LIBRARY DIRECTOR
TERI DUGAN
SEPTEMBER 2026

I recently attended a meeting of the Downtown Kalispell Forward Committee, where we discussed plans for the upcoming annual Holiday Stroll. This year, organizers are working to expand the event by adding activities on Saturday. Businesses will be encouraged to collaborate with one another and offer special events, activities, and festive experiences throughout the weekend. As part of these discussions, we are exploring ways the library can participate in and contribute to this downtown community celebration.

The public survey phase of the feasibility study is progressing well, with just a few weeks remaining. We have received 184 responses so far, and I am confident we will reach our goal of 200 responses. The next phase of the study will take place during the week of October 5 and will include individual interviews and several focus group sessions. One of the most meaningful things I have learned through this process is the strong support our library enjoys within the community. Time and again, people have expressed how much they value the library and feel a sense of ownership and connection to it. I will come away from this experience with an even deeper appreciation for the library's role in our community. The library truly is one of the few places where everyone is welcome, and where people come together to learn, connect, and improve their lives.

Sam and I recently visited the future smart locker site at Evergreen School District to finalize the electrical and data connections needed for installation. Over the next few weeks, we will be working with an electrician to complete the required electrical work. Our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the school district is now in place, and we are excited to partner with them on this project. We look forward to bringing this new service to the community and hope to celebrate its opening near the end of the year.

The Storytelling Bootcamp partnership with the *Daily Inter Lake* was a great success. It was exciting to see the students' interviews published both in print and online. The library was a natural partner in supporting and facilitating the program, helping participants develop their storytelling and interviewing skills. We are grateful for the opportunity to collaborate on this project and look forward to partnering with the *Daily Inter Lake* again next year.

Sam, Tony, and I have been spending significant time reviewing our Business Continuity Plan and preparing for the transition as we recruit a new Network Administrator. A special thank you to Sam for helping position us for success during this process. We have set aside time each day to shadow Sam and document key responsibilities, procedures, and institutional knowledge. We have also met with County IT, and they have offered their support and expertise should any questions arise. Thanks to this planning and preparation, I am confident that we are well positioned to maintain reliable technology services throughout the transition.

TRAFFIC COUNTS- AUG 2026
Kalispell- 12,194
Columbia Falls- 4,437
Bigfork- 2,212

TRAFFIC COUNTS- AUG 2025
Kalispell- 11,702
Columbia Falls- 4,719
Bigfork- 2,128

HEAD LIBRARIAN
TONY EDMUNDSON
SEPTEMBER 2026

We are working with Flathead Industries to bring in a staff in their Work Experiences program. They will help us out with janitorial duties at the Kalispell Library for one or two hours a week. This is a terrific opportunity for both the library and their staff, as we can always use help maintaining clean and friendly spaces and they will learn valuable skills for future work endeavors.

We have a half a dozen interviews scheduled for various open positions, and work is underway to prepare for the Systems Administrator position opening. Our hiring committees are working to prepare for these potential hires and prepare them for onboarding. The leadership team has put in magnificent work over the last couple of years in updating our onboarding procedures and creating helpful templates for the various position responsibilities associated with each job. This makes for a smoother hiring process, where we can make sure we are consistent in our training plans and getting folks up to speed and ready for their days as quickly as possible.

On Thursday, September 17th, The Friends of the Library set up for their annual book sale. This event raises thousands of dollars every year to support library programs and events. The Friends spent hours over the last year accepting, sorting, and storing donated materials, and on this day, brought all of that out of storage and moved it out to the Kalispell Center Mall in preparation for the sale. We have a heartfelt appreciation for all our Friends do for us, and a special shoutout to the crew from Western Building Center (WBC) who show up every year with lots of strong hands and a giant trailer. It truly takes a team to put on this sale.

SYSTEMS ADMINSTRATOR
SAM CROMPTON
SEPTEMBER 2026

Expanded critical FCLFS Server warranty/support through Dell until Nov 6, 2028. This is the primary hardware forming the operational backbone of staff network security, storage/file sharing and DNS service. In case of an outage this hardware would need to be brought back into production quickly and having vendor-backed support helps minimize any downtime. Maintaining an active manufacturer warranty ensures immediate availability of legitimate, tested firmware updates, security patches and next day hardware replacement as necessary.

