

LIBRARY DIRECTOR
TERI DUGAN
DECEMBER 2025

I completed the Montana State Annual Statistical Report in early November. This report is required under the Administrative Rule of Montana (10.102.1155) and the Public Library Standards in order for libraries to receive State Aid. It includes data on library visits, circulation, collection size, public service hours, staffing, electronic resources, operating revenues and expenditures, and the number of service outlets.

Here is just a sampling of our stats.

The library had **6,604** open hours
40,461 people have a library card
222,377 people walked through our doors

Our collection has **91,141** physical items
There was **64,944** uses of public computers
40,823 Wireless sessions took place

The building program for the new Kalispell library is underway. Honore Bray, from Beyond the Stacks Consulting, has prepared an outline and a spreadsheet with initial figures, and I'm collaborating with staff to finalize the program. This document will guide the architect in designing a space that meets the needs outlined in the plan.

I'm participating in a Local Government Community of Practice with other library directors. This month's assignment was to attend a city or county commission meeting to better understand the issues our local officials are facing. My goal is to show both the commission and the community how the library can be part of the solution by helping address challenges and creating positive opportunities.

Chair David Ingram and I met with Flathead County Finance Director Amy Dexter to plan topics for the library board's annual training retreat. The discussion was extremely valuable, covering areas such as how the budget is developed each year and the special funds available to Montana libraries through the Depreciation Fund. This session will provide important insights for all attendees.

I'm excited to share that the library has been awarded \$50,000 from LSW Architects to support pre-design work for the new Kalispell library project. This generous funding allows us to take the first crucial steps towards creating a thoughtful, well-planned roadmap for the future library. In the coming weeks, the facilities committee and I will meet with LSW to begin shaping that plan.

TRAFFIC COUNTS- OCT 2025
Kalispell- 11,594
Columbia Falls- 5,247
Bigfork- 2,215

TRAFFIC COUNTS- OCT 2024
Kalispell- 11,149
Columbia Falls- 5,111
Bigfork- 2,210

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR
SAM CROMPTON
DECEMBER 2025

A lot of computer hardware & software upgrades:

Ordered replacement computer hardware with windows 11 for Kalispell self-checks. Previous computers could only support Windows 10 which was made end-of-life by Microsoft in October 2025. The new hardware was also placed in a better position to suit the deployment environment, limiting the visibility of the wiring and computers making for a more aesthetically pleasing deployment.

Changed out two Bigfork desktop public computer stations to Windows 11 OS. The hardware isn't new but functionally their excellent and over 50% less expensive than purchasing new equipment. These computers should provide service to the community for many years.

Also, in Bigfork, one of the two public-use laptops was replaced with a redeployed unit previously used by staff. The self-check station also was upgraded to new hardware running Windows 11. With these changes, all computers in Bigfork are now standardized on the latest Windows 11 operating system. Since relocating from the former downtown site to the new library, the number of computers available for both public and staff use has expanded significantly—from just four to sixteen.

Ordered and took delivery of a new Dell R260 server. The existing server was purchased in early 2014 and has been in production on the library network since August of that year. The typical useful life of server hardware is between 3-5 years, so with ours providing over eleven years of reliable service it's time for an upgrade. The OS software, Windows Server 2025, was purchased from Techsoup at a savings of 45% vs ordering with the hardware from Dell. Installation will be an ongoing project expected to be completed by the end of January.

COLLECTION SERVICES LIBRARIAN
KAT WILSON
 DECEMBER 2025

October 2025 Circulation Statistics

	October 2025	October 2024	October 2023	October 2022
Juvenile	18563	18426	15610	16939
Young Adult	1018	1074	907	812
Adult	11736	12300	11977	12206
Overdrive ebooks	4291	4440	4587	4079
Overdrive audiobooks	8410	7729	7124	6305
Overdrive magazines	2275	1301	1671	381
Total	46293	45270	41876	40722
ILLs Borrowed	47	49	43	44
ILLs Loaned	47	52	29	38
Outgoing Partners Crates	310	322	302	271
Incoming Partners Crates	281	342	274	278

Lakeside and Marion FY26 Circulation Statistics

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Lakeside	140	166	133	128								
Marion	N/A*	N/A*	4	9								

*Marion closed first week of June through August.

COMMUNICATIONS LIBRARIAN
LUNE AXELSEN
DECEMBER 2025

October was one of our fullest months this year for Adult Programming. We hosted 14 adult programs last month including 2 Flathead Audubon events, 2 Artist Meet-and-Greets, 2 Baroque Music concerts, 2 Creative Aging 6-week long courses, as well as Seed Cleaning and Packing Parties and our regular monthly programs like Genealogy and the Kalispell Library Tour. It was my task to promote all of these events and get the word out to the community. My efforts were largely successful as most events were well attended.

