**AUGUST 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**

* Elizabeth Jonkel and Laura Cote attended the Pacific Northwest Library Association virtual conference held between August 7-9. Although PNLA is typically a vibrant and dynamic event, the online offering had mixed success due to technical difficulties and planning. Conference reports were written highlighting useful sessions.
* Alex Johnson attended the International Symposium for Academic Makerspaces at UC Berkeley from August 6-8. Alex composed a report highlighting useful sessions and experiences learning about Makerspaces, services, and training methodologies.
* MPL assisted Humanities MT with their launch of One Book Montana and securing distributable e-books of the selected title *Becoming Little Shell.*

**Core Services**

* The new courier, Peaks, launched a shipment tracking system of materials transiting between the partner sharing group libraries on August 18th. MPL was in the first cohort of five to begin use of online shipping order. A work station was set up in the loading bay for easy access. This change reduces touch steps in item management, permits crate tracking, and streamlines reports and invoicing. MPL may be asked to contribute financially to adhesive envelopes for packing slips. Staff are optimistic and generally positive about the new tracking system.
* The state of Montana launched Montana Mobile IDs allowing Montanans to carry digital versions of state drivers’ licenses. They can only be used at places choosing to participate with the Montana Mobile ID Verifier App. MPL should consider how policy might address this new development in ID verification.
* MPL began circulate Nintendo Switch Games. There will be a display pod in the Market showing which games are available. They check out for two weeks and their replacement cost is $60.

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* **Community Engagement**

**Community Engagement**

* Indigipolooza – collectively almost 60,000 views on the videos we shared. About 1,100 seats were filled throughout the whole weekend, for poetry and language conversations that is great attendance. We introduced a lot of people to indigenous poetry and literature. The presenters felt it was one of the best events they had ever participated in, and it was wonderful to connect with other presenters. We introduced the library to a lot of new visitors through an event that was showcasing indigenous culture in a welcoming environment. Gained 114 followers on IG just from the Supaman post.
* We have been cross sharing posts from the Bookmobile & RAD social media and also doing some cross sharing with community partners to help us reach more people.
* Brainfuse – Staff created a successful promotion video for Brainfuse. It has received positive feedback and engagement on social media. We have had 116 clicks on the link.
* DNA Playground launch: PR did a press release and it was really well attended. Mayor Davis and Commissioner Strohmaier attended and gave a speech. Many kids enjoyed the area after the launch.
* In August the Bookmobile did special trips to Seeley Lake and a Paddleheads game.
* The Bookmobile Stop at Meadowlark stop is picking up and is exploring more ways to engage the residents.
* Staff are pulling donation books for giveaways on the Bookmobile. This gives kids who visit the Bookmobile without parents and who don’t have a library card an opportunity to participate in library. They are still able to pick out a book and take it with them.
* On Aug 19th staff did a library tour with a group from Missoula Works, focusing on library services and what the library offers.
* Staff gave a tour to University of Montana incoming students participating in the Big Sky Experience. After the tour they participated in an information literacy escape room activity and signed up for library cards. Another group of students with the same group had interviews with two library staff members about library careers.
* We began collaborating with the group who does Death Café, making it a library sponsored program. The group has grown a lot and outgrew the space. They will move to the Cooper Room.
* SLP ended and was a successful year. Adult engagement was strong. The fair pass prize really seems to encourage kids to read.
* Spice Club has consistently been the most popular program post on social media each month.
* The Bookmobile attended the Food Bank Back to School Bash where we signed up 7 people for library cards. We interacted with over 60 youth and made lots of bookmarks.
* Social work team connected with Missoula Aging Services to locate personal hygiene items for patrons, and with the HOT Team to assist a patron with a new MT ID and employment assistance. Missoula Food Bank and Open Aid Alliance were also contacted to inform them of new sw position and inquire about personal hygiene items per MAS suggestion and clothing closets, respectively.
* SW team assisted a senior in a Great Falls housing search, and again later in the week with a U-Haul rental.
* SW team assisted a senior with no email or smartphone capabilities in uploading workman’s compensation documents – patron was responsible for USPS finally paying WC after taking her case to the US Supreme Court!
* Liam and Virginia attended Youth Mental Health First Aid
* Social work team reached out to the International Rescue Committee to let them know a social worker was on staff and available to help with LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance) applications.
* Updated Whole Person Librarianship with new information regarding social work at MPL and added services to the Aging and Disability Resource Centers website per suggestion from MAS.