A new self-check station is installed at Marion school. It consists of an updated computer with Windows 11, reuse of an existing touch screen that's size appropriate and an existing receipt printer with a barcode scanner. Only hardware/software cost was for a $300 refurbished computer. This compact and efficient station will provide Marion's 1,100 residents with the convenience of picking up holds and returning items locally at their grade school.

All public computer stations have been adjusted to provide the new print cost for B&W prints, as well wireless patron connections are notified of the change to $0.15 each side.

Configured a laptop for patron use to complete the survey associated with the new library building initiative.

Renewed our eleven Mobile Beacon hotspots for continued circulation during the next twelve-month period.

Have ordered a new color printer for public use in Kalispell to replace our previous model, which was 15 years old and struggled with large document jobs, ship date TBD. The new device will be integrated into the HP Managed Print Service, meaning library staff will no longer need to handle toner replacements. Additionally, our per-page printing cost will drop from **$0.19 to $0.10**. Although patrons mostly print in black and white, the substantial increase in speed and convenience can be expected to boost overall usage moving forward.

Negotiated and ordered a speed upgrade to our existing internet service for the public network in Kalispell. The current internet speed on the upload side of 5Mbps is out-of-date. The speed change for the new circuit will be going from 60/5Mbps to 100/20Mbps. I'm happy to report Spectrums pricing agreed to is lower than the current monthly service price. Spectrum has always provided very reliable service with equally good support at all three locations when needed. Install date TBD.

COMMUNICATION LIBRARIAN
LUNE AXELSEN
SEPTEMBER 2026

Fall is in the air and that means new fall programming and new art exhibits at the library. This past month the Communications Team has been rolling out new library programs for all ages to the public. One of the biggest changes this season is the new roster of Teen Programming. We've been working on getting the word out about these new offerings, including sending out a press release, creating flyers and handouts for each library location, posting them on various online calendars throughout the valley, making social posts, sending out an email newsletter, talking about them on KGEZ Radio, as well as updating our website. It seems to be paying off because most programs have been well attended, which is remarkable for a new school year when numbers are typically low.

In addition to marketing our programs and services, the Communications Team has been working on creating interest in the library through creative social media posts. Our regular series like History Friday and Montana Mondays continue to be hugely popular with our online audience, especially Facebook where we've grown our audience to 10.3K followers. We introduced a Librarian Book Recommendation series last spring using our blog. Deidre offers her monthly To-Be-Read list for book enthusiasts to get ideas for new reads. Being consistent is the key to growing an audience, so we will continue to post and see how patrons interact with this information. Morgan has been creating library posts that promote library services and literacy in a fun and playful way, such as "Last Current, Next," a series featuring what library staff has been reading lately. All of these posts have been popular and hit the mark of reaching a broader library audience while drawing them into the library through reading.

I've also been promoting the Capital Campaign Survey and created a new Capital Campaign webpage on our website. We've almost hit our goal of 200 surveys completed! Some upcoming projects include drafting designs for the new Smart Lockers for the PR committee consideration, updating the About Us page on our website, and creating a new Communications Plan.

Fall Art Exhibits: Kalispell: Mary Knotts, Columbia Falls: Sierra Wardjamin, Bigfork: Jeanette Rehahn

Social Media Snap Shot
Social Media Stats:

- **Facebook:**
  - 204 New Followers this period (2% increase in the last 28 days)
- **Facebook Views:**
  - 400K views this period (17% increase in the last 28 days)
- **Facebook Reach:**
  - 377K accounts reached this period (60% increase in the last 28 days)
- **Instagram Followers:**
  - 35 new followers this period (1% increase in the last 28 days)
- **Instagram Stories Reach:**
  - 3,187 accounts reached this period (5% increase in the last 28 days)
- **Website top 5 viewed pages in the last 28 days:**
  - **Kids, Teens, Events for Sept, Request an Item, Locations and h**

