



**Rochester
Public Library**

More Than You Think

115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

**Rochester Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
Kusler-Cox Auditorium, Rundel Memorial Library Building
April 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Agenda**

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Benjamin

II. ACTION ITEMS

- | | | |
|--|--------------|---------|
| 1. Minutes of Previous Meeting | Benjamin | page 3 |
| 2. Personnel Changes | Suro | page 7 |
| 3. Financial Reports | Hasselwander | page 9 |
| 4. NYS Annual Report | Clasper | page 13 |
| 5. Central Library Shoulders to Stand On Special Event Hours | Clasper | page 13 |
| 6. RPL Special Event Extended Hours | Clasper | page 14 |
| 7. Occupancy & Service Agreement Amendment,
Empire Justice CASH Program | Hasselwander | page 14 |

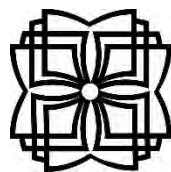
III. REPORT/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Liaison & Committee Reports | | |
| a. Liaison from the MCLS Board | Stockman/Clasper | |
| b. Liaison from the FFRPL | Borgus | |
| 2. Staff Reports | | |
| a. Director's Report/Central Library | Clasper | page 15 & 17 |
| b. Community Libraries | Scanlon | page 26 |

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

V. ADJOURNMENT

**Next Meeting
May 28, 2025
Central Library, Rundel Memorial Building**



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**Meeting of the RPL Board of Trustees
Central Library, Rundel Memorial Building
March 26, 2025
Minutes**

RPL Trustees Present: Donna Benjamin, Ellen Brenner, Elizabeth Call, Daniel Karin, James Kraus, Sarah Murphy Abbamonte, Suzanne Stockman, Jeffrey Tucker (quorum present)

RPL Trustees Excused: Alinda Drury, Sharon Salluzzo (observed online)

Staff and Guests: City Law Department Liaison, Allison Bartlett; City Council Liaison, Mitch Gruber; FFRPL Liaison, Donna Borgus; staff members, Emily Clasper, Katy Hasselwander, Debi Mansour, BJ Scanlon, Ana Suro

Call to Order

Ms. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m., welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and confirmed a quorum was present.

Welcome Guests

Ms. Benjamin welcomed Marcus Cooper and introduced him as a prospective trustee.

Public Comments

No members of the public were present who wished to address the board.

Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the February meeting were approved as presented.

Personnel Changes

Ms. Suro called attention to the personnel changes and staffing levels for February 10, 2025–March 7, 2025, and offered to answer questions. Mr. Kraus MADE A MOTION to approve the personnel changes. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Reports

Ms. Hasselwander reviewed the financial reports with the trustees and offered to answer questions.

Ms. Stockman MADE A MOTION to approve the monthly financial reports as presented and approved by the RPL Finance Committee. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Central Library Special Event Hours, Sept. 18

Ms. Clasper reviewed the item with everyone. Ms. Call MADE A MOTION to approve keeping the Rundel Building open until 9:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 18, 2025, to accommodate a RPL sponsored Fringe Festival special event. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Central Library Special Event Hours, May 7

Ms. Clasper explained that the Board had previously approved this item for a different date. Due to a schedule conflict, the date was moved. Ms. Brenner MADE A MOTION to approve keeping the first floor of the Bausch and Lomb Library building open until 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 7th, 2025, to accommodate the “It’s Your America” special event. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Acceptance of 2025 Tummonds Funds

Ms. Clasper reviewed the item. Ms. Brenner MADE A MOTION to accept the 2025 Tummonds fund allocation of \$103,307.25. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agreement, Taylor Thomas

Ms. Hasselwander reviewed the action item and explained the contractor will be working on the Shoulders to Stand On archive. After a brief discussion, Ms. Call MADE A MOTION to approve an agreement with Taylor Thomas for an amount not to exceed \$7,500 through March 1, 2026. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Trustee Appointment Recommendation

Mr. Karin stated that the Nominating Committee recently interviewed Marcus Cooper. The committee was impressed with Mr. Cooper’s qualifications and enthusiasm for libraries. Mr. Kraus MADE A MOTION to approve the forwarding of Mr. Cooper’s name to the mayor for recommendation to the City Council for appointment to the RPL Board of Trustees to the vacant term ending December 31, 2029. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Liaison to the Monroe County Library System (MCLS) Board

Ms. Stockman reported that the MCLS Board had no action items at their last meeting. She mentioned that the MCLS will be looking at library cataloging systems. She noted that the MCLS is the only user of CARL in New York state. She also shared that a Fairy Houses exhibit will be coming soon to the Mascioli Gallery at the Central Library.

Liaison from the Friends & Foundation of the Rochester Public Library (FFRPL)

Ms. Borgus offered to answer questions about her written report. She reported on the various distributions for the FFRPL grants for circulating materials, upcoming Harold Hacker Grants for the Advancement of Libraries, selected campaign contributions, and FFRPL legacy programming.

Director’s Report/Central Library

Ms. Clasper offered to answer questions about the written report. She reported that recently retired Library Director Patty Uttaro received formal recognition of her years of dedication and service at the Rochester City Council meeting the night before.

She reminded everyone that National Library Week is coming up in early April and the Central Library will be hosting some banned book readings and staff will be treated to ice cream at Central and other sweet treats at the branches on National Library Workers Day.

She shared that the recent Executive Order from the Trump administration to reduce services from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to only those mandated by law has resulted in more questions than answers. In New York State, the state library receives approximately \$8.1 million. The State library then provides services to libraries. The monetary impact to MCLS and RPL is unknown at this time, however, construction funding is likely to be directly impacted by this change. Stakeholders are all monitoring the situation carefully. The IMLS Board sent a letter to the recently appointed acting director, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Labor Keith Sonderling. In it, the board members outlined the programs and services that have been mandated by

Congress—which is most of their current work— and therefore must be continued. In response to a question, she clarified that the IMLS is its own agency and is not within any other federal agencies.

Community Libraries

Mr. Scanlon provided a brief introduction and pointed out the numerous ways in which he has worked with many of the RPL trustees over his career in municipal government. He thanked everyone for their warm welcome to RPL and specifically praised Amy Discenza and Bruce Tehan for running the Branch Administration office prior to his hiring.

He reminded everyone that in 2023 the RPL approved the closing of branches to the public twice each year for staff development. The language at the time provided guidelines for the annual closures but was open-ended in its authorization time limit. This has allowed the Deputy Director of Branch Administration to oversee these staff development days without requesting approval from the board each year. He is proposing that the Board be given the opportunity to renew their approval every four years which will provide opportunity to ensure the staff development closures are continuing to be useful and in line with the goals of the RPL.

Next, he shared his involvement in the 20th anniversary of the Safe Space program. He shared an anecdote from the Arnett Branch about a young person whose family was trying to get them to drop out of school to help financially support their family. They wanted to continue schooling and had been couch surfing for a while, using the library as a safe haven. Library staff were able to talk with that young person, build that relationship and connect them with the Center for Youth. The Center for Youth was able to help connect them with family out of town, and the library staff heard through reports from that young person's friends that they were able to finish high school and are doing well.

Last, he reported that the launch of the new bookmobile, RPL GO! is progressing nicely. A team is working on the coordination of how to share the van across divisions when not in use by the Lyell Branch staff. All potential drivers are going through training on the safe operation of the vehicle and the final installations of technology are scheduled.

Agreement, Father Tracy Advocacy Center (Late Item)

Ms. Clasper reviewed the item and explained that the Rochester City Council unanimously approved legislation at their meeting the previous evening to amend the budget and make funding available to support the Father Tracy Center services within the Central Library. Ms. Murphy Abbamonte MADE A MOTION to approve an agreement with the Father Tracy Advocacy Center for an amount not to exceed \$54,000 through December 31, 2025. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Other Business

None

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Dan Karin, Secretary

**ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY
PERSONNEL CHANGES
March 10, 2025 to April 4, 2025**

➤ **PROMOTION**

Hoecker, Chloe	FROM: Library Page/PT/Sully Branch	03/31/2025
	TO: Clerk Typist/PT/Monroe Branch	
Morry, Emily	FROM: Library Assistant/FT/Central/Local History	03/31/2025
	TO: Historical Researcher/FT/Central/Local History	
Pradhan, Onisha	FROM: Library Page/PT/Central/Circulation	03/24/2025
	TO: Clerk Typist/PT/Central/Circulation	
Shropshire, Cy	FROM: Librarian I/PT/Central/Technology Center	03/24/2025
	TO: Library Tech Services Specialist/FT/Central/Tech Center	

➤ **RESIGNATION**

Gamble, Megan	Library Page/PT/Sully Branch	04/04/2025
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STAFFING

Full-Time Positions	Central	Branches
Budgeted	81	31
Filled	79	28
Vacancies	2	3
Part-time Positions	Central	Branches
Budgeted	122	136
Filled	71	109
Vacancies	51	27

**Rochester Public Library
Financial Report – Summary
April 30, 2025, Board Meeting**

Central Financial Report, March 2025

Salary & Benefits: Salaries, wages, and overtime are within budget. Underruns transferred to travel & training to allow the City & County Historian to attend the National Council on Public History, increasing the revised budget for Employee Development.

Equipment & Supplies: Materials purchases and other expenses are projected within budget.

Services & Charges: Services & Charges expenses are within budget.

Cash Capital: BLB glass repair expense hits prior year funds (\$8.8K). Remaining funds are reserved for planned expenses (HVAC) and unknown needs with upcoming construction projects. Report only reflects FY25 funds, which remain unspent.

Community Financial Report, March 2025

Salary & Benefits: Salaries and wages are within budget.

Equipment & Supplies: Materials purchases and supplies are within budget.

Services & Charges: Services & Charges expenses are within budget.

Cash Capital: New current year expenses include a new staff laptop purchase (BrAd) and furniture orders for Sully & Winton. Prior year rollover funds were utilized for carpet replacement in the Arnett Branch's Children section. Remaining funds are reserved for other planned expenses including for NE branch design services.

