

BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

**Franklin Branch
Wednesday
January 21, 2026
Board of Trustees Meeting—3:000 pm**

Budget & 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

January 21, 2026

- Agenda – January 2026
- Minutes – November 2025
- Library Director’s Report
- Library Bills
- Monthly Statistics Report – November and December 2025
- Staffing and Workshop Report

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

Agenda

Franklin Branch

Call to Order

Adoption of Agenda – January 2026

Approval of Minutes – November 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

New Business

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Announcement of Next Meeting

- February 18, 2026

Adjournment

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES BUDGET WORKSHOP NOTES
November 19, 2025**

<u>Present</u>	<u>Remote (via Zoom)</u>
Mechelle Blunt – Southampton County	
Ora Briggs – Sussex 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 McClenney – Southampton County	
Karen Richardson – Sussex County	<u>Absent</u>
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County	
Ben Neal – Library Director	
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director	
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager	

Ms. Dawson called the Budget Workshop to order at 2:04 p.m. and turned the meeting over to Mr. Neal.

Mr. Neal reviewed the November 2025 Budget Workshop presentation distributed in the handouts and answered questions from the Board. The following topics were explained:

Budget Overview
Locality Funding Formula
Breakdown of Local Funds FY2025
Notes on State Aid
State Aid Formula
Breakdown of State Aid Funds FY2025
FY2026-2027 Proposed Budget Timeline
Salary Step
Rawls Trust
Factors Driving Budget Changes
Locality Allocations

Ms. Herrala moved, and Ms. Blunt seconded the Budget Workshop be adjourned. The vote was unanimous.

The workshop ended at 2:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Ora Briggs, Secretary

**BLACKWATER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
November 19, 2025**

<u>Present</u>	<u>Remote (via Zoom)</u>
MeChelle Blunt – Southampton County	
Ora Briggs – Sussex 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	<u>Absent</u>
Margie McClenney – Southampton County	
Karen Richardson – Sussex County	
Judge Alfreda Talton-Harris – City of Franklin	
Kisha Watford – Southampton County	
Johanna Wiggins – Isle of Wight County	
Ben Neal – Library Director	
Bonnie Lauver – Assistant Library Director	
Debbie Carter – Budget & Finance Manager	

Chair, Deborah Dawson called the meeting of the Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees to order at 2:48 p.m. at the Franklin Branch following the Budget Workshop.

Consideration of Remote Meeting Participation Requests

None

Agenda

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

Minutes

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

Ms. Richardson moved, and Ms. Wiggins seconded the October minutes be approved as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Library Director's Report

Two vacancies as of 11.11.2025

Staff attended Virginia Library Association and Association of Bookmobile & Outreach Services conferences for important continuing education.

BRL participated in 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.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance – Ms. Dawson – committee met in October, but did not have a quorum. The consensus of the group was to support the budget as proposed for FY2027.

Personnel & Policy – Ms. Briggs – no report

Long Range Planning – Ms. Dawson – no report – Ms. Dawson would like to plan a meeting prior to the January Board meeting. She will communicate meeting information.

Accounts Payable

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

Unfinished Business

Approval of Holiday Gift Cards for Staff – Dr. Blunt moved, and Ms. Herrala seconded that each permanent staff member be given a \$30 Walmart gift card for the holidays. The vote was unanimous.

Consideration of FY2026-2027 Budget – Ms. Dawson asked for additional questions. Hearing none, she called for a vote. Ms. Richardson moved, and Ms. Briggs seconded that the FY2026-2027 Operating Budget be accepted as proposed. The vote was unanimous.

New Business

Acceptance of FY2025 Annual Audit – Mr. Neal stated that an annual audit is required by the Library of Virginia, and per contract with localities. Ms. Lease moved, and Ms. Briggs seconded that the annual audit be accepted as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Board Member Comments/Announcements

Ms. Richardson – Very nice Farmer's Market was held at Waverly yesterday.

Ms. Briggs – Senior Center is hosting a Thanksgiving giveaway for seniors.

Ms. Lippard – School supply donations in Smithfield are coming in nicely.

Ms. Herrala – Santa Breakfast in Windsor on 12/6

Ms. Dawson – Happy Holidays! Did a presentation for a church group in Isle of Wight and plugged many BRL resources, including 1000 Books Before Kindergarten and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

Announcement of Next Meeting

The next Blackwater Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be on January 21, 2026 at 3:00 p.m. at the Franklin Branch.

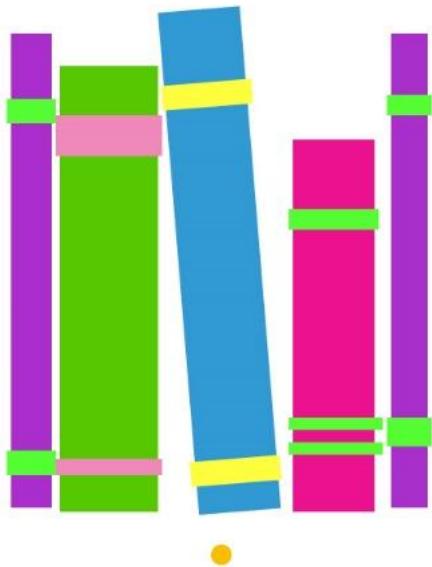
Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Carter for
Ora Briggs, Secretary



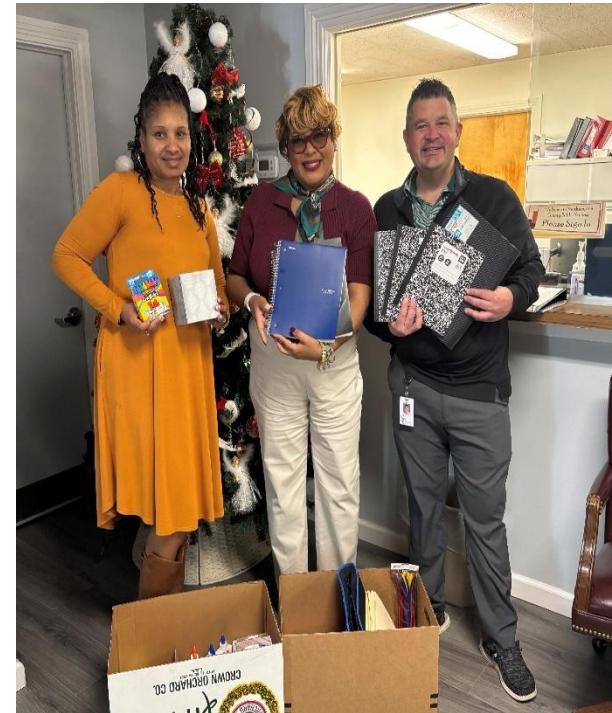
blackwater
regional
library

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

Director's Report
November/December 2025

Central/System-wide Updates

- Two vacancies for PT positions as of 1.8.26
- 18 trainings completed by staff in November and December
- Successful holiday school supplies drive throughout library system. Donations were distributed to all our local school systems



School Supplies Donation to Southampton County Public Schools

Winter Reading Program

Opens February 1st!



