

TOTAL INCOME FROM CREDITS	141,932	174,382
----------------------------------	----------------	----------------

TOTAL BUDGET FOR LOCALITY DISTRIBUTION	2,065,240	1,994,907
---	------------------	------------------

Blackwater Regional Library Proposed Budget 2026-2027

Locality Distribution - **DRAFT**

	2024 Population	2025 Circulation	Locality Percentage	2026-2027 Funding Based on Contract Formula*
City of Franklin	8,130	64,608	15.0964%	305,773 301,159
Isle of Wight County	41,048	209,165	53.9156%	1,111,494 1,075,566
Southampton County	17,769	44,654	14.8093%	311,626 295,432
Surry County	6,558	28,080	8.0502%	157,863 160,594
Sussex County	9,897	26,202	8.1285%	178,484 162,156
Totals	83,402	372,709	100%	2,065,240 1,994,907

*rounded to the nearest dollar

FY2026 allocations in red

Difference from FY2026 allocation:

City of Franklin:	increase of:	4,614
Isle of Wight County:	increase of:	35,928
Southampton County:	increase of:	16,194
Surry County:	decrease of:	(2,731)
Sussex County:	increase of:	16,328
Total:	increase of:	70,333

2026-2027 Budget

Budget - 14.00 minimum + 1.5% **\$2,065,240.00**

	FY27 Percentages	Budget Share - 14.00 minimum + 1.5%
City of Franklin	14.8057%	305,773
Isle of Wight County	53.8191%	1,111,494
Southampton County	15.0891%	311,626
Surry County	7.6438%	157,863
Sussex County	8.6423%	178,484
	100.000%	2,065,240

	FY26 Allocation	Difference 14.00 min + 1.5%
City of Franklin	301,159	4,614
Isle of Wight County	1,075,566	35,928
Southampton County	295,432	16,194
Surry County	160,594	(2,731)
Sussex County	162,156	16,328
	1,994,907	70,333

	FY27 Percentages	FY26 Percentages	Change
City of Franklin	14.80569%	15.0964%	-0.29071%
Isle of Wight County	53.81911%	53.9156%	-0.09649%
Southampton County	15.08908%	14.8093%	0.27977%
Surry County	7.64381%	8.0502%	-0.40637%
Sussex County	8.64231%	8.1285%	0.51382%
	100.00%	100%	

Weldon Cooper Estimates	2024 Population
City of Franklin	8,130
Isle of Wight County	41,048
Southampton County	17,769
Surry County	6,558
Sussex County	9,897
Total Population	83,402

Locality Circulation	2025 Circulation	BKM Circ	Total Locality Circ	Total Circ
City of Franklin	64,462	145	64,607	
Isle of Wight County	208,486	679	209,165	
Southampton County	43,733	921	44,654	
Surry County	27,935	145	28,080	
Sussex County	24,602	1,600	26,202	
Total Circulation	369,218	3,491	372,709	372,709

	circ	pop	(circ+pop)/3	%
City of Franklin	0.34669	0.0975	0.1481	14.80569%
Isle of Wight County	1.12240	0.4922	0.5382	53.81911%
Southampton County	0.23962	0.2131	0.1509	15.08908%
Surry County	0.15068	0.0786	0.0764	7.64381%
Sussex County	0.14060	0.1187	0.0864	8.64231%
	2.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000

Formula: [(Locality Circulation/Total Circulation*2) + (Locality Population/Total Population)]/3

	July 24 - June 25	Percentage of Circ	Circ to add to Locality
Bookmobile Stops			
City of Franklin	3	0.042	145.46
Isle of Wight County	14	0.194	678.81
Southampton County	19	0.264	921.24
Surry County	3	0.042	145.46
Sussex County	33	0.458	1600.04
Total Stops	72	1	3491.00

Position Title	Pay Grade	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum	Minimum Hourly*	Maximum Hourly*
					*based on 1,885 hours/year	*based on 1,885 hours/year
Library Director	7	78,020.00	92,980.00	110,900.00	41.39	58.83
Budget & Finance Manager	6	56,531.00	66,812.00	79,200.00	29.99	42.02
Assistant Director	6	56,531.00	66,812.00	79,200.00	29.99	42.02
Collection Development Manager	5	47,502.00	55,954.00	66,000.00	25.20	35.01
Branch Manager II	5	47,502.00	55,954.00	66,000.00	25.20	35.01
Branch Manager I	4	39,943.00	46,718.00	55,000.00	21.19	29.18
Outreach Services/Marketing Coord.	4	39,943.00	46,718.00	55,000.00	21.19	29.18
Administrative Services Coordinator	4	39,943.00	46,718.00	55,000.00	21.19	29.18
Cataloger	3	31,932.00	37,350.00	43,900.00	16.94	23.29
Youth Services Programmer	3	31,932.00	37,350.00	43,900.00	16.94	23.29
Senior Library Assistant	2	29,029.00	33,948.00	39,900.00	15.40	21.17
Courier	1	26,390.00	30,875.00	36,300.00	14.00	19.26
Library Assistant	1	26,390.00	30,875.00	36,300.00	14.00	19.26
Acquisitions Clerk	1	26,390.00	30,875.00	36,300.00	14.00	19.26