Central Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25 Fiscal YTD (through March 31, 2025)					
Category	Description	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Expenses FISCAL YTD	Remaining Balance % of Budget
Salary & Benefits	Full-Time Salaries	4,943,000	4,943,000	3,759,581	1,183,419 76.1%
	Part-Time/Temp Salaries	1,597,400	1,581,300	1,033,825	547,475 65.4%
	Overtime	17,500	17,500	15,966	1,534 91.2%
	Employee Benefits	3,310,600	3,310,600	2,455,972	854,628 74.2%
	Employee Development	27,700	32,466	22,784	9,681 70.2%
	Other	59,800	59,800	44,025	15,775 73.6%
Sub Total		9,956,000	9,944,666	7,332,153	2,612,512 73.7%
Equipment & Supplies	Materials Budget	505,000	507,214	327,469	179,745 64.6%
	Other Furnishings & Equipment	10,100	10,100	339	9,761 3.4%
	Office Supplies	56,500	59,143	33,806	25,337 57.2%
	Other Materials & Supplies	51,000	55,175	28,886	26,289 52.4%
		622,600	631,632	390,499	241,133 61.8%
Services & Charges	Utilities	467,500	467,500	348,462	119,038 74.5%
	Facility Maintenance	103,400	132,962	52,818	80,144 39.7%
	Professional Services/Fees	221,600	228,997	175,224	53,773 76.5%
	Chargebacks	80,700	92,628	45,368	47,259 49.0%
	Service Charges - Other Gov't	51,400	51,400	27,365	24,035 53.2%
	Telecommunications	14,200	14,950	9,700	5,250 64.9%
	Other Expenses	204,400	230,022	81,794	148,228 35.6%
	Sub Total	1,143,200	1,218,458	740,730	477,728 60.8%
TOTAL EXPENSED		11,721,800	11,794,756	8,463,383	3,331,373 72.2%
Central Cash Capital	Facility Maintenance Allocation	94,000	94,000	0	94,000 0.0%
REVENUE RECEIPTS		11,736,100	11,736,100	4,891,873	6,844,227
		Original Budget	Revised Budget	Central Library Support from City + Central Revenue Outstanding Revenue	

Community Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25 <i>Fiscal YTD (through March 31, 2025)</i>						
Category	Description	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Expenses FISCAL YTD	Remaining Balance	% of Budget
Salary & Benefits	Full-Time Salaries	2,080,100	2,076,500	1,412,206	664,294	68.0%
	Part-Time/Temp Salaries	2,026,400	2,013,400	1,406,821	606,579	69.9%
	Overtime	2,000	2,000	8,563	-6,563	428.2%
	Employee Development	22,900	26,610	11,904	14,707	44.7%
	Other	28,300	28,300	17,134	11,166	60.5%
	Sub Total	4,159,700	4,146,810	2,856,627	1,279,017	68.9%
Equipment & Supplies	Materials Budget	496,600	502,973	319,876	183,097	63.6%
	Office Supplies	37,700	37,806	27,063	10,743	71.6%
	Other Materials & Supplies	34,500	35,512	19,030	16,482	53.6%
	Sub Total	568,800	576,292	365,970	210,322	63.5%
Services & Charges	Utilities	224,500	229,993	142,452	87,541	61.9%
	Facility Maintenance	39,000	39,496	12,110	27,386	30.7%
	Professional Services/Fees	376,800	381,042	183,778	197,265	48.2%
	Chargebacks	27,300	36,982	26,187	10,795	70.8%
	Service Charges - Other Gov't	7,500	7,500	7,201	299	96.0%
	Telecommunications	21,400	22,631	12,505	10,126	55.3%
	Other Expenses	52,500	67,266	38,203	29,063	56.8%
	Sub Total	749,000	784,910	422,436	362,475	53.8%
	TOTAL EXPENSED	5,477,500	5,508,012	3,645,033	1,851,813	66.2%
Community Cash Capital	Computers & Equipment	10,000	10,000	2,107	7,893	21.1%
	Library Furnishings	12,000	12,000	9,232	2,768	76.9%
	Library Facilities	41,000	41,000	2,184	38,816	5.3%
	Library Capital Projects*	40,000				
	Cash Capital Total	103,000	63,000	13,523	49,477	21.5%
	REVENUE RECEIPTS	390,461	390,461	230,735	159,726	
* Projects administered by City DES						
		Original Budget	Revised Budget	Receipts FISCAL YTD	Outstanding Revenue	

Trust Funds Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25						
Fiscal YTD (through April 7, 2025)						
	Allocation	Carry-forward	TOTAL	YTD Expenses	% of Total	
Reynolds Fund - RPL	4229	\$144,857	\$70,945	\$215,802	\$116,209	53.8%
Fenevessy (Central + Branch bal)	4224	\$31,369	\$25,278	\$56,647	\$58,227	102.8%
Kenyon-Jeffries Fund	4233	\$20,191	\$10,806	\$11,997	\$8,250	68.8%
Purton Fund	4231	\$17,007	\$3,716	\$20,723	\$15,111	72.9%
Gleason Fund	4225	\$15,862				
Gleason Fund (FFRPL)	4225	\$12,183	\$15,427	\$43,472	\$15,209	35.0%
Gervickas Fund	4235	\$6,045	\$8,157	\$14,203	\$1,267	8.9%
Taylor Fund	4226	\$3,610	\$4,030	\$7,640	\$1,357	17.8%
Boland Fund	4232	\$1,541	\$1,535	\$3,076	\$572	18.6%
Carnahan Fund	4228	\$1,555	\$0	\$1,555	\$810	52.1%
Poletto Fund	4234	\$1,555	\$0	\$1,555	\$953	61.3%
Beeney Fund (FFRPL)	4227	\$4,878	\$2,829	\$7,707	\$689	8.9%
Craig Fund (FFRPL)	4236	\$2,716	\$1,209	\$3,925	\$243	6.2%
Holtzman Fund (FFRPL)	4239	\$1,560	\$1,851	\$3,411	\$977	28.6%
Lee Fund (FFRPL)	4237	\$1,475	\$2,581	\$4,056	\$368	9.1%
Vietnam Veterans Fund (FFRPL)	4238	\$688	\$2,161	\$2,849	\$148	5.2%
Tummonds Fund (FFRPL)	4241	\$88,391	\$54,141	\$142,532	\$76,668	53.8%
TOTAL		\$355,483	\$204,667	\$541,150	\$297,058	54.9%
Gift Fund Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25						
Fiscal YTD (through April 7, 2025)						
Fund	Allocation	Transfer In	TOTAL	YTD Expenses	% of Total	
Gift Fund	4230	\$4,244	\$30,810	\$35,054	\$3,705	10.6%



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TO: RPL Board of Trustees
FROM: Emily Clasper, Director
DATE: April 30, 2025
SUBJECT: Monthly Report–April 2025

Action Items

NYS Annual Report (Clasper)

All public libraries in New York State are required to submit an annual statistical report to the New York State Education Department's Division of Library Development. This year the 2024 results for the Rochester Public Library are notable:

- 843,064 visits to libraries, an increase of 61,605 or 8%.
- There were 98,379 reference transactions, an increase of 7%.
- Circulation of physical materials totaled 764,115, up 15% from last year.
- Circulation of physical materials totaled 1,105,014, a 9% increase from last year. After a 14% drop in 2023, this brings us closer to 2022 levels of circulation.
- The number of physical items held decreased overall as fewer items added to collection, more items weeded than in the previous year.
- Participation in the Summer Reading program increased to include all RPL Locations. Registration for Summer Reading rose by 14% for children, 244% for teens.
- Program attendance over all remained strong, with some increases and decreases in various categories of programming. See Section 3 in the report for specific numbers of programs and attendance.

Overall, 2024 was a good year for RPL. Increases in visits and circulation of both physical and digital materials are an encouraging sign.

Board Action Requested: Approve the RPL 2024 NYS Annual Report.

Central Library Shoulders to Stand On Special Event Hours (Clasper)

The Local History and Genealogy Division and the Reynolds Media Center have partnered with [ImageOut](#) to plan a series of screenings of archival films at the Central Library. The screening of these films works in conjunction with our Shoulders to Stand On LGBTQIA+ collection.

The 2025 Archival Film Festival will consist of screenings of the following films:

- *Teorema*, Wednesday May 21
- *Shoulders To Stand On*, Wednesday July 16
- *The Watermelon Woman*, Wednesday September 17
- *Madchen in Uniform*, Wednesday November 19

RPL has worked with ImageOut in the past to plan this series, including assisting in the selection and sourcing of the films shown. This time, the group has asked to use our space as well, reserving the Kate Gleason Auditorium for the screenings. To keep consistency with past years' events and better accommodate the core audience for these films, the group has requested that the films are screened from 6:30–8:30 p.m.

On the event dates, we anticipate closing the rest of the library at the usual time but making the Kate Gleason Auditorium available until the film screening ends. Staffing for this event, including Security, will be arranged so it will not impact the budget.

Board Action Requested: Approve keeping the Bausch and Lomb Public Library Building open until 9:00 p.m. on May 21, July 16, September 1, and November 19, 2025, to accommodate the screening of archival films in the Kate Gleason Auditorium.

RPL Special Event Extended Hours (Clasper)

RPL Locations occasionally need to keep spaces open later than the normal closing time to accommodate Library-sponsored or co-sponsored programming and special events. Typically, these instances are for an hour or two, do not require public access to the entire building, and do not have a budget impact as employee hours can be flexed to provide adequate staffing and security. This currently requires Board approval. The Director would like to request the discretion to approve extending access to RPL spaces for RPL-sponsored or co-sponsored events, provided the additional hours do not impede the regular provision of library services, staffing is available to provide adequate security, it does not impact the budget, and the Board is informed of the after-hours program or event.

Board Action Requested: Allow the RPL Director discretion to approve extending access to RPL spaces for RPL-sponsored or co-sponsored events, provided the additional hours do not impede the regular provision of library services, staffing is available to provide adequate security, there is no impact on the budget, and the Board is informed of the after-hours program or event. This authorization will expire December 30, 2029.

Occupancy & Service Agreement Amendment, Empire Justice CASH Program (Hasselwander)

Empire Justice has operated the CASH (Creating Assets, Savings, & Hope) program from the Central Library since 2019, first in the lower link level and now on the fourth floor of the Bausch & Lomb Public Library building. CASH is a free tax preparation site that has helped over 191,000 families, resulting in \$146 million in total EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) benefits to date. In addition to being a Volunteer Low Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site, CASH provides year-round financial services to community members and library patrons.

The original agreement was approved by the RPL board at the May 2019 board meeting and established an occupancy charge based on utility, security, and facility expenses, as opposed to a traditional lease based on square footage. The valuation of CASH occupancy is updated based on the annual budget of the Central Library, and calculated as a ratio of the space CASH occupies and a portion of public/shared access spaces to the total Central Library square footage.

This amendment extends the agreement for another five-year term ending February 25, 2030. The occupancy charges proposed for the first year are \$37,800, invoiced quarterly.

Board Action Requested: Approve the amended occupancy and use agreement with Empire Justice Center for CASH operations at the Central Library for a five-year extension ending February 25, 2030.

Report & Discussion Items

RPL Director Emily Clasper reporting

Director's Update

- MCLS sponsored two tables at the annual Women Empowering Women Conference, sponsored by the Greater Rochester Chamber. This sponsorship allowed twenty women from libraries across the County to engage in leadership training and networking with other up and coming female leaders in the Rochester area. The day was filled with informative learning opportunities.