Impact in the Community



Holiday Market at
Waverly Library



Breakfast with Santa Event at
Windsor Town Center



RISE Program at Nike
Park

35 Outreach events reaching around 2200 people
in November & December

City of Franklin

- Strong turnout for our programs, especially our holiday-adjacent programs; children and their parents enjoyed weekly Storytimes, & Pokémon Club continues to be a big hit with older children
- The branch welcomed best-selling author Nancy Naigle for an author talk and book signing that saw a lot of attendees
- A lot of outreach in the community, including the Gingerbread House Building Program at the MLK Center



Isle of Wight County

- Carrollton Branch hosted the Pet Photos with Santa program, where donations were collected for the IOW Animal Humane Society and a fun Di-November event that saw a lot of Dinosaur-related fun by area families
- Smithfield hosted several popular programs both inside the library, most notably the Whoville Crafts & Cocoa event that featured caroling by a couple Hardy Elementary classes and welcomed over 125 families
- In addition to the very popular “Breakfast with Santa” event, the branch hosted a variety of other fun & educational programs, including Craftsy, Switch It On, and hosting local poet Heather Brown Barrett



Between Outreach and In-House programming, 74 programs reaching over 2300 persons were delivered in IOW County in November/December

Southampton County

- Through a partnership with Franklin-Southampton Area United Way, families enjoyed penguin bowling and other fun activities as well as a Santa Photos event
- Fun programs for all ages including Craftsy for Adults, a local author event, and our STEAM program for children, with attendees making Lego Ornaments



Surry County

- A lot of fun regular and holiday programs, including Surry Branch's fun Elf on the Shelf party for area families
- Local girl scout troop once again filled our free community pantry for the holiday with items as part of their service project
- In addition to their usual programming, our Claremont Branch held a celebration of the library's 45th anniversary. Thanks to all who have supported the library over the years



Sussex County

- Waverly Branch hosted their first Holiday Market and saw good turnout for our local vendors and artisans
- The Wakefield branch participated in the Town of Wakefield's Tree Lighting event and provided holiday crafts for all the families attending
- Both branches were full of children for our children's programs during November and December



Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

November 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
AFLAC				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		219408 11.30.2025	-961.61
11/30/2025	Bill		219408	961.61
Amazon Capital Services				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11768	-1,115.33
11/30/2025	Bill		1HV1-9QTJ-RNLG	671.99
11/30/2025	Bill		1QN4-CHFJ-1PQR	443.34
Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		20122402	-9,280.00
11/19/2025	Bill		000904823F	9,280.00
AT&T				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11769	-0.62
11/30/2025	Bill		1281545736	0.62
Barnes & Noble, Inc.				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11770	-5,880.87
11/30/2025	Bill		4692562	5,880.87
Blackstone Publishing				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		24PZ8UW49QPY	-16.24
11/19/2025	Bill		2216983	16.24
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		33GRUYTK11H4	-86.90
11/30/2025	Bill		2217139	86.90
Cengage Learning, Inc.				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11771	-227.13
11/30/2025	Bill		999101723155	128.76
11/30/2025	Bill		999101723154	98.37
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-131.16
11/19/2025	Bill		999101708179	65.58
11/19/2025	Bill		999101703925	65.58
Center Point Large Print				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11772	-32.21
11/30/2025	Bill		2214285	32.21
Dataprise LLC				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-108.00
11/19/2025	Bill		CW60332	108.00

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

November 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Dominion Energy Virginia				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		4652998166	-1,265.56
11/30/2025	Bill		3233130008 11.30.2025	1,265.56
Ingram Library Services				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11763	-3,232.73
11/19/2025	Bill		91847989	124.80
11/19/2025	Bill		91847990	1,161.22
11/19/2025	Bill		918479876	1,239.74
11/19/2025	Bill		91847987	422.49
11/19/2025	Bill		91847988	284.48
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11773	-1,002.85
11/30/2025	Bill		92202609	52.28
11/30/2025	Bill		92202610	32.58
11/30/2025	Bill		92202611	898.73
11/30/2025	Bill		92202612	19.26
Midwest Tape				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11774	-1,966.88
11/30/2025	Bill		508019494	1,966.88
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-834.15
11/19/2025	Bill		507991504	834.15
Overdrive, Inc				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		j5txvxxc	-3,479.81
11/19/2025	Bill		03100DA25359775	19.99
11/19/2025	Bill		03100DA25350254	2,011.55
11/19/2025	Bill		03100DA5352678	154.98
11/19/2025	Bill		03100DA25353787	84.99
11/19/2025	Bill		03100DA25356784	1,208.30
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		8n32sp6t	-1,821.62
11/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25371857	300.69
11/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25362634	179.99
11/30/2025	Bill		03100DA25364643	1,340.94
PEAC Solutions				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		200349027112	-1,598.72
11/19/2025	Bill		41180457	1,598.72
Petty Cash				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11775	-685.85
11/30/2025	Bill		11.30.2025 Petty Cash	685.85

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

November 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Queen B's Cleaning Service				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11776	-877.20
11/30/2025	Bill		1943	877.20
Sentara Health Plans				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		WAD2533833603	-16,574.00
11/30/2025	Bill		10522079	16,574.00
Southampton County				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		39420	-65.00
11/30/2025	Bill		Acct 46 11.14.2025	65.00
Southampton County (1)				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11764	-434.59
11/19/2025	Bill		2025-10 (Oct gas)	434.59
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11777	-392.47
11/30/2025	Bill		2025-11 November gas	392.47
Southside Gas Service, Inc.				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11778	-921.44
11/30/2025	Bill		27184	921.44
Spectrum Enterprise				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		0949291364	-71.97
11/19/2025	Bill		089740301110125	71.97
T & A Repairs, LLC.				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11779	-153.62
11/30/2025	Bill		39890	153.62
Total Business Solutions				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11765	-519.90
11/19/2025	Bill		299647	519.90
TowneBank/Card Services				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		C83E45E35E	-12,332.52
11/19/2025	Bill		6457 0001 11.19.2025	12,332.52
Treasurer of Virginia (1)				
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11780	-100.00
11/30/2025	Bill		VDACS reg 2026	100.00
Unique Management Services, Inc.				