Minimum 14.00

effective - 7.1.2026

approved - **DRAFT**

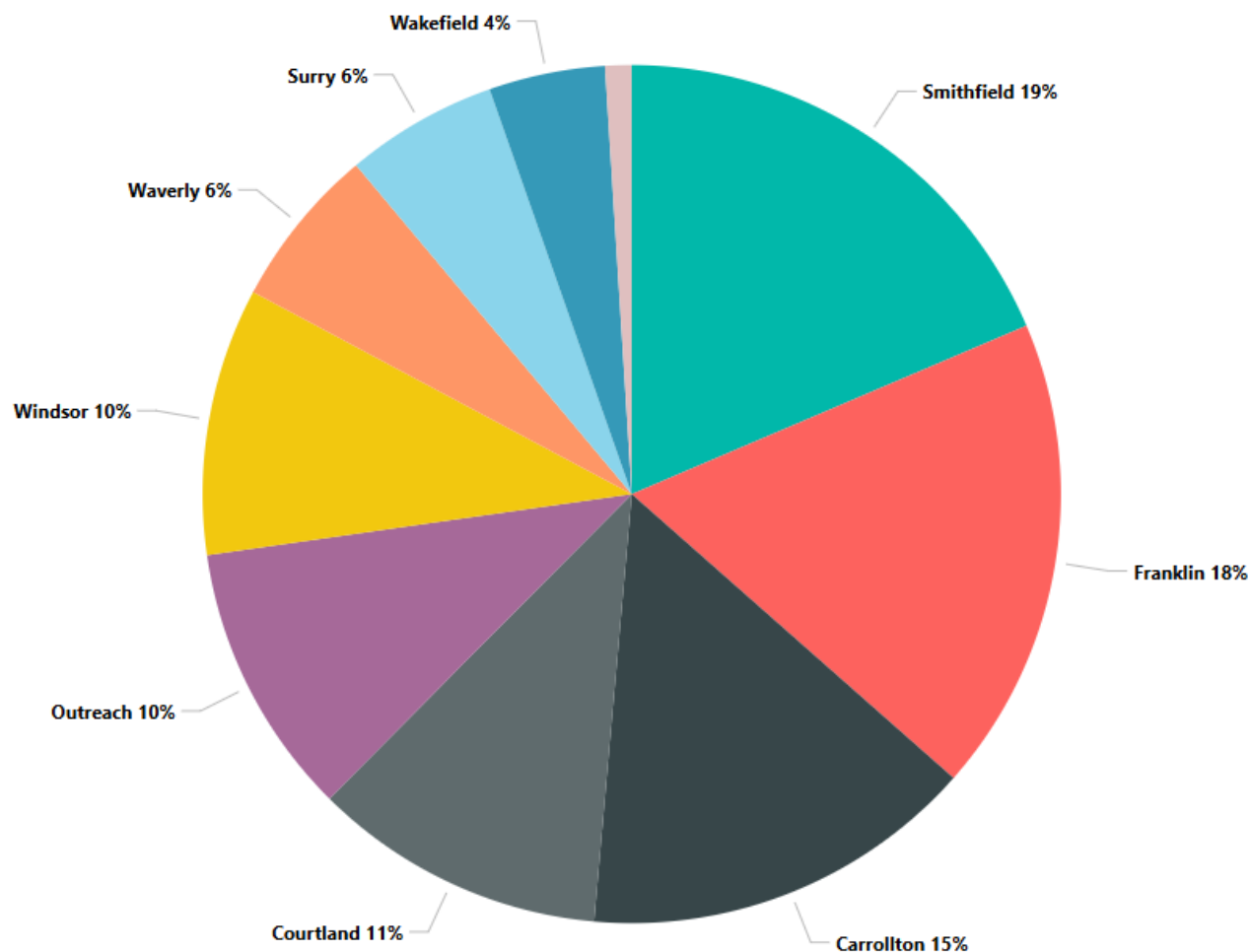


Franklin, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Surry, and Sussex
www.blackwaterlib.org