- To improve communication within RPL, Clasper and the management team conducted a staff survey aimed at collecting feedback on the monthly All-Staff meeting. There was a tremendous response to the survey, allowing the team to identify several ways in which the meeting could be made more valuable to a greater number of staff and improve the flow of information within the organization. Many of the staff suggestions have already been implemented, and a follow-up survey in a few months will seek feedback on how the changes are working so far.
- Clasper met with Senator Jeremy Cooney to discuss the future of libraries in the area and the needs we may have on the horizon. The Senator was extremely enthusiastic about the direction our libraries are headed and offered his support in further promoting our programs and services through his office.
- Clasper has been an active participant in several City and County committees related to the services libraries provide. In addition to the Opioid Steering Committee, she has been working with the City and County Arts and Culture Steering Committee and the City and County Homeless Advisory Council. All are working to coordinate efforts to tackle their respective issues and improve the quality of life for everyone in the community. In all of the groups she has been working with, Clasper has heard positive feedback on the role libraries play, with much excitement for the new opportunities for collaboration that will come from working with these teams.



Recommended Reading

- State of America's Libraries: A Snapshot of 2024: <https://www.ala.org/news/state-americas-libraries-report-2025>
- 70 percent of book challenges come from groups, elected officials: Research: <https://thehill.com/homenews/education/5235708-book-bans-challenges-ala/>
- A Celebrated Librarian's Concealed Life: <https://hyperallergic.com/1001007/celebrated-librarian-belle-da-costa-greene-concealed-life-morgan-library/>
- How Two Wake County Libraries Are Navigating the Homelessness Crisis <https://indyweek.com/culture/recharging-and-referrals-how-wake-county-libraries-are-taking-on-the-homelessness-crisis/>

Director's Site Visits

March

Penfield Public Library
Henrietta Public Library
Rush Public Library
Sully Branch
Arnett Branch
Chili Public Library

February

Charlotte Branch
Maplewood Community Library

January

Frederick Douglass Community Library
Lyell Branch
Monroe Branch

Social Media



Central Library

Emily Clasper reporting

- Clasper has been engaging with a group of downtown Rochester business owners to discuss security concerns and efforts to keep patrons and employees safe while in the area. Meetings of the newly formed Downtown Security Resource Sharing Team have resulted in a number of suggestions for collaborative training initiatives and improved communication between downtown business owners.
- Interviews are underway to hire an Associate Director for the vacant the Central Library role.

Arts/Literature, Erin Clarke reporting

Programs

- Art in the Public Space closed out the *Marionettes by Rachel* exhibit with a discussion on the numerous ways artists Michael Moss, Javannah Davis, John Magnus Apollo (Champlin), Dr. Hinda Mandel, Thomas Warfield, and Christopher Hennelly have interpreted the public art experience from their backgrounds. Each artist spoke compellingly about the importance of art for the community. The audio of this program was replayed on 3/31 on WAYO radio at 1 p.m. Hennelly put this together to extend the program further to the public through media partnerships.
- *Wool, Water, and Wellbeing: Stitching the Story of Water with Fiber Art* with Michale Glennon featured Glennon's fiber arts to demonstrate both representation and function to further the public understanding of the environment and human impacts on it. Scarves, dresses, and bags with climate change data can show beauty in pattern making as well as the increase in annual global temperatures. The program was presented in conjunction with an artist visit at the University of Rochester.
- Manczuk and Clarke hosted a party to create small pieces of artwork to benefit the Rochester Contemporary Art Center during their annual 6x6 charity auction. Patrons were given 6x6 cardboard squares, art supplies, and encouraged to be creative! Most participants left artwork to be taken to the art center for auction, although some were so happy with what they made it went home with them.



Anecdotes

- Manczuk had a reference phone call with a patron looking for the complete text of the Prayer of St Patrick. She said someone else had found it for her and was reading it to her so she could write it down in its entirety and that they had been disconnected. As Manczuk was reading the prayer, the patron asked how many more verses there were until the part she remembered was reached. Manczuk said that there were several more verses to go and the patron asked if those could be skipped as her hand was hurting from trying to write it all down. Manczuk then offered to mail the prayer to her. The patron was delighted that this was an option and thanked Manczuk several times.

Business Insight Center (BIC), Jennifer Byrnes, reporting

Programs

- **Business First Wednesday – Networking and Discussions with Lenders** presented by Chloe Handelman from the Small Business Development Center. Attendees learned how to connect with lenders for their small business.
- **Thinking Money for Kids: Penny Pincher’s Party.** Kids become party planners, creating Planning Boards for their clients while staying on budget. This program was planned in partnership with Children’s Center and was designed to help kids learn about budgeting.
- ***Building a Stronger Workforce: Hiring Individuals with Criminal Records.*** Presented by Cecelia Oyediran of Cannabis Workforce Initiative. Businesses learned how to effectively work with ex-offenders.
- ***Beyond the Bud: Ancillary Opportunities in the Cannabis Industry*** – presented by April Smith of Cannabis Workforce Initiative. Attendees learned about the myriad ways they can work in the cannabis industry.



Outreach and Training

- Byrnes presented at NextCorp's Lunch and Learn on intellectual property.
- Cobo presented to the MARL accelerator's (Mobility, AI, Robotics and Logistics) newest cohort.
- Cobo is participating in Lead On: Supervisor Leadership Development Training by the Jackman Group through the City of Rochester
- Cobo is representing BIC on the National Small Business Week Planning Committee led by RocEDC (Rochester Economic Development Corporation). Other agencies include Ibero, Venture Jobs, Pathstone, SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives), and SBDC (Small Business Development Center).

Consulting

- Hours of in-depth market research/prior art searching: 58
- The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property assisted:
 - In person: 2
 - Email: 27
 - Mail: 0
 - Phone: 4
 - Zoom: 5
- 3D Printer: 2
- Requests Outside Greater Rochester Area: 1
- Referrals to Tracy Jong (Intellectual Property Attorney): 1
- Referrals to Davis Bassett (Patent Agent): 2

Database Usage Statistics

- Frost & Sullivan - Page views: 23 Value: \$74,800
- IBISWorld - Page views: 80 Value: \$46,970
- InnovationQ - Logins: 17 Searches: 45
- Mintel - Sessions: 25 Page Views: 12 Downloads: 8
- PitchBook - Logins: 26
- Statista - Page views: 67 Downloads: 24
- Foundation Directory - Searches: 32 Views: 84

Wired for Opportunity Program

- Anna Neumaier attended the Digital Equity Academy live session, where they discussed ways to improve stakeholder and user experience through digital equity. They specifically talked about ways to do this in rural and tribal libraries.
- Progress is being made toward launching our digital skills classes. The team received the first shipment of 250 Chromebooks and 25 tablets for use in the classes and distribution to participants completing the program. LAS cataloged the shipment and scanned all the Chromebook information into a spreadsheet. Rich Mangione is in the process of ordering supplies, including tech tubs, in preparation for classes.
- The ordering process for the solar tables has begun, Mangione is to be the point person for the installation process.
- The Wired for Opportunity program has been getting some excellent press coverage recently. We expect that as press releases are issued for each stage in the rollout, we will see more positive stories like this one coming out! <https://www.wxnews.org/local-news/2025-03-03/monroe-countys-digital-equity-program-continues-with-free-online-learning-laptops-and-wi-fi-access>

Children's Center, Chelsea Arnold reporting

Programs

- The Children's Center welcomed a homeschool group for a tour and storytime in the library.
- A 5th grade class from #33 school associated with the Pillars of Hope program also came for an extended visit spending half of their visit with Children's staff touring the library and the other half with Jeff Bostic in ImagineYOU.
- Miranda Hazen did three craft programs in March starting with a Pinwheel Weathervane.
- The Fairy House program, with much help from Francis Harte, was to get submissions for the exhibit. Though there was a good amount of participation, most kids wanted to take theirs home, but we did get one.
- Hazen and Harte also worked together for the Paper First Flowers craft to make crocuses, and snow drops, two of the first flowers of spring.
- Nadia Morales collaborated with the business department to do a 'Think Money' Program, where kids planned an imaginary party with a set budget to learn about finances, as well as a St. Patrick's Day Shamrock craft.
- Morales also did a Women's History Month display, and patrons enjoyed seeing who each 'Woman of the Day' would be.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Brie Harrison and Cathy Henderson presented at the MCLS Juvenile meeting about building renovations.
- Chelsea Arnold attended the Festival of Inclusion at Nazareth College, engaging in sensory play activities and sharing information about the libraries.
- Arnold also had the opportunity to attend the Women Empowering Women Conference alongside other MCLS staff.

Raising A Reader

RAR staff continued to do storytimes and support storytimes for all sites. Staff have been communicating with sites about their end-of-year celebrations. RAR staff's goals are to attend as many celebrations as possible to connect with families and teachers. Olivia Cutter worked on an end of year teacher survey for RAR sites. The survey will help determine strengths and how staff can better support sites for the next school year.

Circulation/Information, Chad Cunningham reporting

Statistics

- Curbside Pickup Appointments- 1
- New Borrowers- 360
- RRLC Access Cards Issued- 2
- Notarial Acts- 139

Anecdotes

- A woman came to the library to get a new library card. It had been years since she had a card—many years. She loves to read and spends lots of time at bookstores browsing and buying. She wanted to come back to the library not only to save some money, but also to show her love and support for libraries, which she feels are incredibly important in this day and age.
- During the tax season, Circulation and Information staff spend a good amount of time helping people who are using the CASH program print documents and information from their phones. Callise Wiley helped a man who needed to print a picture of his social security card that was in a text message on his phone. Standard practice is to have the individual e-mail the image from their phone to our Information Desk e-mail to be printed. Unfortunately, he did not have an e-mail set up on his phone. He texted the image to his companion to send to Wiley. Her phone would not send the e-mail, so Wiley offered to give them her cell phone number so they could text the image to her. Wiley then printed the e-mail for the grateful couple and cleared their information off her phone to protect their privacy. Later, Wiley received a text message that said, *"Thank you sweetheart so much for your kindness today you were such a blessing."*

Local History & Genealogy, Shalis Worthy reporting

Programs

- Brandon Fess hosted the Hon. Richard Dollinger's talk, "Rochester v. Buffalo – Emma Goldman and the Dawn of the American Century."
- Antoine McDonald met with Robin Joy and other members of the genealogy research group based out of the AME Zion church to introduce them to genealogy resources available in the division. Through this program, patrons were able to engage with the library's resources to learn more about their personal genealogy.

- Fess gave a tour of the Division to 15 social studies teachers from the Rochester City School District. Fess was asked to talk to the teachers about the Division's resources, especially those that have classroom uses. As a result of this tour, Fess was invited to present on the library's resources at an upcoming Monroe County teacher training day. This program allowed us to educate teachers on the local history resources available through the Local History & Genealogy Division.

Outreach/Meetings/Training

Shalis Worthy presented the Local History & Genealogy Division's resources at the March meeting of the Rochester Genealogical Society.