In addition, we had our regular kids and teens programs to promote. I have been working with Jackie and the Teen Team to come up with a new strategy to target teens since the teen attendance was low in September. Last month I began creating Facebook Events for each teen program, as well as detailed posts for each event. I paid for targeted ads on each post, and it worked! Our teen events have had great attendance since with lots of new teen faces. Kids programming has also been successful. We had a special Symphony Storytime at the Bigfork library in early November. Becca asked that I promote this event, so I used the same strategy I used to target teen programming, and it worked amazingly well. This event packed the house in Bigfork. It was very exciting to see.

Meanwhile, I have been training our new part-time library advisors Joni Jenks and Stephanie Knight. Both have been picking up Communications tasks quickly, and I am pleased to have these two on my team. I am currently still designing our print calendars and newsletters until Stephanie is trained, probably in January.

Social Media Snapshot

This month we saw continued growth in followers on both Facebook and Instagram. Our engagement was down on both platforms due to my focus on paid promotions and not as much on fun library content like photos and videos featuring programs. This is due to my limited ability to capture these things while training new staff. Once staff are trained in the next few months, I will be able to create original library content again.

Social Media Stats:

- **Facebook:**
 - 245 New Followers this period (3% increase in the last 28 days)
- **Facebook Views:**
 - 240K page views this period (30% decrease in the last 28 days)
- **Instagram Followers:**
 - 25 new followers this period (1% increase in the last 28 days)
- **Instagram Views:**
 - 31K account views this period (18% decrease in the last 28 days)
- **Website Pageviews:**
 - 21,903 pageviews this period (11% increase in the last 30 days)
- **Website top 5 viewed pages in the last 14 days:**
 - **Teens**
 - **Events**
 - **Kids**
 - **Request an Item**
 - **Locations & Hours**

PUBLIC SERVICES LIBRARIAN
TONY EDMUNDSON
DECEMBER 2025

Incidents

Even with a busy month of incident responses in October, we are still on track to see less than half the number of the last couple of years. On Friday, November 21, I gave an update to staff on incidents and tips on incident response. We have also scheduled a future date to meet and hear from the local Crisis Assistance Team.

TEEN SERVICES LIBRARIAN
JACKIE CARLL
DECEMBER 2025

NOVEMBER STATS:

Here is a recap of our programming:

Fandom- ***Onigiri Rice Balls*** (Kal): 24

LVL-UP- ***Shrinky Dinks Keychains*** (Kal): 16

Challenge Accepted- ***Foosbots Team Battles*** (Kal): 18

Scene- ***Post-it-note tangles*** (All locations)

Gem Wall Theme: ***What Summer Experience theme do you want to see next summer?***

CFJH Outreach: **11 (18 in October!)**

School Visits: **63**

TEEN UPDATES

Hello fellow board of trustees and staff. My first two months as the new Teen Services Librarian have come and gone so quickly. It has been a delight to meet my team and see how we are serving and impacting our youth in a positive way. The teen team looks forward to implementing more ideas on how our library can provide engagement and connection opportunities across all three branches. If you ever see me, please do not hesitate to say, "hello"!

SCHOOL GROUP VISITS

We have already had some field trip visits! Saint Matthews Middle School (6-8th grade) and Bigfork High School students came to use and check out materials. St. Matt's teacher Lisa Melnick brought her middle school students (59 total) to the library so they can enjoy a larger collection of reading materials. They plan on visiting us at least once a month. Bigfork teacher, Cynthia Wilondek, brought 4 students to research historical figures using resources that are unique to the library. This included the Montana History book collection, Montana files, and working with microfilm. We look forward to seeing many *eager* faces coming to learn more, check out books, and make use of the unique materials available at their local library.

OUTREACH

Columbia Falls Junior High (CFJH)

Madi and I are continuing our lunchtime outreach program at CFJH, which functions as a school club. The club takes place in a communal open space during lunch, providing Columbia Falls Junior High students with opportunities for creativity, discovery, and connection. In October we had the highest attendance of 18 kids in total. I even overheard a kiddo exclaim how, "this program was better than recess". What a WIN!

Bigfork Junior High & High School

The Teen Team is excited to expand our monthly library outreach to Bigfork schools. Madi, Deidre, and I met with both school librarians to gauge if our program would benefit their school. They noted our program would benefit their 7th – 9th graders the most, so we plan to visit in January and see how it goes.

**YOUTH SERVICES LIBRARIAN
BECCA JOHNSON
DECEMBER 2025**

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Program attendance is climbing, Wednesday Workshops are inspiring scientific thinking and interest in the outdoors and children continue to learn and grow at their local library!

EARLY LITERACY STORYTIME (0-5 YEARS)

SEPTEMBER ATTENDANCE

KALISPELL- 408 (13 PROGRAMS)

COLUMBIA FALLS- 245 (14 PROGRAMS)

BIGFORK- 119 (11 PROGRAMS)

OCTOBER ATTENDANCE

KALISPELL – 421 (12 PROGRAMS)/ 28 (2 GROUP VISITS)

COLUMBIA FALLS- 258 (14 PROGRAMS)/ 12 (1 GROUP VISIT)

BIGFORK- 240 (14 PROGRAMS)

KIDS WORKSHOPS/SCHOOL VISITS (6-12 YEARS)

During October and November, we launched one new Wednesday Workshop offering called Wild Explorers. Local outdoor education experts provide kids an opportunity to learn about exciting aspects of the natural environment. These special workshops were well received! Thank you to our partners: Glacier Institute, Flathead Audubon Society, Flathead Lake Biological Station and Wayfarers State Park Ranger Station. We can't wait for more Wild Explorers programs this coming spring!