October 2025

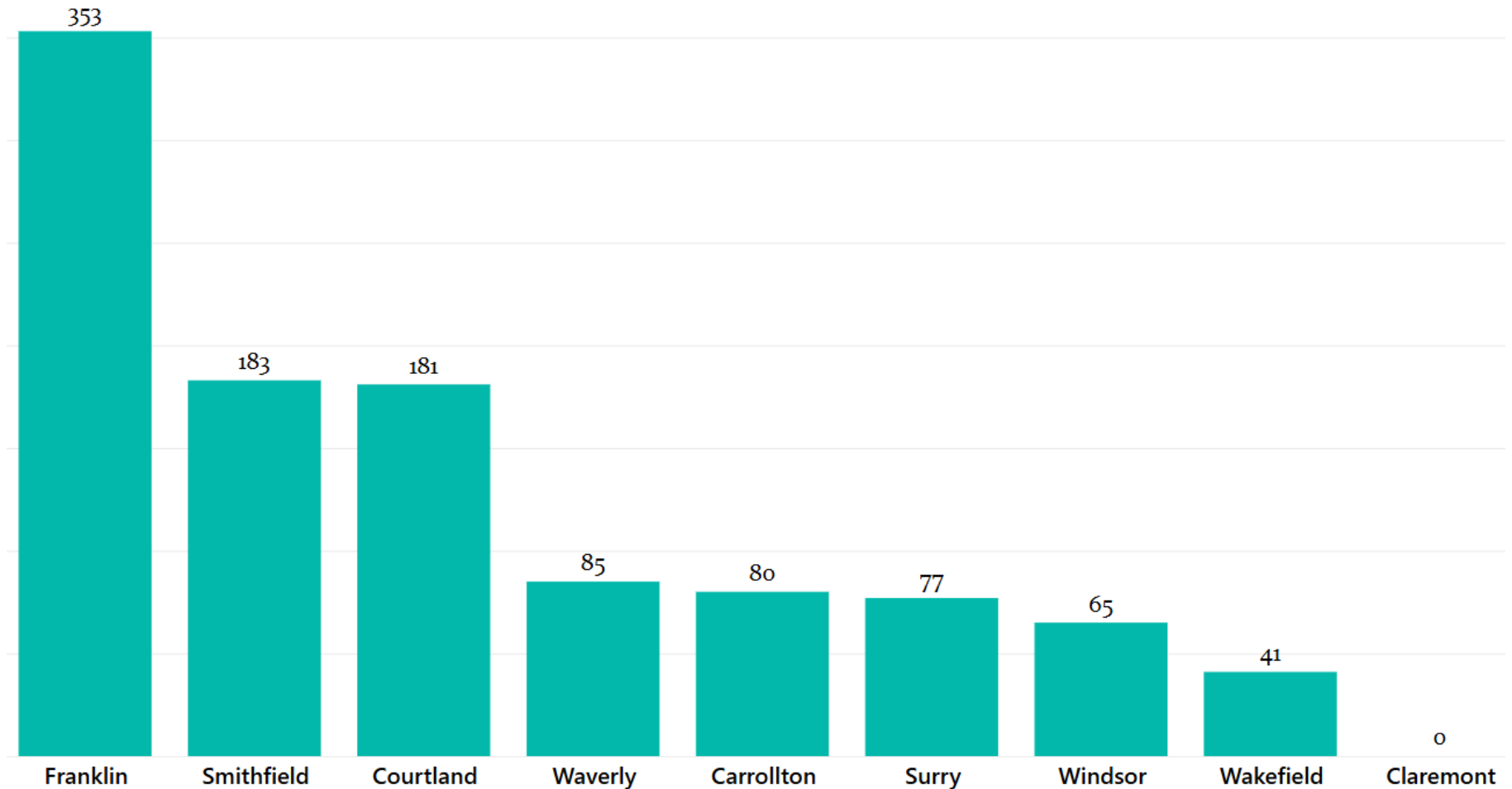
Statistics

Monthly Report: Patron Count

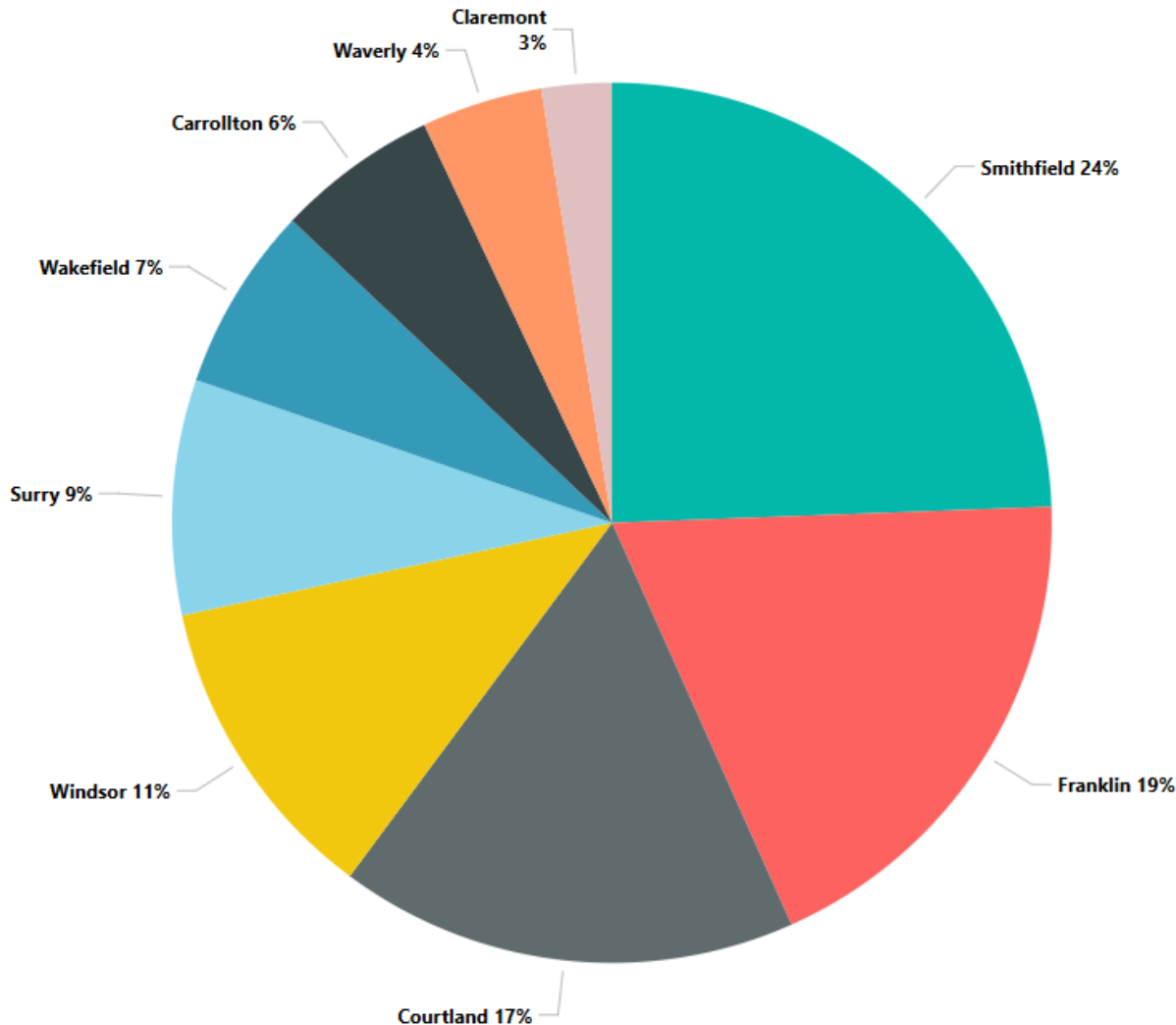


Branch	Patron Count
Carrollton	2422
Claremont	162
Courtland	1795
Franklin	2915
Outreach	1672
Smithfield	3021
Surry	931
Wakefield	712
Waverly	991
Windsor	1639
Total	16260

Monthly Report: In-House Internet

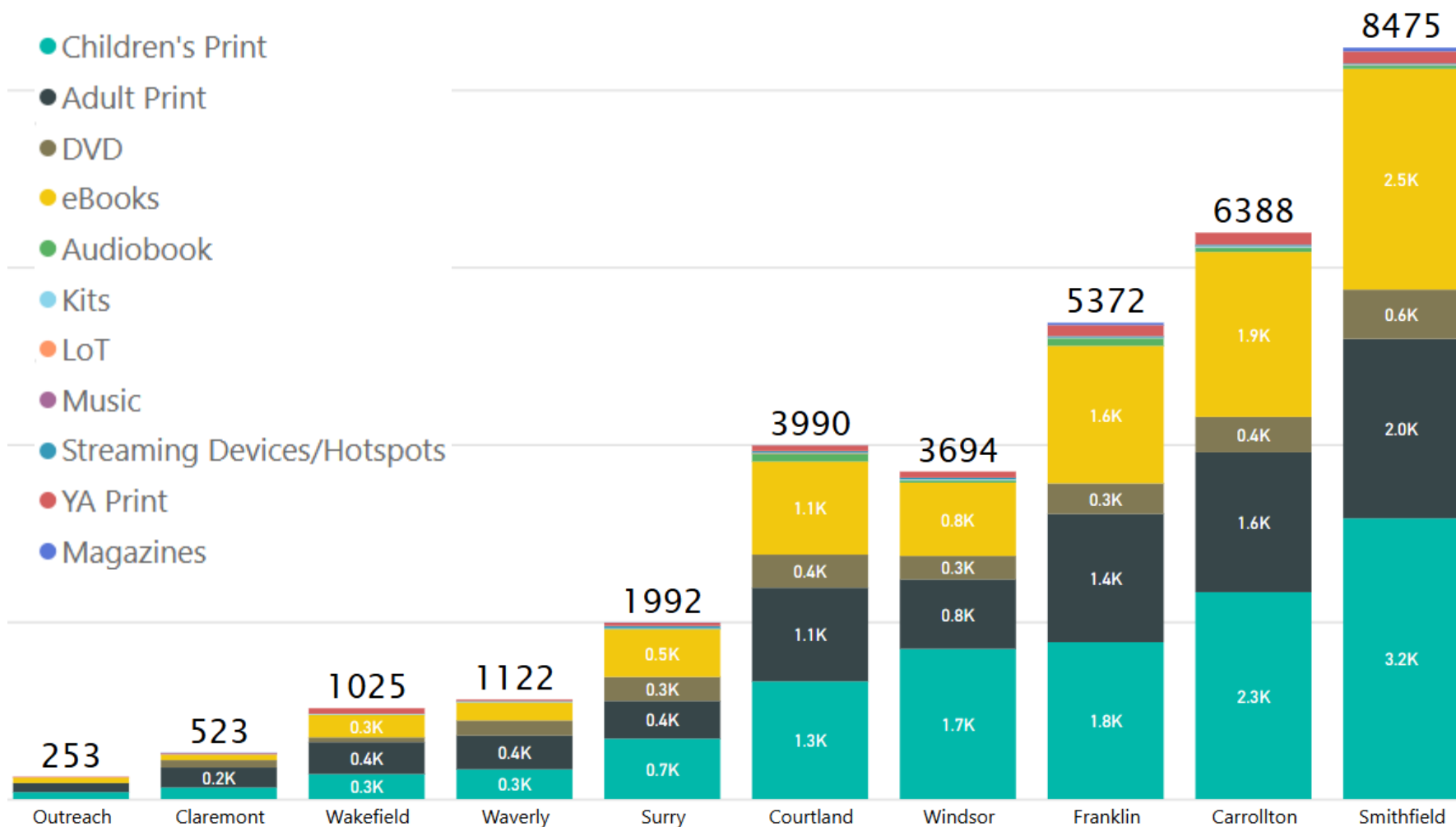


Monthly Report: WiFi Use



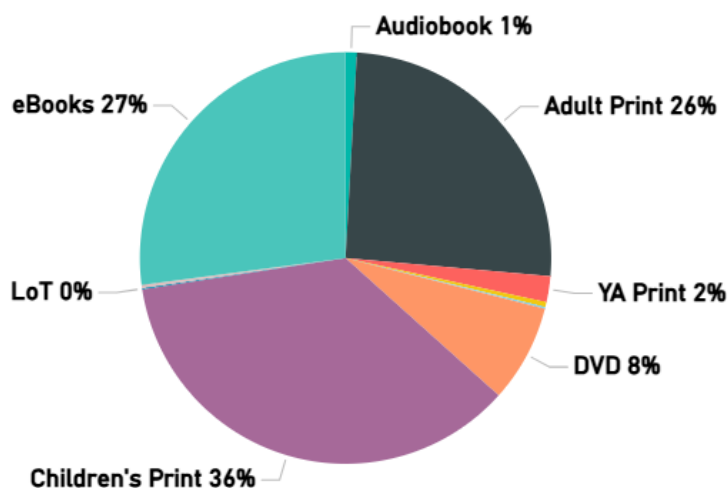
Branch	Wireless Internet Usage
Carrollton	99
Claremont	43
Courtland	281
Franklin	315
Smithfield	407
Surry	144
Wakefield	113
Waverly	74
Windsor	191
Total	1667