Anecdotes

The Jewish Tidings and *Jewish Ledger* are now available for use on NYS Historic Newspapers. The project that allowed them to be imaged was carried out in partnership with Hillel at the University of Rochester. Joy Getnick, executive director of Hillel at the University of Rochester, has been effusive about the powerful and immediate impact that having these newspapers available has made on Rochester's Jewish community. She sent this message:

"I've heard from people (and this all happened immediately) that they are using the system to:

- Find birth/death announcements and fill in family trees, particularly with the names of siblings of generations past*
- Find family wedding announcements and photos*
- Conduct themed histories, i.e.: the new owner of the local kosher butcher was interested in learning more about the history of Jewish food in Rochester and now can!*
- Begin inquiries into organizational histories, i.e.: of Jewish Family Services and related offerings in Jewish Rochester*
- Learn more about their parents' involvement in local organizations and synagogues*
- Conduct research on the history of Jewish women at the University of Rochester as part of a larger historical project*

The outpouring of positivity reached all corners of the Rochester Jewish community and will invariably over time reach well beyond because these papers also capture a slice of the history of Rochester. They're a treasure, and this project not only saves them but makes them accessible for generations to come.

Thank you!!!"

Office of the City and County Historian, Christine Ridarsky Reporting

Programs

- A crowd of 69 people attended the second event in the Storied Saloons: Local History Happy Hours series at the Union Tavern in Sea Breeze. Owner Kelly Bush regaled the audience with stories about prohibition, secret gatherings, and larger-than-life characters in the tavern's 200-plus-year history. The next Storied Saloons program will be held at The Spirit Room, 139 State Street, Rochester, at 5:30 pm on May 15.
- Christine Ridarsky presented a talk about the Erie Canal Bicentennial at the Genesee Valley Recreation on Park Society's Annual Conference.
- Emily Morry presented a virtual walking tour of Rochester to a group at Catholic Charities.

Outreach/Training

- Ridarsky met with representatives from the City's Law and Information Technology departments to discuss the status of the City's records management program.
- Ridarsky participated in one meeting of the City's Civil Rights Heritage Committee and one meeting of its Civil Rights Heritage Park subcommittee.
- Ridarsky attended three meetings of the Corn Hill Waterfront and Navigation Foundation's Erie Canal Bicentennial Planning Committee.
- Ridarsky attended the National Council on Public History's Annual Conference in Montreal, Quebec. She is a member of that organization's Membership Committee.

Research Activities

- Ridarsky provided talking points to the City Communications Bureau for Mayor Malik Evan's press conference about the Cox Building being named one of the Landmark Society of Western New York's Five to Revive historic structures.

Interns & Volunteers

- SUNY Brockport intern Emilie Fregoe continued to inventory books and collections material in the Monroe County Historian's Collection. She contributed 16 hours of service in March.

Reynolds Media Center, Joseph Born reporting

Reference

RMC handled 864 reference questions and 416 non-reference transactions for a total of 1280.

RMC Circulation

- RMC loaned 10 pieces of equipment and 878 Mi-Fi units in addition to the regular collection, for a total of 4,166 items.
- Total circulation of RMC materials, including those that occurred at other libraries was 12,028.
- RMC materials accounted for 30% of the overall Central Library circulation (before renewals).
- At the time of this report, there were 948 MiFi units in circulation with 558 holds in the queue. We plan to increase the number of units further when the shipment of cases for the units comes in.

Programs

- First Friday Film: *The Critic*
- See it First Matinee: *Wicked*

Hoopla

Circulation

- Audiobooks – 2010
- Binge Pass – 44
- Comics – 209
- eBooks – 476
- Movies/TV – 558
- Music – 113
- **Total Circulation – 3413**

Users

- New users – 125
- Patrons using all 7 borrows – 181 (19%)
- Total users – 997

Cost

- Total - \$7697.50
- Per item – \$2.26

Door Count

- Mon – Fri average door count: 229 people per day
- Saturday average door count: 126 people per day

Science and History, Gabe Pellegrino reporting

Programs

- MCC history professor Mark Sample presented a talk on Jeannette Rankin, the first woman in United States history elected to the House of Representatives in 1916. She was involved in the women's suffrage movement prior to that and continued with it until the passage of the 19th Amendment. Mark shared Jeannette's fascinating background. The audience was engaged throughout Mark's presentation.
- *Growing Orchids in Rochester* was presented by David Weiss of the Genesee Region Orchid Society. David did a great presentation about growing Orchids. He also brought in some of his own orchids to show and discuss as part of his presentation. Although there was a small audience, everyone was interested in learning about orchids! Renée Kendrot, who scheduled the program, would like to consider hosting it in the future on a Saturday.
- Florence Morris manages the large tax program held annually in the Science Division. The New York State Taxpayer Assistance Program is going very well this tax season, in which representatives from NYS Department of Taxation and Finance are available to assist patrons who fill out their taxes on provided laptops, using online software. This program has been running every Wednesday throughout the tax season. The Science, History and Social Sciences Division staff continue to work with patrons in taking their appointments for the TAP Program as well as continuing to provide information to the CASH Program on the fourth floor.



Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Florence Morris worked with a local teacher to get access to more than 40 books to support an annual class research project.
- In addition to the weekly health clinic in partnership with the University of Rochester Medical Center, Center for Community Health and Prevention, there was a special Vision Screening afternoon offered by the CCHP group, in which about ten people were seen and screened.
- LROC (Library Resource Outreach Center) visitors numbered about 35 people seen in March. People are still getting used to the new scheduling for MCCollaborative on Thursdays. These numbers also include visits to Legal Assistance of Western New York, who assist with various legal and housing issues.
- Pellegrino attended the monthly meeting of the Hearing Loss of America, Rochester (HLAA) via Zoom.
- Pellegrino continues to attend the monthly meetings of the Wilmot Cancer Center's Cancer Community Action Council (CCAC). Wilmot Cancer Center has finally regained its designation as a National Cancer Institute as a clinical cancer center, which includes a large grant. CCAC is recognized as a "jewel in the crown" among cancer communities.

Anecdotes

- Pellegrino assisted a telephone patron who was looking for obituaries. Given his experience in Local History, rather than transferring her call, he provided the information requested. Pellegrino subsequently received a beautifully handwritten card from the patron who lives in Manhattan, with a very gracious thank you and appreciation for valuable information found in the articles.
- A regular patron to whom Morris provides tax forms every year called Pellegrino to praise her efforts and those of all the Science Division.

Technology Center, Jay Osborne Reporting

Programs

- Pedro Nunez's Tabletop Gaming Group is attracting more interest from the gaming community and is increasing the breadth of its content. One of the central themes of this program has been to teach about the online tools that make for an immersive gaming experience. Some of the members have created their own games. The entire group sometimes plays a member's game, and everyone learns more about the structures and design elements that go into good game creation. They also try different online tools and discuss where they best fit into a game developers' toolbox.
- Cy Shropshire's Senior Planet courses have been immensely popular with the attendees. Shropshire wisely kept the initial class size small to give them more flexibility on the first run through the curriculum. With the initial testing phase of the curriculum almost over, Shropshire has started registering new students for the next series of classes and has more people wanting to register for classes than the available seats. At last count, 20 Seniors are on the list, and more are interested in attending a later session. This impressive wait list is the result of Shropshire's willingness to build the program slowly with an eye on its long-term success. Shropshire is also an excellent teacher, and the students appreciate the effort that they put into every class.

Anecdotes

- Coding Club has been diversifying their interests, and we have just the resources for that! Many of the adult participants are interested in certifications and job skills available through our newly expanded Udemy Business access. Shropshire has been using Udemy to walk through Python coding tutorials and the curriculum has been an excellent jumping off point for developing further interest and curriculum. The handouts our Business Department staff made, letting participants know how to access Udemy from various devices, have been instrumental in getting people excited and learning.
- Collecting a diverse group of capable professionals has been key to the success of the Technology Center. One of the team members, Trevor Johnson, is a very patient and effective teacher and has excellent skills in troubleshooting Apple devices. He also has 18 years of security experience, and training in de-escalation and conflict resolution. After months of watching Johnson deliver stellar service to our patrons and manage tense situations in the Technology Center, some staff are noticing that we have picked up a few skills from just watching him work. Supervisor Jay Osborne found himself responding to a very provocative patron with unusual calm and managed to redirect the patron away from a conflict with another patron in the way that Johnson would. Learning highly effective conflict resolution strategies from a genuine professional is amazing on the job training for the whole team. Everyone on the Technology Center Staff brings their unique skill sets to the operation and everyone on the team contributes and learns something from each team member.

Teen Central, Jeff Bostic reporting

Programs

- The Liberators are once again participating in the NASEF Worldwide Mario Kart Time Trials. The spring worldwide tournament is open to all ages, so everyone in an organization can participate. Our reigning champion Victor has come in first place on the first two tracks of the event. He is the favorite to win the spring open tournament.
- The comic empowerment program delivered two more labs this month, allowing more teens to tell their stories and turn themselves into superheroes to overcome their fears or anxieties. We are preparing for the 1st Annual Comic Empowerment Awards with animations of the comic book characters.
- The media lab hosted over 60 students this month for school field trips. High school seniors interested in the digital media field explored photography, esports, and music production. Middle schoolers w to test out the various aspects of digital media and have fun.
- The photo voice group, which employs teens to explore issues in Rochester using photography, learned photoshop and AI image generation in the lab this month.
- The ImagineYOU lab entered a Fairy House into the Central Library Fairy House display this month. It was created using the Glowforge.



Community Libraries

BJ Scanlon reporting

- Highlights from my first month include: Visiting each of the branches and talking with staff, in my travels I received a lot of media recommendations and advice, notably I got a crash course on My Little Pony so I could talk about it with my nieces, a recommendation to read *Heartstopper*, and an invitation to a future D&D session.
- BRAD has also begun a practice of stopping into at least one program a week put on by our team. I've joined the Arnett teens for a taste-testing program and ardently disagreed with their rankings, watched live Irish Dance demonstrations at Wheatley, and clapped and sang with a group of 12 toddlers at Rhyme Time at Winton. I've also learned the dangers of working too late on a Friday, when my car was locked away, and I had to navigate my way out of the library late at night!
- I had the opportunity to travel to RIT for Tora-Con, an all-things anime convention, where I attended the panel on the Librarian's History of Manga in the U.S., presented by a team of RPL employees. I will also be working Saturday shifts at each of the branches throughout the upcoming months to learn more about operations, meet staff, and have some front-end experience with patrons.
- RPL is in the process of reconvening the library's Health and Safety Committee. This committee, chaired by the Deputy Director of Community Libraries, focuses on identifying and resolving health and safety concerns for staff, as well as reviewing notable incidents that have occurred within the library system.

