

OCPL Director's Report

May 2023

1. Programs and Services: Programs were well attended in March and April. Children's programming continues to be our biggest draw. (Actual attendance numbers may be found in the Youth Services report, and they are impressive.) Kerry Leeper Brock, the Community Resource Associate, has been coordinating a program or series of programs each month based on the theme for that month (e.g., women's health, heart health, etc.). In May and June, the library will hold blood drives at each of the branches in conjunction with the Blood Connection of Seneca. The Library also hosted Yoga classes taught by the Community Resource Assistant, Amy Saylor. In late April, the Walhalla Main Library also hosted a Cinco de Mayo festival, aimed at trying to increase Latino community awareness and use of library services. There were nine food vendors, crafts, bingo, and games. Around 150 people attended.

2. Usage Statistics and Narratives: Usage statistics for March and April as well as individual branch/department narratives are attached.

3. Finance and Budget: OCPL budget figures for FY23 to date are attached.

4. Personnel and Training: All of our regular county positions are filled. We continue to experience some turnover with our Staffmark positions, in part because some staff members found full time employment, but also because of the low hourly wage. We will be working with County Administration to see whether there is an opportunity to raise the starting wage in this or the next fiscal year. We are also continuing to make sure that we can retain Kerry Leeper Brock once the CRPH grant has expired in May of 2024. We held our spring staff training day on Good Friday, April 7.

5. Building and Grounds: The staff took on some beautification efforts in the front of the Walhalla Library during our In-Service training in April. (Pictures in the Branch Services report.) We have also made some small improvements to the children's and teen's area at the main location in Walhalla. The Lake and Hills Garden Club continues to maintain the beds in front of the Seneca Branch. The ADA-compliant ramp at the Seneca Branch still seems to be on track for completion. Staff at the Westminster Branch have installed a couple of flower boxes at the entrance to the building. In early May the Facilities Maintenance staff will complete a couple of additional cosmetic and space-related changes to the Walhalla Main Library; one in the children's area to accommodate our new AWE children's computers, and one to increase storage in the meeting room.

6. Technology: The library will begin using Beanstack, a tracking program for Summer Reading provided by the SC State Library. This replaces the less popular ReadSquared program. The library also will launch a new phone/device app for patrons to look at the items they have charged out, place holds on items, directly access some of our technology, and more.

7. Friends of the Library: Used book sales have continued each Thursday from 11:00 to 3:30 p.m. The Friends had excellent sales figures in January and February.

March: Basement Sales \$2,183

Books on the Alley	1,268
Lobby	376
2nd Party	30
Online	181
Seneca	39
Cafe Sales	34

Total **\$4,111**

April sales figures were not available, but will be updated as soon as they are received.

8. Oconee County: The County has approved our budget request for FY23-24, however some larger ticket items like the ADA ramp in Seneca and the salary for our Community resource Associate were not included.

9. State Library: The State Library has replaced ReadSquared with Beanstack to manage the attendance, registration, and completion numbers for Summer Reading. Youth Services staff reinforced training first conducted at the spring staff day with visits to each branch in late April and early May.

10. Community Involvement: Director and Comm. Resource Associate continue to be involved with the Healthy Oconee Coalition. The Healthy Eating/Active Living (HEAL) workgroup received approval on grant to help educate county residents on how to prevent and manage diabetes, so the library will have an ongoing role with that. Quientell Walker, Local History Associate, is also working with the Oconee History Museum on a project to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the OCPL with an electronic exhibit. The library is also donating books to the Blue Ridge Community Center in Seneca for their Summer Camp.

11. Other: The final draft of the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan is attached for your review.

OCPL Bimonthly Report
Library Usage Statistics
Director: Blair Hinson

	Mar 2022	Mar 2023	Change	Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Change
Visits to Library	12,369	13,031	5.4%	10,899	11,154	2.3%
Material Circulation - Adult	13,594	12,670	-6.8%	12,203	11,511	-5.7%
Material Circulation - Youth	941	819	-13.0%	812	734	-9.6%
Material Circulation - Juvenile	7,846	9,390	19.7%	7,421	7,969	7.4%
Total Material Circulation	22,381	22,879	2.2%	20,436	20,214	-1.1%
Internet Users	864	895	3.6%	808	755	-6.6%
Internet Hours of Use	419	411	-1.9%	350	335	-4.3%
New Cards Issued	150	98	-34.7%	154	92	-40.3%
Programs - Adult	9	10	11.1%	2	14	600.0%
Programs Attendance - Adult	67	75	11.9%	35	64	82.9%
Programs - Youth 12-18	2	1	-50.0%	0	1	
Programs Att - Youth 12-18	44	9	-79.5%	0	3	
Programs -Juvenile 6-11	13	10	-23.1%	11	9	-18.2%
Programs Att -Juv 6-11	474	206	-56.5%	166	683	311.4%
Programs - Children 0-5	22	30	36.4%	18	28	55.6%
Programs - Att - Children 0-5	346	639	84.7%	334	567	69.8%
Outreach Activities	17	18	5.9%	17	24	41.2%
Outreach Act. Attendance	719	429	-40.3%	719	978	36.0%
Public Training Sessions	0	0		0	0	
Public Training Participants	0	0		0	0	
Public Training Hours	0	0		0	0	
Staff Training Sessions	1	7		10	4	-60.0%
Staff Training Participants	1	7		21	4	-81.0%
Staff Training Hours	45	7	-84.4%	84	14	-83.2%
Number of New Volunteers	0	0		0	0	
Number of Vol Hours	21	44	109.5%	22	38	70.5%
Meeting Room Use	37	60	62.2%	31	43	38.7%
Meeting Room Attendance	137	728	431.4%	209	524	150.7%
Number of Web Site Hits	10,696	12,354	15.5%	10,496	11,367	8.3%
Wi-Fi Users	108	115	6.5%	110	112	1.8%
Wi-Fi Sessions	658	721	9.6%	697	715	2.6%
E Book Downloads	2,936	3,446	17.4%	3,094	3,508	13.4%
Flipster	147	132	-10.2%	129	143	10.9%
Kanopy visits	1,845	1,202	-34.9%	1,147	1,093	-4.7%
Ancestry.com Hits	433	106	-75.5%	350	143	-59.1%
Interlibrary Loans	20	19	-5.0%	20	21	5.0%
New Material Added	1,492	1,189	-20.3%	1,243	1,171	-5.8%