COLLECTION SERVICES LIBRARIAN
KAT WILSON
SEPTEMBER 2026

August 2026 Circulation Statistics

	August 2026	August 2025	August 2024	August 2023
Juvenile	19005	18165	19090	18853
Young Adult	1133	1273	1554	1434
Adult	12261	12218	13478	14221
Overdrive ebooks	4200	4309	4555	4609
Overdrive audiobooks	9152	8200	7539	6995
Overdrive magazines	2186	2222	1130	469
Total	47937	46387	47346	46581
ILLs Borrowed	61	48	65	64
ILLs Loaned	48	44	28	37
Outgoing Partners Crates	293	311	314	291
Incoming Partners Crates	318	293	286	298

Lakeside and Marion FY27 Circulation Statistics

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Lakeside	149	232										
Marion	N/A*	N/A*										N/A*

*Marion closed first week of June through August.

CHILDRENS LIBRARIAN
BECCA JOHNSON
SEPTEMBER 2026

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Fall programs are up and running! We made a few adjustments to our Storytime schedule and so far, they appear to be positive changes. In Kalispell, we are offering Storytime on Tue, Wed, and Thursday instead of Mon-Wed. Across locations, we also changed our program time to 10:30 instead of 11:00. This earlier start time makes it a little easier for families to get home for lunch and naptime. It has also been really helpful for staff to get activities cleaned up by noon so we are ready for visiting school groups.

EARLY LITERACY STORYTIME (0-5 YEARS)

Overall, we are really pleased with attendance at all of our locations. Families have given us positive feedback about the time change! This time of year always brings in a new crowd of regular attendees and we enjoy seeing new faces. It's also fun to see some of our younger babies and toddlers "graduate" to the next age level program.

SEPTEMBER ATTENDANCE 9/1-9/17

KALISPELL – 292 (9 programs) / Sensory Play Saturday - 62
COLUMBIA FALLS – 112 (8 programs) / Sensory Play Saturday - 37
BIGFORK – 119 (8 programs)

KIDS WORKSHOPS/SCHOOL VISITS (6-12 YEARS)

Wednesday Workshops started off strong especially in Columbia Falls! The Kalispell SD5 early out schedule just started so we anticipate that attendance will continue to grow once that routine is established. We are continuing to look for opportunities to promote this program in Bigfork.

SEPTEMBER ATTENDANCE 9/1-9/17

KALISPELL: 45 (3 programs)
COLUMBIA FALLS: 71 (3 programs)
BIGFORK: 18 (3 programs)

OUTREACH

DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

With Dolly Parton's passing the Imagination Library program has been getting a lot of attention. We have seen an increase in child registrations and inquiries in general. The Dollywood Foundation announced that Sept. 25th will be "Give Like Dolly Day" a new tradition internationally as a way to carry forward Dolly's legacy of generosity and belief in giving back, especially to children. We are excited to take part in this day by partnering with the Treasure State Foundation and Bee Broadcasting, who will host a radiothon on 9-25. The radiothon will encourage people to give to the Flathead Valley's Imagination Library. Here at the library, we will welcome families to join us in a Dolly Storytime that will include a read aloud of "Dolly Parton's Billy the Kid Makes it Big" and activities.

IMAGINATION LIBRARY STATISTICS

Active enrollment: 3,160
Number of children who have graduated: 1,603

TEEN SERVICES LIBRARIAN
JACKIE CARLL
SEPTEMBER 2026

AUGUST STATS:

Here is a recap of our summer programing:

LEGO Masters Workshop: *16 (Kal)*
Buttered Noodles Workshop: *3 (BF),*
Mini Brands at Home Workshop: *13 (Kal)*
Glowing Coral Reef Pasta Workshop: *9 (Kal), 7 (CF)*
Robotic Jellyfish Lamp Workshop: *18 (Kal)*
Teen After-Hours End of Summer Party: *40 (Kal)*
Scene- *Amigurumi Dragons* (All locations)
Gem Wall Theme: *Which Activities will you do at the Fair?*

TEEN UPDATES

SUMMER READING EXPERIENCE WORKSHOPS

During August, teens continued to come in and participate in our summer workshops as well as read and connect in the teen zone and play with others on the Switch. We noticed that rainy days brought more people into the library, including our teens. We ended strong with our End of Summer Party, which tells me switching the days paid off for us. (I plan to share more in our upcoming October summer debrief.)

