**JULY 2025**

**The MPL Mission**

Spark curiosity. Make connections. Thrive together.

Missoula Public Library achieves its mission by fostering community engagement, providing core services, and promoting sustainability and wellness.

* **Circulation**

**Community Engagement**

* MPL hosted two UM practicum students from July through the beginning of August. During their placement, they received training in basic public library operations, cataloging and acquisitions, outreach and branch services, youth services and programming, and library administration.

**Core Services**

* Programming Coordinator Xavier Kneedler-Shorten finalized a Library of Things display which is now available for public browsing in the Marketplace. This display provides information about unusual or non-traditional circulating items such as the telescopes.

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* **Community Engagement**

**Community Engagement**

* Grew the library’s social media presence by gaining over 250 new followers on Instagram and Facebook in July.
* Developed and introduced new merchandise for the MPL Store.
* Collaborated with the Food Bank and Families First on providing Bookmobile library service to rural and underserved communities in the county (Travois Village, Futura Park and Clinton) during Kids Eat Free lunch distribution and Clinton Food Pantry hours.
* Joined seniors for lunch at Missoula Aging Services Community Lunch in Bonner and presented information about library services for seniors.
* Attended the Arlee Celebration with library materials and a kids activity.
* Strengthened community connections by leveraging the AUOR model in Seeley Lake as part of the AUOR Roadshow program.

**Core Services**

* Successfully launched the new Library of Things (LOT) display pod, enhancing visibility and engagement.
* Designed and implemented a new informational stand for the MakerSpace, including printed handouts for each available piece of equipment.
* Rotated new books into the Bookmobile collection to increase resonance and breadth of the collection.

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* Resource Access Day (RAD) continues to grow.
* Community Engagement Specialist presented at the criminal Justice Coordinating Council Justice Initiatives Lunch & Learn.
* Community Engagement Specialist taught a Mental Health First Aid Class.

* **Reference**

**Community Engagement**

* We are continuing to archive local digital-born news websites through our partnership with Community Webs
* MPL Policy Manual language has been updated – shorter and directed towards the general public
* Barbara Theroux is using the MPL archives to prepare for a MOLLI session about the history of MPL
* Weeded older brochures about St. Patrick Hospital and donating to their Learning Center’s archives

**Core Services**

* Finished weeding adult Fiction collection; shifting will start soon
* *The Dog Days of Summe*r book display featuring the dogs of MPL & Partner staff on special bookmarks, is popular
* Vital Records Index is down and Allen is gradually working to bring it back up
* Videogame lending will launch soon
* Helping people has been especially rewarding and interesting. Summertime brings in visitors from out of town as well as Missoulians who are doing both genealogy and local history research (businesses, buildings, prominent citizens, events). The *Ancestry database* and *newspapers.com* are a winning combination to use in answering their questions. For example, *Ancestry* provided family history and military records to learn when a well-known Missoulian enlisted & died in WWI. Articles from around the country found on *newspapers.com* filled in the story of his life and how he was killed. For another patron, *newspapers.com* helped to establish a timeline when tracking a relative’s 1880-era movement & career in western Montana. The advertisements for his Missoula business were a bonus of information (and fun to see too). Census records found in *Ancestry* and books in our Montana Room added details.

**Sustainability and Wellness**

* Assessing the 2-year-old Strategic Plan is underway
* **Youth Services**

**Community Engagement**

* Summer Learning Program events continued – Altered Books, Portrait Making, Bracelet Making, String Crafts, and our ongoing scavenger hunt and art gallery
* Regular programming continuing to be well attended: 0-3 Play Group, Read With Dogs, Story Time, Tiny Tales
* YS staff joining the Bookmobile at the Meadowlark shelter to bring Tiny Tales to the kids there
* Partnered with Montana PBS to bring Buddy the Dinosaur and dinosaur-themed activities to the library! 180+ attendees in 2 hours

**Core Services**

* Ongoing project to go through all of our STEM, toy, and story time kits to make sure the catalog records match what is in each kit, missing or worn-out items are replaced, and the binder accurately reflects what is in each kit

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* Tiny Tales in the Park (Westside Park) providing kids and families an active outdoor activity this summer
* Continuing to provide free lunches this summer to kids, thanks to the Missoula Food Bank
* **Branches**