Branch Administration, Amy Discenza reporting

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- RPL GO! Worked with team to develop the logistics of using RPL GO! to transport library books to and from Tora-Con. The team of Amy Discenza, Dennis Williams, and BJ Scanlon also presented on RPL GO! At the All-Staff meeting, slides included in this packet.
- Discenza represented Rochester Public Library at the Summer of Opportunity Program Annual Host Site Convening for Supervisors. The half-day event featured three guest speakers and a panel discussion.
- City of Rochester Opioid Team: Discenza attended a drug education session affiliated with the Neighborhood Ambassador Program at the Father Tracy Advocacy Center. Representatives from Helio Health, Conifer Park, and Villa of Hope shared information about the detox and recovery services their organizations offer. Staff from Helio Health expressed interest in partnering with libraries to promote their services, and Discenza connected Helio's Chief Marketing Officer with the managers of the Lincoln and Monroe branches.



Anecdotes

- Amy Discenza presented to a group of 20 mentors from the City of Rochester's Pillars of Hope program. She highlighted recent construction projects and renovations, new and noteworthy library services, digital resources, community partnerships and collaborations, programs and events, and ways the Central Library can support the Pillars program through tours and class visits. Throughout the presentation, she emphasized

how the Rochester Public Library can assist community members in their job search or pursuit of lifelong learning, and highlighted ways to utilize the library for enjoyment and savings.

- Discenza and BJ Scanlon attended a lively and well-received performance by the local Irish dance group ROCeltic at the Phillis Wheatley Community Library on the Friday before St. Patrick's Day. She also went to see the Resonanz Singers from Rochester Oratorio perform a special program of music about the Fisk Jubilee Singers at the Arnett Branch. It was both educational and entertaining—and the branch was bustling on a Saturday afternoon.



Arnett Branch Library, Ginger Brewer reporting

Programs

- Arnett's Read Across America celebration was a success! One family participated in an author name hunt; all three children found the authors' names hidden throughout the children's section, and even Grandma joined in the fun. Another family enjoyed an obstacle course inspired by the Berenstain Bears' *Bears in the Night*. They enthusiastically navigated the course multiple times, improving their completion time with each attempt. After finishing, they read books, and everyone went home with a prize. One young participant excitedly remarked, "*Today was the funnest day at the library ever.*"
- In anticipation of spring, young patrons personalized ceramic planters with stickers, temporary tattoos, washi tape, and paint markers. They were invited to bring their decorated planters to the farmer's market program that evening, where they could plant seeds supplied by the library. The activity was enthusiastically received and showcased the children's creativity.
- The third time was the charm for teen trivia, drawing an enthusiastic group of participants. Teens competed individually or in small groups, answering questions such as "What is the largest U.S. state?" and "How many sides does a stop sign have?" to win candy. The questions were challenging yet accessible and encouraged critical thinking. Participants enjoyed testing their knowledge and earning prizes.
- The Arnett Branch Library was pleased to host two cooking demonstrations this month, facilitated by Foodlink and the Westside Farmers Market. Both programs provided patrons with healthy recipes featuring a variety of fruits and vegetables. Attendees appreciated the engaging presentations and the delicious food samples on offer. Both organizations have scheduled future demonstrations at the library.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Stephanie Knapp attended the 30th Annual School and Community Project Fair at School No. 16. Knapp engaged with 60 children and adults to promote library services and programs. School No. 16 has shown interest in having Arnett participate in future events.

Anecdotes/Other

- A patron expressed deep gratitude for the kindness Arnett staff showed her and her children during a particularly challenging period in the summer of 2024. She noted that she lacked the words to fully convey her appreciation, but the Arnett team played a crucial role in restoring her hope. On a comment card, she wrote: *"The staff were helpful and offered words of encouragement to me and my children during our most difficult times. Thank you!"*
- From the NYS Department of Public Service: *"Thank you to all the staff at the Arnett Library for the assistance you provided in making my agency's use of the Community Room go smoothly last week. Although we had hoped for a little larger turnout from the public, the space that you provided was perfect for our needs for these mandated regulatory hearings. Thank you again."*



Charlotte Branch Library, Cathy Kyle reporting

Programs

- The Charlotte Branch hosted a two-session boating course to help attendees secure their New York State boating safety certificate, which is now required to operate a motorized boat in New York.
- The library's Cricut machine was utilized to design basic stencils, which participants then etched onto drinking glasses during two well-attended programs. Staff have received multiple requests to offer additional Cricut-based programs.
- Jennifer Cherelin introduced a new weekly program for homeschooled families, the Turning Point Book Group.
- Cherelin and a team of volunteers fed many families and made a large donation to a church's blessing box through the branch's food distribution program. Produce was secured from vendors at the Rochester Public Market
- The Food for Thought book club discussed *What You Are Looking For Is in the Library* by Michiko Aoyama. Participants met via Zoom to share their thoughts on the title and other books they've recently enjoyed.



Frederick Douglass Community Library, Evanna DiSalvo reporting

Programs

- Isaac Lewis has been networking with several teachers at School No. 12, and it is beginning to pay off. One of the sixth-grade classes has been visiting the library weekly to learn how to do research.
- Every week, groups of children from the Douglass R-center attend the regular Dungeons and Dragons and Douglass Doings programs.
- The theme of this month's Safari Storytime with the Zoomobile was bugs. The attendees were enthralled by the special guests – an African cockroach and two large millipedes – and had lots of questions.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Evanna DiSalvo attended Blankets and Books: Healthy Food Night with the Foodlink Curbside Market, at School No. 12. She brought a collection of gardening books curated by Jennifer Dupre for families to read. Participants also enjoyed a social time, potted seeds to start garden plants, and shopped for fruits and vegetables at the curbside market.
- DiSalvo met with School No. 12 Nature Based Planning coach Kyra Stephenson and C.G. from the Frederick Douglass Recreation Center to discuss plans for the Douglass Family Campus to become a HUB for nature-based learning this fall. The library will play a role in events that are based on the [Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights](#).
- Lewis was part of a panel of MCLS staff at RIT's [Tora-Con](#). For the past few months, Lewis has been involved in planning a discussion about where various manga titles should be in the library collection. He's been concerned that often, all manga is seen as being YA when, in fact, many titles contain very adult themes. This event brought that situation to light for many in attendance. The panel also provided an opportunity for individuals to ask questions and interact one-on-one before the "Manga in Libraries" event.
- Dupre enjoyed tabling at the Rochester Childfirst Network's Family Fun Night this month. She spoke with several of the library's regular families, as well as some new faces, and shared information about RPL and upcoming events at Douglass. It was a busy and successful event.



Anecdotes/Other

- The spontaneous arrival of Mr. Julio Nieves', HOLA Bilingual 4th grade, illustrated Lewis's effort in inviting classroom visits from our neighboring school. The staff was impressed to see the students quickly find books and sit down to read them. Library cards were processed for those who came prepared to receive borrowing privileges.
- At Douglass, when a patron receives their first library card, a small brass bell is rung. This ceremony has been witnessed by library regulars numerous times. The community's support was evident this month when the bell was used uniquely – to capture everyone's attention for singing



“Happy Birthday” to a staff member (another library tradition). When the afterschool families heard the bell, there was an enthusiastic chorus of “*yeah*” and applause. They thought someone had just received a library card and celebrated it.

- To highlight Women’s History Month an art exhibit titled “Women of the World” by [Eric VanAucken](#) was installed on the south wall of the library.
- On National Teenager Day a group of teens dropped by to visit Lewis. They were surprised and pleased to learn the library was recognizing the holiday and happily selected a free book.



Lincoln Branch Library, Sarah Lehman reporting

Programs

- March saw the return of the popular March Madness Board Game Bracket. Patrons voted each week on a bracket to determine their favorite board game until the competition narrowed down to Connect Four versus Uno. Lincoln staff disagree with this outcome, but the people have spoken, and it seems that Uno is the favorite game of 2025.
- RocDog made two visits to Lincoln this month. The later time slot is attracting more participants, and the visiting dogs enjoyed lots of pets and snuggles.
- Teens celebrated Pi Day by sampling a selection of pies.
- A women’s history-themed scavenger hunt encouraged teens to explore Lincoln’s teen space in search of photos of notable women from Rochester. Participants received prizes after completing the hunt.
- Vera Haygood and Sarah Lehman coordinated with Justin Delinois from the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) to organize a series of workshops on mental health for teens and their parents. The event was a resounding success, attracting wonderful attendance. Staff from Lincoln and NYIC look forward to continuing this partnership and planning more events in the future.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Lehman attended two meetings for the Clean Streets Makeover project taking place on Avenue D and Hollenbeck Street. The official street painting party is scheduled for May 10. The planning committee reviewed initial recommendations from the engineering firm and provided suggestions for minor adjustments to the plan.
- Lehman attended a stakeholder meeting for the Joseph Avenue Artwalk Program. A final public input session is scheduled for April 1, after which the architecture firm will present its recommendations for improvements to the Joseph Avenue corridor.

Anecdotes/Other

Haygood teamed up with staff from Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School to arrange library and teen space tours for four groups of teenagers. During their visits, the teens engaged with game stations designed for social interaction with their peers. They also applied for and acquired library cards, allowing them to check out books.

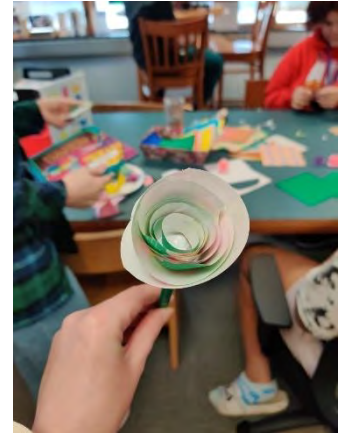
Lyell Branch Library, Dennis Williams reporting

Programs

- Artemis Markakis led a computer literacy class at the Charles Settlement House.
- Teens learned how to make origami flowers, bookmarks, and animals.
- Children had the opportunity to complete a seasonally themed Leprechaun Take and Make craft.

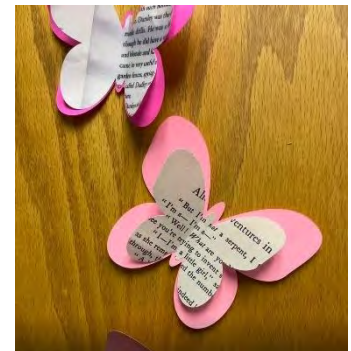
Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Dennis Williams and Markakis visited the Maplewood YMCA to meet with staff from the Lifespan Lily Cafe regarding potential mobile library programming opportunities.



