

OCPL Director's Report

January 2026

1. Programs and Services: Attendance at programs in November and December was very good. In addition to the regular movie nights, craft programs, and Story Times, there were also more programs for the holidays, including a Christmas Fiesta at the Walhalla Library attended by over 50 people. There were also several Book Clubs, such as Book Buzz and the Zoom Book Club series. (The branches have also conducted numerous programs. See the branch managers' reports for more on those.

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

3. Finance and Budget: OCPL budget figures for FY25/26 to date are attached.

4. Personnel and Training: When Tucker Brown left in October 2026, we hired Abigail White as the new circulation manager. That left an opening for a full-time circulation assistant at our Salem Branch. Anna Holbrooks, who had been a part time circulation assistant at our main branch in Walhalla until May 2023, was hired as the full-time person. We are working on a new system of training and evaluation starting with the new calendar year. We hope to roll this out by our spring In-Service on April 3. We adapted this system from Richland Library.

5. Building and Grounds: The paving for the new small lot at the Seneca Branch will hopefully come in spring 2026 if the County has a new crew leader for asphalt. With cooler weather we have experienced an uptick in incidents of vandalism in our public restrooms at the Seneca and Walhalla locations. We might have to inquire with the county as to whether we need to keep the facilities locked except on request.

6. Technology: We have been exploring options for new Smartboards at the Seneca and Walhalla locations. Newline makes boards that operate on the Android operating system, and might not become obsolete as quickly as ones made by Ricoh. We have also seen an uptick in requests for our 3D printer. We are also going to need to replace the coin towers at the Seneca, Walhalla, and Westminster Branches in the near future as these are from 2011 and will reach their end of life soon.

7. Friends of the Library: Used book sales have continued each Thursday from 10:00 to 3:30 p.m. They had a special Saturday sale in December. Their Books on the Alley location in M. Tannery and Sons on Ram Cat Alley also does very well, as did the lobby sales in Walhalla and Seneca. The Friends have received several large donations recently, and have processed them fairly quickly.

Book Sales collected November & December of 2025:

Basement \$3,612.07

Booth \$4,064.20

Lobby \$543.00

2nd Party \$242.00

Online Sales \$500.21

Seneca \$147.00

Total Book Sales Revenue \$9,108.48

8. Oconee County: We are working with county grants writer Brittney Martin to identify possible grants to continue to fund a social worker/resource associate at the library. We will also be working with county administration to ask for funding for this critical part time position in the FY27 budget. A new County Administrator was hired in December, and the County does not yet have a finance director, so the budget process might be a bit chaotic this year.

9. State Library: The directors from across the state, collectively known as APLA, the Association of Public Library Administrators, will be working with the State Library on the FY27 state budget request for State Aid. There are hopes to have the legislature pass a resolution in support of libraries. The strategy this year is to advocate for a \$50,000 per annum increase in the minimum grant for smaller counties. That will increase their State Aid from \$150,000 a year to \$200,000 per year. The legislative visit for Oconee County is on Wednesday, January 21, 2026.

10. Community Involvement: Kerry Leeper Brock and Amy Saylor are continuing to help with the Clean of Heart Mobile showers every other Wednesday at Our Daily Bread in Seneca. We also are picking up loaves of bread from Golden Corner Food Pantry to distribute at the branches for free each week. The bookmobile appeared in all four municipal Christmas parades (Seneca, Westminster, Walhalla, and Salem) again this year. We are still involved with the Healthy Oconee Coalition. We are also attending meetings of the Oconee County Services Association (OCSA), where we network with local non-profits and other service agencies.

11. Other: I would commend the staff at the main branch in Walhalla for their patience while we transitioned from Tucker to Abigail. Our Salem Branch had already scheduled programs and events for November and December before we hired Abigail for the circulation manager position at the Walhalla Library. It created a little bit of confusion while Abigail had to work one day in Salem and the next in Walhalla until we had coverage for Salem. The staff in Walhalla did a fine job of covering during the transition.