Circulation Report: By Branch

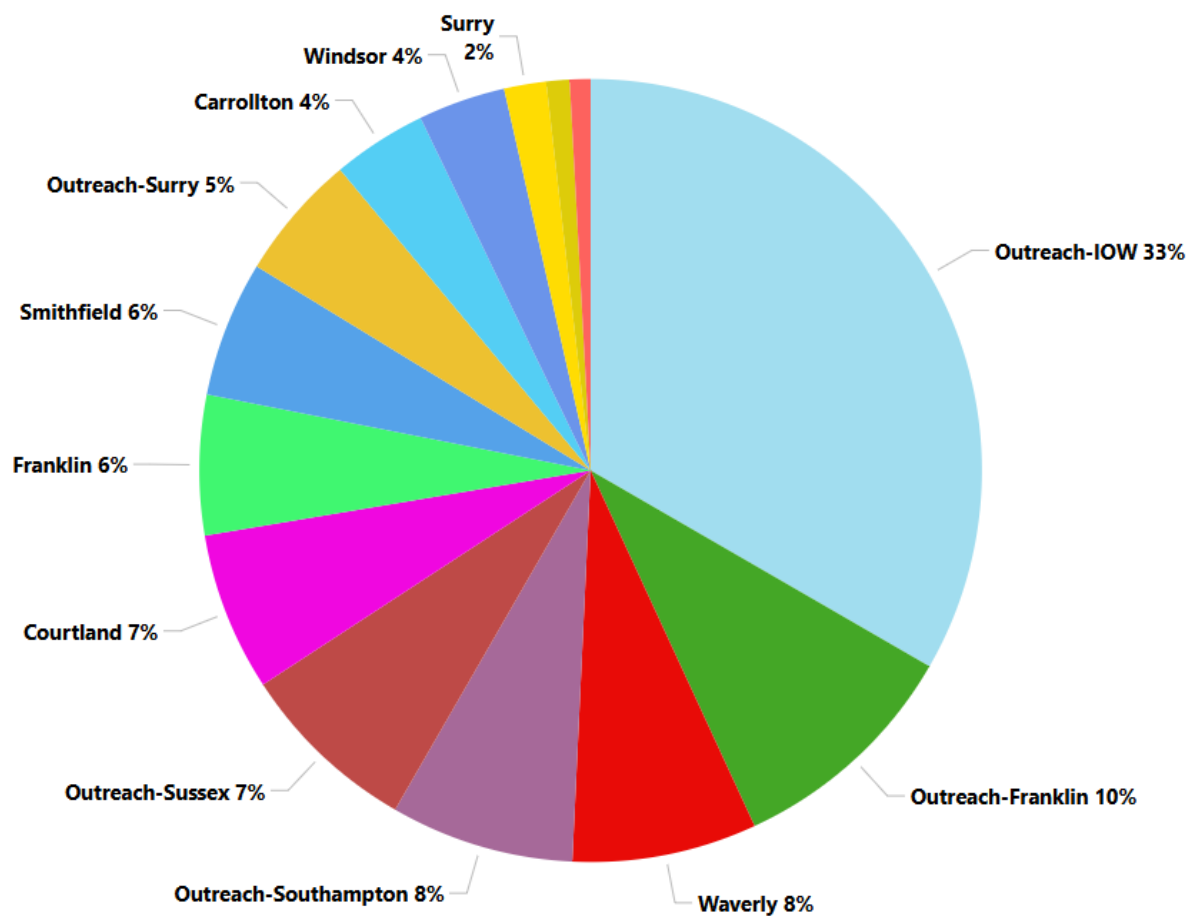


Circulation Report: Type by Branch

Location	Adult Print	Children's Print	DVD	Audiobook	Kits	YA Print	Music	LoT	Magazines	eBooks	Streaming Devices/ Hotspots
Carrollton	1578	2333	399	47	10	136	0	6	0	1861	18
Claremont	225	131	82	1	0	13	0	2	6	62	1
Courtland	1057	1327	373	87	0	62	0	10	2	1050	22
Franklin	1446	1770	345	84	5	125	0	3	26	1551	17
Outreach	100	79	1	0	0	8	0	1	0	64	0
Smithfield	2024	3166	556	36	6	137	0	5	42	2490	13
Surry	426	681	271	6	2	37	0	3	3	536	27
Wakefield	360	282	54	3	8	64	0	1	0	252	1
Waverly	382	335	170	1	5	17	0	2	0	202	8
Windsor	783	1694	265	25	11	70	0	3	0	826	17
Total	8381	11798	2516	290	47	669	0	36	79	8894	124

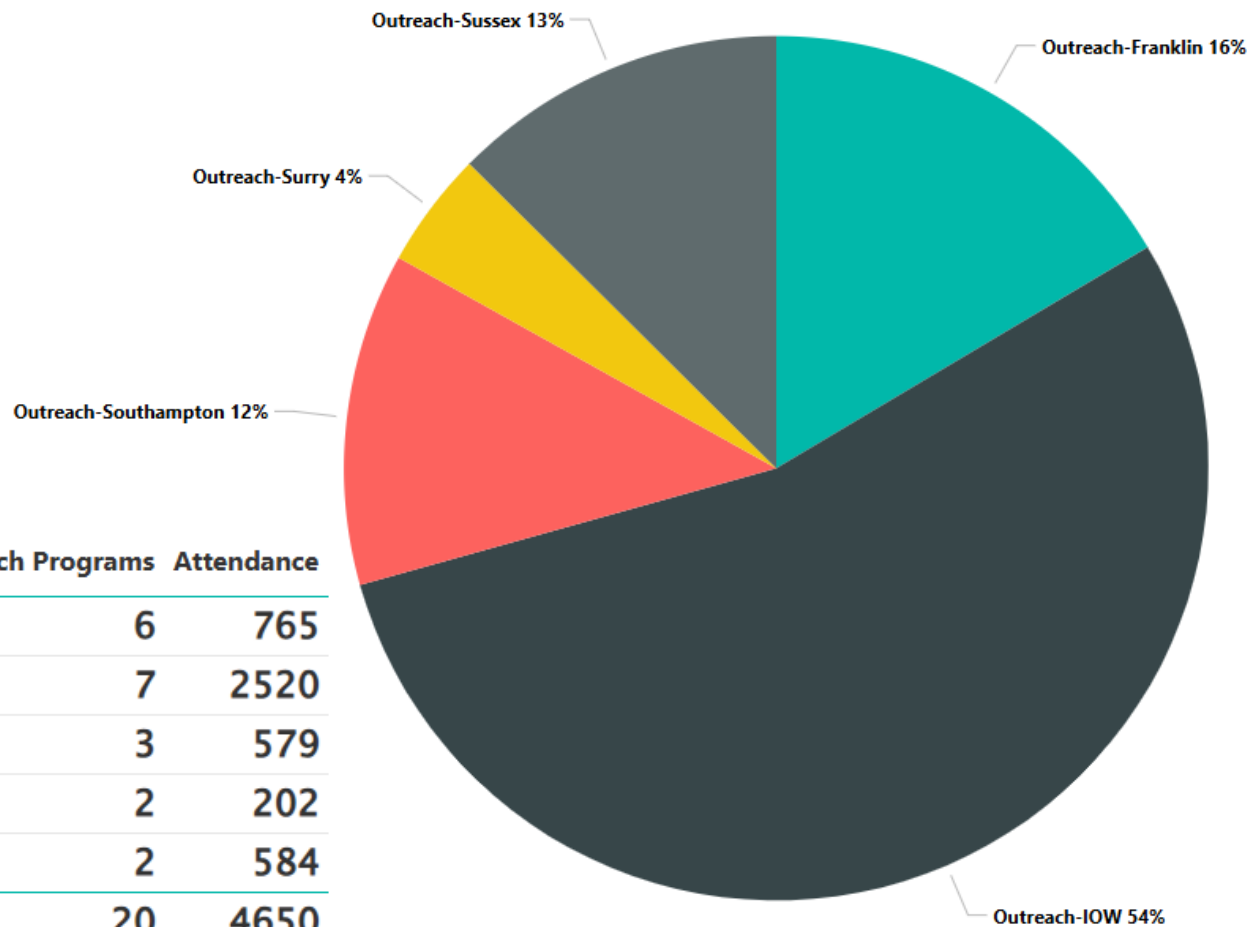


Program Report: Total Participation



Location/Branch	Count
Windsor	282
Waverly	597
Wakefield	67
Surry	136
Smithfield	439
Outreach-Sussex	584
Outreach-Surry	408
Outreach-Southampton	593
Outreach-IOW	2608
Outreach-Franklin	765
Franklin	452
Courtland	512
Claremont	75
Carrollton	305
Total	7823

Outreach Report: Programs



Location/Branch	Outreach Programs	Attendance
Outreach-Franklin	6	765
Outreach-IOW	7	2520
Outreach-Southampton	3	579
Outreach-Surry	2	202
Outreach-Sussex	2	584
Total	20	4650

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Staffing Update October 2025 Blackwater Regional Library

New Hires

- Terri Conklin – Substitute Library Assistant

Promotions

Transfers

- Ann Epps – Substitute Library Assistant

Separations

- Darby Lindsay - Senior Library Assistant, Wakefield and Waverly branches

Vacancies

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Training Sessions – October 2025

Isle of Wight County staff completed a total of 12 trainings

Southampton County staff completed a total of 2 trainings

Surry County staff completed a total of 9 trainings

Sussex County staff completed a total of 3 trainings

Central Office staff completed a total of 11 trainings

10/2/2025 – Using Book Displays and More to Market your Winter Holiday Collection - This webinar was titled as above and the presenter is Lela Denning, presenting out of St. Petersburg, FL. She specializes in passive reader's advisory to benefit patrons of all ages.