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

November 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-431.05
11/19/2025	Bill		6145929	431.05
<hr/>				
Verizon (1)				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3201725 3201726	-164.76
11/19/2025	Bill		961660704 11.9.2025	164.76
11/30/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3207517	-64.91
11/30/2025	Bill		624106825 11.22.2025	64.91
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Verizon Wireless				
11/19/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3794569897	-3,911.03
11/19/2025	Bill		6128040768	3,911.03
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Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

December 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
AFLAC				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		570724 12.31.2025	-809.51
12/31/2025	Bill		570724	809.51
Amazon Capital Services				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11788	-5,308.32
12/31/2025	Bill		1KV9-FDTG-PFYY	79.89
12/31/2025	Bill		1CQV-HJH4-H4VN	5,228.43
Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		13065907	-9,280.00
12/17/2025	Bill		000910786F	9,280.00
Barnes & Noble, Inc.				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11782	-53.18
12/17/2025	Bill		4695146	32.19
12/17/2025	Bill		4694871	20.99
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11789	-2,608.39
12/31/2025	Bill		4697838	375.84
12/31/2025	Bill		4697837	7.69
12/31/2025	Bill		4697804	165.02
12/31/2025	Bill		4697803	1,587.41
12/31/2025	Bill		4697839	472.43
Cengage Learning, Inc.				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11790	-44.78
12/31/2025	Bill		999101807535	18.39
12/31/2025	Bill		999101812327	26.39
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-131.16
12/17/2025	Bill		999101776635	131.16
Dataprise LLC				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11791	-8,284.03
12/31/2025	Bill		MSP69492	924.50
12/31/2025	Bill		MSP67956	6,241.78
12/31/2025	Bill		MSP67889	1,017.75
12/31/2025	Bill		CW273619	100.00
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-7,256.78
12/17/2025	Bill		MSP63716	6,241.78
12/17/2025	Bill		MSP64388	1,015.00
Document Systems, Inc.				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11792	-2,847.46

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

December 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
12/31/2025	Bill		149978	2,847.46
Dominion Energy Virginia				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		4712855940	-1,245.95
12/31/2025	Bill		3233130008 12.31.2025	1,245.95
Franklin-Southampton Area Chamber of Commerce				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11793	-150.00
12/31/2025	Bill		4132	150.00
Ingram Library Services				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11794	-1,929.71
12/31/2025	Bill		92570757	1,929.71
MidAmerica Books				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11795	-659.65
12/31/2025	Bill		0081258	659.65
Midwest Tape				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11796	-917.94
12/31/2025	Bill		508186084	917.94
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-935.15
12/17/2025	Bill		508118156	935.15
Overdrive, Inc				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		b649spxs	-5,026.12
12/17/2025	Bill		03100DA25390668	623.43
12/17/2025	Bill		03100DA25394163	37.46
12/17/2025	Bill		03100CO25388205	4,320.27
12/17/2025	Bill		03100DA25387869	44.96
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		15w1rcqk	-450.75
12/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25397181	67.96
12/31/2025	Bill		03100DA25406866	382.79
PEAC Solutions				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		200364765434	-1,598.72
12/17/2025	Bill		41322543	1,598.72
Petersburg Alarm Company				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11797	-1,470.00
09/30/2025	Bill		215696	435.00
12/31/2025	Bill		217312	1,035.00

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

December 2025

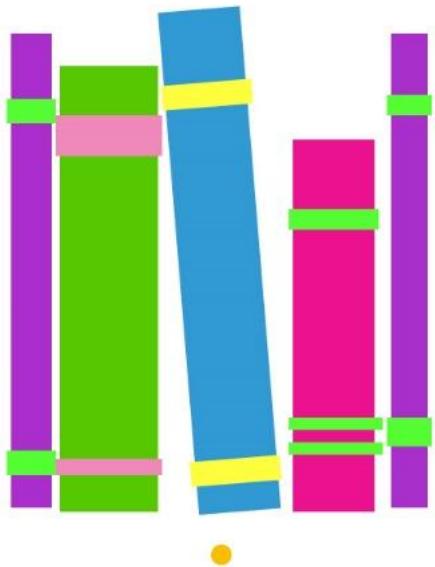
DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
Petty Cash				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11798	-577.19
12/31/2025	Bill		12.31.2025 Petty Cash	577.19
Quadient Postage				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		BH3807562056	-250.00
12/31/2025	Bill		8140 0461 12.22.2025	250.00
Queen B's Cleaning Service				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11799	-1,096.50
12/31/2025	Bill		1962	1,096.50
Sentara Health Plans				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11803	-16,574.00
12/31/2025	Bill		10646205	16,574.00
Southampton County				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		40938	-65.00
12/31/2025	Bill		46 12.15.2025	65.00
Southampton County (1)				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11800	-351.25
12/31/2025	Bill		2025-12-December gas	351.25
Southside Gas Service, Inc.				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11783	-1,469.30
12/17/2025	Bill		27909	1,469.30
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11801	-681.76
12/31/2025	Bill		27537	681.76
Spectrum Enterprise				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		0973175660	-30.39
12/17/2025	Bill		089740301120125	30.39
The Tidewater News				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11784	-54.00
12/17/2025	Bill		21267 12.17.2025	54.00
TowneBank/Card Services				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		CD71AD98FD	-14,122.46
12/17/2025	Bill		6457 0001 12.12.2025	14,122.46
Unique Management Services, Inc.				