**Core Services**

* The new form for submitting programs this second go around has worked great. Staff created the form and then created a macro to format it in a way that make it easier to digest.
* This past month, the Bookmobile signed up a new Home Library Service patron for a library card who is 102!
* On Aug 31 we held a College Application 101 workshop geared towards teens and teen’s parents
* A University of Montana intern is starting at the library at the end of August. This is a collaboration between MPL and Mansfield Library to give a student experience in the public library field.

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* End of summer RAD celebrated it’s 1 year RADaversary. A cake was provided to celebrate the occasion. 130 participants which is our largest RAD attendance yet.
* We wrapped up our summer collaboration with the Bookmobile, Foodbank & Families First at Kids Eat Free open meal sites. It felt like a meaningful collaboration and allowed the Bookmobile introductions to families in different areas of town. The Bookmobile will continue to go to the Clinton Food Distribution site during the school year.
* Social Work Practicums started their semester at the library at the end of August.

* **Reference**

**Community Engagement**

* Acting as site mentor for the capstone project of an OT doctorate student who is working with Memory Cafe participants and conducting her own program for dementia care-will have resources to share at the end of her project
* Rewrote volunteer duties to better express expectations as well as to add more tasks such as book shelving.
* Collected staff cat photos for “Septem-Purr” book display and made bookmarks of cats for patrons to take for the Sept. Display pod. This is a follow-up to the Dog Days of Summer display and both have been popular with both patrons and staff.

**Core Services**

* Weeded the 000 section of adult nonfiction.
* Obtained more book holders for facing out books in the stacks for better display/marketing/browsability
* Utilized artificial intelligence to quickly and efficiently add thousands of death records to the vital records index.
* Launched a new circulating collection of Nintendo Switch games with funds moved from music CDs and the Friends of the Library.
* Shifting Fiction has been completed and the collection is much better distributed on shelves.
* Added “Becoming Littleshell” Bookchat kit, ordered “Remarkably Bright Creatures” kit.
* Continued interest in Genealogy and family history at the MTR. One highlight was a patron whose great-grandfather was mayor of Missoula for two years. Patron was looking for info about why he wasn’t re-elected and had family gossip to share. It was a fun research project.
* Heritage Quest stats are finally available for June-Aug and the usage is updated for those months.

**Sustainability and Wellness**

* Met the new American Red Cross Accounts Manager for blood drives who is based in Bozeman.
* Received training on Johnson Controls, the building mechanical control system, and helped diagnose fan problems.
* Spearheaded a preliminary assessment of the Strategic Plan. Work continues on a final assessment and an update to the goals.
* **Youth Services**

**Community Engagement**

* Wrapped up 2025 Summer Learning with 2 very successful events – Hero Cape Making and the End of Summer Celebration at Kiwanis Park. Both events had 70+ attendees
* Regular programming (Read with Dogs, Game On!, Infant Playgroup, Middle School and YA Writers groups, Tiny Tales, and Story Time) continues to bring in many attendees
* Special story times (Sensory and Diverse Abilities) have a steady stream of regular attendees. Special thanks to the Foundation for helping to support these story times!
* Across MPL and its branches, around 2,000 reading logs were handed out this summer.
  + About 300 logs were completed and returned to MPL

**Core Services**

* Ongoing project to review, update, fix/replace all our STEM, Story Time, and Toy kits
  + Includes updating inventory list on the bins and in the catalog and updating the Toy/Kit binder