SEPTEMBER ATTENDANCE

KALISPELL- 68 (4 WORKSHOPS)

COLUMBIA FALLS- 97 (4 WORKSHOPS)

BIGFORK – 13 (4 WORKSHOPS)

OCTOBER ATTENDANCE

KALISPELL- 168 (5 WORKSHOPS)/ 45 (3 CLASS VISITS)

COLUMBIA FALLS- 116 (5 WORKSHOPS)

BIGFORK – 46 (5 WORKSHOPS)/ 50 (3 CLASS VISITS)

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

SYMPHONY STORYTIME

Our first "Symphony Storytime", a collaboration with the Glacier Symphony Orchestra and Chorale was presented in Bigfork and was a huge success. A crowd of 130 children and 90 adults enjoyed live music from a woodwind quintet paired with the reading of Dan Brown's picture book "Wild Symphony". We are excited to continue this partnership and host future Symphony Storytimes at our Columbia Falls and Kalispell branches.

SENSORY PLAY SATURDAY ATTENDANCE

Our goal for Sensory Play Saturday is to offer working families a fun, interactive space to visit with their children on the weekend.

KALISPELL – 55 (SEPT), 40 (OCT)

COLUMBIA FALLS- 17 (SEPT), 19 (OCT)

BIGFORK – 12 (SEPT), 15 (OCT)

COLUMBIA FALL BRANCH MANAGER
LIZ CAMARILLO
DECEMBER 2025

Kylin attended Harvest Fest and reported that 249 visitors stopped by to enjoy the interactive activities she set up. She saw many familiar faces and also had the opportunity to promote our library services to new visitors. Kylin consistently does an excellent job of motivating people to come and experience the library and explore all the programs we offer. Our Halloween Day story time program was fun! Kylin led our young patrons through the City of Columbia Falls building, visiting every department. Eric Hanks, our City Manager, dressed up as a pirate and created an amazing setup with full-size candy. The Hungry Horse News captured a great photo of him, and we had an excellent turnout!

For our Wednesday Workshop, Liza hosted the Flathead Lake Biological Station. To introduce children to their work, the team provided engaging activities and interactive displays, including several microscopes that participants were able to use!

The Land to Hand Seed Packing Parties have started again, and community members are showing strong support. We'll continue hosting these events almost right up until the Free the Seeds Fair on the first Saturday in March.

For our October Adult Programming Zone, we featured a Zone on creating Mexican paper flowers. We also had one of our patrons, Karl Sorenson, share that he had an extensive collection of postage stamps and asked if we could help him put them to good use. We decided to incorporate the stamps into a letter writing project for veterans at the Veterans Home. Although we barely made a dent in his collection, we decorated the letters with stamps valued as little as 0.5¢, resulting in a creative and artistic touch. In total, we mailed out 90 thank you cards for Veterans Day. Enough for every resident at the facility.

Lisa and I attended a presentation by Sally Thompson; Author of *Black Robes Enter Coyote's World* and other notable Montana history books. With Lisa leading Montana Mondays, and I overseeing History Fridays, the session proved to be incredibly informative and insightful.

We experienced a few challenging days at the library due to a fire alarm that emitted a loud screech every 30 seconds because of a dying battery. The constant noise was starting to get stressful for both patrons and staff, but ultimately, the City brought in scaffolding and completed the repair. They plan to replace all fire alarms throughout the entire City building next year, a project estimated at \$10,000. We are deeply grateful to the City for their commitment to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for the library.

ADULT PROGRAMMING LIBRARIAN
BIGFORK BRANCH MANAGER
DEIDRE MCMULLIN
DECEMBER 2025

We hosted a Saturday nature painting class focused on painting skies and building basic skills. Art programs are especially compelling for our patrons, and having the Bigfork space makes these workshops possible. This class could accommodate 9 people though several had to cancel due to illness.

Our final talk in the Audubon series covered the history of the Christmas Bird Count and gave practical tips for anyone who wants to join in. It was a great way to connect people with citizen science.

Bird Bingo is finishing up, and we're rolling out **Cooking Bingo** next. This fun challenge encourages people to try new foods, share dishes, and check out cookbooks. It's designed for all ages and hopefully encourages whole families to get active and find resources at the library too.

We're partnering with Flathead Audubon for a hands-on art and conservation event. Participants (16+) will create fabric bird sculptures to honor birds lost to window strikes and learn simple steps to make homes safer for birds. All materials provided. One session will be in Bigfork on December 5 and another in Kalispell on December 15.