Administrative and Staff Reports for December 11, 2025 Board Meeting

Waukesha Public Library Service Standards

WE ARE PEOPLE-CENTERED

Purpose over task • Respect for privacy

• High regard for all

WE CELEBRATE OUR SPACEShared ownership • Proactive helpfulness

WE ARE CONSISTENT IN OUR SERVICE

Unified experience • Timely responses

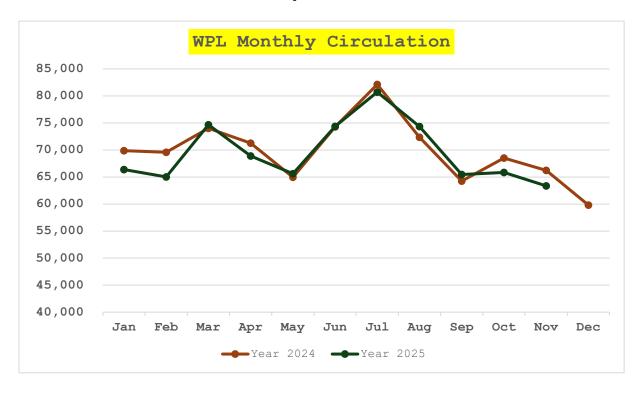
Effective referrals • Fair enforcement

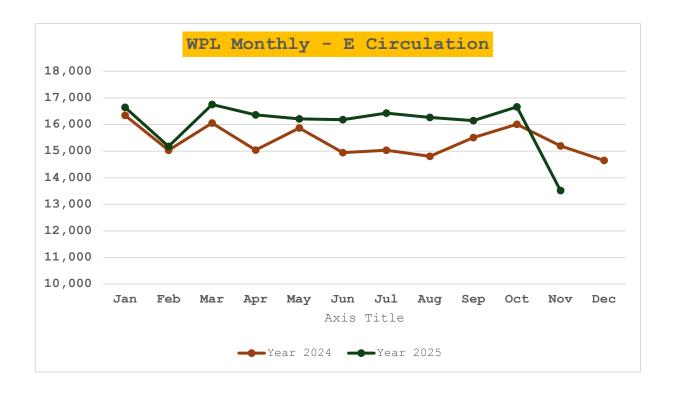
WE RESPECT EACH OTHER

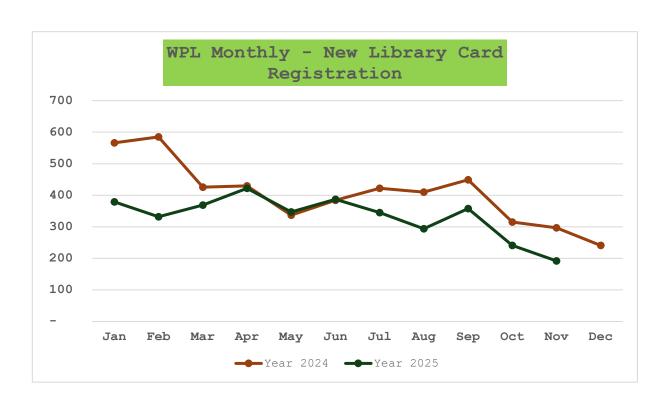
LIBRARY DIRECTOR, BRUCE GAY

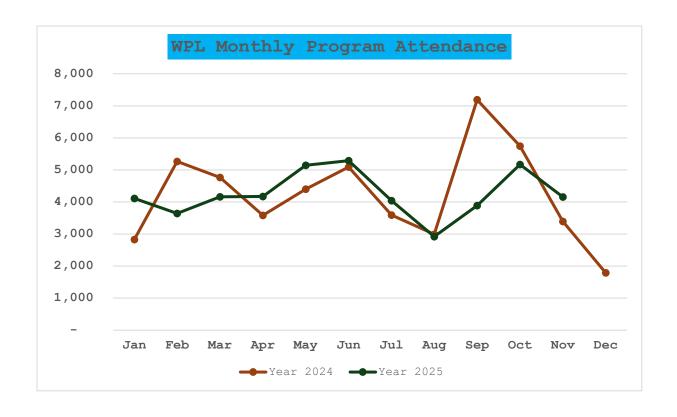
- Waukesha County Act 150 Committee: The committee
 met November 4, and will meet on December 9. I believe the
 committee will wrap up after its January meeting and send a
 recommendation to the Waukesha County board.
- **2026 Budget**: The 2026 operating budget was approved by the Common Council on November 4. There were no changes to the budget from earlier versions.
- Friends of Waukesha Public Library event: I attended the Friends event on November 22 featuring local author Maggie
 Ginsberg. The event was well planned and included a lively and interesting discussion with the author. 44 people attended.
- **Early close:** The library closed at 1 pm on Saturday, November 29 because of the large snowfall.
- **Hot Talks program:** I was the featured speaker at a library "Hot Talks" program on November 18. Organized by librarian Khorye Huffman, the program features 8 increasingly spicy salsas that I ate and then answered questions. Despite my nervousness, the program went well and I did not make a complete fool of myself.