OCPL Budget 2022-2023 5-5-23

Account Number	Description	Budgeted	Spent	Percent	Balance
Local Budget					
010-206-30024-00000	Equip. Maintenance	2,500	2,475	99%	25
010-206-30025-00000	Professional -Staffmark	154,965	119,987	77%	34,978
010-206-30041-00000	Telecommunications	1,000	684	68%	316
010-206-30056-00000	Data Processing	28,817	28,300	98%	517
010-206-30059-00000	Copier Click Charges - Xerox	8,500	6,552	77%	1,948
010-206-30080-00000	Dues	750	750	100%	0
010-206-30084-00000	School, Training, Sem.	3,000	3,000	100%	0
010-206-30090-00000	Honorarium	900	900	100%	0
010-206-33022-00207	Bldg Maint - Walhalla	5,500	6,333	115%	-833
010-206-33022-00208	Bldg Maint - Seneca	3,500	2,856	82%	644
010-206-33022-00209	Bldg Maint - Westminster	2,500	2,712	108%	-212
010-206-33022-00210	Bldg. Maint - Salem	2,020	2,102	104%	-82
010-206-34043-00207	Electricity - Walhalla	25,000	11,950	48%	13,050
010-206-34043-00208	Electricity - Seneca	16,000	9,191	57%	6,809
010-206-34043-00209	Electricity - Westminster	15,500	5,924	38%	9,577
010-206-34043-00210	Electricity - Salem	5,000	5,000	100%	0
010-206-34044-00207	Water - Walhalla	1,700	977	57%	723
010-206-34044-00208	Water - Seneca	1,200	1,313	109%	-113
010-206-34044-00209	Water - Westminster	1,200	672	56%	528
010-206-40031-00000	Sm Capital Equip (Loc)	2,200	2,200	100%	0
010-206-40032-00000	Operational	6,000	5,969	99%	31
010-206-40032-00000-A	Youth Services	2,000	1,993	100%	7
010-206-40033-00000	Postage	500	48	10%	452
010-206-40034-00000	Food	500	165	33%	335
010-206-40045-00000	IT Equipment				0
010-206-40101-00000	Books (Local)	85,000	78,801	93%	6,199
010-206-40102-00000	Periodicals (Local)	22,200	22,200	100%	0
010-206-40103-00000	AV (Local)	11,300	11,253	100%	47
010-206-80206-00000	Automobile Maint - Library	1,500	1,151	77%	349
010-206-81206-00000	Gasoline - Library	3,000	1,871	62%	1,129
010-206-82206-00000	Diesel - Library	2,000	2,118	106%	-118
TOTAL LOCAL FUNDS		415,752	339,446	82%	76,306
013-206-60010-00000	Gift's	61,591			61,591
013-080-00805-11001	Nettles Trust	68,328	568	1%	67,760
TOTAL MISC. FUNDS					129,351
State Aid Budget					
240-206-30056-00255	Data Processing (State)	\$15,773.82	15,773.82	100%	0.00
240-206-30080-00255	Dues (State)	\$791.00	790.89	100%	0.11
240-206-30084-00255	Schools, Training (State)	\$1,709.00	933.38	55%	775.62
240-206-40031-00255	Sm Capital (State)	5,542.21	2,454.15	44%	3,088.06
240-206-40032-00255	Operational (State)	\$15,000.00	14,700.71	98%	299.29
240-206-40045-00255	IT Equipment	\$8,500.00	8,343.40	98%	156.60
240-206-40111-00255	Books (State)	\$81,500.00	73,214.48	90%	8,285.52
240-206-40112-00255	Periodicals (State)	\$31,664.00	31,663.04	100%	0.96
240-206-40113-00255	AV (State)	\$16,600.00	12,521.04	75%	4,078.96
Total State Aid Funds		\$177,080.03	160,394.91	91%	16,685.12



Budget Transer \$14,965 from 010-717-60767-00000 Contingency Fund for Thomas Hutton

|

|

| Transferred \$600 to General Telecommunications/Cell service Kerry 010-709-30041-00000

| Transferred \$291 from Schools, Training (240-206-30084-00255)
Transferred \$291 to Dues (240-206-30080-00255)

|

Bookmobile and Outreach Narrative, March/April 2023

Christie Johnson, Bookmobile Manager

Operations

In March, twenty-four regularly scheduled stops were completed. Five volunteers worked with me, along with one Walhalla staff member. In April, twenty-four regular stops were completed. I had four volunteers and two Walhalla staff members to assist.