The goals of this presentation are to identify and apply effective book displays, in the selection of themes, titles, and planning ideas, as well as show examples.

You can find more resources at: <https://bookdisplays.blogspot.com/>

The Reader's advisory is all about supporting the patrons' wants and needs as expressed by them. It is not about what we think they need.

I learned the importance of doing the work before you need the answer because anyone can fall into just giving the same names out when someone asks for a mystery. But, when you explore areas of your library's collection beforehand, you will find books you have not discovered, and you can produce better answers for patrons. You then can be as inclusive as possible of books that may interest the patron for future reading.

Anyone who works in a library can participate in the Passive Reader's Advisory to help your patron find their next great read using a book, audiobook, digital book, or even DVD.

Book displays are super helpful because you can show front-facing books that get the reader's attention and provide more information and pictures than spines do. People gravitate to smaller displays. While they should be eye-catching and attractive, book displays are not meant to be works of art.

Resources to get book information out to patrons include book displays of course, along with bookmarks, book lists, and shelf talkers. I learned that shelf talkers offer brief, persuasive content like staff recommendations, award mentions, or intriguing facts to encourage readers to browse and check out titles.

Also, find an available cart and make a display to move around the library. Put a display beside the computers to remind patrons to check out books while they are in the library.

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

10/2/2025 – CaTs on the Prowl (Technical Services Meeting) - Just a roundtable discussion about the issues we have in technical services. Baker & Taylor was of course discussed and we also shared what companies other libraries are transferring to such as Ingram and BroDart. We also discussed if our libraries let other companies handle processing. There was also a long discussion about libraries who have transferring to another ILS in the past year. That sounds like a stressful experience. Thankfully it seems like we've been okay with using TLC for over 25 years.

10/2/2025 – Connecting Libraries and Communities through Asset Mapping - "Asset mapping is what we do naturally when we shift the way we see our communities from seeing them as full of needs to be filled by our or other agencies services to seeing them as filled with abundant talents resources as an valuable resident led change efforts and ideas." All institutions bring resources and skills to their communities.

Someone mentioned that their library does a bug fest at their library because they met the mosquito control person at a meeting, and the program taught people how mosquito control worked in the community and what insects the community have.

Community assets: associations, institutions, physical spaces (parks, etc), economy and exchange, culture and stories.

Several mentioned a partnership with a credit unions, like banking basics for teens, and learning how to build generational wealth.

10/2/2025 – Adult Programs Way Outside the Box! – Ever thought there might be more to adult programming than crafts & book clubs? Need inspiration? Learn how to think WAY outside the box and expand your programs to celebrate community through concerts and creative arts. Lauren's motto is "Let's do something that is too expensive/messy to do at home!" The focus was on creative cheap programming that utilizes local artists, musicians, and more!

10/2/2025 – Providing for Pro Se Patrons: Experiences of Law Librarians Servicing Self-Represented Litigants – This panel explored practical ways for effectively supporting self-represented individuals in navigating the legal system. Panelists shared experiences from a variety of library types, including public, academic, and court libraries, highlighting successful strategies, resources, and opportunities for collaboration.

10/2/2025 – From Data to Dinner – Food insecurity is a serious, widespread issue that may not always be visible. Libraries, no matter how big or small, have a unique opportunity to play an important role in combating food insecurity in its community.

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

10/2/2025 – Don't Call it a Flash Mob: Menopause Cafes and the Library – Half the world goes through it, and all the world knows someone impacted by it, so why all the taboos around Menopause? We learned about the growing movement bringing all ages and genders together to discuss, share, and support each other in the comfort of their local coffee houses or other places of support.

At a Menopause Café the offerings include:

- A gathering place to eat cake, drink tea or coffee, and discuss menopause. Menopause Cafés can be public or workplace-only events.
- Open for all, regardless of gender or age.
- With no intention of leading people to any conclusion, product or course of action.
- On a not for profit basis
- Alongside refreshing drinks and cake!

10/2/2025 – Read Queer, Read Native, Read APIDA – This was a great talk regarding the benefits of catering book fairs to marginalized communities, along with the challenges that may arise, particularly in our current socio-political climate. Katelyn and Kristen explained their processes for organizing, preparing, and executing book fairs for communities that don't traditionally have book fairs catered towards them. A huge takeaway from this talk was that when considering having a book fair geared towards Queer identifying students on a college campus, having it in a highly visible location may not be the best idea. This is because some students may fear the repercussions of openly expressing their sexuality. In essence, this was a great seminar about the importance of championing Queer, Native, and APIDA voices through book fairs while giving authentic insights into the process and potential barriers one might encounter. I highly recommend a similar seminar/webinar if anyone can locate it.

10/2/2025 – Graphic Novel Diversity Award Youth Winner Jeremy Whitley – Navigating with you Discussion – The youth winner of the Graphic Novel Diversity Award, Jeremy Whitley, discusses his winning title Navigating with You

- When Neesha Sparks and Gabrielle Graciana find themselves the new girls in school, they end up bonding over the one thing that can't be denied – shared love of an obscure manga. The thing is, neither of them have ever been able to finish the series, so they form a reading club to find and read every volume of the Super Navigator Nozomi. But while they're looking for manga, they just might find a romantic connection they can't deny.

Jeremy Whitley is a writer from Durham, North Carolina. He broke into comics in 2010 with the Eisner-Nominated smash hit comic "Princeless". He then spun off a second book in the same world called "Raven Pirate Princess" that highlighted the adventures of Raven and her all-girl crew of pirates.

After the success of Princeless, Jeremy has gone on to write for a number of existing properties including an acclaimed run for Marvel's "Unstoppable Wasp", "Future

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Foundation”, “Hulk Vs. Thor: Champions of the Universe” and a ground breaking coming out story for Marvel’s Gwenpool in their “Love Unlimited” series. He has also written for “Sea of Thieves”, “Vampirella”, and over 50 issues of “My Little Pony”.

Currently he is writing “School for Extraterrestrial Girls”, “The Dog Knight”, “The Cold Ever After”, and “The Dashing School for Wayward Princes”. His newest graphic novel is “Navigating with You” the hit queer YA romance from Maverick/Mad Cave.

10/2/2025 – Access and Agency: Welcoming the Disabled Community in Public – Susan

Metallo who is a YA author, mother, and a member of the disabled community. Susan presented the attendees with valuable information regarding welcoming our patrons who deal with a variety of disabilities; from ambulatory to cognitive. A big point that she made aside from creating a physical space that can properly accommodate individuals with ambulatory issues, she pointed out the importance of keeping in mind the individual’s caregiver. She made it clear that patron lead advisory boards for addressing any issues or concerns our disabled patron community has had the best outcomes for both the library and the community. Susan also reiterated the importance of the language used when marketing to our disabled community. Language is very important to convey a sense of safety and understanding. She explicitly stated that euphemisms should be avoided at all times in marketing language. Overall, this presentation was very informative, providing for us an important perspective to properly provide the best service possible for our patrons in the disabled community.