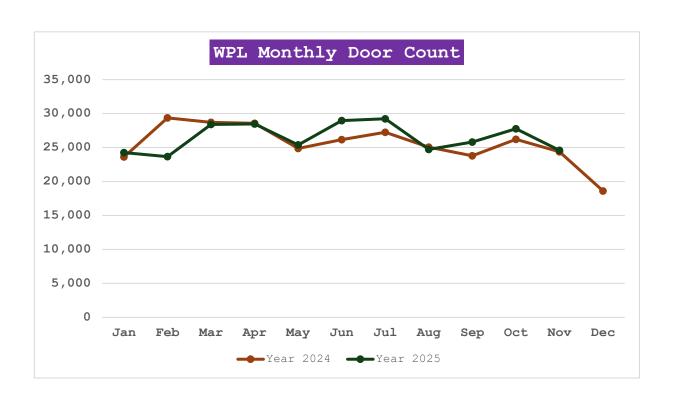
WPL By the Numbers:











ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, THERESE LYONS

Human Resources

The Accidents and Medical Incidents procedure was updated and shared with staff.

Building

- Thank you to Custodian Anna Gabrielson who finished removing peeled off decals from a wall in the Children's area. She then repainted it, making it look cleaner and more polished.
- Lee Mechanical is still in the building working on the HVAC project. New thermostats have been installed but are not yet operational. Thank you to staff for their patience as there are times when certain areas of the library are very warm.





The front entrance revolving door is currently inoperable and unfortunately, the parts we need to
repair it are unavailable. We are also reviewing proposals for replacement of the glass panels as
they are also in need of attention. It may be more costly than expected because the current glass
panels are no longer available. Patrons are still able to use the two side doors to enter and exit
the building

Staff Development

- This month, we hosted a variety of Staff Development and THAM sessions. Topics included Equus Workforce Solutions, St. Vincent De Paul, reviewing the Accidents/Medical Emergencies procedure, and Conference Learnings from the Wisconsin Library Association and CORE Forum. We also hosted a Ryan Dowd Training called Self-Care and Burnout Prevention Training with Gabrielle Juliano-Villani.
- I also attended these webinars: "Thriving Workplaces: Mental Health and Wellbeing", "Seven Signs you have a Significant Leadership Gap," and "Understanding Library Governance in Milwaukee County."

Cross Training

This month staff began to work on cross training on their secondary desks. The hope is that cross training will increase flexibility and provide even better customer service while encouraging employees to grow in their skills.

Employee Engagement

• Cindy and the City's Employee Events committee hosted a baked potato bar for all City employees on **Thursday, November 6**. Afterward, city employees were given a tour of the library led by Bruce. Thank you to Cindy for doing much of the meal preparation and set up.

On November 12, I joined other Leading Waukesha Alumni in putting together donations for the VA Hospital. The library collected a significant amount to add to the donations.

Public Art Committee

Three members of the Public Art Committee hosted tours of the collection on **Saturday, November** 8. Tour guides reportedly had a great time and this may be a program offered again.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, ALYSSA PISARSKI