Outreach

There are many different types of outreach that the Bookmobile is involved in, such as regular visits to preschools, daycares, assisted living homes, and other facilities, tours of the Bookmobile as part of a visit to the library, and special events. This two-month period saw a variety of outreach opportunities.

- **Preschool/Daycare stops** – The Learning Center at Open Door Baptist Church, Homestead Academy
- **Assisted Living Homes** – Lakeview Assisted Living, Residences at Park Place, The Oaks, Keowee Place, Foothills Assisted Living
- **Other Facilities** – Oconee ARC, Oconee County Detention Center, Oconee County Animal Shelter
- **Special Events** – Walhalla Elementary tour, YMCA Spring Break Camp, YMCA Healthy Kids Day, James M. Brown Kids Fest, Northside Elementary Literacy Night

My newest outreach stop, The Oaks Assisted Living in Seneca, requested us to come into their facility instead of having residents come out to the bookmobile. They have many residents with mobility issues, and though the Bookmobile is equipped with a wheelchair lift, their parking lot is very small, and isn't a great fit for us to use the lift. Our March visit to them was the first lobby visit. My volunteer and I took materials inside and set up at a table in the lobby. We were able to check out books and create new cards, just like on board the bookmobile. We have had 7 new patrons with new library cards since adding this stop, and I hope to see it expand, since we will be providing easier access for the patrons now. We will continue to improve and streamline our lobby visit process, and this may be something I can offer to our other assisted living homes in the future.

Youth Services hosted the Kindergarten classes from Walhalla Elementary in March for a field trip, and they were kind enough to include the Bookmobile on the tour of the library. DJ brought the classes on board, where they had a brief look around, and I talked about the Bookmobile.

I have been contacted by Golden Corner Church Preschool. They requested the Bookmobile to come starting next school year, as they are going from a 3-day to a 5-day program. I am excited to be able to add this as a regular stop starting in August. I

am working out the details with them, and will need to ensure that I have a volunteer to assist.

The YMCA asked us to come for their Spring Break Camp the first week of April. The kids got to take a look inside the Bookmobile, and DJ provided story time for them.

I participated in Kids Fest at James M. Brown Elementary, where I saw 75 people and created a couple of new library cards.

Darcy and I attended the YMCA's Healthy Kids Day in April. We saw 135 people and handed out bookmarks, stickers, and summer reading information. Quite a few people came on the bookmobile for the first time, as well as some return visitors.

Darcy and I participated in Literacy Night at Northside Elementary. There was a wonderful crowd there. We had nearly a dozen new library card sign ups and saw 86 people.

Maintenance

The Bookmobile picked up quite a bit of mud during the rainy month of March. Our county vehicle maintenance crew was kind enough to wash it at the end of the month to get it sparkly clean before our special events in April. I also had a leaking air compressor line in the front seats. The air compressor allows us to turn the seats around to serve patrons at stops, as well as giving us a more comfortable ride on the bumpy Oconee roads. Vehicle Maintenance was able to patch it up for us, and we are awaiting a replacement compressor.

Statistics

Category	March 2023	April 2023
Stops	26	28
Hours Open	24.5	32.5
Total Attendance	382	588
Outreach Stops	14	17
Outreach Visitors	231	247
New Cards	4	13
Volunteers/Hours	5/41	4/36

Branch Services Narrative

Mar-Apr 2023

Sue Andrus

Adult Programming

Adult Summer Reading program planning has started. This year the theme for Summer Reading is "Friends & Kindness", which our Youth Services Department interpreted with a "Summer Camp" emphasis.

Prizes are:

- Kavu toiletries/cosmetic bag
- JBL Flip 5 bluetooth speaker
- Yeti soft sided lunch bag cooler
- Uncle Hu 20x50 binoculars
- Byer of Maine canvas camp chair
- Dalix canvas tote bag

Thanks to the excellent work by Bethany Culp, our graphics program (Canva) now has many templates we can use to create social media content and publicity materials.

Facilities

On In Service Day (April 7) we planned a group project to landscape the two 10'x25' areas between the Walhalla library entrance and the parking lot. This didn't happen due to rain. Over the course of the next two weeks, I spent several days working on the project as time and weather allowed. Circulation Manager Tucker Brown rototilled the dead grass and removed it, and then we chopped roots out and dug up the entire area to a depth of about one foot. The soil was amended with fresh topsoil and compost. By the third week of April, I planted:

- 5 Carolina jessamine vines
- 6 dwarf butterfly bushes
- 24 salvia
- 12 phlox
- 1 speedwell

I spent a fair amount of time in the planning of this simple pollinator garden. Plants needed to be known pollinator attracters (obviously), low-maintenance perennials, extremely sun-tolerant (they are on the west side of the building), purple or yellow, and available locally. The library's [Southern Living Garden Book](#) was an invaluable resource!

The county Facilities Maintenance staff spread a thick layer of mulch over the entire area and pressure-washed all of the sidewalks and it looks fantastic. Still to come are some bee and bird houses and a sign identifying the Joe Lenderman Memorial Garden.

