**December 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**

* All new card registrants who provide an email address now receive a welcome email from MPL.

**Core Services**

* The space previously used by Facilities in the 1st floor hallway has been repurposed as a storage area for Cataloging and staging area for donation sorting by FOL volunteers. This is a marked improvement as Cataloging did not have any dedicated storage area prior to this. Donations are now in a controlled space that is more efficient and convenient. Facilities relocated to the garage hallway, by the tool room, where donations were previously held.
* All staff participated in a building wide shelf reading project. All collection areas were reviewed for accuracy and damaged items were pulled for repurchase or discard.
* Employee Elizabeth Lofts assumed the 20-hour Library Assistant 2 position vacated by David Culhane. Former employee Emily Walter joined the Circulation team as a short-term employee, assisting with the 16-hour coverage gap resulting from Elizabeth Loft’s schedule change.
* Kris Goss who presented on the ethics and legalities of patron library record confidentiality in Montana. Highlights of his presentation include:
  + Specifics of the Montana Constitution, which enshrines the right to an educational potential for each person in Montana.
  + How access to information is a part of all people's right to the freedom of speech
  + That Montana's right to privacy extends to all persons of any age
  + Kris also discussed how the MT Parental Engagement Law, adopted in the last few years, creates an emerging area of debate on how to balance the right of the parent with a person of any age's right to privacy. He provided food for thought on the ethical obligations of public employees, which includes public library employees.

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* A power outage on December 11 resulted in a non-emergency evacuation of the library. Staff managed the event professionally and efficiently. The outage provided learning opportunities for improving future emergency responses.

**Community Engagement**

**Community Engagement**

* Bookmobile made 29 stops around the county to serve priority communities
* The Bookmobile served 369 patrons, checked out 392 items, and answered 418 questions
* The Bookmobile worked with United Way to help with their outreach and recruitment /Parent Leadership Training Institute (representatives from United Way joined for three bookmobile stops)
* Invited a group from Soft Landing to teach people about Ramadan and offer seasonal activities for folks during the All Under One Roof Winter Celebration event.
* Held Missoula on Main at the library, a program sharing culture and art with the Missoula community via a cross-section of talent from Missoula.
* Collaborative promotion with partners has significantly expanded the library’s reach and visibility. Announcements for the spectrUM Discovery Area and NASA’s Telescope Library program generated more than 25,000 total engagements across social media platforms and resulted in 42 new Instagram followers from a single post.
* Additional promotion of the Green Roof Grant reached more than 21,000 engagements, demonstrating strong public interest in sustainability focused initiatives.
* The Missoula on Main New Year’s Eve event at the library generated 9,416 engagements, highlighting the value of cross-promotion and the library’s role as a central community gathering space.

**Core Services**

* With the help of the cataloging department, added dozens of new books to the bookmobile collection, with particular focus on children's/middle grade graphic novels (our most requested category)
* Staff from several different departments (youth services, reference, safety, social work) joined for bookmobile stops aligned with their interests
* The Community Engagement team held a two-day retreat to discuss the work of 2025 and look ahead to 2026, thereby developing and strengthening internal communications and information sharing.
* In December, the announcement of the 2026 Missoula Reads Reading Challenge resulted in more than 200 patrons visiting the library to pick up participation logs within days of the announcement, requiring an additional 150 logs to be ordered within four days to meet demand.
* Coverage of the Bookmobile at Animeals on KPAX’s Positively Montana segment increased awareness of library outreach services and resulted in 47 new Instagram followers and 37 new Facebook followers.

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* In the month of December, the social work team facilitated 4 families with children into permanent housing and assisted 4 folks in relocating to stable housing outside of Missoula. We worked with 47 unique individuals and had over 130 contacts for the month. Additionally, two clients were able to get Medicaid, and another patron is close to being back on SSI.
* Collaborated with Climate Smart Missoula for a DIY Sustainable Gift Making program, using reused materials to make gifts and talk to participants about healthy holiday practices.
* Operational efficiencies also continue to support long-term sustainability. The implementation of the single page program guide has resulted in approximately $8,000 in cost savings in 2025, reflecting improved resource use while maintaining effective communication with the public.