10/3/2025 – Rise Up Rooted Together: Recover Courts and Libraries - These people are gold! I chose this session, because I knew absolutely nothing about this topic. And wow. These librarians go above and beyond. And Lisa has received several well-earned honors this year (that she didn’t mention, I found online).

Lisa Thompson is the Assistant Branch Manager at the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library. She has made it her personal mission to serve the needs of her community. Each community has its specific needs, and she understands hers and has acted upon it. The area has been devastated by the opioid epidemic.

Lisa has done a lot to help the community over the years due to this issue, but in her role at the library, she has found a way to help even more. She went to the judge at the recovery court and asked how she could be of assistance. She knew that those who have been able to choose this option in the court system needed help staying positive, on track, and active. The judge agreed to develop a program with her, so that Lisa would have access to the participants.

Lisa developed a program that provides various types of support for Recovery Court participants including:

- 1- Group meetings, clubs, and craft days
- 2- Education-type classes
- 3- Help with applications, resumes, etc
- 4- Most importantly, a judgement-free and warm environment for those who attend

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

She has also implemented into her library a “Free Fridge” for those in need.

After the session, I commended her on what she is doing and for gearing her efforts to the needs of the most vulnerable in her community. I also noted how wonderful it is that even though she may only have 4-5 participants at a time, that doesn't matter to her. Lisa and her boss responded that “one is enough.” She is really passionate about helping anyone affected by this crisis, and you can tell. And she is making a total impact. The number of successful Recovery Court graduates has also increased.

She gave us her information as well, for support in case we were able to start up a program like she did.

I checked to see what the Recovery Court system looked like in our area and (I think), anyone from Sussex County who was interested in Recovery Court, would have to travel to Emporia, if they were eligible. So unfortunately it doesn't seem to be something Wakefield and Waverly could replicate.

10/3/2025 – Digitizing Collections: Best Practices and Lessons Learned - I would love to have more of our genealogy collection up on the Internet Archive one day, but I know it's a daunting process. I'm sure there's a lot of items that our patrons don't even know about.

The process:

Pre-planning and planning, project management, indexing/inventory collection, technical specifications, scanning, documentation/metadata, editing, pulling it all together, publishing, ongoing maintenance.

Lessons learned:

- assume nothing
- lots of follow ups
- don't do it all
- provide direct feedback on the spot
- fix the issues ASAP
- When in doubt, don't
- Follow up on assignments all through the project
- Time management
- Document along the way

10/3/2025 – True Crime Done Right - The *True Crime Done Right* workshop was a roundtable discussion in which fellow librarians discussed ways to enhance libraries' true crime programs, such as our “Death and Donuts” Book Club and our “Teen Solve a Crime Night”. A few additional ideas that were discussed included hosting a “Solve the Mystery” Scavenger Hunt around the library for adults/teens, hosting a “Crafty Criminals” program where patrons can bring their current craft projects or needlework projects and work on them while listening as a

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

group to true crime podcasts, and even contacting local universities' forensic departments or our local historical societies to have a staff member visit the library for a presentation.

10/3/2025 – Bingo! Fun and easy Readers Advisory Training - In 2018, Arlington Public Library launched a reading challenge to encourage staff to read more widely to get to know the collection and increase their readers' advisory skills. This was meant as a positive, energetic approach ("fun") rather than seeing readers' advisory as a chore or only for expert librarians. Also library staff also like prizes for reading books!

The challenge emphasized the library's commitment to freedom of expression and an informed community. A key component of the challenge was for staff to read across diverse topic and genres, the library believes this wider knowledge base strengthens staff expertise and enhances their ability to help the public discover new materials, this was part of an overall professional development effort.

- Readers' advisory is a core service in many libraries, especially public libraries, and having training that simplifies and energizes that work can increase staff confidence and patron satisfaction.
- For libraries with limited resources or less-experienced staff, "fun and easy" approaches may lower barriers to offering strong readers' advisory service.

10/3/2025 – Drawn to the Library: How to Host Drawing Programs for Late Elementary - Kris Eldred, Library Program Specialist for Virginia Beach Library System, discussed how she runs a monthly drawing club at her library. The benefits of providing a drawing club are that it's an inexpensive program that provides a safe, third space for kids to spark creativity in a structured setting. The program can be simple and requires inexpensive supplies such as pencils, paper, erasers, pencil sharpeners, scissors and markers or colored pencils. More expensive tools can be incorporated like light boxes and ipads with the app Osmo Masterpiece. Eldred discouraged participants bringing in toys to the program due to it distracting artists from the activities, however she did recommend providing photos and books for kids to use as drawing reference. Eldred recommended PowerPoint, Canva and a site called Adorkastock for compiling reference photos. The structure for the program includes a warmup exercises/ice breaker, the main activity and concludes with a drawing game. Eldred's program is a monthly event geared towards 3rd-5th grade kids and it lasts about an hour.

Examples of main activities included word prompts, stations with different art mediums, telephone Pictionary, and exquisite corpse/monster factory (a word prompts the first artist to draw a part of a person/monster and, when completed the paper is passed to the next person). The closing games can be a short word prompt or drawing Simon Says. Samples of the drawing exercises are attached.

10/3/2025 – From Anxiety to Action - Jenn Ferriss and Lisa Kropp with the *Sustainable Libraries Initiative* discussed the negative effects that loneliness can have on our patrons' health. Over

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

50% of adults post-COVID-19 pandemic have reported feeling lonely and lacked connection with their peers. Libraries have the ability to strengthen social infrastructure in local communities by enacting pro-connection public policies, mobilizing our local health sectors, reforming our digital environments, and deepening our knowledge of ways to assist in building a culture of connection. Practical changes that we can make as libraries include creating community spaces for connection, creating support programs and/or resources, partnering with nonprofits and businesses such as our local food banks, offering food security programs, providing community service opportunities, or hosting voter registration drives. Various programming ideas included hosting a little free pantry, walk and talk programs, STEM programs, hosting a “get to know your neighbor” event, a library farm and/or seed swap, outside book talks, providing a warming tree in the winter, and offering veteran discussion groups. Currently, the Carrollton Library strives to connect our community members by offering volunteer positions, hosting a seed swap, hosting STEAM programs as well as discussion groups (i.e. book clubs, Stamp Club), and providing resources to connect patrons to local community nonprofits such as local food banks. This workshop provided a wealth of knowledge of ways to expand our efforts.

10/3/2025 – Adapting to Need: Programming for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities - Dawn Naher and Alisen Spruill, MLIS discussed how they started *Adaptive Fridays*, a program geared towards adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities at the Mary D. Pretlow Branch of Norfolk Public Library. Day groups for adults with disabilities visited their library daily, however the staff realized that the library didn’t have programs geared towards this community. Spruill and Naher run two monthly programs for adults with disabilities: Craft Time in their maker studio and Story Time. The Craft Time programs are easy crafts and, to keep the program inexpensive, they re-use ideas and supplies from the other departments. Story Time consists of a picture book (they recommended choosing a book where the main character isn’t a kid and book isn’t too kiddy), coloring pages for attendees to work on while listening to the story, and music. When starting a program for adults with disabilities, they recommended professional development courses on this topic (they included the PDF of a session from the 2024 PLA conference *We See You: Programming for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* by Rebecca Wolfe with the Allen County Public Library https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r8zTZhRQ_U835TyxtJvQeGPixNp8PkK/view?usp=drivesdk). They also recommended that the program may need to be a collaborative effort since day support groups have a high staff change-over rate. Spruill and Naher emphasized that they are still learning as they go, however, their programming has been well received and has made an impact on the attendees. While the Carrollton library does have a day group visit infrequently, I thought this session could be helpful for future reference.