Before (October 2022 Google map image):



After (April 23):



Salem Library
Mar/Apr 2023
Kayla Rucker
Branch Manager

Programming, Operations, Staff Development, etc...

- ❖ In February, we debated on discontinuing story time at the Salem branch; however, attendance in March has picked up. We will be keeping it as a staple program.
- ❖ For March, there were 21 total in attendance for story time; in April, there were 10 in attendance.
- ❖ LEGO club was another program that was on the chopping block. We've seen an increase in attendance for both ages groups.
- ❖ There were 3 in attendance for LEGO club in March; in April, there were also 3.
- ❖ On March 17th, our Leprechaun Trap program was held. There were 8 that attended the program.
- ❖ For our Zoom Page Turners Book Club, we had 4 in attendance for March and 0 in April
- ❖ On April 3rd, 4 patrons joined us for our Peeps Stamp Art program.
- ❖ On April 7th, part of our training day was spent at our respective branch. We spent this time weeding our juvenile fiction to prepare for inventory and working on collection development in that section.
- ❖ Downtime during the end of April was used to shelf read all sections of the library. Inventory will be started at the beginning of May.
- ❖ Kayla accessed/viewed the Creating and Implementing an Outreach Committee and Plan and "Things" for Your Library recorded sessions of the Southeast Collaborative Online Conference in early April.
- ❖ The majority of programming for April was held during National Library Week (24th-28th)
 - Family Bingo, which is our most popular program, brought in 14 attendees.
 - Coffee and Crafts Hydrangea Bubble Art program was attended by 5 patrons.
 - The Betty B. Watkins Pop-Up Seed Library was also quite popular with our patrons. _ 64 packets of seeds were distributed throughout the week.

Resource Allocation

- ❖ The CRO (Cliffs Resident Outreach) granted the Salem branch \$1100 to spend on programming supplies and book incentives for Summer Reading.
 - Roughly \$600 was spent on book incentives (75 books in total)
 - Four programs were originally planned with the grant money but the amount allowed for an additional program.
 - All book incentives and supplies were purchased and received in the month of March.

Stats	Mar	Apr
Visits	1889	1637
New Cards	8	5
ILLs	0	1

Narrative

Microfilm Machine Problems:

We are continuing to have issues with the ScanPro 3500. In short, the machine crashes after about 30 minutes of use. I contacted Palmetto Microfilm and County IT about this issue. All parties went through the suggested list of changes, and these changes were addressed in previous attempts to resolve the problem.

After discussion County IT and Palmetto Microfilm suggested switching the computer used with ScanPro 3500, for the one used with the ScanPro 3000. I performed this swap, and started testing the ScanPro 3000 on the ScanPro 3500 computer. During the course of testing, the ScanPro 3000 started to crash and the ScanPro 3500 performed without any issue. I contacted Palmetto Microfilm and County IT about this. Again, we went through the list of suggested changes, and we determined that the changes were made during a previous attempt. At this time, Palmetto Microfilm believes the computer has an enabled function causing the ScanPro to loose connection. Hence, the recurring error code.

Digitization Project:

At this time, I have not been able to resume digitization. This is mainly due to working to resolve the problem with the microfilm machine. I have reviewed the last scans performed by our former SC Room Volunteer; I have to make a few adjustments and may have to rescan a few items. Scanning will resume in May.

Volunteers:

Sara R. has returned, and has resumed indexing the Rogers' Newspaper Index. Clarissa H. has made progress in assisting with the Genealogy Inquiry assigned to her.

Addendum to January-February 2023 Statistics:

I have started to record Volunteer Hours with statistics. However, I omitted January and February in my last reports. The Volunteer Hours are:

January 2023: 8.5 hours

February 2023: 10 hours

Partnership with Oconee History Museum:

Leslie, Oconee History Museum Director, has started purchasing the iPad stands for the 75th Anniversary Digital Exhibit. Currently, she and Jennifer, Assistant Curator/Education Specialist, are working on setting up there iPad to restricted access. Using restricted access will prevent patrons/visitors from accessing content not pertinent to the 75th Anniversary Collection.

Partnership with Oconee Military Museum:

April 6, 2023: I was able to visit with the Oconee Military Museum. I have visited the museum before, but that was as a local tourist and as a member of a Leadership Oconee Class. After introductions, we toured the first floor. My guide pointed out an update to TSGT Frank Watkins exhibit, and she commented on my assistance with the update. TSGT Watkins is the brother of Medal of Honor recipient SSGT Lewis Watkins. A researcher from the museum contacted me a few months ago, asking if I would be able to find newspaper articles about TSGT Watkins. I was able to find a few articles and I provided a copy of his service from the South Carolina World War II roster book.

Before concluding the research inquiry, the researcher asked if I would be able to find a particular student South Carolina History Textbook. A family member stated that this textbook mentions SSGT Watkins. To my surprise, we had a copy of this textbook in our SC Room Collection. I gave the researcher a copy of the page. However, when seeing the museum exhibit I thought of a question. I asked if the museum would be interested in borrowing the textbook for the SSGT Watkins exhibit. I checked with Blair, and he gave me permission to do this extended loan. The museum was very appreciative of the gesture from the library.

Lastly, when the tour concluded I asked about how I could assist them. In short, they are interested in finding material that pertains to Oconee Military history. Moreover, they really want information about the people at home as well as anything pertinent to the Korean, Vietnam, and other modern wars. I stated that I was working on this, and gave them a packet of articles I found pertaining the Persian Gulf War. In short, while reviewing the Seneca Journal-Tribune microfilm I came across these articles, and thought the museum would be interested.

