



Director's Report
Richland Community Library
Board Meeting
August 19, 2026

Operations

- **Local History Room:** Beginning September 2, the Local History Room will have open hours on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:00 AM–12:00 PM. During these hours, the room will be available as a shared space and will not be reserved for individual or private use.
- **Fall Newsletter:** The Fall Newsletter is now available.
- **Square Payment System:** The Square payment system is now fully implemented, allowing the Library to accept credit card payments for fees and services. To date, approximately \$500 in credit card payments have been processed, providing patrons with a more convenient payment option.
- **Expanded Hours Update:** Monday continues to show strong usage following the addition of Monday hours in March. During June and July, the Library recorded **2,230 visitors on Mondays**, averaging **248 visitors per day**. This compares to an average of 132 visitors per Monday in March and 169 in April.

The highest Monday door count was **409 visitors on June 22**, which coincided with the Summer Reading Kickoff. Even excluding that event, Monday attendance **averaged 228 visitors**, demonstrating continued growth and consistent use of the expanded hours.

Saturday Extended Hours: Usage of the Library's extended Saturday hours (1–3 PM) continued to be monitored throughout the summer. Across eight Saturdays, **430 visitors** used the Library during the additional two hours, averaging approximately **54 visitors each Saturday** between 1–3 PM.

Usage varied by week, ranging from 25 to 103 visitors during the extended hours, with the highest counts recorded on June 27 (103) and July 18 (90). These numbers continue to demonstrate consistent use of the additional Saturday hours beyond the Library's previous 1 PM closing time.

- **Staff Wellness & Morale:** Desiree has implemented several small staff wellness and morale initiatives. Staff now have access to complimentary snacks and beverages and may take a "Zen 10", a brief 10-minute break to step away and recharge when feeling overwhelmed.
- **Patron Services Professional Development:** Desiree has also reformatted professional development for the Patron Services team. Rather than completing webinars individually, staff are participating in selected webinars as a group,

allowing for greater discussion, shared learning, and understanding of the topics presented.

Programming

SUMMER

- **Adult Programs:** The Library's year-round Adult Reading Challenge currently has **152 enrolled participants**, with **29 completing the challenge** to date. During the summer, **6 adult programs** were held with **68 attendees**. The highest-attended programs were the **Fungi Nature Walk** with the Kalamazoo Conservation District and **Campfire Cocktails** with Angie Jackson.
- **Children's Summer Reading:** **410 children enrolled**, with **288 participating** and **150 completing** the Summer Reading Challenge. Children's staff offered **34 programs**, with a combined attendance of **559**.
- **Teen Summer Reading:** **155 teens enrolled**, with **122 actively participating (79%)** and **68 completing the challenge (44%)**. Teen Services offered **13 unique programs**, drawing a combined **273 attendees**.
- **Family Programs:** The Library offered **8 family programs** throughout the summer, with an impressive combined attendance of **615**.

FALL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Adult:** A wide variety of unique programming is planned for this fall, including **one-on-one tech help**, **Book Chat Café at Java Jones**, **Beyond Books presentations**, **Craft & Jam**, a **Murder Mystery Party**, **trivia**, **educational programs**, and more. **Meet Michigan Authors** will also feature three Michigan authors this fall in partnership with Rotary and the Friends of the Library.
- **Children's:** Multiple weekly **storytimes** return after Labor Day, along with a weekly **Homeschool Meet-Up**. Additional offerings include art programs, a youth book club, and monthly **Saturday Pop-Up Programs**.
- **Teen:** Regular teen favorites return this fall, including **Maker Mondays**, **Dungeons & Dragons**, **Teen Advisory Board**, and **weekly gaming**. Special programs will include an after-hours **Blood on the Clocktower** event, taste-testing programs, and a tea-themed program.
- **Patron-Led Programs:** Patron-led programming continues to be a successful and growing part of the Library's offerings, including **Bridge Club**, **Writers' Group**, **Genealogy Group**, and **Sit N' Stitch**. Even members of the **RCL Book Group** continued meeting throughout the summer, independently leading their discussions while staff-led meetings were on break. This fall also brings a new **kid-led Beyblade program**, giving younger patrons an opportunity to gather and connect over a shared interest.

Outreach

- **Social Media:** Since June 1, Library social media content has received more than **80,000 views, 1,000 interactions, and 3,100 page visits**. Top-performing posts included the Summer Reading Program announcement (with a *Jurassic Park* nod), Adult Summer Camp announcement, 4th of July Parade, former TAB member leading a program, and the End of Summer Reading post.
- **Young Explorers:** The summer Young Explorers series included visits to the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, RACC, Bow in the Clouds Preserve, and Gull Prairie Preserve. The series had strong participation throughout the summer, with **127 total attendees**.
- **HOP! Storytime & Hike:** Partnered with Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy for a **HOP! (Hike Our Preserves!) Storytime and Hike**, combining early literacy with outdoor exploration.
- **Richland Farmers Market:** Continued outreach visits to the Farmers Market with a variety of activities, including a dinosaur visit, dinosaur bone building, zine making, scavenger hunts, trivia, and promotion of the Seed Library.
- **Home Again Daycare:** Hosted regular visits from Home Again Daycare at the Library featuring storytimes, crafts, and other activities, with **80 total participants**.
- **4th of July Parade:** Three staff members represented the Library in the community parade with a decorated float and distributed candy and small prizes to parade-goers.
- **Looking Ahead to Fall:** Outreach plans currently include a **Homeschool Meet-Up** every Monday afternoon, with activity stations available in the Community Room, and a Library booth at the **Rotary Dinner in October**.

Collections

- **Physical Circulation:** Summer 2026 physical circulation reached **25,346 items**, the highest summer total in the past six years. This represents a **21% increase over 2025** and a **44% increase compared with 2021**. A total of **4,371 more items circulated than last summer**, continuing the upward trend in physical circulation seen over the past several years.
- **New Library Cards:** The Library issued **137 new library cards** this summer, also the highest total in the past six years. This represents a **29% increase over 2025** and slightly exceeds the previous high of 134 cards issued in 2023. Overall, **31 more new cards** were issued compared with last summer.

Additional Information

- **Joan Split Fund:** Recent donations made in memory of **Brant Dykehouse**, a former Library teen volunteer, were directed to the Joan Split Fund and used to purchase new makerspace carts for the Children's Area and Main Level. A small plaque will be added to the carts in Brant's memory and to recognize the support of the Joan Split Fund.
- Anne became a Gull Lake Area Rotary Member in July 2026.