10/3/2025 – Keep ‘Em Reading: Starting a Graphic Novel Book Club - The workshop “Keep ‘Em Reading: Starting a Graphic Novel Book Club” discussed various ways to start a graphic novel book club for reluctant readers. Graphic novels are a great way to excite readers that are just beginning to venture into chapter books, or even older readers that may struggle with English. Graphic novels are multimodal media, and can serve as visual bridges that contain context clues

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

for English language learners. To get started with setting up a graphic novel book club, pick books that you have multiple viable copies of, and attempt to diversify the subjects/genres. Set guidelines at your first meeting with your attendees, as this may be their first time being a part of a discussion group. Add fun elements to your meetings, such as “Would You Rather..” questions based on scenes/characters/settings in the book, short videos of the author or illustrator discussing the process of creating the book, video tutorials of how to draw the characters, etc. Keep the discussion itself rather short (around 5 questions), and add in closing games such as “Guess That Character” or a pixelated book cover guessing game. At the end of your meeting, do a follow up survey with your participants to find out what they enjoyed or did not enjoy about the book club. I feel this would be a very popular program with our young patrons, and this workshop provided many helpful tips on how to get it started!

10/3/2025 – Something Old, Something New: Revitalizing Local History Programming and Services - (presented by Prince William public libraries.)

<https://www.pwcva.gov/departments/library/RELIC/> - they have a center just for genealogy and local history.

-Stop having the same presentations with the same people, things need revamps.

-A newsletter that showcases the program and events.

Preservation labs: visit other labs for inspiration

-Made a point when it came to purchasing time that items being scanned, etc write directly to the file, so no editing, no opening adobe etc.

-Focus on easy to use consumer equipment. (we should order one of those digital converter thingies for the library of things, maybe a slide scanner too).

Digital lab challenges:

-Training, beta testing, creating policies, adapting the digital lab for a staff of two people

-Reminded me of when we set up the library of things

-Do an exercise where you are pretending to train an employee like they're a patron

10/3/2025 – Swap Happens: Ins and Outs of Library Swap Events - Pearl Derlaga and Elizabeth Land with York County Public Library covered how their library hosts Swap events. Swap events are environmentally friendly and can draw people into the library that are not typical library users.

The past swap themes for the York County Library included puzzles, art and craft supplies, seeds and vinyl records. However, their most popular swap events are their puzzles and craft supplies. There can be quite a bit of planning involved with swap events and this session provided a wealth of information for the logistical side.

The presenters recommended asking these questions when preparing:

- What is the theme of the swap? Some other examples included toy, book, plant, Halloween costumes, prom, recipe, kitchen tool swaps.
- What will get people in the door or what is your community interested in?
- Where will it take place?

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

- When will it take place?
- Scalability, how can you scale it down for your community/library?
- Will donations be accepted ahead of time and if so, where will the items be stored? How will you keep track of the items donated?

Pre-event logistics:

The tips before the event included

- printing out donation guidelines so that staff can refer to this sheet when answering patron's questions
- Planning a layout of the space ahead of time and how the items will be displayed/sorted
- Creating signs to guide patrons through the space

Logistics for the day of the swap:

- Have a way to accurately count attendance and take photos. It seems simple, but they assign one volunteer just to count attendees as they enter the room and another volunteer to take photos. Photos will help advertise program and will drum up interest if the event is repeated
- They encouraged volunteers and staff to listen to patrons during the event and to take notes on sticking points, problems, successes and suggestions.

Post Swap Logistics:

- The presenters recommended gathering staff to debrief and share their impressions, notes and lessons about the event.
- Pay attention to items no one wanted in order to get an idea of what not to accept if the program is repeated

In conclusion, I found this session to be helpful and I'm hoping to plan a swap event at the Carrollton library on a smaller scale.

10/3/2025 – Accessible Library Services for Children with Disabilities and their Families -

Whether large or small, rural or urban, all library communities serve children with disabilities. Developing an awareness and understanding to the needs of kids with disabilities and their families is vital for providing relevant and impactful library services to all. This webinar shared ideas for programs, collections, and services that welcome and support kids with disabilities and their families. Also shared, ways youth programmers can make their existing library programs more inclusive for all.

Ideas shared in the areas of:

- Sensory Storytimes
- Playgroups
- Inclusive Spaces
- Music
- Sensory Paths

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

- Accessibility features on platforms such as hoopla and Libby
- Therapy Dogs
- Sensory Kits
- Story trails

10/3/2025 – Stacking Up the Fun: Engaging Library Staff Beyond the Shelves - Candace Sample-Smalley, Michelle Ross, Kristen Burnham and Rebecca Lowe with the Prince William Library system discussed briefly, how they created a team to plan monthly activities for staff. The initial goal of the group was to plan the yearly staff Christmas party, however the goal expanded to include monthly team building activities and events. The events take place during work hours and typically when the library is closed to the public. This initiative is not funded by the library system and instead the group uses different fundraising opportunities like raffle baskets, cook offs and providing a donation option at all their events/activities to support their efforts.

Examples of their activities are:

- Game day: board games, card games and Ice Breaker Jenga (ice breaker questions are on the bottom of the Jenga blocks)
- Trivia: any theme or topic
- Scavenger hunts: around the library or office to help staff learn about each other
- Potlucks: breakfast, brunch or lunch (to offer food sensitivity options during potlucks and include recipe cards)
- Ice cream social
- Summer BBQ
- Craft sessions: painting mason jars, cricut projects, pet rock decorating
- Themed activities: Memorial Day, NFL/game day and library week

10/3/2025 – Looking for the Latest: DIY Trends Reports - This workshop was presented by Diamond Chavis-Waller of Suffolk Public Library.

This Trends Report In-Depth Analysis is no longer being created at Suffolk Public Library, but they hope to continue it in the near future. We had hands on Trends starter worksheets for current trends we thought would be relevant. Suggestions were Government shutdown, AI, (is it real) Taylor Swift (when is the wedding). She gave examples of TRENDS REPORTS created in 2024.

10/3/2025 – Assisting Patrons Experiencing Homelessness - Craig Graziano and Erin Creighton with the Central Rappahannock Regional Library presented an excellent presentation on assisting our homeless population. Over 1.25 million individuals (not including those living in vehicles/etc.) were reported in 2020 as being homeless. This astronomically high number is due to an ongoing deficit of affordable housing and daily living expenses steadily increasing. As librarians, we often interact with the homeless population on a day-to-day basis as libraries are

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

a safe and welcoming place for homeless individuals to visit. When interacting with our homeless population, we should ensure that we demonstrate respect to these individuals, be aware of power dynamics, practice active listening, and when necessary, reiterate that certain behaviors (public bathing, drug activities, etc.) aren't permitted. On occasion, these patrons can be dealing with mental health challenges. These patrons are often looking for an authority figure to make determinations that validate their side of arguments, and the most efficient way to shut down this type of behavior is to refocus the issue back to what we can do to assist them while at the library. Other challenges that homeless individuals may face is a strong body odor. If this needs to be addressed, blame the issue on their clothes, not the patron. You can even recommend places to wash clothes or to obtain new clothes such as a local community center or nonprofit organizations. If you need to deescalate a conflict, walk the patron outside to discuss delicate issues. If tensions rise, you can ask local officers to do "walk-throughs" to ensure the safety of other patrons and staff. If these patrons mention topics that you are uncomfortable discussing, redirect them with "is there anything library related that I can help you with?" Libraries can also work alongside local nonprofits to offer resources to their local homeless patrons such as setting up miniature food pantries and warming trees (offering scarfs/hats/blankets) during the winter months.

10/3/2025 – Two Languages Are Better Than One - This purpose of this workshop was to share how this particular library is serving the needs of their community by offering both resources and a space for other who are learning English (as their second language). This was a great workshop for me to attend, as I did not know anything about what other libraries are doing to support ESL patrons their community.