Seneca Area Museums:

I did reach out again to the Seneca Area Museums. I see potential with assisting them with their research. At this time, they have requested that I keep an eye out for African-American History in the county. This is a good topic of inquiry—but I need to work on specific African-American topics. This would prevent me from providing the museum with useless items.

Genealogy and Local History Research Service Policy:

I am working on developing a Genealogy and Local History Research Service Policy. I have reached the point that a policy would be beneficial to improve and maintain service. I have given Blair a draft document with reference resources.

Outside the Library:

March 10, 2023: The Oconee History Museum hosted the School District of Oconee County Social Study Teachers as part of their In-service. I had asked about providing information about the library's genealogy/local history resources. Instead, Leslie offered me a time slot to present this information. I produced a one-page flyer highlighting our collection and a list of helpful free online resources. In total, I spoke to 40 people.

April 25, 2023: A member of the Lake Hartwell Country contacted me for assistance with a research project. When he mentioned the topic, I stated that I already found articles about it, and that I can send them over to him. It was just happenstance that I selected a pertinent roll of microfilm to test the microfilm machines. I am hoping to plan a visit to tour their archive later in the year.

Ancestry Library Edition Class:

Blair asked me to present a class on Ancestry Library Edition. This is due to the low numbers of use. I stated that this would not be a problem, and that I could update an old class I created years ago. I had been planning to do various classes on genealogy/ local history. This introduction to Ancestry Library Edition will be at the Walhalla Library on Wednesday, May 17th at 2:00pm.

Rogers Room Statistics:

I am unable to provide pertinent statistics for the ScanPro machines. This due to the switching the machines, thus producing irrelevant data.

Statistics Recorded	Mar. 2023	Apr. 2023
Walk-In	16	6
Phone Call	9	5
Email/Online	3	2
Books	12	3
Microfilm	26	7
Map	0	3
ScanPro 3000 Scan Count	x	x
ScanPro 3000 Printer Count	x	x
ScanPro 3500 Scan Count	x	x

ScanPro 3500 Printer Count	x	x
Questions Completed	35	19
Outstanding Questions	3	2
Volunteer Hours	10	2.5

Walhalla Library

March - April 2023

Tucker Brown, Circulation Manager

Staffing:

March saw the loss of two part-time circulation assistants who have left for full-time opportunities elsewhere. While their skills and ideas will be sorely missed, the remaining staff have done an excellent job at keeping the front of the library running smoothly during this transition. With summer reading coming so soon, we hope to have a fully staff circulation team before the kickoff.

Meeting Room:

March – BabyRead, Tri-county Home Educators, Friends of the Library, Walhalla Pharmacy, SC Thrive

April – Clearwater HOA, Guardian ad Litem, Tri-county Home Educators, BabyRead, Community Conversations

Study Room:

March – 35 uses

April – 34 uses

Facilities:

With the beginning of spring, Walhalla has undertaken a beautification project to make the building more welcoming to the public. The front entrance of the building has been serviceable for years, but not much more than that. A pollinator garden had been discussed since the winter for curb appeal and in memory of our longtime courier, Joe Lenderman. Over the month of April the grass was tilled, the soil was conditioned, and plants were chosen with an eye towards hardiness, upkeep, and aesthetics. When combined with the new mulch that facilities has spread the effect is a much more inviting façade. Once the plants are more securely rooted in, plans are to train the jessamine around the chain-link fence that surround the air handlers. Thanks to the efforts of some of the staff at Walhalla, costs and time were minimal for a project that can have such a large effect on the appearance of the branch.

During the same time inside the library, an additional low shelf was added to the front on the library and material was shifted to make a more cohesive sectioning of our collection. While the adult audiobooks had been shelved in an awkward spot between the end of the young adult fiction and the study rooms, the library's YA audiobooks as well as manga and award winning fiction had been place in the center of the library near the Western and Inspirational sections. These have been flipped, leaving the audiobooks in the center of the library and more easily found while the YA fiction now feeds into the YA audiobooks, award winners, and manga.

Statistics:

Category	March 2023	April 2023
Visitors	4,115	3,391
New Cards Issued	57	49
ILL	18	15
Hours Open	223	187

Westminster Report for March and April 2023

Community, Staff, and Programming

- On March 2nd, we celebrated Read Across America Day with a fun Dr. Seuss-themed bingo event. We had 27 attendees of all ages.
- On St. Patrick's Day we had Orchard Park Elementary kindergarteners visit the library for a field trip. We did 45 minutes of reading, rhymes, and showcasing the library's collection. Then 45 minutes was split into session where the kids got a tour of the library, played with Legos, and made a Leprechaun craft and did an I Spy St. Patrick's Day worksheet. There were 53 kids and 17 adults. The rain ruined their plans of continuing on to the park, but they were able to pick up lunch for our neighbor's at Park Place.
- Leah attended several sessions of the virtual 2023 Southeast Collaborative Library Conference. Sessions included: Adult Programming in a Post-Pandemic World; Managing Your Library Facility; Things for Your Library; Battling Period Poverty; Reasoning with the Unreasonable Patron; Branching Out; and You, Me, We: Building Community Partnerships.
- We had 13 attend the movie showing of *Puss in Boots: The Last Wish* in March.
- We gave out 50 Grab & Go: Seed Starting Kits the week of March 13-17. These kits included seeds from the BBW Seed Library, seed starting soil, newspapers, and instructions on how to make seed starting pots out of the newspapers as well as a list of library resources for gardening.
- We had 4 attend our April movie showing of *A Man Called Otto*.
- All four Westminster employees participated in staff in-service in April. The staff spent the second half at the branch weeding and beginning inventory of the collection.
- On April 13th we had Westminster Elementary kindergarteners visit the library for a field trip. We did 3-30 minute sessions of reading, rhymes, and showcasing the library's collection with a brief tour of the library. There were 48 kids and 18 adults. The rain made them move their trip up by a day, but it was still great as they visited the library, Magley Veterinarian Hospital, Park Place Drive In (for ice cream at 10 am!), and lunch at Anderson Park.
- We had 15 entries for a cute book tote bag giveaway.