END OF SUMMER BREAK

Our department had a two-week program break after summer workshops to tidy up, reorganize the teen storage, and get ready for our continuing and *new* fall programming.

ADULT PROGRAMMING LIBRARIAN
BIGFORK BRANCH MANAGER
DEIDRE MCMULLIN
SEPTEMBER 2026

Bigfork Branch Manager
We recently completed some long-awaited fixes at the Bigfork library, including replacing the bathroom faucets to a non-automatic version. The old faucets often splashed water onto the counters while providing limited flow. We also replaced the last of our pendant lights replaced, which we have been trying to get that fixed for at least a year or more.

The Eagle Scout landscaping project at the front of the library is nearing completion. As an added bonus, the company working on the Sportsman's Bridge repair has offered to donate several large boulders to enhance the final design.

Our Bigfork Youth Services team has been busy planning upcoming programs and sharing information about library services throughout the community. This month, all three kindergarten classes from Bigfork Elementary will visit the library to receive library cards and explore our spaces. These visits are a valuable introduction to the library and often help connect new families with our services and programs.

Adult Programming Librarian
The Reading Road Trip challenge continues to gain momentum. Patrons who have completed the challenge by reading one book from each region have started collecting their tote bag prizes. The Reading Road Trip T-shirt, awarded to participants who read one book from every state, is available but so far no one has completed that challenge. We are holding off on selling T-shirts until participants have had an opportunity to earn them through the challenge. We are also creating a series of readers' advisory bookmarks featuring recommended titles from each region.

The Bigfork Craft Café continues in September, with supplies available for both needle felting and watercolor painting. September will also feature a panel discussion exploring how audiobooks are created, along with a drop-in information session for anyone interested in learning more about Libby or the Talking Books Library.

COLUMBIA FALLS BRANCH MANAGER
LIZ CAMARILLO
SEPTEMBER 2026

Regular YS programs are back in session, and the season is off to a strong start. Lisa M. led her first story time program and did an excellent job engaging littles and creating a welcoming experience for families. As she settles into her new role, the coming season will provide valuable opportunities to explore new ideas and determine what programs and activities resonate most with our community. With Lisa M. on board, Liza is enjoying having extra dedicated off-desk time, which allows for planning and program development. She is already looking ahead to Harvest Fest in October and is actively preparing to make it fun.

On September 1, Julie Liang of Twice as Tasty led a pickling workshop that was a great success. The event reached its target attendance of 15 participants, exactly as planned. Attendees came prepared with thoughtful questions and were curiously engaged throughout the session. Participants left with valuable knowledge about food preservation techniques, along with a 16oz. jar of refrigerator pickles that Julie helped them prepare. The workshop provided a hands-on learning experience and equipped attendees with practical skills they can use at home. They also checked out a hefty number of cookbooks!

Our first Zone installation is now up and ready for patrons to enjoy. Embracing the spirit of the season, this fall-themed activity features dried oranges, apples, cinnamon sticks, and wooden beads that can be transformed into a decorative ornament. The Zone was thoughtfully designed to spark curiosity about fall and encourage exploration of the season's colors, textures, and traditions.

Lune provided us with a dedicated iPad for our Columbia Falls location, which will remain on-site permanently. This gives us a unique opportunity to regularly share with the community and families the many activities and experiences taking place in C-Falls. In addition to occasional social media stories, we are capturing video content throughout the week and compiling it into a weekly Reel. This allows families to get a glimpse into the engaging moments, programs, and daily experiences happening at our Columbia Falls branch.

Tony coordinated with CENTRAL to address a couple of electrical outlets that had not been installed correctly and had become recessed into their electrical boxes. A technician was able to securely remount the outlets, resolving the issue quickly and efficiently.