Blackwater Regional Library

Library Bills

December 2025

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	MEMO/DESCRIPTION	NUM	AMOUNT
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)			-396.10
12/17/2025	Bill		6147099	396.10
<hr/>				
Verizon (1)				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3220368	-64.91
12/31/2025	Bill		624106825 12.22.2025	64.91
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Verizon Wireless				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		3837348808	-2,840.71
12/17/2025	Bill		6130550597	2,840.71
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Virginia Library Association				
12/17/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11785	-1,360.00
12/17/2025	Bill		16688	1,360.00
<hr/>				
WT Cox				
12/31/2025	Bill Payment (Check)		11802	-32.00
12/31/2025	Bill		3157261-supplemental	32.00
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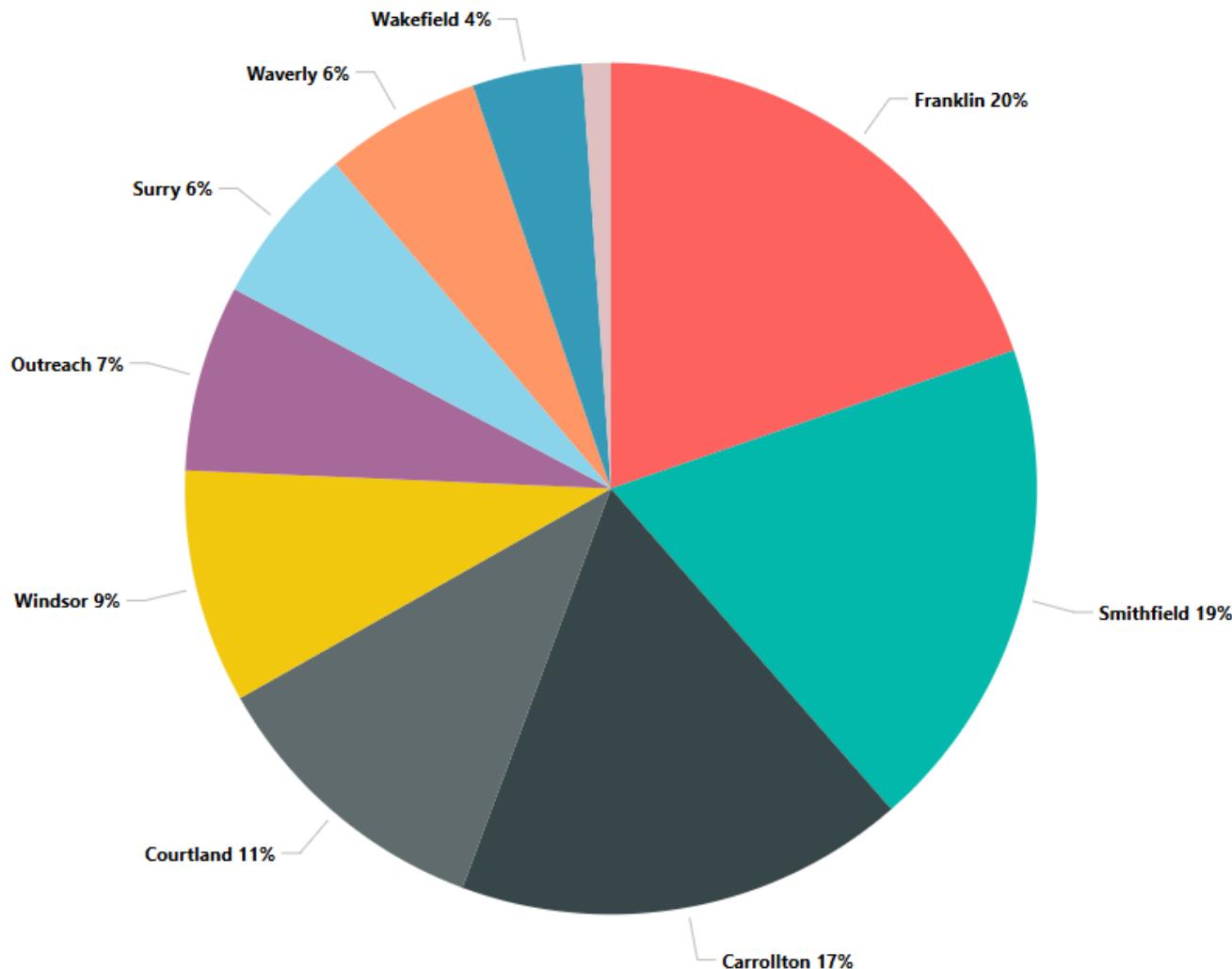


blackwater
regional
library

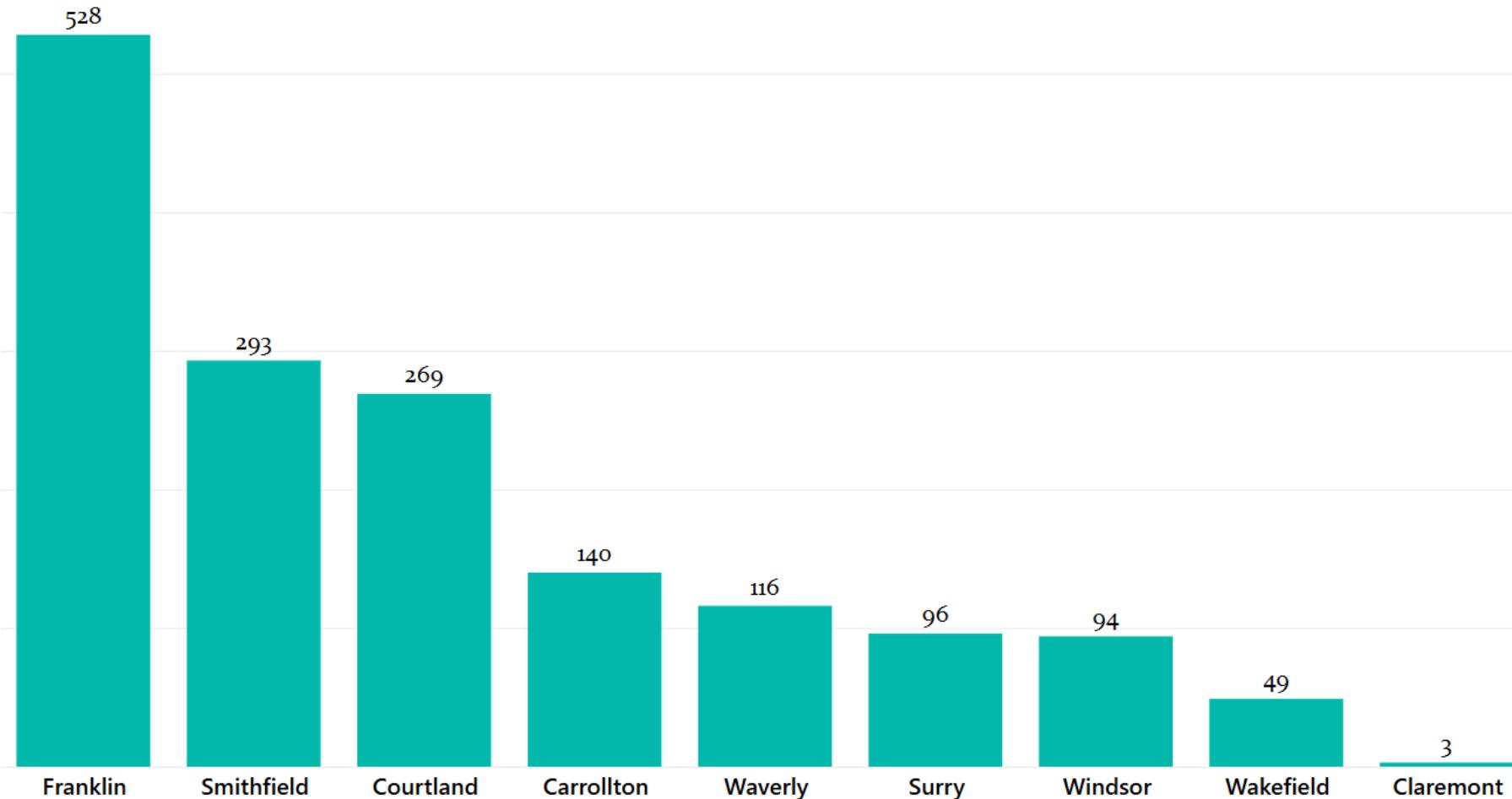
Franklin, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Surry, and Sussex
www.blackwaterlib.org