They offer a welcoming space for the patrons to meet one hour per month. They do not teach English, they simply provide an opportunity for non-native English speakers to have freeform discussions and interact with others learning the language as well. Library employees assist by 1- offering ideas to help get conversations started and use vocabulary, 2- provide interactive tools that encourage language growth, and 3- provide a list of idioms to address inconsistencies in the English language.

They provided the following examples:

1 – Conversation Starters: The library provides each participant with a "name tent" that also includes their home country. They provide discussion prompts such as "would you rather bungee jump or go deep sea diving."

2- Interactive Tools: The library staff put various objects in a brown paper bags. The patrons are instructed not to look at the object but to feel it and use their vocabulary to describe it to others. Additionally, the library workers hand out pennies, and they go around the room asking each participant what memory they have from the year the penny was minted.

3- Idioms are displayed in the meeting space and are discussed as a group. ie.

I appreciate the efforts they are making, and it doesn't even cost a "penny." Well, you know.

I also learned more about the Virtual Vacation Site. I believe they were going to discuss 'Transparent Language,' but ran out of time.

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

10/3/2025 – Entrepreneurs Library: Creating a Library that is leveraging Library Resources for Business - Discover Calibrate at Chinn, Chinn Park Regional Library's new small business center developed in partnership with Prince William County Economic Development. This program supports entrepreneurs with access to technology, resources, and tailored programming. Learn how libraries can play a pivotal role in fostering local economic growth through innovative community partnerships.

10/3/2025 – Meeting Needs Through Community Collaboration: Sterling Library's Hygiene Kit Project - Presenters shared how they collaborated with their Friends of the Library to create and sustain a hygiene kit distribution project. This project led to more community collaboration for the library and increased membership for the Friends of the Library, the relationship with the Friends group was also strengthened through this program.

The system held a toiletries drive and also created an Amazon purchasing wish list for this program.

Included in the toiletry bags are:

- Soap or Body Wipes (better than soap)
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Shampoo
- Conditioner

10/3/2025 – Cardinal Cup Committee Book Discussion - Cardinal Cup Committee members book talked their favorite selections from their year of reading and honoring the most distinguished biography, historical fiction, or American history book for young people - and offered free books for giveaway.

The 2025 Cardinal Cup Award presentations at the Virginia Library Association 2025 Annual Conference in Richmond, Virginia were sponsored by Virginia Commonwealth University.

The 2025 Cardinal Cup winner:

- One Big Open Sky by Lesa Cline-Ransome, a compelling middle-grade novel in verse shines a light on a little-known chapter of the American pioneer experience.

2025 Honors went to:

- Call Me Roberto: Roberto Clemente goes to Bat for Latinos by Nathalie Alonso, Illustrated by Rudy Gutierrez
- Heroes by Alan Gratz
- The Soldier's Friend: Walt Whitman's Extraordinary Service in the American Civil War by Gary Golio, Illustrated by E.B. Lewis

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

- The Sole Man: Jan Matzeliger's Lasting Invention by Shana Keller, Illustrated by Stephen Costanza

Series of Note:

- Hip-Hop: The Beat of America by Jarrett Williams
- The Prohibition Era: America's War on Alcohol by Jason Viola and Roger Langridge

10/23/2025 – More Money, More Ways - In this webinar provided by Niche Academy for free, Library Director Chelsea Price shares fantastic resources for fundraising, grant writing, and creating community financial partners. Her library is in a town that is 1.5 square miles total! She has a fiscal year budget (including payroll) of about \$30,000. She has been able to run large community programs, including summer food programs, local author events, and summer reading, through fundraising and grant writing. Some key takeaways for me were to prioritize the relationship and tell the human story beyond just data and money requests. People are more willing to donate to causes where they understand the human element. I actually got a few ideas from this training that I think would work here in Smithfield. The bottom line was that fundraising is an ongoing effort, and that it takes your literal village to keep libraries thriving. I would absolutely recommend this to other library managers in Blackwater.

10/25/2025 – Doing the Right Things When Things Go Wrong -

I. Managing the "Blindside"- protecting your organization from internal and external crises--- before they occur, while they occur, and after they occur

A. Crisis Defined: Danger and opportunity

1. We can't manage what we don't know about
2. Prior planning prevents poor performance

B. Be ready—communicate and stay consistent

1. Prevention: Vulnerability audits, patron feedback, policy and operations review, employee surveys, facility
Safety and security audits
2. Preparedness: Create a crisis management response team and security plans for formal events
3. Response: Learn from local and national events, monitor the culture for signs of discomfort
4. Recovery: Normalize critical incident stress responses and provide PTSD debriefing

C. List possible worst case events

II. APTRA Crisis Avoidance Model

A. Anticipate- early thinking

1. What is most likely to happen?
2. What are gaps in policies and training?

B. Plan- put actions on paper

1. What plans already exist on paper?
2. Be aware of revision dates
3. Develop or fine tune policies through expertise and committee

C. Train- Practice real scenarios

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

1. Fire, inclement weather, and earthquake drills
 2. Active shooter drills
 3. CPR classes
 3. Test alarms and inspect emergency kits
 4. Building evacuation protocols
- D. Review- debrief and improve
1. Debrief as soon as things are back to normal
 2. Ask what lessons were learned and what needs to be fixed
 3. Who do we need to get advice from
- E. Act
1. What do we need to keep doing, stop doing, or start doing?
 2. Be willing to do what it takes to reduce risk.

10/29/2025 – All Board for Kindergarten - WAKIDS: Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills.

WAKIDS will allow them to have a great transition process to start school and this will access to what children know when they enter kindergarten.

WAKIDS can assist in story time and help in the library to them to kindergarten.

Three component to WAKIDS

1. Family connection- parents can let the teachers know all about their child
2. Whole child assessment- Helps the teacher know about strength and skills about the student. Observation base tools for teacher to plan their school year
3. Early learning collaboration- The pre-k and kindergarten teacher to learn about the child

Whole Child Assessments

1. Social-emotional
2. Physical
3. Cognitive
4. Language
5. Literacy
6. Math

Every child ready to read

Read, Talk, Sing, Write, and Play

Role modeling book and stories, when we read ask question, letter and prewrite activities, play is a child's work which families can do with children.

Cognitive Domain is the development of a child's thinking ability, and to grow and learn

Cognitive Skills such as puppets, and open ended art allow the teacher or parent to ask questions, and let the children use their imagination.

Early Literacy

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Talk to your children about feelings children learn new vocabulary when they become a better reader. This allow them to recognize more new words.

Language

Language development is the ability for a child to use and understand language Parent and caregivers need to understand it take 4 different parts of a child's brain to think and answer a question and say it.

Be patient

Following direction is a language goal

Literacy Domain

There are seven basic components in literacy development

1. Source of enjoyment
2. Vocabulary Text
3. Language text
4. Phonological awareness
5. Knowledge of print comprehension
6. Book
7. Text

Variety of literacy goals:

Identify names and letters

Solve problems

Write names

Math Vocab: high/ low, near/ far, above/ below

Math

Early math skills include counting, recognizing numbers, shape knowledge, sorting and patterning.

There are a variety of books that assist with early math skills.

Stack the cat, ten in the bed, and how much does a ladybug weigh.

Social Emotion

Social Emotional Domain can manage feeling, helps interact with peers, and solve social problems

Children tend to get frustrated e.g. Tying their shoes, fighting with friends, and sharing.

There a variety of breathing exercises: likes shaking a snow globe, until the snow settles.

Find a stuffy and hold it on their tummy with inhales and exhales they can rock their friend to sleep.

Some ways for teacher to gain trust is an activity where they can draw on the child's face.

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

While doing this activity ask questions like how does the crayon feel, use vocabulary words like curly moustache, make swirly eye brows, blue start on left and right side.
Use washable face paint crayons and use non-toxic wipes or they can wash their face with water in story time.