Building Management

- A new toilet paper dispenser was ordered and installed in the women's restroom in March.
- Progress has been made on installing new planters. There may be an opportunity to collaborate with a local Boy Scout troop to complete the project, but it is still in the discussion phase.
- Facilities came and pressure washed the sidewalk in April. Unfortunately, we still have a lot of debris and mud that collect against it because of the drainage issues we have.
- The Westminster staff took 2 weeks to inventory the collection, which has not been inventoried since the shutdown in March of 2020. Out of the 20,000 + items housed at the Westminster Branch, there are around 60 items not accounted for, which is not a surprising amount. Most of these are R-rated DVDs and juvenile materials which are on trend to be the type of items that tend to be taken from the library.

Resource Allocation

- The 2023 BBW Seed Library launched in March. There was some issues with an advertisement that made a good many people come to the library a few days before the official launch. Because library

staff had done such a phenomenal job in preparation for the launch, we were able to set a great selection of seeds for people to choose from until the official launch a few days later. It was good to see people excited and anticipating the seed library this year. Salem hosted a weeklong pop-up in April and did very well helping get seeds out into the community.

- The Friends have been generous to us again this year with donating monies to the branch to help us purchase items. We recently purchased some acrylic shelves to hang on the ends of the shelves. These help us have display space when there really is not anywhere else to have it. Some corkboard was also purchased to go in another area to help us create better displays. We also used the funds the purchase some bookmarks and "I visited the library!" stickers to give out to children. We are thankful to the Friends for their generosity.

BBW Seed Library	Packs Given out Library Locations Only	All Locations OHM & Festivals
Inaugural Year 2021	755	2,000
Second Year 2022	2,644	4,212
January 2023	18	NA
February 2023	NA	NA
March 2023	762	
April 2023	465	

Branch Statistics	March	April
Door Count	2063	1587
Meeting Room Use	238	165
New Users	29	25
Program Attendance	127	70

Youth Services Department

March — April 2023

Darcy Arnall, Youth Services Librarian

Programs

The past two months were very successful in Youth Services programming. In March, we offered more programs than we've ever done in a single non-summer month during my tenure. We backed off a little in April so as not to overwhelm ourselves, but we still planned a lot of activities for that month as well.

After discussing the idea for many months, we finally hosted our first 3D printing program in March. DJ took the lead on this project because the printers are her area of expertise, and she brought in Alexis, one of the part-time circulation staff members, who has a lot of experience with 3D printing. They kept the event very small and limited to teens because this program was not conducive to a large group. They ended up with nine attendees, and we are exploring the possibility of using the 3D printers in our programming more regularly. We planned a teen program for April, but it was canceled because we did not get enough interest. It was a riskier program idea, to begin with, and I'm guessing that some of our regulars were busy with other things in late April.

Our Homeschool Hangout program is continuing to attract good crowds. We had 49 people attend those programs between these two months. Explorers Club attendance fell off a little bit, particularly in April, but I think we can primarily attribute that to our patrons' general busyness this time of year. Explorers Club was attended by 48 people in this period. We did continue to offer our new school-year reading dog program as well. In March, we worked with Amy Saylor and some of her contacts again, and in April, we partnered with SC Dogs, who normally visit us in the summer for I Read to Animals. My contact with SC Dogs, Diane Sosnowski, suggested that we schedule Sit, Stay, Read for the week of Spring Break so that more students could hopefully attend. We did not get as much interest as I had hoped for, but I want to keep that idea in mind for future years so that we can capitalize on Spring Break more than we currently do.

Our programs for the birth to five age group continue to be our most consistently successful offerings. Between these two months, our weekly storytimes were attended by a staggering 704 people. On March 13th (which was an In-Service Day at the schools), we broke our non-summer record for attendance at a single storytime with 52 people (pictured below). It was a fun morning, but very crowded! We did one evening storytime in March with a costume party theme, which did not attract the crowd that I had hoped it might. We had an attendance of 18 people, which was respectable, and everyone who attended seemed to enjoy themselves. Attendance at Shake, Rattle, & Roll (our music and movement program) still fluctuates some. I'm sure that if I offered the program on a weekly basis, I could build up a more consistent crowd, but there is just no space on the schedule for another weekly commitment at this time. Still, an attendance of 81 people between the two months is very encouraging.

Between March and April, Youth Services planned and presented a total of 65 programs, which were attended by 1,944 people. Program-specific statistics and some of our favorite pictures from the months are attached at the end of this report.