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* **Branches**

**Community Engagement**

* **Big Sky**
  + Continued interest in Writers’ Group and D&D during the end of the summer, not so much for the Arts & Crafts.
* **Frenchtown**
  + My favorite month our here. Busy with lots of kids for story time and crafts, continuing to serve lunches before the quietness of Academic schedule
  + Over 30 reading charts were given out. Twenty-five first, second, and third, rewards were given out. Thanks to Town Pump for their generosity.
  + Story Time was attended by more kids this month. A local day care came regularly.
  + Some of the kids did activities before story time and others stayed for crafts and lunch.
  + Spectrum did a human body presentation. Not as many came as we have had in the past. Maybe fewer due to the time in mid-August. Interesting info was provided. Love the hands-on work.
* **Lolo**
  + Storytimes & Crafternoons continued.
  + Kindergarten Readiness Program (Library orientation)
  + Clean Air Location
  + Children have completed the summer reading program and were awarded prizes. There were approximately 40 children that were given summer reading logs and stickers.
* **Potomac**
  + Not a lot of opportunities for engagement in August – most kids are busy with their show animals for the fair
  + Maintaining items in the Little Free Library
* **Seeley Lake** 
  + Summer Reading Program concluded with decent engagement. 31 kids registered - prizes awarded: $75 gift certificate for Route 83 Coffee & Pizza; $50 gift certificate for The Filling Station; telescope (donated); hand-made blanket (donated)
  + New Freshman—library tour (planning for September)
* **Swan Valley**
  + We have a total of 35 kids who signed up for summer reading. 28 of them read at least 150 minutes. We gave out $730 in cash prizes at the end of the summer. The total minutes read was just over 30,000.
  + Story time went well this summer. We had 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 will continue story time throughout the school year but move it to the first and 3rd Fridays of the month because the elementary school is on a 4 day week and Friday is their day off.
  + A local community organisation called SMAART is once again collaborating with us to facilitate a “baby sitting club” that will meet on Fridays for 6 weeks and lead a couple of our story times.

**Core Services**

* **Big Sky**
  + Made the transition to the academic year smoothly. Hours updated and some new students are already getting library cards.
* **Frenchtown**
  + Book Club met in August to discuss Framed: Astonishing true stories of wrongful convictions by Grisham and McCloskey. Ten attended. Intriguing discussions not only about the book but what has happened in the courts to some of them.
  + Completed three new library cards this month.
  + Continue to cover all types of books for MPL.
* **Lolo**
  + K-Readiness Program began on July 30th and continued into August. There were two sessions on two consecutive Wednesdays in August. I worked with three groups each session and had 30 kindergarteners each session. During these sessions, I helped students practice using shelf markers. I also gave them tours of the library "where to find books just right for them." Last, I read the students a story about libraries.
  + I continue to see a few children and parents during the August crafternoons and story times.
  + 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
  + Pulled items that were in need of replacement or easy repair
* **Seeley Lake**
  + Active book club with dynamic participants
  + Student reading group going strong (had returning graduates in the summer participate)
* **Swan Valley**
  + Our Book Chat book for August was Hanna’s daughters by Marianne Fredriksson. We had only a handful of participants even though lots of people read the book. Summer seems to be a busy time of travel and other distractions.
  + Notary services continue to bring community members who have never entered the library in for a visit. In the month of August we had 12 notary visits.

**Sustainability and Wellness**

* **Big Sky**
  + Ran air filter in the library to combat wildfire smoke.
* **Frenchtown**
  + Missoula Food Bank provided 30 meals per day (3 days each week). Lunches served in August – 239 students. Adults accompanying - 80.
* **Lolo**
  + The placement of a 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. Air quality is monitored with a purple device.
  + Repository of USDA Environmental Impact Statements.
* **Seeley Lake**
  + We are a “Clean Air Center”
  + Climate Smart & Missoula County HD did a fun DIY box fan air filter activity for wildfire smoke readiness
* **Swan Valley**
  + Our new door is being manufactured by a local craftsman and should be in place within the next few months.