

Director's Report January 2026
Respectfully Presented by Nikki Ericksen, Library Director

February Events

 Plains Library Chess Club Chess Club February 11-25	 Tea and Talk February 11-25	 Book Club January 11 @ 6:00
 Jr. Chess Tournament Feb 21-22	 Warm Up the Library	 Friends Meeting February 3 @ 6:00

Building

The building has two new accessible door units. We found that the fire exit door really wouldn't benefit from one because of the push bar so we returned it. Matt Fields felt he could repair the one that we were replacing and if so, we will be able to return a second one.

The new units were suggested by Matt and were purchased by the library on Amazon. Unfortunately, they are stiffer to open without the push-button. They also don't have the feature we were hoping for of not holding the door open when the button hasn't been pushed. Apparently, that feature is not available at the price point that these units were purchased at.

Hopefully, Matt can fix the broken one because it is a higher quality unit and has the ability to toggle off and on when the button is/isn't pushed instead of holding the door open for the extra 4 seconds of time when it's not necessary. If he cannot fix it, we will use the money from two returned units to buy one of the more expensive units just for the inner door.

Technology

The old printers were shipped off to Washington and our new printers are in place and working fine.

Staff and Volunteers

I hired two new staff members in December and they both began January 7.

Eden Marcoe is our new library tech working 16 hours per week. She is handling much of the marketing, social media, and website maintenance besides serving patrons. So far, she is lovely to work with and has the necessary skills to be successful at the job.

Angela Conley worked for the library years ago and left us because of a health scare. She was available to return to the library and I'm very happy to have her back as our library aide 12 hours a week. She is very organized and efficient. Her job includes a wide variety of supportive tasks from checking in the partner crates and wrapping new materials to designing displays and passive programming.

Programming

I am making some changes to chess club.

1. We have dropped the word club from the marketing. We got the sense that the word club gave the impression that players had to belong or even pay. New people seem more interested now that we are just calling it "Chess".
2. We have decided to limit the time children are welcome at chess to the time between 4 pm and 5:30. We want to give more serious adult players a chance to have that experience as well. I also want to limit the amount of time staff are spending monitoring behavior.
3. I will talk to parents of children who are poorly behaved and let them know that they will need to accompany their children to chess in the future.

Chess has been doing great with about a dozen players at each event and players are getting excited about the upcoming tournaments in February and March.

The Chess Tournament will be March 21. Prizes will be \$100 cash, handmade resin chess board and pieces, and a Plains Library Chess Club ballcap.

The Junior Chess tournament will be February 21. Prizes will be a Harry Potter chess set, a digital handheld chess game, and a Plains Library Chess Logo T shirt.

Fundraising

Our second Warm Up the Library fundraiser will run from January 27 to March 10. Last year we raised almost \$4,000. This year, donations can be made via credit card and we even have a QR code to add to our marketing materials. We mailed out 220 letters to local residents. While we don't seek donations from local businesses during this fundraiser, I am applying for contributions from corporations like Blackfoot, Northwestern Energy and Energy Partners.

Library Policy

Letters informing out-of-district patrons of the annual fee went out the beginning of January. Out of sixty letters, nine have paid the fee so far. Cards will become inactive on February 1 so we will likely hear from more patrons as their card becomes inactive.

I feel that the change is successful. It has had the added bonus of highlighting the value we offer and I think these patrons are feeling more invested after making their payments and will more likely to use our services. It has also highlighted the cardholders who have left the area so we can clean up our system.

Transactions December 2025

CD	15
CHAPTER	12
DISPLAY	41
DVD	115
EASY	65
EASY-NF	2
FICTION	103
JUV-BIO	2
JUV-FICT	71

New Patrons	
8	
Computer Users	38
Reference Questions	
10	
Patron Traffic	

Programming

Story Time	53
Book Club	8
Pinochle	14
Chess Club	21