



Director's Report
Richland Community Library
Board Meeting
March 18, 2026

Operations

- Patron Services - Two new hires, Jessica Barboline and Jennifer Stratman, started the week of February 23rd and are currently completing their initial three weeks of training with Desiree
- Anne is currently in the hiring process for the Technical Services Specialist position. The applicant pool is small, and candidates generally have limited experience. A significant investment of Anne's time for training the new hire will be required to ensure proper cataloging coverage.
- Attendance during the new Monday and Saturday hours continues to show an optimistic trend as community awareness increases.
 - Visitor numbers:
 - Monday, March 2, 2026 : 120
 - Monday March 9, 2026 : 137
 - Saturday, March 7, 2026 : 125 people total (22 between 1-3 PM)
 - Saturday, March 14, 2026 : 146 people total (15 between 1-3 PM)

Programming

- Adult programming continued to offer a strong mix of practical and enriching topics this month.
 - Education programs included sessions on Prepare for a Financial Disaster (a morning program), Introduction to AI, and Scam & Fraud Protection — all well-suited to community needs.
 - The Watercolor class, led by local artist Gina Stevens, was held to full attendance and was warmly received.
 - Adult Trivia is returning this month after experimenting with a new format in January and February. Regular attendees are eager to welcome it back in its original form.
 - Book Clubs continue to draw steady, reliable attendance. The RCL Book Club, Romance Club, and Cookbook Club are each meeting regularly and maintaining engaged membership.
- Children
 - Baby Storytime has started on Mondays at 10:15 a.m. Attendance is currently modest, and we anticipate it will grow as families become more accustomed to our updated Monday schedule.

- Launching Read to a Dog program, organized by Mary in partnership with Marsha Meyer and her trained therapy dog. The first session is scheduled for Saturday, March 21, 2026. This program offers children a relaxed, supportive environment in which to practice their reading skills.
- The Lego Challenge program, held on Gull Lake early release Wednesdays, continues to fill the Children's Room with enthusiastic participants each time it takes place.
- Teen
 - Maker Mondays has also started this month. Attendance is currently on the lighter side in comparison to Erica's other programs. We remain encouraged and expect participation to build as the program becomes more established.
 - Specialty programs continue to generate significant interest among teens. Edible Fruit Arrangements, Resin Jewelry, and Paint Your Pet have all reached full registration, with wait lists for each. This is a clear sign of strong community enthusiasm for unique teen programs.
 - In early March, the library distributed 40 Teen Take-Home Final Exam Survival Kits. Each kit included a couple of snacks, encouraging quotes, stickers, and a small fidget toy. The response was immediate and all 40 kits were claimed by Thursday morning of the first week of March.
- All Ages
 - How to Make Sushi, a collaborative effort by Anna and Erica, proved so popular with pre-registration, that the program was divided into two sessions to accommodate demand. The program was held at the Presbyterian Church and welcomed a combined total of 56 attendees of all ages.
 - The Comfort Blanket Making program, offered in partnership with Gift of Life, drew 30 participants, including members of a local Girl Scout Troop. Gift of Life provided a brief presentation on organ donation and the story of their organization. Participants crafted no-sew fleece blankets to be given to families of new organ and tissue donors.
 - The Living Room Musicians performed Celtic Music on Saturday, March 14, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The event was well attended and the Celtic music filled the library with a lively, welcoming atmosphere.

Outreach

- Carrie and Mary represented the library at Literacy Night at Richland Elementary. They brought along different collections for families to explore, including STEM kits, VOX books, and phonics kits. The library was given a larger space this year, which allowed for more hands-on activities to help engage visiting families.

- Mary also visited Richland Elementary to lead storytimes and promote the library's 500 Books Before Middle School program, encouraging young readers to take on the challenge.
- Looking ahead, Library Hop kicks off in April. Anna has designed the passport for 16 participating libraries across the Southwest Michigan area. Mary and Desiree are planning a passive activity to welcome visitors to our location. Participants who visit libraries will have the opportunity to win a prize basket.

Collections

- Approximately 1,500 digital items and 6,000 physical items were borrowed last month, reflecting strong engagement with library collections.
- The library added Memory Care Kits, purchased with funds from the Libraries Transforming Communities ALA Grant. These kits are designed to support individuals living with dementia, memory loss, or cognitive impairment, as well as their caregivers. Each kit contains puzzles, games, sensory objects, books, and resources aimed at stimulating the mind and promoting cognitive and emotional well-being. Four kits are available, covering the Early, Middle, and Late Stages of Alzheimer's and Dementia, as well as a Brain Boost Kit for those looking to maintain mental sharpness. The kits have generated impressive visibility on social media, earning 15,800 views and 242 interactions including comments, shares, and likes.
- The Seed Library is undergoing a refresh under the care of Mary and Desiree, who have taken over organization and maintenance from Anne. They are currently reviewing inventory, seeking donations, and filling collection gaps. The Seed Library is expected to reopen officially by the beginning of April.

Additional Information

- A facility assessment walkthrough with TowerPinkster is scheduled for Tuesday, March 17, 2026. Anne will report back to the Board with any significant findings or updates following that visit.
- The Winter Taxes check was received following finalization of February financials. A deposit of \$641,789.88 has been made and will be reflected in the March financial report.
- Anne has completed both the New Director's Workshop and the Advanced Director's Workshop through the Library of Michigan. Completion of the full pathway is a requirement for director certification and serves as part of the qualification criteria for State Aid to Public Libraries. New directors of Class 1 through 6 libraries are required to complete the pathway within one year of their initial appointment date.

- The transition into the Director role has been an active one. Anne has been prioritizing essential responsibilities including payroll, scheduling, and working closely with the bookkeeper, while delegating former duties where possible. A significant portion of cataloging responsibilities remain with her until the Technical Services Specialist position is filled, and some of the finer details of the Director role will receive more focused attention once that hire is in place.