November and December 2025
Statistics

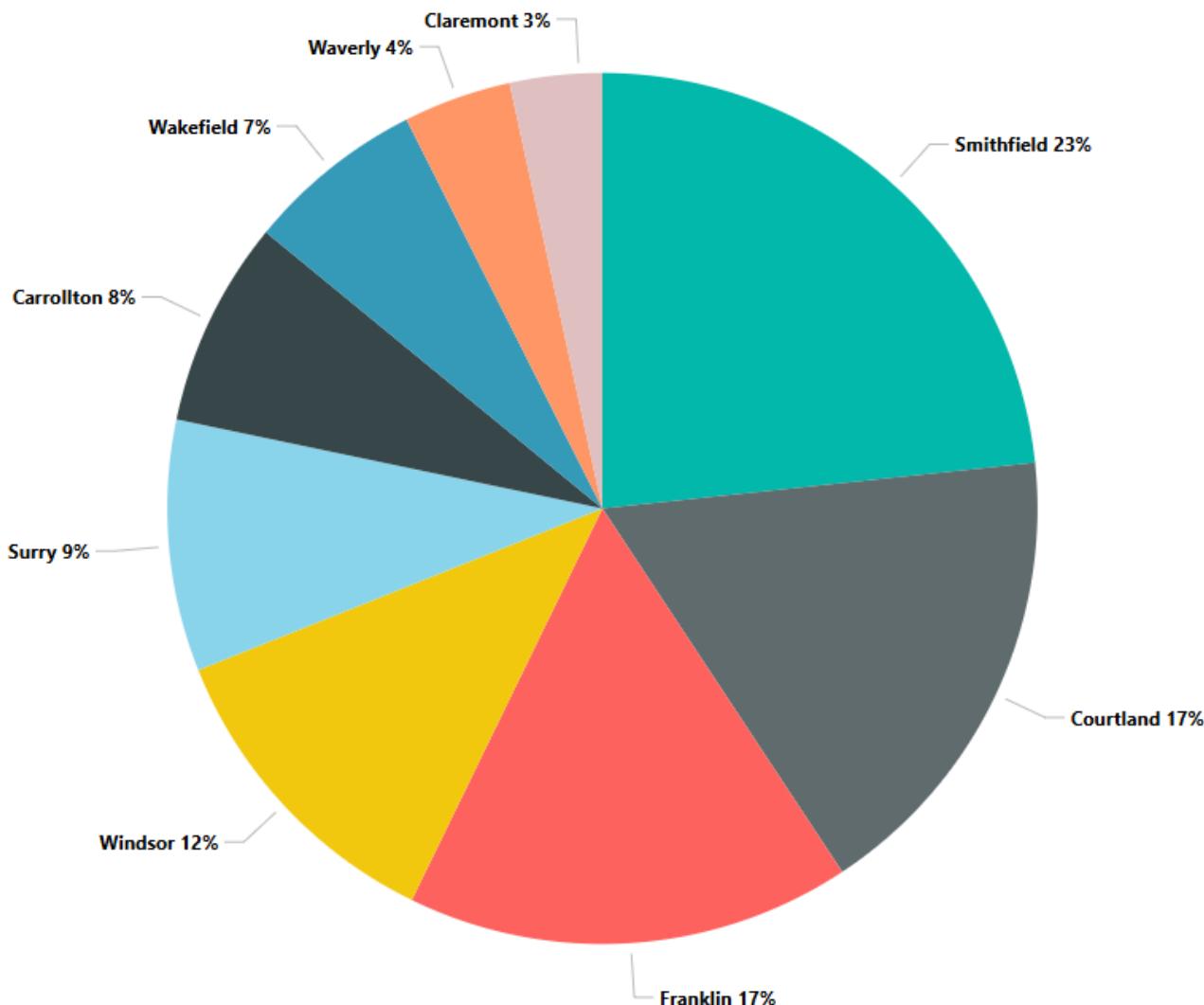
Monthly Report: Patron Count



Monthly Report: In-House Internet

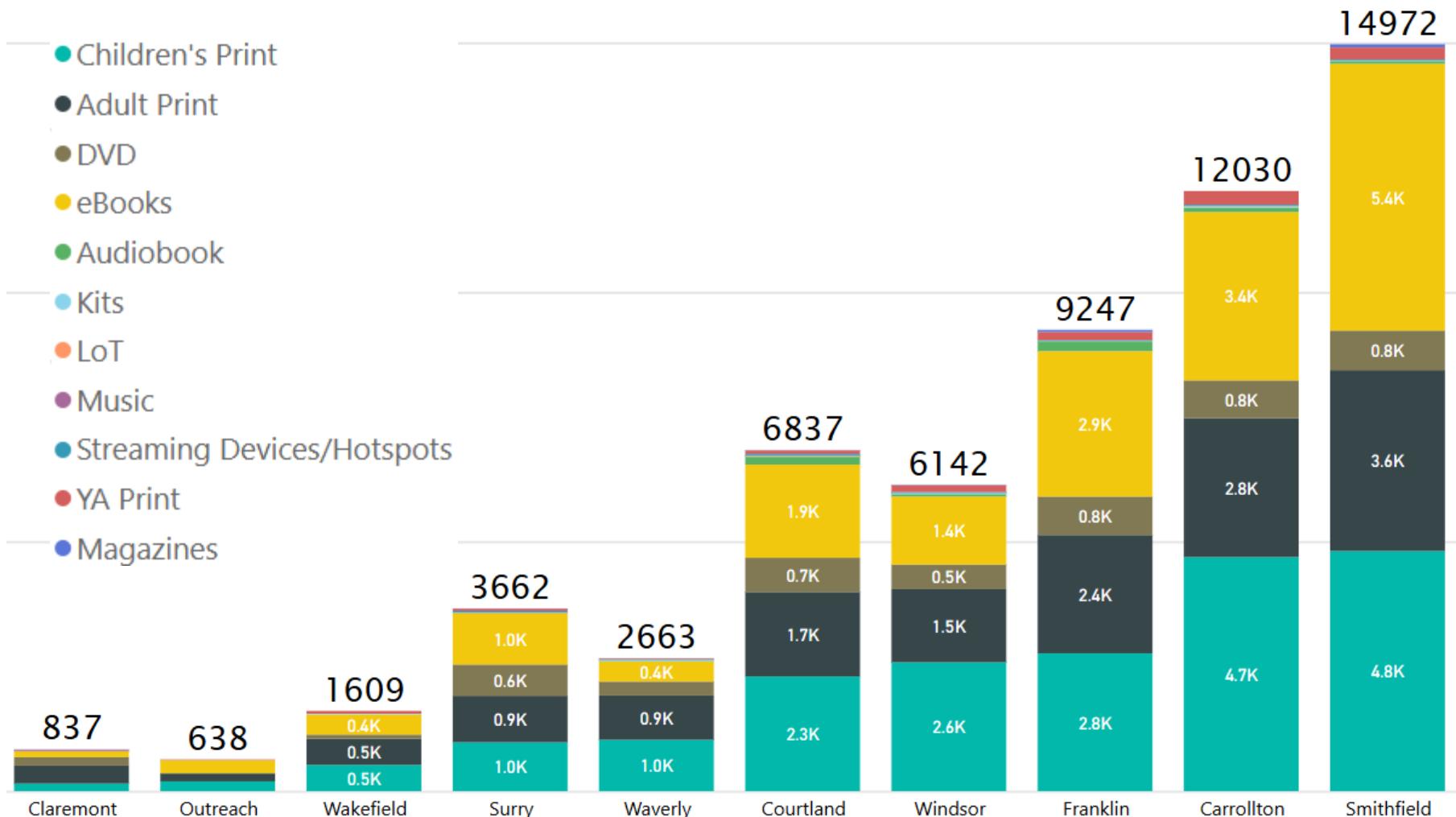


Monthly Report: WiFi Use



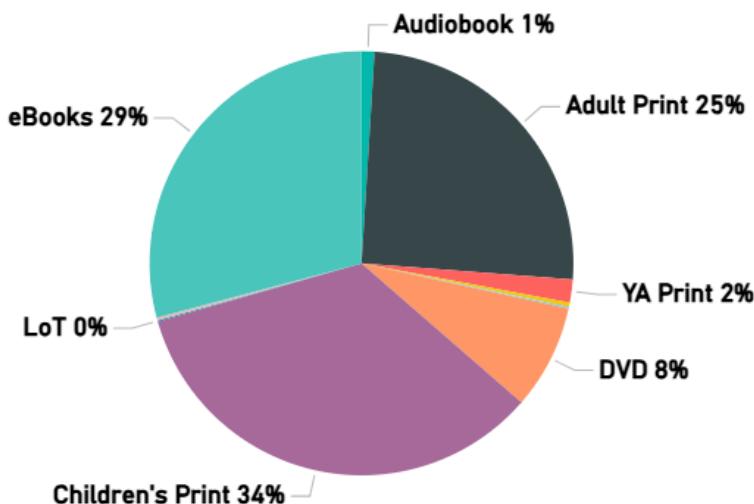
Branch	Wireless Internet Usage
Carrollton	210
Claremont	94
Courtland	477
Franklin	453
Smithfield	640
Surry	256
Wakefield	182
Waverly	110
Windsor	322
Total	2744

Circulation Report: By Branch

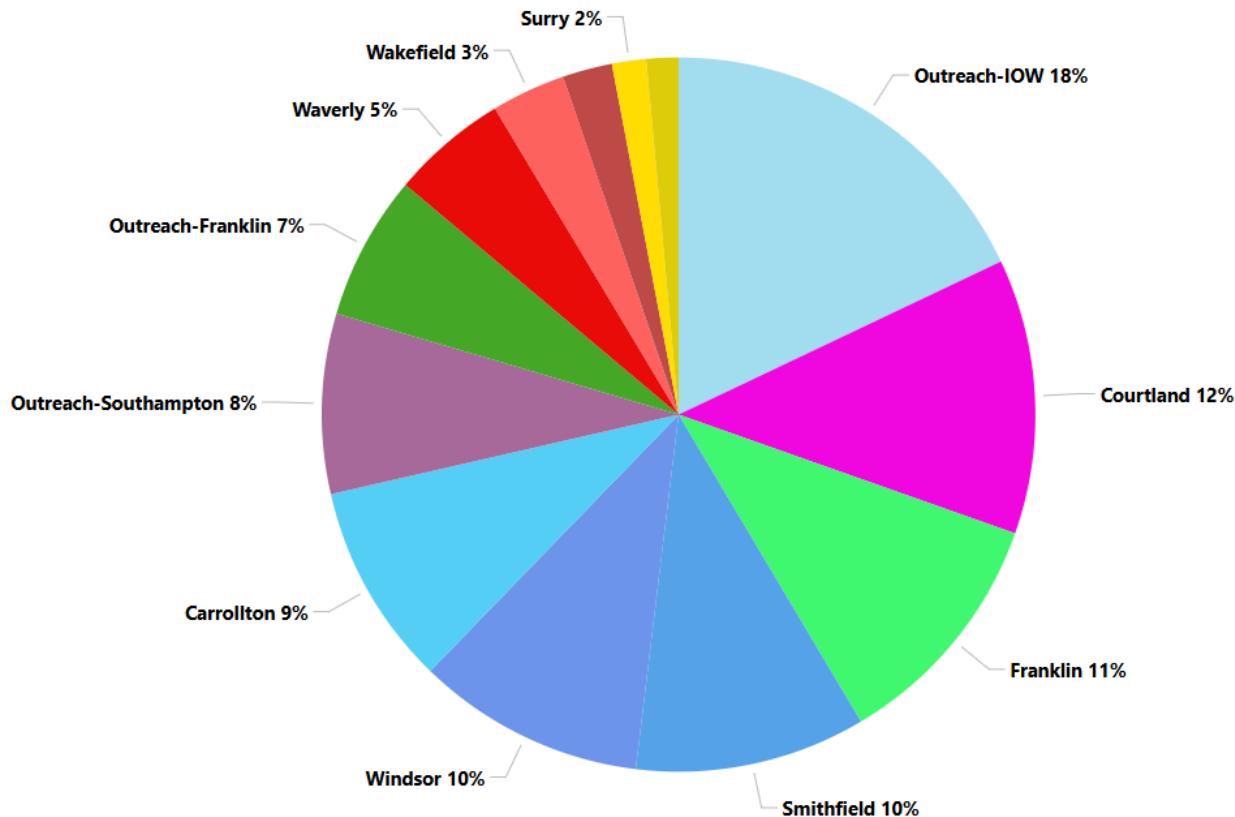


Circulation Report: Type by Branch

Location	Adult Print	Children's Print	DVD	Audiobook	Kits	YA Print	Music	LoT	Magazines	eBooks	Streaming Devices/ Hotspots
Carrollton	2784	4693	758	90	18	272	0	12	0	3373	30
Claremont	357	153	172	3	0	21	0	1	10	115	5
Courtland	1693	2300	685	159	1	70	0	17	5	1868	39
Franklin	2371	2763	772	198	6	161	0	4	41	2913	18
Outreach	161	196	3	1	0	12	0	3	0	260	2
Smithfield	3623	4813	796	54	8	241	0	4	63	5350	20
Surry	932	980	626	7	0	45	0	8	3	1027	34
Wakefield	520	527	86	5	9	57	0	1	0	402	2
Waverly	887	1030	281	11	18	18	0	1	0	402	15
Windsor	1467	2584	491	48	17	135	0	3	10	1365	22
Total	14795	20039	4670	576	77	1032	0	54	132	17075	187

