

Director's Report April 2025

Respectfully Presented by Nikki Ericksen, Library Director

Volunteers and Staff

Summer Help: I hired Mikiah Cook to help us out for the summer. This is her second summer helping out at the library. She is filling in as a Library Tech, covering for vacations, assisting with summer programming and field trips, and generally easing the load for Cindy and me.

Programming

Ladies' Tea: The first tea was very nice. Attendance was modest but it was such a lovely vibe and all seemed to enjoy and appreciate the evening. The next Tea & Talk will be June 4th at 6 pm.

Head Start: The Head Start director took the kids on a field trip to the library on May 13th. They spent time reading books inside and playing games and doing activities in the yard. The director encouraged parents to get a library card and impressed upon them the value of the library and family reading. There were about 20 people in attendance.

First Grade Field Trip: The first-grade teachers approached us about having a field trip for the first-grade class and we eagerly agreed. Their field trip options were limited due to funding this year and we were very happy to fill the gap. Denise Montgomery (volunteer) and I organized a two hour visit to the library on May 15th that included science, crafts, games, and exploration, along with a good story. There were two members of staff, two teachers and three volunteers to keep 33 excited 7-and 8-year-olds happy and engaged. Activities happened both inside and outside the library at 6 separate stations including giant bubbles, homemade river sensory station, flower planting, and balloon powered ping pong ball shooters.

Book Signing: The library hosted a book signing for Rube Wrightsman on May 14th from 1pm to 4pm. Tracy at the Clark Fork Valley Press worked with us to feature Rube in the paper the week before the event. Rube set the stage with props from the actual places he visited that are included in the book. The turnout was quite good and the author said he had a great time. He gifted the library two copies of his book, "Let the Rivers Clap Their Hands". We are considering purchasing enough to make a book club kit to share around the state to both support our local author and to add a unique local book to the book club kits currently available.

Fundraising

The Bookin' It 5K and Fun Run: With 24 days to go, there are 20 runners signed up and we have collected 1900 dollars in sponsorships. Last year, half again as many runners signed up on the day of the race. While we were hoping for a slightly better turn out this year, we may still be

surprised on race day. In any event, we hope to put on a party that will encourage larger numbers next year.

Friends of the Library: Julia Phillips (Friends of the Library Chair) will have a booth at Plains Day to drum up interest in the organization. Monica Martin will be organizing a Friends table at the Bookin' It 5k and Fun Run. Their next meeting will be June 3 at 6pm at the library.

Painting: A large painting by the artist, Mairead Delaney, was donated to the library to sell or display. Due to its large size and thanks to Greg Sanders' (Library Board Vice-Chair) suggestion, I approached the Clark Fork Hospital about displaying the 3'x4' painting. It will hopefully gain some exposure. We displayed information about the library fall auction so interested parties will know how they can bid for it in the fall.

Building

Inspection: County inspectors came on May 14th. With the exception of some small things that Terry is already working to correct, we passed with flying colors. They did have some concern over the openings in the floor that once contained outlets that we are stumped on how to correct. The final report was sent to me and to the mayor.

Events and Meetings

Board Training: Annual 3-hour training for library trustees is scheduled for June 3 from 6:00 to 9:00 pm at the library. We will discuss what the board would like to cover in that training at this month's meeting.

Montana Shared Catalog Spring Meeting: This meeting was held via zoom on May 6. Upgrades to the catalog include better searchability of series and individual volumes. Also, generic graphics for items will be replaced with format specific graphics for better clarity. Patrons will be able to tell the difference between a book or cd when cover art isn't available.

Two new Sirsi Dynix products were recommended to member libraries by the Montana Shared Catalog team. One of them is an add-on to help give the software better performance when creating reports. The other will upgrade the technology that is currently used to give 3rd party vendors such as Overdrive.com/Libby access to the catalog. The cost of these two additions would raise member libraries cost share by 6%, for the Plains Library \$130.60 per year. The motion to adopt these two upgrades passed although Crystal from Thompson Falls and I both voted against.

The benefit of these products is almost completely on the back end but the upside for our patrons is that when a patron replaces a lost card, they will no longer lose their holds on Overdrive.com/Libby.

April Statistics

BOARD BOOK	14
CD	15
CHAPTER	29
DISPLAY	38
DVD	223
EASY	154
EASY-NF	14
FICTION	119
JUV-BIO	1
JUV-FICT	145
JUV-NF	45
MONTANA	20
MYSTERY	40
NEW-BOOK	59
NON FICTION	94
SCI-FI	11
STACKS	142
WESTERN	24
YA	31
Total	1,229

New Patrons	7
Computer Users	42
Reference Questions	6
Volunteer Hours	22
Crates to Missoula	19
Crates from Missoula	15