**Reference**

**Community Engagement**

**Core Services**

**Sustainability and Wellness**

**Youth Services**

**Community Engagement**

* Regular programming continues with steady attendance: Read With Dogs, Game On!, Tiny Tales and Story Times, Infant Play Group, Teen Tuesdays, and Teen Library Community
* We had several successful holiday programs with high turnout: Story Time with Santa, Cookies and Crafts with Santa, Gingerbread House Making with Teen Library Community, and Missoula on Main
* Dana continues reading stories for Pea Green Boat radio show twice a month
* 5th Grade Tours wrapped up this month; overall they went well, and most of the classes were very engaged with staff

**Core Services**

* As part of the library-wide shelf-reading project, we were able to shelf-read and tidy up all sections in YS

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* Using most discarded books for use during Altered Books program in the summer
* Working with adolescent mental health floor at St. Pat’s to provide books for youth (donated and discarded materials). Feedback so far from youth and staff has been very positive, and the hope is to provide books quarterly, and fulfill wish list items as we are able

**Branches**

**Community Engagement**

* **Big Sky**
  + More engagement this month. More students staying after school and more patrons coming in during basketball games to read and use the computers. Lots of patrons 3D printing, mostly making gifts for the holidays. Several regulars needing help during Thursday Tech Time.
* **Lolo**
  + Slow down in visits from patrons likely due to library reduction in hours. There were many patrons who expressed their displeasure and difficulty getting to the library one time only during limited hours to pick up their holds.
  + Hours will be returning to 4-8pm Mon-Thurs on January 20.
* **Potomac**
  + Another well-attended book club meeting
  + Saturday hours started again this month. Hosted a holiday story time and craft program
* **Seeley Lake** 
  + Posting library updates in local paper
  + Helping WIC with fliers
  + Getting some requests about people using our space (Baha’i group; Girl Scouts)
* **Swan Valley**
  + The Swan Valley Library has been giving books to all the elementary students in the valley for the past few years. We are once again gearing up to pass them out. Books have been acquired and matched up with students. They will be wrapped by the book chat members at our December book chat.
  + Plans are being discussed for a pottery painting class in Jan or Feb.

**Core Services**

* **Big Sky**
  + Began ordering books from Ingram now that Baker & Taylor is closed. Caroline Campbell provided instruction on using their similar system.
* **Lolo**
  + Giving patrons an extra week to pick up their holds, to give them extra time during this transition phase of reduced hours.
* **Potomac**
  + Continuing to replace books that are lost or damaged
  + Going through the J collection to update spine labels with series/series # as needed
* **Seeley Lake**
  + Active book club with dynamic participants
  + After school book club going strong
  + Community puzzle available for anyone to work on
* **Swan Valley**
  + Our Book Chat book for December was Time of the Child by Naill Williams. His writing style did not appeal to most of our readers. He is very descriptive in his writing style and it was not till the middle of the book that we found out who the child was.
  + 4 notaries were performed in December.

**Sustainability and Wellness**

* **Lolo**
  + Looking forward to opening hours back up in January. Patrons will be relieved.
  + Hoping to be able to restart some of the programs we had previously. Yarns will be able to meet in the library again, and hopefully we can get the book discussion group back up.
  + Brainstorming other passive programming ideas.
* **Seeley Lake**
  + Maintaining clean air protocols during winter (continuing partnership with Amy of Climate Smart Missoula)
* **Swan Valley**
  + Our door is installed. We look forward to many years of use out of it. It ended up that it is a bit of a step up from the deck so we are looking into ordering a small ramp to make it handicap accessible.
  + We are looking into new exit signs for our doors.