Anecdotes/Other

- Lyell staff dealt with a particularly troubling incident this month. Artemis, Jamie, Manju, Danielle, Caleb, and Natasa seamlessly gelled together and effectively worked out a solution. Oftentimes, in public service, the reality is harsh. Having staff support one another and work out solutions that best suit them is key to maintaining a healthy atmosphere. Otherwise, staff end up burning out, or worse creating a cynical, dark attitude that does not aid those who need help the most. Kudos to the Lyell team.
- Staff spent this month addressing practical concerns regarding RPL GO! For example, navigation requires staff to use their personal cell phones to access the vehicle's GPS software. Hopefully, once the MiFi is in place, staff will be able to reconfigure that.
- Talented and creative staff charm the public with imaginative decorations.



Maplewood Community Library, Johanna Buran reporting

Programs

- This year's March scavenger hunt involved many young patrons who struggled to find shamrocks and pots of gold without calling out their locations for all to hear. Tiny leprechauns were hidden to add an extra challenge. No one was able to locate all three of them.
- A Pre-K class was on a field trip to the post office when they decided to make a surprise visit to the library. While visiting, they sang "Happy Birthday" to Maplewood's tween librarian, played on the playground, and entered the library's coloring contest. After the voting for the coloring contest concluded, one of these students won a prize.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- The Exploration Elementary Charter School for Science & Technology held an open house for prospective and current students in March. Forty-six people visited the library table during this event. This outreach

opportunity made residents aware of the changes at the Maplewood Community Library and helped establish connections with the staff at the school, which is currently operating without a library.

Anecdotes/Other

- A retired patron came in for help upgrading an investment monitoring app on his phone. Staff guided him through the process and introduced him to two-factor authentication—a necessary feature for the app's upgrade. He said he'd be back next week for help with his laptop.
- Another patron, who had recently gotten a job at the Jewish Home, needed assistance taking and emailing an ID photo to her new employer. Library staff helped her navigate this process, and she expressed her gratitude for their support.
- The online Advanced Conversation Class, held on Wednesday evenings, continued to attract participants from around the world. In March, the class included students from Ukraine, South Korea, China, and Tajikistan.
- A particularly memorable moment this month involved a teen who became transfixed by a small container resembling a fruit cup that had fallen from a child's pocket. Ravenous from fasting for Ramadan, he was determined to eat it, but staff cautioned him against it. A quick search using Google Lens identified the item as a jelly cup designed for feeding reptiles and insects in terrariums. Disappointed by this revelation, the patron ultimately discarded the item.

Monroe Branch Library, Mary Clare Scheg reporting

Programs

- Monroe hosted a musical program featuring Resonanz, the outreach choir of the Rochester Oratorio Society. Through narration and song, the choir shared the story of the legendary Fisk University Singers.
- The online trivia game Wheel of Poultry made its return! In honor of St. Patrick's Day, the trivia questions centered around the color green. Three participants joined in on the fun, and the winner received a library-themed puzzle as a prize.
- The Dungeons and Dragons Club has a loyal and enthusiastic following; the group met three times this month.



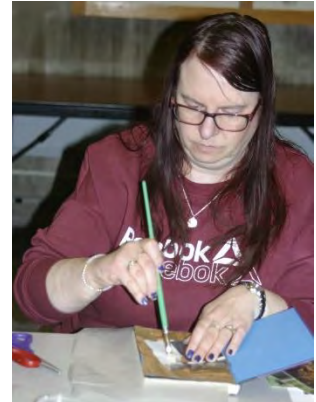
Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Lewis made two outreach visits to St. Paul's Daycare. She led three story times during each visit, engaging classes of 2-year-olds, 3-year-olds, and 4-year-olds.
- Theresa Filo hosted a video game program at the Center for Youth. It will continue as a monthly collaboration.

Phillis Wheatley Community Library, Kathryn Rebholz reporting

Programs

- Visiting artist Laura Jackett led an Altered Books workshop for adults. Participants had the opportunity to create their own altered book projects with step-by-step guidance from the presenter. They reported enjoying the workshop.
- The March Mix and Mingle event was a hit with Wheatley children and teens. Alexandra Haehn and Kathryn Rebholz paired walking tacos with a geography game. Participants used atlases to locate countries in North America, Central America, and South America. Afterward, they received a bag of taco chips and could put different toppings into the bag.



- The children created leprechaun traps in hopes of catching one at Wheatley. They placed the traps on the bookshelves along with letters addressed to the leprechaun. In response, the leprechaun left Haehn a note and some gold for the children to find the next day.
- Local Irish dance company ROCeltic visited the library to demonstrate various styles of Irish dance. For many attendees, it was their first experience with Irish dance. It was a delight to see everyone clapping along to the music, and one child even started dancing as he watched.



Anecdotes/Other

- An individual came into the library looking for help with New York State Unemployment. Heather Ahearn worked with them to set up an email account, establish an account with the New York State Department of Labor, and offer guidance throughout the application process. However, the website appeared to be experiencing technical difficulties, and after investing hours in the project, the patron decided to call the state the following day to find out how to proceed. Although Ahearn and the patron did not accomplish what the patron originally intended, they laid a substantial amount of groundwork, and the patron benefited from learning some basic computer skills.
- The kids and teens had a great time learning to use atlases for the Mix and Mingle! They felt a lot of pride when they could tell Haehn and Rebholz where a country was located. Some even stayed after the Mix and Mingle ended to find all the countries in Africa.

Sully Branch Library, Bruce Tehan reporting

Programs

There were several popular, scheduled events during the month, including a Computer Basics Class facilitated by Literacy Rochester, a meet-and-greet with representatives from the Rochester City School District's Office of Adult & Career Services, Narcan training from the Monroe County Department of Health, a Crochet Club, and a resource table on energy efficiency and bill assistance from Rochester Gas & Electric. Sully's team of literacy aides organized numerous pop-up programs to engage the branch's young visitors at a moment's notice.

Community Outreach/Meeting/Training

Jacob Bigelow, who's known for his expertise on manga, served on a panel comprised of MCLS staff at RIT's Tora-Con. To learn more about this wildly popular event celebrating manga and anime visit: <https://toracon.org/>.

Anecdotes/Other

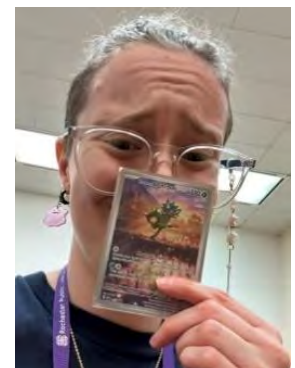
James Mitchell has done outstanding work at the Sully Branch for 15 years. Emily Clasper, BJ Scanlon, Maria Heeks-Heinlein, and George Carter presented James with a certificate from Mayor Malik Evans and the City of Rochester in honor of his service.



Winton Branch Library, Kathy Wolf reporting

Programs

- The Eastman School of Music's Music For All program celebrates its 30th Anniversary this year. The Winton Branch Library was delighted to host the Lilac String Sextet as they played Brahms for an audience of all ages. The six Eastman students encouraged audience questions about the music, their instruments, and how they started their musical journeys.
- The March meeting of the Winton Comic Club featured a lively discussion on *Pokémon Adventure Manga*, led by Emily Smith, where kids shared their favorite Pokémon and thoughts on the series. Afterward, they played Pokémon Battle Bingo, which was a hit, but the highlight of the meeting featured longtime member and first-time co-host Rowan. He brought his personal Pokémon card collection to teach club members how to build strong decks and battle effectively. Under his guidance, everyone carefully assembled their decks before facing off in matches. Rowan offered strategic advice throughout, even teaching Smith to play—though she finished last in the tournament. To wrap up the fun, he gave away some of his cards as prizes, including one to Smith as a keepsake (and a consolation for her crushing defeat at the hands of some excellent Pokémon masters).



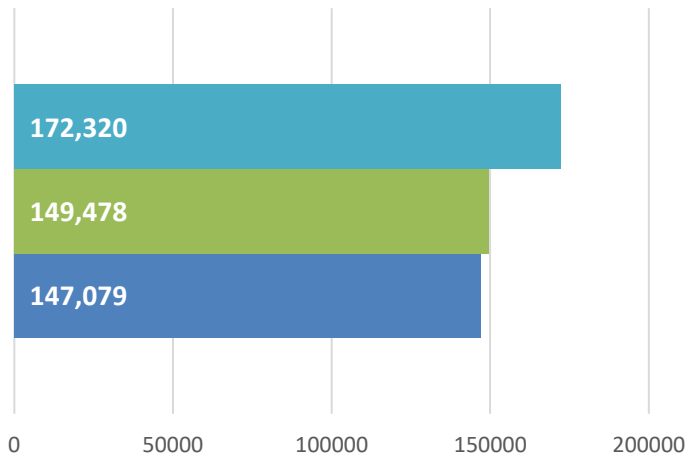
Anecdotes/Other

- One evening, while walking through her neighborhood, Kathy Wolf ran into a Rhyme Time family. The father mentioned that he and another Rhyme Time dad had planned a morning visit to Seneca Park Zoo, where they unexpectedly met three other regular attendees. The group joked about whether Wolf would appear to lead them in a sing-along at the zoo.
- While working at the Circulation Desk, Wolf noticed a large group of about thirty people crossing Winton Road with help from a Rochester Police Officer. She was surprised when they all entered the library—led by Mayor Malik Evans and several City Council members. Many had questions about the library, both in general and about Winton specifically. It was inspiring to see such an engaged group fostering connections within the community.
- Smith and Mary Fraser helped a customer print out over one hundred documents to send to her immigration lawyer. This experience was a good reminder for staff of how important library services are. During all of life's uncertainties and stresses, the public library can always lend a helping hand and make the hard times a little easier.
- As the library was closing on a Tuesday evening, a regular patron stopped by the Circulation Desk to share her gratitude. She praised the Digital Literacy Volunteer for their help and described Smith as a blessing, crediting her with teaching her how to set up email and apply for jobs. *"I think I've been helped by everyone here, and this month marks a year since I started coming to the library. I got my job at the airport eight months ago, and I couldn't have done it without the library."* she said. What a wonderful way to end the day!
- Amid recent news of the presidential executive order cutting funding to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the rise in book banning, some patrons have expressed concerns about the Winton Branch Library's future. One boy, accompanied by his mother, brought in a plate of cookies to show his appreciation to the library staff. Another patron called to ask how she could support the Winton Branch and shared her experience living in countries without libraries. She emphasized the vital role libraries play in communities and democracies.