In November, the Library hosted 124 programs with 4,156 attendees

Children's Programs: 46 programs, 2,765 attendees

Teen Programs: 19 programs, 461 attendees

• Adult Programs: 19 programs, 389 attendees

• General Interest: 40 programs, 541 attendees

Program Highlights

- Preschool Fun Day: In November, 166 children and caregivers visited the library for Preschool Fun Day. In one session hosted by Library Associate Kelli Cramer, children celebrated the Fall season. The children enjoyed listening to three books, singing, dancing, and using sandblocks. After storytime, they created a Fall Leaf Craft, used tangrams, sorted fruits and vegetables by color, and engaged in sensory play with bristle blocks and building toys. This program builds early literacy skills and school readiness for preschool-age children through the five early literacy practices of reading, writing, singing, talking, and playing!
- Pajama Rama: This has been another great month for Pajamarama! Kathy Luck has been joined by 154 patrons, who enjoyed her puppetry and storytelling.
- Kids in the Kitchen: The Tostadas program was a hit with our 39 attendees. Kids learned safe vegetable cutting skills with avocados, tomatoes, and even shaved carrots as they topped tostada shells with beans and rice to create delicious "food art."
- Hello Saturday, STEAM: National STEAM Day was a success at WPL. 117 patrons participated in STEAM centers. Families explored magnets, designed art with patterns, engineered habitats for animals, and learned about physics with marble mazes. Hello Saturday is a drop-in, weekend program that provides fun, engaging activities for children of all ages to participate in while visiting the library.
- Memory Cafe: Our November Taste of Fall Memory Cafe was full of fun and memories for 49 attendees, including 10 new participants. Tina Melzl demonstrated how to make a quick 20minute berry jam. While the jam was thickening, she showed us how to make a delicious Fall apple loaf and made many samples for the group to taste. Attendees then took turns stirring the ingredients to make their own homemade salted maple butter. Our super volunteer Lu Ann made pumpkin bread. All of the recipes were included in their folders to try at home.
- **Adult Book Discussion:** *The Women* by Kristin Hannah We welcomed 25 participants for an emotional, deeply touching discussion of Kristin Hannah's novel about the Vietnam War era through the perspective of a young female army nurse. Several veterans joined the discussion,

including Army Veteran Peer Specialist and Purple Heart recipient Peter Borucki. Almost everyone in attendance described personal and often painful family connections to the Vietnam War, and the group offered much support to each other during conversation.

 Les Paul Lunch in the Library: 11 teen students enjoyed making and decorating mini tile magnets to decorate their lockers. We also talked about our favorite Thanksgiving foods, Holiday traditions, and the proper timing for putting up Christmas decorations.

Outreach Highlights

Total outreach circulation – 874 items were delivered to and borrowed by Waukesha Outreach Patrons in November. The Outreach Services team had 129 in person interactions with outreach patrons this month, and received 79 phone, text, and email requests.



Library & School Collaboration

- **Kids' Choice** The 2025-2026 Kids' Choice school visits were a hit with fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students at fourteen elementary and middle schools in Waukesha. Michele and Caitlin facilitated 18 visits and presented to 1,174 students. The Kids' Choice books are flying off the shelf at WPL!
- School-aged Outreach- More than 200 students at eAchieve Academy, Butler and Horning Middle School Lunch Bunch, afterschool CLC programs, and special ed storytimes enjoyed creating Tiny Art at thirteen separate events in November. Participants of all ages,



with a variety of interests created unique art that they excitedly displayed or gifted to family members.

Partnerships/Collaborations

Laundromat Storytimes – Library Associate Rachel Brown and Library Page Kayla Vega visited two local laundromats (Flash and Westbrook) and engaged with 26 people. They distributed information about library services and programs, gave away books, and promoted early literacy in English and Spanish. Survey information was also collected regarding library use.

Community Engagement Highlights

Sustainable Summer Reading Workshop – Alyssa Pisarski, Kelli Cramer, and Paula Mason attended a half day workshop at the Brookfield Public Library to learn about environmentally sound, economically feasible, and socially equitable summer programming practices. The workshop focused on library programming for all ages and provided time to discuss the ideas presented and brainstorm new program opportunities.

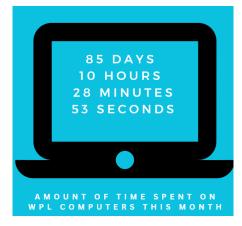
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, JOHN KLIMA

Studio 321

- 443 patron touch points.
- 56 makers were trained on makerspace equipment.
- The Glowforge and 3D printers have been running nonstop through November. The Glowforge is also booked out until the first full week of January for use. It is our most popular machine this time of year. Folks begin working on holiday projects starting in August and September.