**Community Engagement**

* **Big Sky**
  + Slight uptick in patrons, a few more coming to Tuesday kids arts & crafts but still not as popular as last year. Those that did come had fun making casts, making slime, and painting rocks. Had a nice surge in interest in Wednesday programming, both D&D and Writers’ Group. A father and son came in to learn the game near the beginning of the month and after that the son also joined the online Teen D&D Guild. A pair of younger sisters have also come three times now and started bringing friends. The two people who showed interest in the Writers’ Group both brought some friends and coworkers, and we also had a Creative Writing graduate from the university who came in to get some feedback on her first novel. A few patrons took advantage of Thursdays Tech Time and 3D printing open hours as well.
* **Frenchtown**
  + Story time now includes one of the local daycares and others from the community. Arts and crafts are done with parent and child after story time. Legos are out and parents busy themselves with a jigsaw puzzle while their children continue to play.
  + Book Club met in July to discuss Becoming Little Shell by Chris La Tray. Those attending noted that it was hard to get into but once they were in they enjoyed the information and the familiarity of the area.
* **Lolo**
  + Storytimes and Crafternoons continue throught the summer.
* **Potomac**
  + SpectrUM came by to do their Be a Health Scientist program – it was very successful!
  + Kids are turning in their reading logs to get their prizes
* **Seeley Lake** 
  + AUOR Road Show – This event on July 2nd was fantastic! I am so thankful for how the AUOR folks reach out to the branches. The community benefits so greatly by having access to fun educational activities we otherwise wouldn’t have.
  + The Bookmobile has continued throughout the summer, parking monthly on a Saturday from noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Ice Cream Place and 1-2 p.m. at Cory’s Valley Market.
* **Swan Valley**
  + We have a total of 35 kids who signed up for summer reading. Three have already filled up one whole sheet that means they have read 1800 minutes.
  + Story time is going well this summer. We have been having record attendance this year. It gets a bit hectic at story time with so many people in such a small space, but it’s fun to see enthusiastic readers.
  + We had 13 kids come for the Spectrum event. Having it be in place of story time really helped increase the participation.

**Core Services**

* **Big Sky**
  + Offering interesting and entertaining library programming is one of our core services, and we’re doing our best to maintain that in the future.
* **Frenchtown**
  + Continue to cover all types of books for MPL.
* **Lolo**
  + K-Readiness Program began on July 30th. There are three sessions of approximately 10 kids each on Wednesday mornings. This program will run for two more consecutive Wednesdays in August. During these sessions, I introduce students entering kindergarten in the fall to the library. Activies and stories relating to the library are provided by MPL staff.
  + Large air purifier and smaller purifier along with informational handouts from Climate Smart Missoula are now located at the Lolo Branch. This will provide a clean air facility for those needing a reprieve from wildfire smoke.
  + Story time each week and a crafternoon session are available to children during public hours.
  + Children are beginning to return their reading logs for prizes.
  + Cataloging and processing new items for the Lolo school collection.
* **Potomac**
  + Continuing to bring in new-to-the-branch books from the MPL adult collection
  + Processed a box of donations and added several books to the school collection; the rest were added to the Little Free Library or used as summer reading prizes
* **Seeley Lake**
  + Active book club with dynamic participants—continues through the summer.
  + I’ve changed the “After School Book Club” name to “Student Reading Group.” This group of teens continues to meet every Wednesday afternoon. I read to them from a book of their choosing while they color, draw, and have snacks. This summer they are also working on a “Color Our World” table-length coloring sheet. We’ll finish up the current book in August and take a break until school starts back up.
* **Swan Valley**
  + We continue to be a good resource for visitors to the Swan Valley to connect with WIFI. Many days people will be sitting in the parking lot even when we are not open using the WIFI.
  + Our Book Chat book for July was Borrowed Time by Steve Lamar. Steve is a local community member and adventure seeker who has written a book about his adventures. We had a few additional participants and enjoyed listening to him speak about his endeavors.
  + Notary services continue to bring community members who have never entered the library in for a visit. In the month of July we had 12 notary visits.

**Sustainability and Wellness**

* **Big Sky**
  + Gave away dozens of free summer meals from the food bank to kids coming to Tuesdays Arts & Crafts programming. Took a vacation and had the branch covered by Carolyn Kamrud and Elizabeth Lofts.
* **Frenchtown**
  + During the summer, we partnered with Missoula Food Bank to provide lunches for those 18 and under. It is served from 12 to 1 on the three days that we are open. We are a Grab and Go site, which means we are all outside, in the driveway in front of the high school. Some never get out of their cars while others have a picnic with games and adult conversation since the kids are busy.
  + In July, the Missoula Food Bank provided 30 meals per day (3 days each week). Lunches served in July – 424 students. Adults accompanying - 100
* **Lolo**
  + Climate Smart’s Clean air facility at the Lolo branch.
* **Seeley Lake**
  + Phase 3 of Climate Smart’s clean air program has been implemented. I put out the “Clean Air Center” signage every open day.
  + There are plans for the Climate Smart folks to come up in August to share information and resources with the community.
* **Swan Valley**
  + We got a grant from the Early literacy grant that will be used to purchase more supplies for the summer reading program.