

WATERTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DIRECTOR'S REPORT
For August 2026

Libby: Audio, Ebook & Magazine Checkouts		
	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>
January	3,974	4,850
February	3,671	4,120
March	3,976	4,691
April	3,986	4,375
May	3,937	4,505
June	4,669	5,163
July	4,930	5,149
August	4,022	
September	4,051	
October	4,074	
November	4,144	
December	4,184	
Total	48,391	

Physical Circulation for June	24,608
July Libby	4,674
July Libby Mags	475
2026 Monthly Total	29,757
2025 July Total	30,272
New Cards	117

Interim Library Director/Head of Adult Services Notes:

In July we issued several stay out orders. One was for a group of five teenagers who were boxing outside the South entrance right after the library closed. The police department has been great partners with this.

I received final mock-ups of the window marketing piece Peg was working on before her retirement with Jody Purtell. We will be paying for most of this with a grant from Bridges, and Friends are picking up the bill for the rest. As I'm writing this report I've received word that the art will be installed tomorrow, August 4. I'm sure you will see it when you come to the meeting on August 12!

I attended the Jefferson County Library Services board meeting last week in Waterloo. It was nice to meet members of that board and spend time with other directors from libraries in the area.

Cari and I held internal interviews for the Senior Library Assistant – Cataloger position. We had five very qualified people who applied. This amount of internal candidates is a testament to how great of a place this is to work and how amazing our team is. Heidi Zipfel accepted the position. Heidi has worked in our Circulation department for almost 8 years and will be a great addition to our team of full-time staff. Her onboarding date is August 5.

At their meeting at the beginning of July, Friends talked about plans to revamp the Book Nook. They are running a sale throughout July to raise \$250 for the project and all books are just \$0.50 (250 years of America, all 50 states is where those numbers came from). They are not meeting in August, but will be back in September.

Last week I had two authors come to the library for events. They were both very interesting. Vaneesa Cook wrote about the Empire State Building and Statue of Liberty; Bill Mueller wrote stories about growing up on a farm in a large family. Thanks to the Bridges Library System for paying for the first visit as part of the Adult Programming Grant.

When our new director starts and I move back into my office on the second floor, we plan to have our library assistant, Anna, do more daytime adult programming. Anna is the Adult Program Coordinator at Oconomowoc Public Library, so she has a lot of ideas and experience for what makes good library programs. It will be nice to extend our offerings to those who are free to attend during the day.

We had another long-time patron and supporter, Dorothy Jean Pauli, pass away and her family wrote in her obituary that people could make donations to the library in Dorothy's name. Handwritten thank you notes will be sent out for those donations.

There has been a bit of scuttlebutt around town about the library spending money on a scissor lift even after our budget was cut last year. I hope that if trustees hear this they remind folks that the purchase of our scissor lift (out of the capital outlay account) was approved by the board for the purpose of staff safety. We have several areas of the library with very tall ceilings and in order to clean or do maintenance in those areas our maintenance staff was climbing up on very tall ladders. The scissor lift has been used many times since its purchase and has given us all huge peace of mind for Tod's safety. A reminder, also, that this was a pre-owned machine and was sold to us at a very fair price.

The weekend of July 31 brought a lot of rain to Watertown, which brought several ceiling leaks to the building. The drains on the roof simply couldn't keep up with the amount of rain that we were getting and things leaked through ceiling tiles in many places. Tod will be working to replace the tiles (we will probably need to replenish our back stock of tiles, as we have been steadily working through what was left over from construction). Thanks to John for coming over on a Saturday and helping clean up the leaks, put up wet floor signs, shut down bathrooms, etc.

- Jamie (MLIS)

Children's Department Notes:

July flew by so quickly, as it always does, with a flurry of programs, performers, prizes and SuperDraw tickets! Our school age kids had Junk Journaling, Bubble Mania, Obstacle Course challenges and Beading Bonanza crafts at Camp Library. We had our final Mystery Lunch, which was completely full and always so much fun! We had 3 performers in July, with Marvelous Michelle's Bubble Show for a Family Fun Night (sponsored by Friends), KidsPlay and Hands on Hawaii (sponsored by Bridges). The giggles, smiling faces (kids and adults alike!) and belly laughs were the highlight of the summer for me! I attended Lights and Sirens and put hundreds of tattoos on kiddos and we wrapped up our week long Scavenger Hunt as well. We had some highly attended movies on Fridays and look forward to more movies in August.

We wrapped up the Summer Library Challenge with a total of 1,737 participants, with 1,053 kids (60.9% of total participants), 311 teens (17.9% of total participants) and 376 adults (21.6% of total participants). In comparison, 2025 had a total of 1,841 participants, with 1,103 kids (59.9%), 318 teens (17.3%) and 426 adults (23.1%). While the total participation was a bit lower than last year, I found it interesting that the total percentage of participation for kids and teens was higher this year than last year, so more of our participants were kids and teens than adults of the total people that registered for the SLC. We have called all of our SuperDraw prize winners and started our annual August program of Back to School Bingo for kids and teens. For five weeks, there is a new Bingo sheet for each age group and kids and teens need to get 2 bingos by completing reading, creating and engaging activities to spin the prize wheel. All prizes are school supplies! It's a great way to keep kids engaged with the library, get additional school supplies in homes and while Children's and Teen staff get a bit of a break from our highly planned programs during the SLC. I'll be taking a much-needed annual vacation with my family next week but will see you all at the next board meeting!

-Tina (MLIS)

Teen Department Notes:

The Summer Library Challenge is coming to a close, and we've had tons of patrons of all ages participating and picking up prizes. Teens also had a number of fun programs to attend this month. We did crafts like perler beads, jewelry-making, and diamond art at the beginning of the month. Later, we did a fun twist on trivia, where all the questions were centered on tween/teen culture, and if they got a question wrong, Tina popped a water balloon over their head. So much fun! Our NERF night was a blast as well! We had full registration, and over 30 teens were able to make it. We have been sorting SuperDraw tickets, and Tina has called all the winners! Another successful Summer Library Challenge is in the books!

-Kaitlyn & Tina (MLIS)

Circulation Department Notes:

We are excited for the promotion of circulation team member Heidi Zipfel, moving to the full time cataloger position. Heidi has worked at the library for almost 8 years.

We continue to welcome patrons from other libraries visiting looking for Bigfoot as part of the Bridges Library system summer program.

We have a nice display for summer and beach related books and movies.

With the help of John K we put a different book shelf out for Lucky Day materials that should make it easier for patrons to browse and staff to shelve.

Patrons have been enjoying the cooler temperatures inside the library.

- Cari