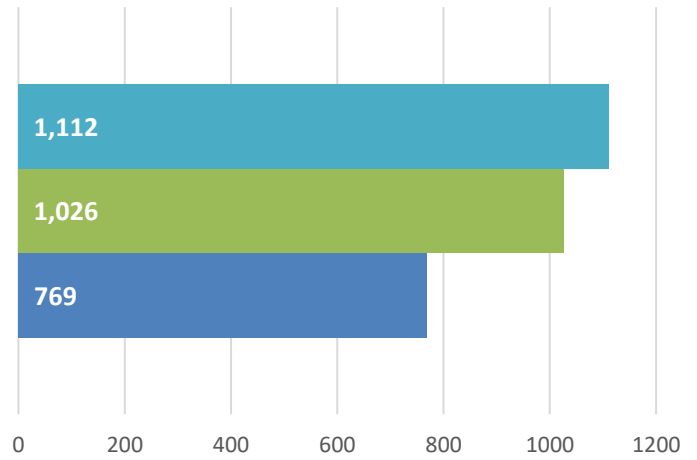
RPL Central Statistics YTD
Jan–Mar



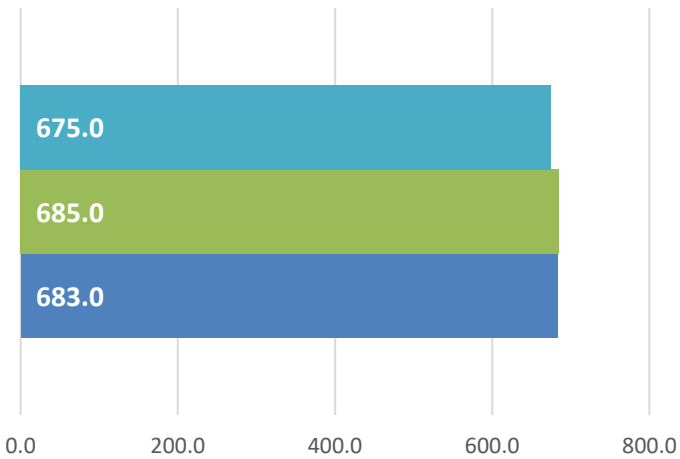
CIRCULATION



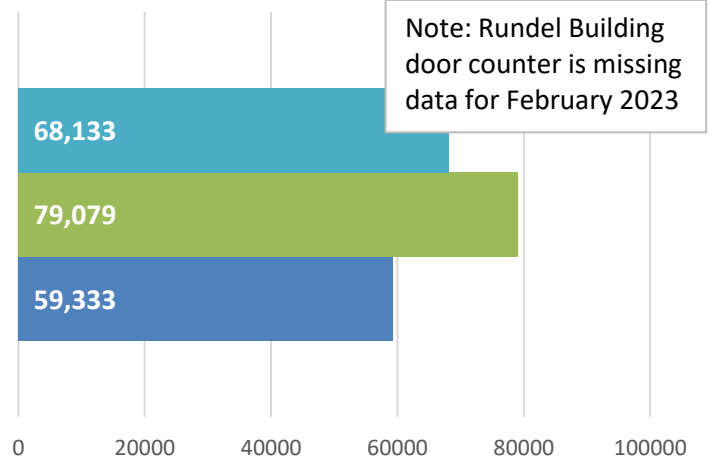
LIBRARY CARDS



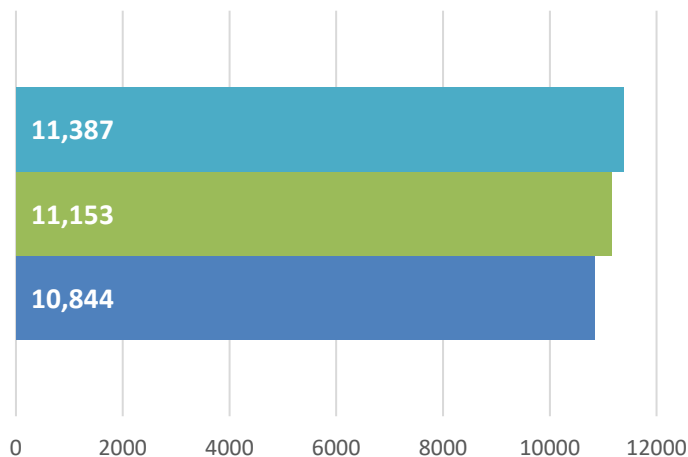
SERVICE HOURS



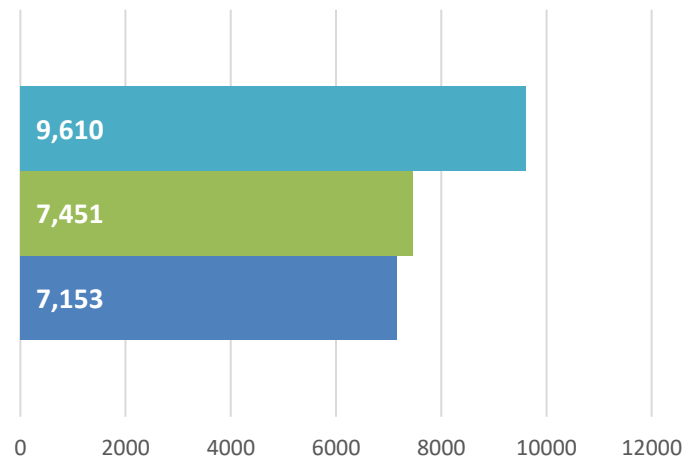
VISITS



REFERENCE QUESTIONS



NON-REFERENCE



RPL Central Statistics YTD

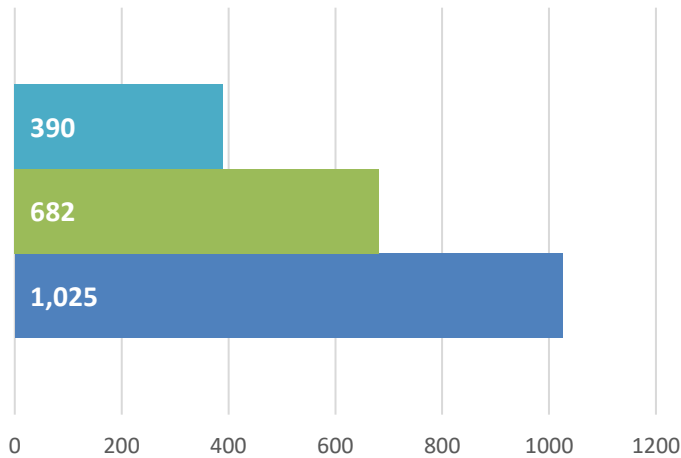
Jan–Mar

2025

2024

2023

NOTARY



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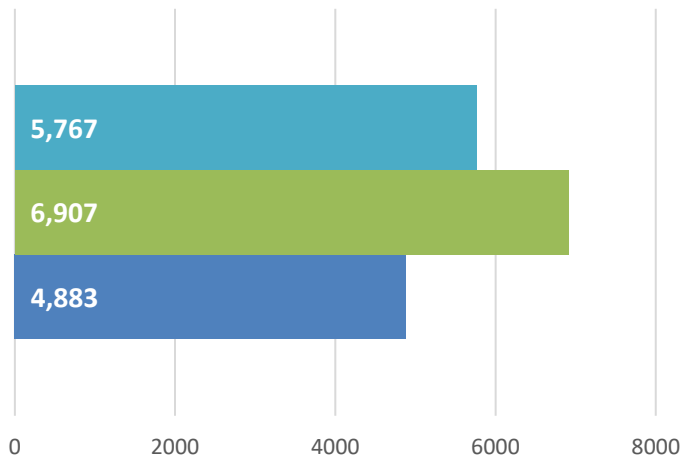
Computer Hours: Hours patrons used the public PCs.

WiFi Uses: Number of log-ins to the public WiFi.

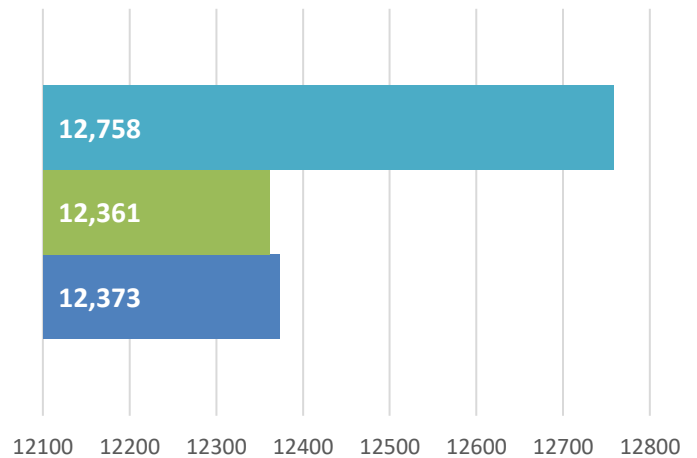
Group Programs: In-person and online programs. Excludes one-on-one programs and take-n-make.

Program Attendance: Attendance at Group Programs. Excludes staff and presenters.