	Nov 2024	Nov 2025	Change	Dec 2024	Dec 2025	Change
Visits to Library	10,229	9,722	-5.0%	10,214	10,288	0.7%
Material Circulation - LOT		74			80	
Material Circulation - Adult	11,050	9,150	-17.2%	12,190	10,680	-12.4%
Material Circulation - Youth	722	582	-19.4%	696	640	-8.0%
Material Circulation - Juvenile	7,743	7,334	-5.3%	8,022	7,736	-3.6%
Total Material Circulation	19,515	17,066	-12.5%	20,908	19,056	-8.9%
Internet Uses	615	594	-3.4%	576	612	6.3%
Internet Hours of Use	212	297	40.1%	265	289	9.1%
New Cards Issued	101	95	-5.9%	87	135	55.2%
Programs - Adult	8	7	-12.5%	7	6	-14.3%
Programs Attendance - Adult	25	42	68.0%	59	36	-39.0%
Programs - Youth 12-18	0	1		0	3	
Programs Att - Youth 12-18	0	2		0	22	
Programs - Juvenile 6-11	7	11	57.1%	5	5	0.0%
Programs Att - Juv 6-11	20	79	295.0%	21	48	128.6%
Programs - Children 0-5	2	14	600.0%	0	13	
Programs - Att - Children 0-5	10	157	1470.0%	0	111	
Programs - All Ages	5	8	60.0%	13	5	-61.5%
Programs Att - All Ages	44	81	84.1%	167	150	-10.2%
Programs Att - Passive	99	299	202.0%	106	633	497.2%
Outreach Activities	0	3		4	3	-25.0%
Outreach Act. Attendance	0	144		0	437	
Public Training Sessions	4	4	0.0%	4	4	0.0%
Public Training Participants	5	5	0.0%	4	4	0.0%
Public Training Hours	4	4	0.0%	4	4	0.0%
Staff Training Sessions	0	3		0	2	
Staff Training Participants	0	2		0	2	
Staff Training Hours	0	3		0	4	
Number of New Volunteers	0	1		0	2	
Number of Vol Hours	41	41	0.6%	24	54	127.7%
Meeting Room Use	62	63	1.6%	41	91	122.0%
Meeting Room Attendance	371	449	21.0%	275	653	137.5%
Specialized 1:1 Sessions	1	1	0.0%	2	0	-100.0%
Number of Web Site Hits	9,227	9,609	4.1%	9,277	10,344	11.5%
Wi-Fi Users	298	274	-8.1%	309	298	-3.6%
Wi-Fi Sessions	1,756	1,658	-5.6%	2,488	2,156	-13.3%
Hoopla Checkouts		1,764			1,976	
CloudLibrary Downloads	3,648	3,641	-0.2%	3,802	3,564	-6.3%
Ancestry.com Hits	427	143	-66.5%	88		-100.0%
Interlibrary Loans	32	26	-18.8%	32	14	-56.3%
New Material Added	576	757	31.4%	765	765	0.0%