Summer Reading 2023

Summer Reading preparation is proceeding at a good pace. We finalized our June and July events in March, and Bethany has designed two beautiful print calendars for both months. Bethany and I have both been working on designs for the summer marketing materials, and we have completed and printed all of the supplies that we will need to advertise the program this spring. I finished the editing process on the Summer Reading promotional video near the end of March, and it currently has 270 views on our YouTube channel.

In the middle of March, I submitted our LSTA Summer Learning grant application to the State Library, and it was approved in April. At the same time, I prepared a funding request for the Friends of the Library to cover most of our other Summer Reading expenses. We very much appreciate the generosity of the Friends because, without their annual donation, we would not be able to afford the grand prizes, program supplies, and professionally-printed marketing materials that we need to run a successful SRP.

DJ and I have done a lot of exploring and experimenting with Beanstack, and on March 22nd, we had a one-on-one meeting with our representative to iron out the questions and concerns that we were not able to address on our own. We had our bi-annual staff In-Service Day on April 7th, and most of the morning was devoted to Summer Reading. As a fun project, we tie-dyed our staff SRP t-shirts, and then we spent a large chunk of time training everyone on our procedures for this summer, particularly focusing on Beanstack. To familiarize our staff with the patron experience in Beanstack, we had everyone sign up for a small staff-only reading challenge that they could work on throughout the month of April. Because I didn't want to overwhelm everyone with all of the Beanstack information in one session, we tried to avoid discussing the administrative side of the program at In-Service. We have scheduled follow-up training sessions with each branch in May, in which we will cover the admin procedures. For the past several years, I have tried to keep the staff's responsibilities in SRP as simple as possible. As much as possible, DJ and I were trying to process registrations and completions ourselves. This procedure wasn't terrible, but it sometimes created confusion for patrons, especially in picking up prizes. This year, I'm hoping that we have found a better balance between making the program accessible and rewarding for patrons while keeping staff's involvement straightforward and easy to manage. Since Beanstack is new for everyone, I'm sure that there is going to be a learning curve, but we have tried to train ourselves in advance as best we can.

In mid-April, I emailed all of the media specialists and literacy coaches in the school system to share our promotional information and offer the option of school visits. Due to the popularity of the visits last year, we had a lot of interest from the teachers, and we currently have plans to visit 6 of the elementary schools in the county. We did the first visit on April 28th at Ravenel Elementary, and it went very well! The other visits are scheduled in May.

Outreach

In these two months, DJ and I did outreach storytimes for 5 different preschools and saw 254 people. We do our last preschool outreach visits for the school year in April because we commit our time in May to going to the elementary schools. We have developed great relationships with several of the preschools that we added this year, and I am excited to reach out to some new ones in the fall to fill out our calendar.

On March 10th, DJ and I hosted the kindergarten classes from Walhalla Elementary for a library field trip. We divided them up into classes, and I did storytime in the meeting room for one group, while

DJ gave the others a tour of the building. It was a tiring morning, but very fun, and the kids and teachers were really sweet and appreciative. On April 3rd, DJ and Christie took the Bookmobile to the YMCA in Seneca for their Spring Break Camp. DJ did a storytime with the students, they got to tour the Bookmobile, and we left a box of free books to give to the kids.

We had back-to-back evening events at a couple of elementary schools in the week of April 17th. On the 19th, DJ and I went to Ravenel for their Fine Arts Night. We set up in their media center, gave out information about Summer Reading and the library in general, and created about half a dozen new library cards. The next night, Christie and I took the Bookmobile to Northside's Literacy Night. They had a very successful event, and we had an excellent crowd come on the Bookmobile. I think that I created about 15 new library cards that night. Our final outreach event for April was Healthy Kids Day at the YMCA, which is always very well-organized and rewarding. We saw around 130 people, and I spent a lot of time talking up Summer Reading.

Collaboration

I attended the April First Steps meeting on Zoom. On March 13th, DJ and I were invited to speak to all of the media specialists in SDOC as part of their In-Service Day. Because we built so many relationships last year as part of promoting Summer Reading, the teachers were interested in hearing about what we have planned for this year. Our presentation was brief, but it was great to see everyone together, and we received some good feedback on our preparation for this year. In April, I contacted the school system to confirm that we will be donating book bags to their Read to Succeed Camp again this summer. They will not have a projected number of students in the program until after state testing in May, but in the meantime, we are going to pack bags for about 80 students. At the end of April, DJ and I met with Nicholas Harper, the owner of Peace of Pie in Fair Play. He was interested in collaborating on various types of programming for the library, so we met to brainstorm and nail down some ways to get started. Mr. Harper is going to reward every child (ages 0-17) who completes this year's SRP with a free small pizza, and we have an idea for a reading challenge that we can run with him throughout the upcoming school year (somewhat inspired by the Pizza Hut Book It! program). Mr. Harper has been very generous with us already, and we are excited to see how that partnership progresses going forward.

Spaces

As part of our LSTA grant from the State Library, we purchased a new Cricut for the Youth Services office. We have also been approved for another copier/printer that will live in our office. It will be delivered in early May. For several months, we have been talking about doing some updates in the meeting room at the Walhalla Library. At the very least, we wanted to repaint. That idea grew into closing in a small portion of the far end of the room to create a storage closet spacious enough to hold most of the tables and chairs that we usually just leave around the perimeter of the room. County Maintenance is scheduled to start work on the meeting room during the first week of May, and they are planning to complete the update before the start of Summer Reading!