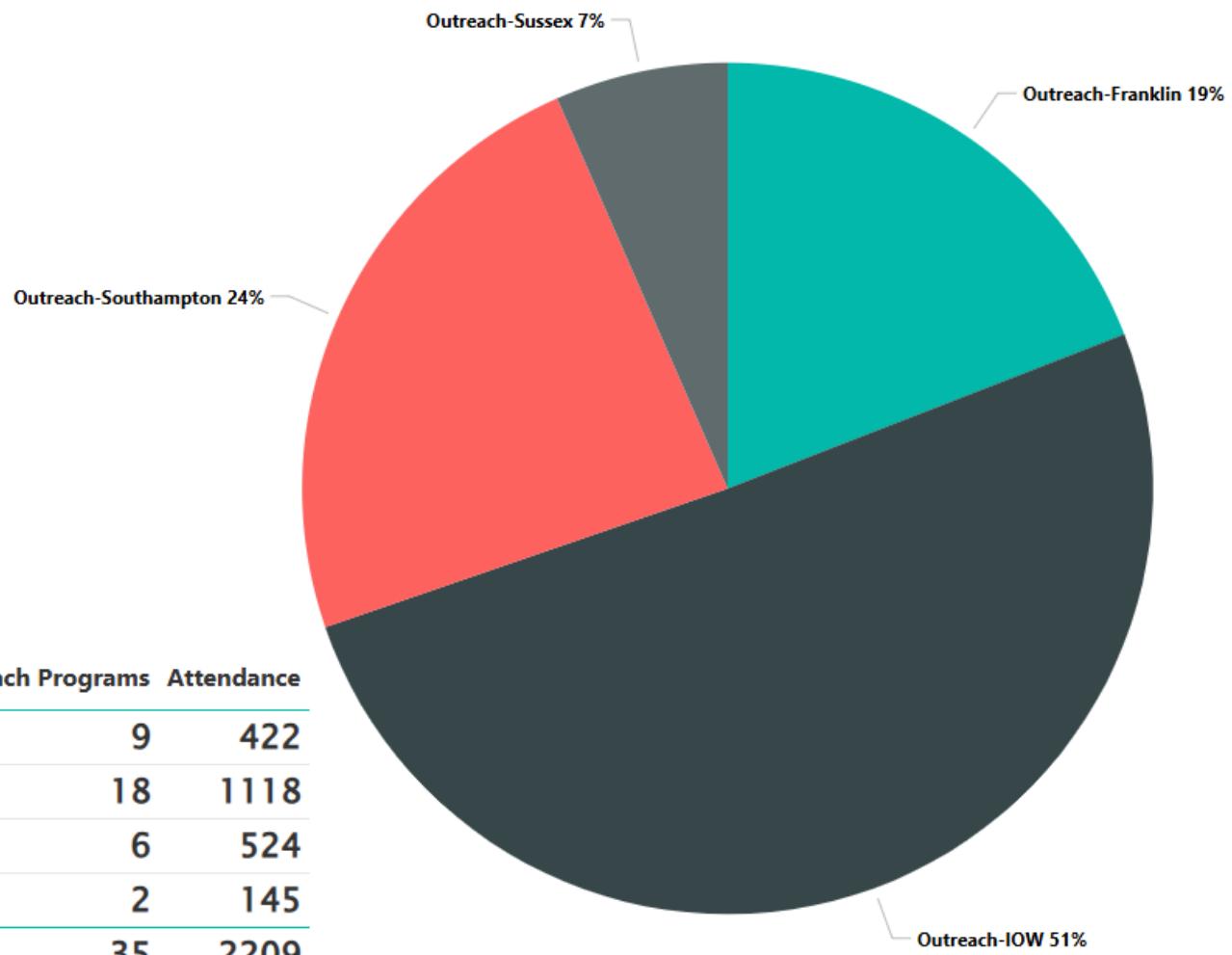


Program Report: Total Participation



Location/Branch	Count
Carrollton	590
Claremont	93
Courtland	801
Franklin	712
Outreach-Franklin	422
Outreach-IOW	1155
Outreach-Southampton	524
Outreach-Sussex	145
Smithfield	673
Surry	100
Wakefield	216
Waverly	339
Windsor	665
Total	6435

Outreach Report: Programs



Location/Branch	Outreach Programs	Attendance
Outreach-Franklin	9	422
Outreach-IOW	18	1118
Outreach-Southampton	6	524
Outreach-Sussex	2	145
Total	35	2209

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Staffing Update November and December 2025 Blackwater Regional Library

New Hires

Promotions

Transfers

Separations

Vacancies

- Senior Library Assistant – Sussex branches

STAFFING AND WORKSHOP REPORT

Training Sessions – November and December 2025

City of Franklin staff completed a total of 3 trainings

Isle of Wight County staff completed a total of 4 trainings

Southampton County staff completed a total of 1 training

Surry County staff completed a total of 1 training

Sussex County staff completed a total of 3 trainings

Central Office staff completed a total of 6 trainings

11/5/2025 – Getting Ready for Library.Solution v5.9 - This seminar discussed the new features and improvements to Library.Solution v5.9. I think it is always helpful to keep up to date on any new changes to ensure that there is no confusion when the time comes to use it.

The speaker was very engaging and gave a detailed run through of what v5.9 will look like and how to use it. She showed us how to manage holds for patrons, what to do when there are error codes, and she discussed the benefits of this system for not only public libraries but for school libraries as well. For the public libraries, some new changes are: No more cancelling a hold because you can't fill it, holds processed quicker, and mark missing permission for only those who need it.

I think these new changes will allow for a much smoother process when helping patrons.

The speaker also touched on new LS2 Cataloging features. Some changes are structural cleanup of MARC records, removing obsolete fields, adding fixed field data and converting specific subject headings. As a cataloger, these updates will allow me to smoothly catalog records. I really enjoyed this seminar. It provided a lot of helpful information on the upcoming updates relating to cataloging in particular.

11/5/2025 – From Stacks to Saws - This seminar discussed the unique collection of items at Smyrna Public library in Georgia. I decided to listen to this seminar to have the opportunity to see the “Library of Things” collection at other libraries and possibly gain new ideas to add to our own LOT.

The speaker began with the discussing how their library displays their LOT in the catalog. It looked very similar to the way we display ours. She discussed the benefits of having a LOT and also the fails they have experienced when experimenting with this type of service. One part of their collection I found very interesting was the passes to State parks and museums that patrons can check out. I think this is a wonderful service to have and gives patrons a chance to explore local areas without the added expense.

This was a very interesting seminar and allowed librarians across the country to come together and share all of the different items they house at their libraries.

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11/11/2025 – Deaf Library Services - The Library of Virginia offers a short course on best practices to communicate with deaf patrons. Ideas include American Sign Language, adaptive technologies, and closed caption. A portion of the course also has participants review their own library's collection to gauge the need for additional, or updated, materials.

11/19/2025 – Best Practices for Onboarding New Staff - New library workers face the challenge of learning a job as well as integrating into a workplace culture and environment. Part of onboarding is showing how the library as an institution supports and encourages employees, and engaged employees are a significant marker of an organization's success. How do you ensure each new employee has a consistent and positive experience? Concrete tools and workflows will provide every person involved with a smooth and collaborative outcome.

As a result of this program, participants will:

- Discuss the essential parts of onboarding and how the process interacts with hiring and training
- Explore ways to organize incoming employees' action items and how to ensure that all employees complete the onboarding process successfully
- Learn how to design a workflow that meets their library's needs

11/24/2025 – Beanstack Patron Experience and Services Overview Library Staff Level - This workshop focused on Interacting with the Patrons who come to the library and how to engage as well as educate them on all library policies, methods, and other inquiries that they may have.