OCPL BUDGET 2025-2026- 1-7-26

Account Number	Description	Budgeted	Spent	Percent	Balance
Local Budget					
010-206-30018-00000	Travel	1500	726.46	48%	774
010-206-30024-00000	Equip. Maintenance	2,745	2,600	95%	145
010-206-30025-00000	Professional -Staffmark	150,000	67,721	45%	82,279
010-206-30041-00000	Telecommunications	0		0%	0
010-206-30056-00000	Data Processing	31,749	28,591	90%	3,158
010-206-30059-00000	Copier Click Charges - Xerox	8,500	5,089	60%	3,411
010-206-30080-00000	Dues	750	360	48%	390
010-206-30084-00000	School, Training, Sem.	2,500	2,499	100%	1
010-206-30090-00000	Honorarium	900	900	100%	0
010-206-33022-00207	Bldg Maint - Walhalla	7,000	7,725	110%	-725
010-206-33022-00208	Bldg Maint - Seneca	4,000	1,821	46%	2,179
010-206-33022-00209	Bldg Maint - Westminster	3,000	1,788	60%	1,212
010-206-33022-00210	Bldg. Maint - Salem	2,000	1,748	87%	252
010-206-34043-00207	Electricity - Walhalla	18,000	7,472	42%	10,528
010-206-34043-00208	Electricity - Seneca	12,000	4,947	41%	7,053
010-206-34043-00209	Electricity - Westminster	9,000	3,374	37%	5,626
010-206-34043-00210	Electricity - Salem	5,000	5,000	100%	0
010-206-34044-00207	Water - Walhalla	1,700	969	57%	731
010-206-34044-00208	Water - Seneca	2,000	891	45%	1,109
010-206-34044-00209	Water - Westminster	2,250	377	17%	1,873
010-206-40031-00000	Sm Capital Equip (Loc)	2,800	2,729	97%	71
010-206-40032-00000	Operational	6,000	5,971	100%	29
010-206-40032-00000-A	Youth Services	2,000	1,312	66%	688
010-206-40033-00000	Postage	250	165	66%	85
010-206-40034-00000	Food	500		0%	500
010-206-40101-00000	Books (Local)	87,000	63,340	73%	23,660
010-206-40102-00000	Periodicals (Local)	23,000	16,905	74%	6,095
010-206-40103-00000	AV (Local)	11,500	6,467	56%	5,033
010-206-80206-00000	Automobile Maint - Library	1,500	426	28%	1,074
010-206-81206-00000	Gasoline - Library	3,000	1,187	40%	1,813
010-206-82206-00000	Diesel - Library	2,500	928	37%	1,572
TOTAL LOCAL FUNDS		404,644		0%	160,615
MISC. FUNDS					
013-206-60010-00000	Gift's	80,240			80,240
013-080-00835-92056	Nettles Trust	60,827		0%	60,827
TOTAL MISC. FUNDS					141,067
State Aid Budget - \$216814.35					
240-206-30056-00255	Data Processing (State)	\$22,710.00	10,951.29	48%	11,758.71
240-206-30059-00255	Copier Click Charges - Xerox	\$3,000.00		0%	3,000.00
240-206-30080-00255	Dues (State)	\$900.00	250.00	28%	650.00
240-206-30084-00255	Schools, Training (State)	\$6,000.00	2,707.48	45%	3,292.52
240-206-40031-00255	Sm Capital Equip (State)	8,863.35	3,268.97	37%	5,594.38
240-206-40032-00255	Operational (State)	\$19,885.00	10,032.25	50%	9,852.75
240-206-40045-00255	IT Equipment	\$5,000.00	3,413.32	68%	1,586.68
240-206-40111-00255	Books (State)	\$101,500.00	41,194.79	41%	60,305.21
240-206-40112-00255	Periodicals (State)	\$32,356.00	29,319.99	91%	3,036.01
240-206-40113-00255	AV (State)	\$16,600.00	3,328.83	20%	13,271.17
Total State Aid Funds		\$216,814.35		0%	112,347.43



2026 Library Board Meeting Calendar

Tuesday, January 27, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Tuesday, March 24, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Wednesday, May 13, 2026 or May 20, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Tuesday, July 28, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Wednesday, November 18, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Tuesday, January 26, 2027, 5:30 p.m.

Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Programs

With the holidays, I wanted to have an adult craft program at every branch over the course of November and December. Thus, I hosted a “Handmade Holidays” series. The series began with wreaths at Walhalla. Patrons were able to choose traditional Christmas colors (reds, greens, golds) or winter colors (blues, white, silver). Wreath programs are always popular and registration filled early. The second program in the series took place at Westminster. We painted simple winter gnomes that had been created using the library’s 3D printer. The program allowed for much creativity and individuality in choosing how to paint the gnomes. In December, the series featured door hangers at Seneca and wood-slice ornaments at Salem. Again, the programs gave the patrons a base to work with and let their creativity flourish. December’s programs were not as well attended as November’s (5 each vs. 8 each), even though they were at the same time of day.

