

**Director's Report**  
**March 2026**

1. Children's Library update (from Children's Library Supervisor Abby Bussen):

**In-person Programs:** 40; Total attendance: 1,736

**Passive Programs:** 5; Total participation: 1,261

It seems superfluous to say "It was another busy month in the Children's Library" because this is our eternal truth – it's always a busy month in the kids' area and we are so lucky to be well used and loved by our community. This month, the DPI's annual report data came out and we discovered that the children's collection ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the state for circulation of materials, an increase from our rank of 4<sup>th</sup> in 2025. We're so glad to have a self-checkout machine in children's to help reduce the burden of this increase on our teammates in circulation. In a reimagined children's area, I hope we'll be able to have two or three self-checks as we currently do have families who like to wait to use the upstairs machine while their kids are playing, finishing up in a program, or making art in the creativity corner.

In February, we introduced our first ever video game collection with a relatively small collection of Nintendo Switch and PlayStation 5 games (just over 100 total games). All of the games in our start-up collection were kid- and family-friendly with E for Everyone or E10+ for Everyone 10 and up. Within 1 week, all of the Switch games and half of the PS5 games had been checked out! This is a collection we will add to and grow as the materials budget allows.



2. Young Adult Library update (from Adult Librarian Katie Jentges):

Children's Librarian Sharon Long and I have started planning this year's Teen Summer Fun! activities. As in years past, there will be a combination of STEM, art & crafts, and food-themed activities like Cupcake Wars and a taste test. Rather than compete for much of the same tween audience we decided to pair together this year. With two librarians at each event, it means that we can have more attendees and even more programs for teens than we usually do over summer.

Local history volunteer Sue Martin-Steiner has taken a step back from volunteering. She has played a significant role in curating the Library's local history pamphlet file. In 2010, Sue began photocopying articles from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and *Wauwatosa Now* sections. She copied articles onto acid-free paper, ensuring their stability, assigned subject headings to each article, and filed them into a well-organized pamphlet file. With fewer articles in the *Milwaukee Journal* and *West Now* and our online subscription, Sue felt it was unnecessary to continue manually duplicating articles. Sue's diligence, attention to detail, and wealth of knowledge will be missed.

3. ARPA update (from Assistant Director Robert Trunley):

ARPA funding is for purchasing materials that are directly responsive to disparities augmented by the pandemic in an effort to reduce barriers. These barriers are disproportionately affecting marginalized populations. The library is using ARPA funds to pay for materials, processing supplies and staffing.

The library will spend \$200,000 on materials over the 5-year period of the project (2022-2026), and \$272,000 total.

Materials:

2025 - \$43,513 (2,349 items - 1,460 adult and 889 juvenile)

As of January 2026, the library had spent \$135,000 on materials, with a balance remaining of \$65,000.

Supplies:

As of January 2026, the library had spent \$6,134 on supplies, with a balance remaining of \$2,566.

Staffing:

As of January 2026, the library had spent \$44,641 on staffing, with a balance remaining of \$18,659.

The library has planned expenditures quarterly for each year of the grant period. The full amount of the grant will be expended by the end of 2026.

4. Circulation update (from Circulation Supervisor Alanna Maddox):

Our new shelvers are assimilating well with the team. They are out of their training stage and have been assigned all the usual tasks that our seasoned shelvers complete. Interviews begin the week of March 23rd for the remaining 12-hour evening shelver position.

We had a successful content checking month in February and found lots of well-loved books ready for replacement. The weekends have been extremely busy so we are happy to be able to catch up on our regular shelving tasks.

Evaluations have been completed and submitted. Over the next few weeks, I will be meeting with each staff member to go over their evaluations.

5. Adult Library update (from Adult Library Supervisor Shellie Anderson):

**Programs and Displays:**

Brian Gleichauf and his family (human and bee) collaborate to operate Bub's Honey in Racine, WI. He presented a program to learn about some of the beautifully deep mysteries of honeybees and how you can welcome more wonderful bee-wild-erment into your own life and your own backyard. Honeybees fascinate so many people, and yet not everyone can or should keep bees, as it must be done in a responsible and ecological manner. His program was also highlighted on Channel 4's "What's Brewing Wisconsin" that day.

We are also thrilled to welcome Milwaukee-area author Nick Petrie as he launches the ninth novel in his pulse-pounding Peter Ash series, *The Dark Time*. Ash rides to the aid of an investigative reporter who may have stumbled on a story more explosive than even he can handle in this propulsive new entry in Petrie's award-winning series. Petrie will be here discussing his new book, answering questions, and signing books. Boswell Books will be on-hand to sell Petrie's latest.

Meagan talked to the Heritage Garden Club this month. She talked about the Explore passes and the Library of Things. They were interested in our seed library and we now have volunteers to help us package them.

Our displays this month include honeybees, mystery books, and stop the scroll, a display promoting analog activities such as reading, gardening, and crafting to keep your mind active.

6. Municipal Complex update:

- Kickoff meeting with C.G. Schmidt and OPN Architects (February 19)
  - The meeting reviewed project considerations, benchmarking, goals, vision, sustainability efforts, and more. The current timeline calls for the council to review three renovation options in May. This will allow the city to include a project in the city's 5-year capital plan as part of the budget process occurring starting in the summer. OPN Architects will attend the May library board meeting to review the three options with the library board.
- Library program verification meeting with OPN Architects (February 26)
  - Library and city staff met with the architects to review program options and priorities.
- Option development meeting with OPN Architects (March 4)
  - Library and city staff met with the architects to review program options.
- Option Development meeting with OPN Architects (March 13)

7. Library Board President and I are scheduled to present the Library Board and Library annual report to the Council's Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, March 24.

8. March staff anniversaries:

13 years Michelle Salm, Library Shelver

1 year Brianna Schwabe Khateeb, Children's Librarian

9. Upcoming meetings:

- Library Board: Wednesday, March 18 at 6:30 PM
- Policy Committee: Wednesday, April 15 at 5:30 PM
- Library Board: Wednesday, April 15 at 6:30 PM