Activities

Core Forum – This year's Core Forum was in Denver, CO. As always, the conference was full of more interesting sessions than I had time to attend. This was also my third year on the planning committee for the conference. Being on the committee means that I spend much of my time at the conference working for the conference. One highlight was a session from the Brooklyn Public Library—When to Tap-In and Tap-Out: Nurturing Resilience and Renewing Bonds in Library Teams—that really spoke to me. BPL's Office of Neighborhood Services noticed that staff from their 62 branches were dealing with burnout, so they wanted to provide a way for staff to recharge



- and reenergize. Branches would 'tap out' and then the Office of Neighborhood Services and other admin staff would 'tap in' and run the branch for the day while staff went out and spent time together outside of work. It's made me start thinking about if there are ways we could do something similar for WPL staff.
- **ALA Emerging Tech Trends** I am on the planning for the Emerging Tech Trends panel that takes place at ALA Annual every year. In October we hosted an online discussion for librarians to talk about AI in the library, and it was very interesting. We met in November to brainstorm topics and potential speakers for the panel. We also put together the form for people to submit ideas for us to review. We won't meet in December, but at the January meeting we'll start reviewing submissions. We plan to host another online discussion in February.
- **Sorter** The sorter started rejecting items in our external return with the error message 'item too long.' IT Technician II Jason Penckofer is working with MK to determine what the problem is. Executive Director Bruce Gay reached out to MK to get an update on the sorter refresh. They are still trying to get the work scheduled in 2025, but they are running out of time.
- Website I signed the contract with Revize to redesign our website and move it to their hosting services. The first step is a design questionnaire. I'll be going through the questionnaire with Marketing and Communications Manager Kori Hall and her staff. The process will take six to eight months to complete.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS, KORI HALL

Winter/Spring Event Handouts

 The Marketing Department completed the children's pages for the 2026 Winter/Spring Park Rec Guide. The guide will be delivered to homes around December 8, and the children's pages are currently available on the Library's website in both <u>English</u> and <u>Spanish</u>. Printed copies can be picked up at either of the Library's service desks.



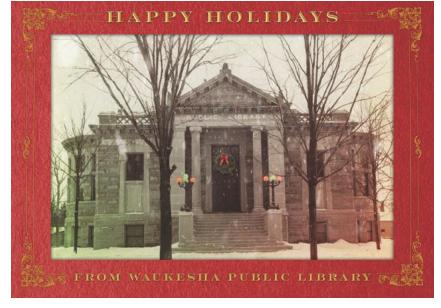
- The Marketing Department also completed the Winter/Spring Adult Events handout. Printed copies are currently available at each of the service desks and on the Library's <u>website</u>. Be sure to take a look at the wide array of upcoming events and mark your calendar!
- To better reach young adults this winter, Marketing created a promotional handout that solely highlights the Library's teen events. Printed copies are available at both service desks and in the Teen Zone. The handout will also be distributed at family outreach events.





Holiday Card

Happy Holidays! Marketing created the Library's holiday card, which will be mailed to donors, partners, government officials, and Library advocates. In recognition of our upcoming 130th anniversary, the design features a vintage photo of the building accented with festive holiday touches.



Book Tree

There's holiday cheer, and then there's LIBRARY holiday cheer! This month, Marketing created the third annual Library book tree and the first-ever holiday selfie station. The tree is approximately eight feet tall, comprised of 387 books, 420 twinkle lights, 24 library cards, and 35 feet of garland. We invite everyone to admire the display, snap a pic, and then share the cheer using #WPLBookTree.

Waukesha Reads

- The Waukesha Reads Partner Committee met on November 11 to celebrate another outstanding year! Members shared success stories and photos while discussing suggestions and potential improvements for Waukesha Reads 2026.
- The Waukesha Reads Steering Committee will meet on December 10 to begin discussing potential book titles for next year and to determine whether or not the Library will be applying for a Big Read grant in 2026.



Other Marketing Projects:

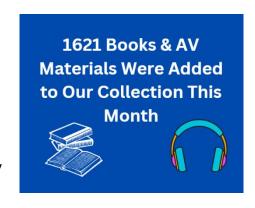
- The October "Welcome" email was sent to 127 new cardholders on November 18. It was opened by 61 people, and nobody unsubscribed.
- November social media statistics:
 - Adult Facebook and Instagram=27 posts (including 10 reels) and 16 stories Children's Facebook=20 posts (including 10 reels)
- November newsletter blasts were sent out on the following topics: November Monday Movie
 Matinee; Quiet Book Club; Public Art Tour; Hot Talks with Bruce Gay; Maggie Ginsberg author
 event; Connect & Learn Workshop; cancellation of the Connect & Learn Workshop; Thanksgiving
 week hours; December Monday Movie Matinee; and the November 29 early close.
- Closing messaging was created for Thanksgiving week.
- Promotional slides were created for the Friends of WPL Maggie Ginsberg event.
- The Vega Catalog's children's showcase was updated to reflect the theme "Gather together."
- Marketing Department slides were created for Staff Ed Day.
- Signs were created for a temporary stuffie and puppet sale.
- The winter/spring children's handout was translated into Spanish and redesigned to accommodate the Spanish text.
- The winter/spring adult events were added to the Library's Online Event Calendar.
- A Memory Café brochure was created for January-June 2026.
- Two decorative "Taste of Fall" signs were created for the November Memory Café.
- A Waukesha Reads photo slideshow was created for use at the Waukesha Reads Partner Committee meeting and the November Library Board meeting.
- A sign was made for the LEGO Club display.
- A logo, slideshow, and letterhead were created for Staff Ed Day.

- Eight reading lists were created in LibraryAware for the 2026 Reading is Lit year-long reading challenge.
- Eight banners and eight badges were created for the 2026 Reading is Lit year-long reading challenge.
- A sign was created for the holiday puzzles.
- The Staff Picks showcase was updated in the Vega Catalog and the *Staff Picks* newsletter was sent out.
- A new booklist, *Feast of Fiction*, was created and added to the Library's website.
- Twelve book display signs were created for the month of December.
- November event information was submitted to the City of Waukesha calendar, the Downtown Waukesha calendar, and the Eras event calendar.
- November event information was submitted to Peachjar.

MATERIALS COLLECTION, CAROLYN PEIL

Activities

- Children's librarian Caitlin Schaffer attended the Bridges Youth Services meeting on Nov. 3 at Hartland Public Library.
- Librarian Sara Byrnes attended the Bridges Adult Services meeting on Nov. 4th at Oconomowoc Public Library.
- Sara also talked with a group of "First Year Experience" students from Carroll University on Nov. 4th about censorship and book banning.
- On Nov. 13th, LA's Anne Klug, Carol Rose, and Cindy Detro were given the opportunity to complete a JDQ for their library assistant position. The completed JDQ was turned in on Nov. 18th.



- On Nov. 19th the selection librarians met with the Acquisitions team to discuss year-end spending and life after Baker & Taylor.
- Children's Librarian Caitlin talked with an honors class from Carroll University about banned books on Nov. 19th.
- Selection librarians worked frantically to prepare final orders for 2025 funds. Acquisitions will complete materials ordering around December 10th. **Acquisitions received 3521 items in November- a number not seen for at least 7 years!**
- Database Librarian Erin Kramer and I met with Kristie Glascock from Newsbank to discuss an enhanced newspaper database available to us. This would provide access to 429 additional newspapers, including 10 from Wisconsin.

PUBLIC SERVICES, JUSTIN STEVENSON

Activities

Cross training for desk staff has begun. This is a multifaceted project involving all public service

points and staff from almost every department. Each desk staff member involved is on a "training pathway" where they will learn a secondary desk and eventually a tertiary desk. This strengthens our staff, our service to our patrons, and increases schedule flexibility. This effort supports multiple WPL Service Standards. More updates and progress to follow in the coming months.

 The Public Services department has adjusted workflows in the circ workroom, resulting in much greater efficiency with transit unloading, materials handling, and shelving.



- Public Services Manager Justin Stevenson and Technology Services Manager John Klima attended
 the Core Forum conference in Denver. This is an annual conference focusing on access and
 equity, buildings and operations, leadership and management, collections, and technology. Justin
 attended a preconference about embedding equity practices into programs and services, as well
 as sessions on accessibility in library buildings, customer service and culture building, and usagebased demography. Useful connections were made with library professionals from systems around
 the U.S.
- Marketing & Communications Manager Kori Hall and Justin met with WPRF's Customer and Administrative Services Manager, Mark Schram, for a demonstration of the USPS's Every Door Direct Mail tool. This tool will allow the Library to send large amounts of mailings to our community members easily and efficiently. Mass mail marketing campaigns are something the Library will explore further in 2026.
- The recently announced School District of Waukesha school closings will likely affect the afterschool environment at the Library. Library management have already begun brainstorming program and service ideas to engage middle schoolers, and have begun a dialog with school staff. More information on collaboration and innovation between SDW and WPL will follow once the effect of these changes is clearer.