In addition to the “Handmade Holidays” series, I continued to hold our recurring programs. Eight people, ranging from elementary age to senior citizen, participated in November’s chess club. The club was paused during December in anticipation of low attendance. Book Buzz, our book club, met at Mountain Mocha in November and December. It continues to average about five people per meeting, though we would have nine or ten if all of the regulars attended in the same month. Our quarterly puzzle swap had lackluster participation in November. The next puzzle swap will be held on a weekday instead of a Saturday to coincide with National Puzzle Day (January 29).

Our English as a Second Language (ESL) program will resume in late January and continue each Monday through the spring. The class is taught by a volunteer who is a certified ESL instructor. Also beginning in January is a volunteer-led book club. “The Little Walhalla Book Club” will meet at Alexander’s Coffee Shop on the first Wednesday of each month.

Adult Winter Reading

Our first annual Adult Winter Reading Challenge kicked off on December 1st. This is a bingo-style challenge built to encourage adults to explore genres outside of their comfort zone. Participants can pick up a bingo card at any OCPL branch or use the Beanstack App to complete their card digitally. Adults must read four genres in a row to earn an OCPL soup mug. The overall response has been positive. A few book club members stated that they could not find a row with four genres they wanted to read, but were inspired to attempt it because they like the mug. Twenty-four adults completed the challenge in December. I expect many more completions in January.

Professional Development

I used November and December to catch up on professional development. I watched a webinar on hosting cooking programs for adults from the South Carolina State Library Online Academy. In a similar vein, I had a conversation with the Free Library of Philadelphia regarding their cooking ESL program. We do not have the resources to replicate the program. However, I am interested in pursuing an occasional cooking lesson/demonstration in the future. I attended a leadership webinar and a webinar on recruiting and engaging volunteers.

Summer Reading

I've begun planning programs for adult summer reading and it looks to be an exciting summer. My goal is to have a minimum of two adult programs at each branch. As much as possible, I aim to have programs that fit either the general summer reading theme of dinosaurs or the slogan "unearth a story". We will also have a couple of patriotic crafts to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Bookmobile and Outreach Narrative, November & December 2025

Angie Clark-Bookmobile Manager

Operations

During the month of November, 14 regularly scheduled stops were completed. Six volunteers assisted. In November, all of my regular stops were visited only once because of the Thanksgiving holiday.

During the month of December, 15 regularly scheduled stops were completed. Five volunteers assisted. All regular stops received only 1 visit because of the Christmas holiday. Blair and I, along with several volunteers participated in 4 Christmas parades. Seneca, Westminster, Walhalla and Salem.

Special Outreach

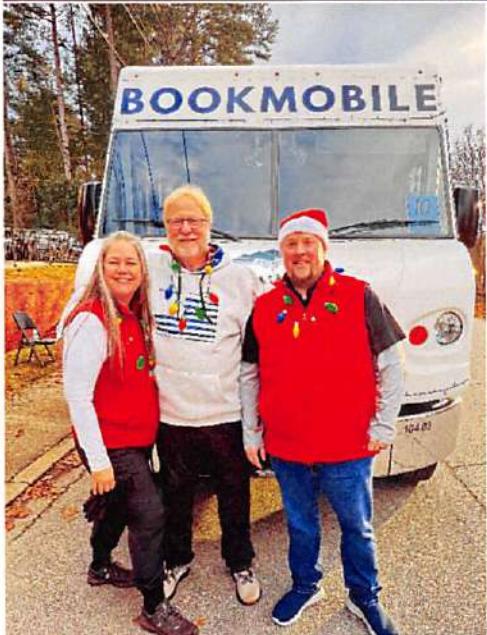
November: No special outreach

December: Tamassee Salem Elementary- Literacy Night

The bookmobile was open for checkouts and new card sign-up. We had 87 total come onboard. One volunteer assisted.