Program Attendance

	March	April
Storytimes	384	320
LEGO Club	16	10
Explorers Club	28	20
Shake, Rattle, & Roll	29	52
Sensory Playtime	17	0
Homeschool Hangout	27	22
Sit, Stay, Read	19	20

Program Pictures



1: March 13th Storytime, the largest crowd I have ever had outside of the summer months



2: Costume Party Storytime



3: School Visit to Ravenel Elementary, performing our Elephant and Piggie skit



4: Our Elephant and Piggie costumes



6: Homeschool Hangout: Crayon Day, making collaborative art projects



5: Explorers Club: Spy Kids, making "disguises"



Library Strategic Plan 2023-2025

Contents:

Executive Summary	2
Acknowledgments	2
Mission/Vision statement	3
O—Outreach	4
C—Communication/Collaboration	4
P—People	5
L—Libraries	6

Executive Summary

The library last completed a Strategic Plan in 2018, which was scheduled to last until the end of 2020. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic (which started in March 2020 in the library service area) interrupted any progress in the last year of the two-year plan. The Board of Trustees extended the existing plan until early 2022 to allow library staff time to review the old plan and ascertain what had already been accomplished and still needed to be done. Was there any carry-over? Would there be new things to add as the system and the county emerged from the worst of the pandemic?

The new plan should revisit and seek to accomplish anything that was not done, or was only partially done, at the end of 2021. It should also look forward to a period where the system can move past the pandemic period and branch out to try some new services and offer users new things.

The political and financial realities of 2022-23 and the near future indicate that attempting to build new buildings is not feasible. As such, the core of the new Strategic Plan will still focus outwardly on library outreach, especially to underserved communities, maintaining community partnerships as well as looking for new partners, and offering users new experiences. At the same time, the library will still seek opportunities to improve existing facilities as well as improve staff processes, staff training, and communication.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the Board of Trustees, the staff, and our many volunteers and community partners for their input into this plan.

Library Board

Allison Addison, Monica Alles White, Shelby Henderson, Paul Holcombe, Liz Kuemmerer, Nick McKinney, Nivia Miranda, Clifton Powell, Tara Weekes

Mission

The Oconee County Public Library provides resources and experiences to satisfy curiosity, connect people with their community, and encourage lifelong discovery.

Vision

The library is a hub for the community, with resources people need and want, programs and services that help people satisfy curiosity or try something new, and staff that is trained and prepared to help people reach their goals.

OUTREACH

Strategic Focus:

Build on and expand library outreach, especially to underserved communities, maintaining community partnerships as well as looking for new partners.

Strategic Outcome:

Increase contacts with users, stakeholders, and partners throughout the community.

Strategic Direction:

Strategy 1: Participate in more community and school events as staffing and resources allow.

Strategy 2: Look for new opportunities to expand Bookmobile usage.

Strategy 3: Explore new service options like Homebound, community pantries, more programming for homeschooling families, and even pickup lockers in remote locations.

Strategy 4: Expand hours for social work and Spanish language translator.

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Strategic Focus:

Deliver timely, relevant communication both internally and externally.

Strategic Outcome:

Increase staff cooperation across the system and increase awareness in the larger community.

Strategic Direction:

Strategy 1: Inform and educate cardholders through print and digital media/communications.

Strategy 2: Enhance and foster employee information sharing.

Strategy 3: Increase engagement with the library's website and develop new applications and methods to better connect with the public.

Strategy 4: Reinvigorate library events to reflect community interest.

PEOPLE

(Internal focus)

Strategic Focus:

Recruit qualified and diverse library staff empowered to use their creativity and talents, and work to retain staff through increased job satisfaction.

Strategic Outcome:

Develop a baseline training plan for all library employees.

Strategic Direction:

Strategy 1: Expand and enhance EPMS and goal-setting for each employee.

Strategy 2: Look for opportunities to expand roles for part time staff, possibly using cross-training to improve system cohesiveness.

Strategy 3: Look for opportunities to adjust staffing, particularly at the main location in Walhalla, to better serve customers and streamline staff roles.

Strategy 4: Adjust more part time positions from temporary staffing back to county part time.

(External focus)

Strategic Focus:

Provide library visitors with a friendly, informed, and user-focused experience.

Strategic Outcome:

Develop a more robust volunteer recruitment and retention program.

Strategic Direction:

Strategy 1: Revamp and refresh the volunteer recruitment and training program.

Strategy 2: Create opportunities to use volunteers to host book clubs and other adult programming.

Strategy 3: Find and develop solutions to mitigate access barriers.

Strategy 4: Recruit a diverse group of volunteers who can bring their unique knowledge and talents.

LIBRARIES (SPACE)

Strategic Focus:

Create welcoming and accessible library spaces.

Strategic Outcome:

Conduct quarterly evaluations of both indoor and outdoor library spaces.

Strategic Direction:

Strategy 1: Create new, more versatile spaces in existing buildings.

Strategy 2: Optimize use, visibility, and aesthetics of outdoor spaces.

Strategy 3: Consider functionality, capacity, and accessibility of library furnishings.

Strategy 4: Expand or enhance services, with air printing, USB access, and other technologies.