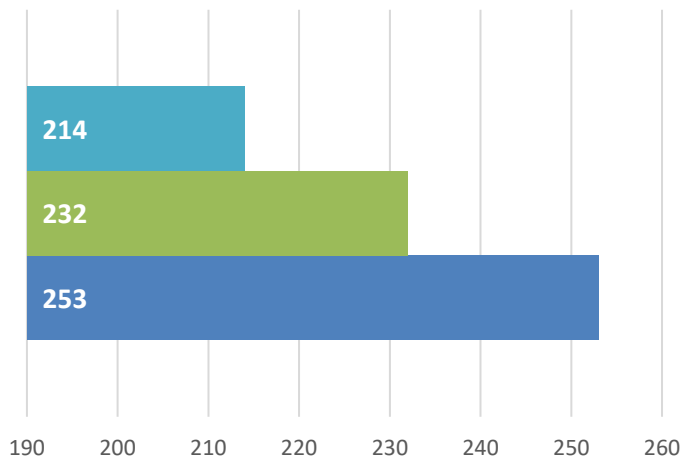
COMPUTER HOURS



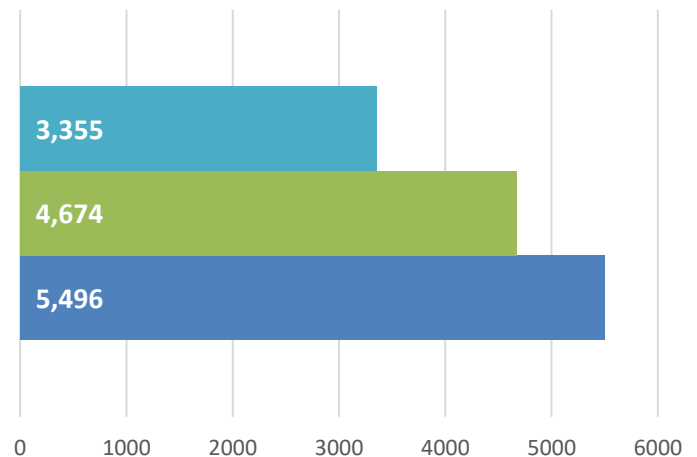
WIFI USES



GROUP PROGRAMS



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE



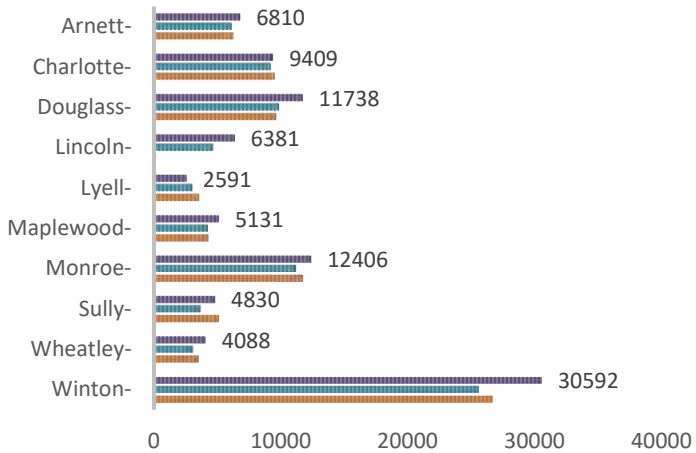
RPL Branch Statistics YTD Jan-Mar

2025

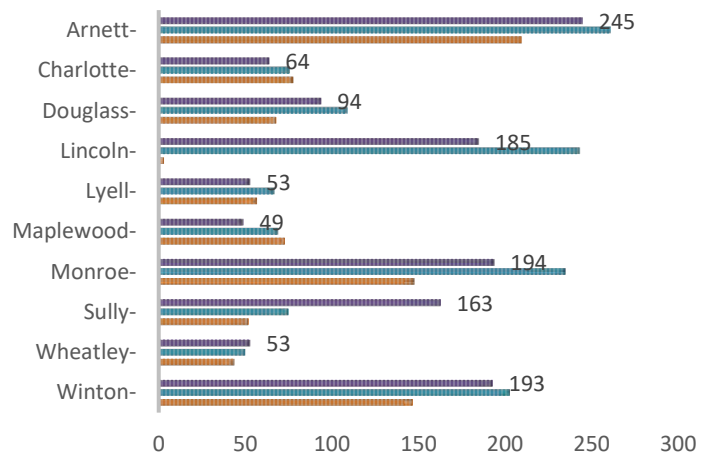
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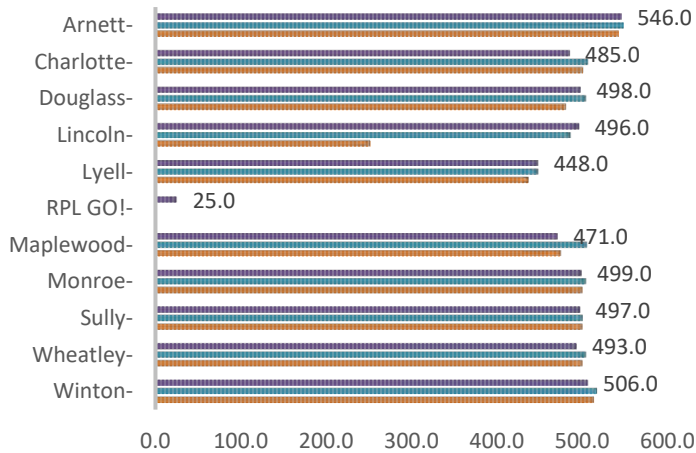
CIRCULATION



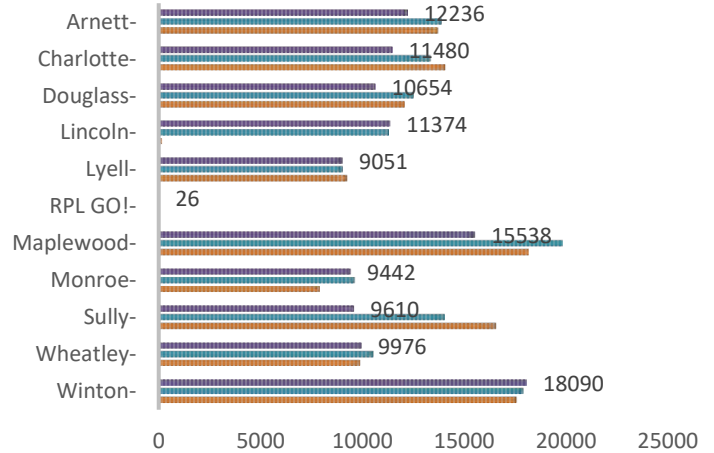
LIBRARY CARDS



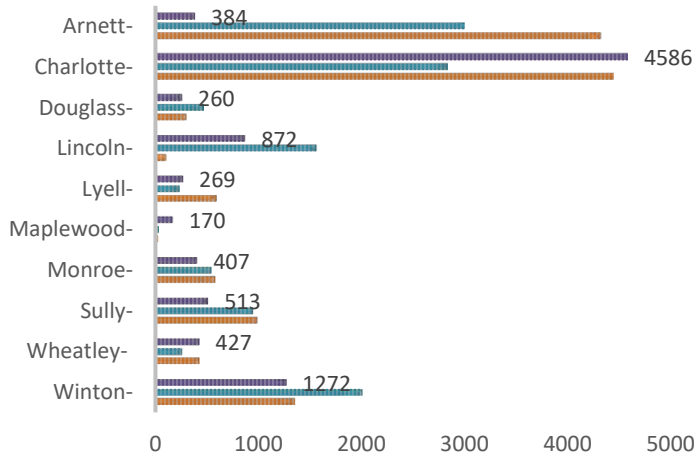
SERVICE HOURS



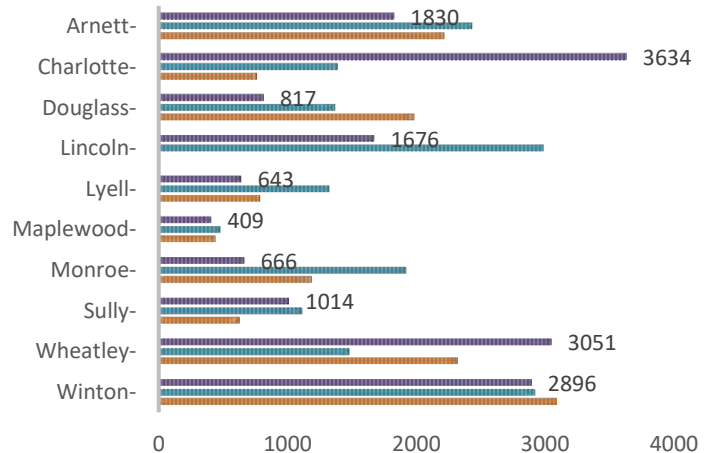
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NON-REFERENCE



RPL Branch Statistics YTD

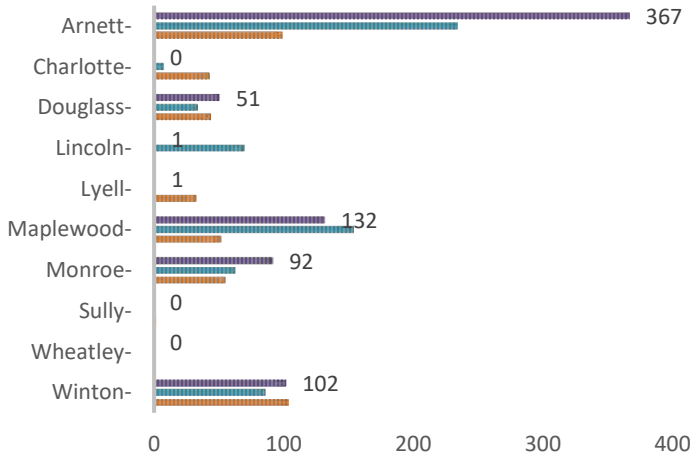
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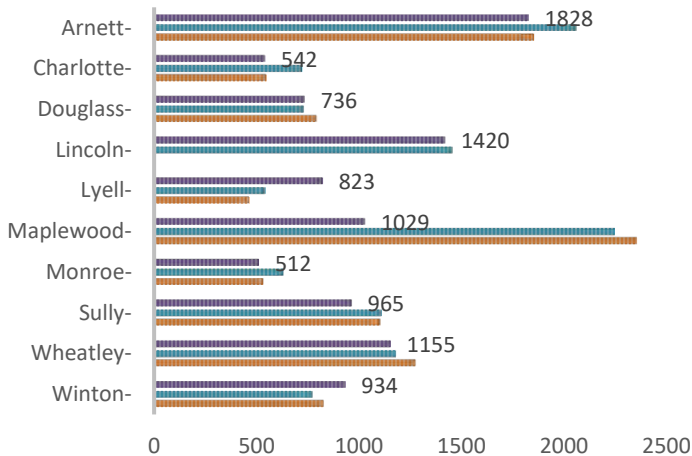
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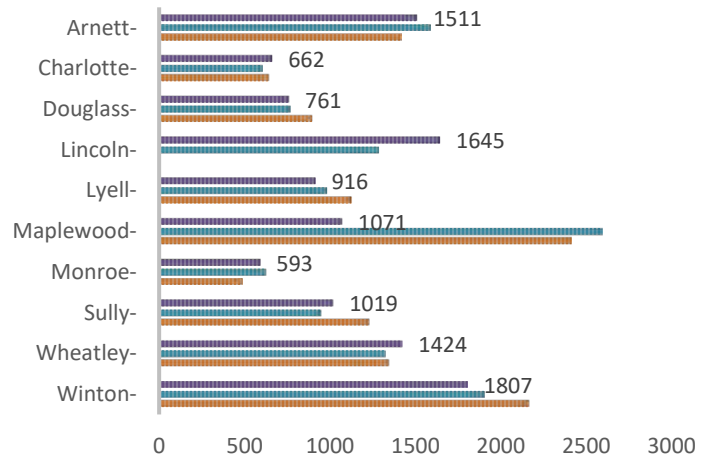
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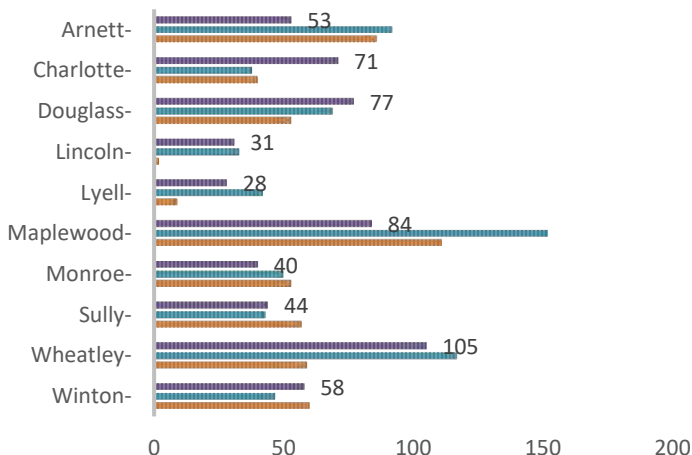
COMPUTER HOURS



WIFI SESSIONS



GROUP PROGRAMS



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