Statistics

Category	November 2025	December 2025
Stops	14	15
Hours Open	11.5	12
Total Attendance	286	284
Volunteers/Hours	6/20.75hrs	5/24.5hrs
Outreach Stops	0	1
Outreach Visitors	0	87
Outreach Hours	0	1.5
New Cards	0	3
Programs-Passive	0	0



Top: Seneca Christmas Parade

Left: Wonderful volunteers at the Walhalla Christmas parade. They walked in front of the bookmobile and handed out candy

**Library Resource Report
November-December 2025**

Awareness/Promotion

As part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month in November, an exhibit was on display in Walhalla, with handouts related to this topic available for patrons to take with them. In addition, books on memory loss, caregiving and related topics were on the display available for checkout. The program on Brain Health: Prevention and Awareness was held at the Seneca branch.

Although there was no programming on the topic, the December awareness display featured books and handouts on Seasonal Affective Disorder, which is a significant issue for many people during the winter.

Library Resource event flyers are emailed to local non-profit and social service agencies, as well as other community leaders. All Library Resource events are also submitted to the Seneca Journal Community Calendar each month, as well as being listed in the OCPL (print) calendar and on the OCPL website and social media sites. Additionally, Library Resource event flyers are frequently featured on the Healthy Oconee Coalition Instagram page and are submitted to the Oconee Observer, the newsletter for Oconee County employees, for additional promotion. In addition, some of the Library Resource events/programs may be featured in the "County Connector," the Oconee Chamber of Commerce's newsletter.

<u>Program/event name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u># of participants</u>
• Mobile Clean of Heart Showers	11/5/25	Our Daily Bread (Seneca)	5/4*
• Brain Health: Prevention and Awareness	11/6/25	Seneca OCPL	6
• Yoga	11/13/25	Walhalla OCPL	7
• Mobile Clean of Heart Showers	11/19/25	Our Daily Bread (Seneca)	13
• Mobile Clean of Heart Showers	12/3/25	Our Daily Bread (Seneca)	12
• Family Christmas Fiesta	12/6/25	Walhalla OCPL	75
• Yoga	12/22/25	Walhalla OCPL	5
• Mobile Clean of Heart Showers	12/17/25	Our Daily Bread (Seneca)	11

*Hot water not working. Five people took cold showers and four additional people were given clothing/hygiene supplies.

Assistance to Individuals/Families

The Community Resource Associate and Community Resource Assistant/Spanish Interpreter assisted 31 individuals/families in November and December.

Other Community Resource Activities/Collaborations

The Library Resource Associate (Kerry) and/or Community Resource Assistant (Amy) attended/participated in/provided the following in November and December:

- Attended Oconee County Stakeholder meeting, Vocational Rehabilitation, November 3, 2025 (Kerry)
- Secured 3rd year of funding for MCOH project from Dabo's All In Team Foundation, November 5, 2025 (Kerry)
- Assisted with translation at Walhalla Women's Club Toys for Tots distribution, November 11, 2025 (Amy)
- Attended Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare dashboard meeting, December 4, 2025 (Kerry)
- Assisted in planning and hosting OCPL Family Christmas Fiesta, December 6, 2025 (Amy and Kerry)
- Assisted with translation at Walhalla Women's Club Toys for Tots distribution, December 9, 2025 (Amy)
- Coordinated clothing donation pick-up for MCOH from United Way, December 10, 2025 (Kerry)
- Coordinated supply pick-up for MCOH shower program from Catholic Charities, December 17, 2025 (Kerry)

Continuing Education

- Elevate Your Human Game: Winter Edition, Linguist Education Online, December 4 & 5, 2025 (Amy)

Salem Library
November/December 2025
Kayla Rucker
Branch Manager

Programming, Operations, Staff Development, etc....