11/25/2025 – ‘Tis the Season for Outdoor Programs - This training discussed ways in which to encourage patrons to attend and participate in outdoor programs. The conversation was geared to more wintery climates, but the information could be helpful for any outdoor event. Selecting places and partnerships that invite interest to the public will maximize turnout for the program.

11/26/2025 – Beanstack EDU: How to Create a Bingo Challenge - This workshop goes into detail on how to create a fun Bingo Challenge for patrons using the website Beanstack! With the Bingo system, patrons can choose from different card sizes, varying from 5x5, 4x4, and 3x3. On these cards, they can make different combinations, such as logging, activities they've done, or reviewing different badges. To complete the Bingo challenge, all they have to do is get all the badges in a row, column, or the full card! The workshop also demoed how to create Bingo challenges with their templates, making the workshop much more immersive and interesting. You can customize the badges, the challenge, making it different based on what is going on in the library, and you can add links to resources on the challenge! I can't wait for the library to implement this program! I'm so sure patrons will love it!!

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12/1/2025 – Social Media Content as Public Records - This Library of Virginia webinar reviewed record keeping procedures for social media content. Social media posts are subject to the same record keeping schedules as paper records.

When sharing posts, you must consider:

- Are there privacy considerations?
 - Exempt information (PII, HIPAA, FERPA, etc.)
 - Anything in the picture/video, especially the background, that could be exempt?
- Where am I posting?
 - Governmental social media account
 - Personal account
 - Private community groups
- Is the post the official record or a copy?
- Which retention schedule is the post governed by?
- Is there a way of preserving the post?

Social media records must be:

- Located and identified within the platform
- Captured and retained
- Classified per retention schedules
- Stored in a way that preserves authenticity and completeness

Disposition of Content

- Who “owns” the information?
 - Single coordinating office, individual departments?
 - Establish procedures that document ownership of the content.
 - Unit that posts or unit responsible for the government function described by the information?
 - Whose retention schedule is it on?
- Whose responsibility is it to delete?
- Document Disposition
 - Inappropriate content removal log

How do you keep up with changing law and requirements for public records and social media?

- Watch for announcements on law changes/updates
- Records manager/clerk
- Google alerts
- Legislative website for Virginia, State/US Supreme Court
- Professional associations

12/3/2025 – Big Programming Ideas for Small Budgets - In this webinar, Chelsea Price (Meserveny, Iowa) discusses fun, easy and cost-effective programming ideas drawn from her

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book and other resources. Chelsea works in a community with approximately 250 people. This workshop would be beneficial to the smaller branches.

Take chances with programming regardless of potential failure.

Passive Programming:

- Doesn't require much money, energy, or staff time
- Makes great social media posts
- Increases interactions with patrons
- Can do while closed to public

Low-Cost Programming:

- Slime
- Dino Dig
- Relay Races
- Holiday Parties
- Trivia Night
- Escape Room

Free Programs:

- Trunk or Treat

Partnerships:

- Local businesses, people you know, hometown heroes

<https://programminglibrarian.org/>

Website also promotes other library programs that have been submitted for all age ranges including breakdowns of planning, budgeting, marketing, etc. Below are two examples:

- Book Tasting
 - Come up with dish ideas based on recipes or food mentioned in the story.
- Letters to a Librarian
 - Increases engagement with families.

12/5/2025 – Training That Works: A Simple Guide for Nonprofits - This webinar discusses the methods you can use to train staff/volunteers. Some methods she discusses to train staff includes in person workshops, orientation, online courses, virtual training and peer shadowing. A number of things could go wrong with peer shadowing if the individual doing the training is not properly prepared. These things include modeling bad habits, inconsistent information, confused expectations and overwhelmed learners. In general, training should include introduction, instruction, practice/assessment and review. A good training plan consists of defining the outcome, plan the assessments, and outline the training. This plan ensures the staff or volunteers know exactly what they should be learning and you know they retained the information.

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12/5/2025 – Improving Library Signage and Displays - Helpful tips on improving signage and message boards in the library, such as; always include branding, use easy to read fonts, avoid distracting pictures and colors. Remember, less is more.

12/13/2025 – Librarian Training Workshop: Objectives and Library Accessibility – This workshop training was a YouTube video that is designed to equip librarians and library teams with the tools they need to develop and sustain a library.

12/16/2025 – Tabletop Gaming for All Ages in Libraries – Ryan LaFerney, a Youth Services Librarian at Indianapolis Public Library talked about how to introduce and explore games and playing games in libraries, specifically games that are a bit more involved than traditional card games or board games, but not excluding those. Games are a great way to bring patrons to the library and can also be used for educational purposes. Games are cost-prohibitive at home, but if the library can provide a space and the materials for patrons to play games, these can be the vehicle for new programming for all ages.

Key bullet points from a slide presented about the benefits of games in libraries:

- Promotes lifelong learning
- Games are educational, informational and recreational-fulfilling the missions of libraries
- Provides opportunities for socialization and recreation
- Access to an expensive hobby
- The variety of board games available can appeal to a wide range of patrons so the program possibilities are endless

12/18/2025 – Library Customer Service for People Living with Dementia – Webinar lists ways to better communicate with patrons suffering from dementia. Reference materials to have in the library can include medical, emotional and even financial (high cost of caregiving) and legal/ethical topics. The webinar reviewed positive therapies for dementia sufferers and ways to delay symptoms/stages. Our library covers many of these (yay us!): wide variety of reading and visual materials (including memory kits), creative engagement (craftsy) and social stimulation (friendly conversations with staff and other patrons). The webinar also gives a list of websites for additional training.

12/19/2025 – Streamlining Outreach: Simplify and Maximize Your Potential – Staff from Aurora Public Library outlined how they reorganized their outreach planning in conjunction with staff from the physical branches to reduce redundancy and create a more efficient flow of responding to requests and attending events. Through updated procedures, creating a well-defined workflow, and creating an “Outreach Ambassadors” program, they were able to maximize how their outreach department ran.

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12/22/2025 – managing Your Own Mental Health While Supporting Your Team – This workshop equips participants with practical insights and tools to navigate the “perfect storm” of challenges—whether they stem from workplace pressures or personal life events—that can disrupt your overall well-being. To effectively support others, especially your team, it is essential to first prioritize your own mental health.

Caring for yourself may include practicing intentional self-care, setting healthy boundaries, seeking support when needed, and incorporating mindfulness into your daily routine. As the saying goes, you can't pour from an empty cup. When you take care of your own mental well-being, you become a more sustainable, effective, and empathetic leader.

Supporting your team starts with leading by example. Model vulnerability, check in regularly, and create a safe, supportive environment where people feel heard and valued. Consistency, flexibility, and trust are key. Above all, serve as a guide— someone who genuinely connects with their employees and supports them through challenges with compassion and understanding.