Despite holidays approaching in November and December, library/program attendance and circulation has remained steady. These months were a bit of a transitional period with Abigail White leaving to work in Walhalla and Anna Holbrooks starting in December but we've worked as a system-wide team to keep things flowing smoothly in Salem. Our patrons maintain great appreciation for this branch and the services we provide.

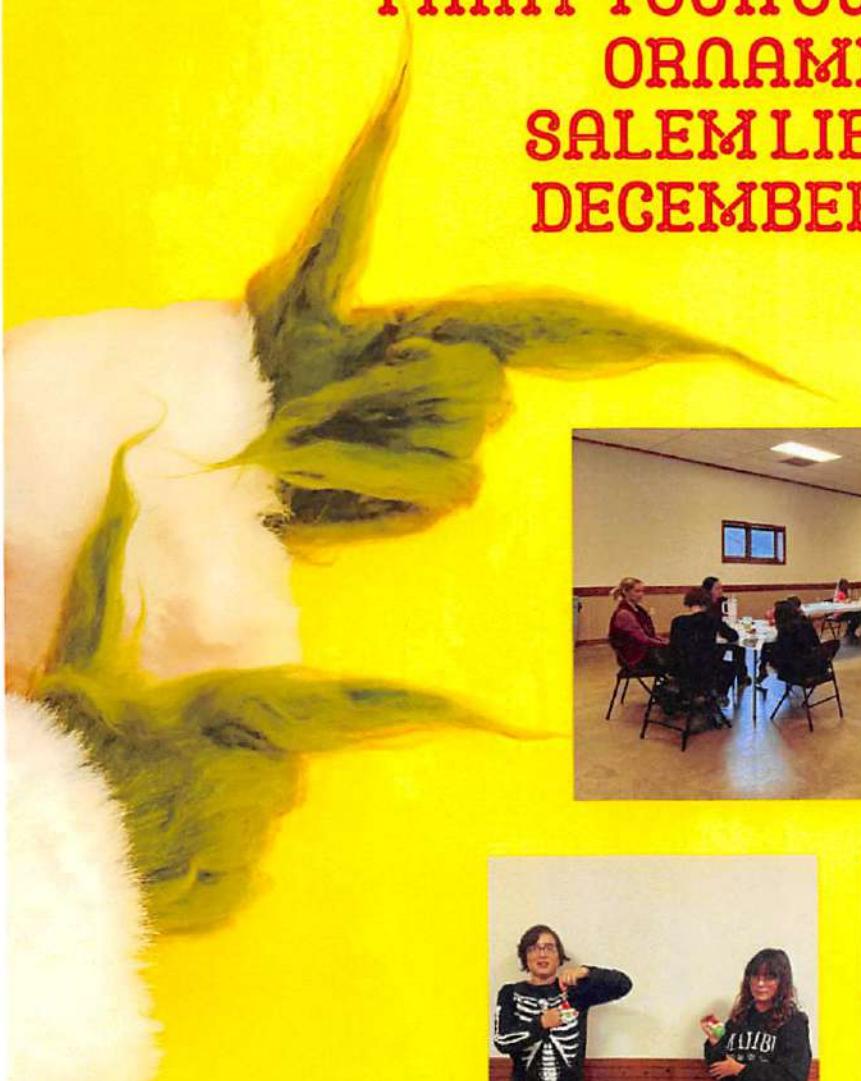
- ➲ Despite not having registration required for Rock Painting, it is still one of our most popular programs. We had 13 in attendance during December 4th's event.
- ➲ Our bimonthly event, Coffee and Crafts, had 5 attendees for the month of November. Even though we had a full event, we unfortunately had some no-shows.
- ➲ We wrapped up our Tiny Art Show event with the awards ceremony. There were 12 in attendance. All participants received a certificate for their participation. Since the show was so successful, we will be holding a spring version in March/April.
- ➲ For November, we offered a series of Thanksgiving-themed weekly children's events called Turkey Time. Each event had turkey-themed stories and a fun turkey craft. For all three events, our total attendance was 16.
- ➲ On December 17th, we held our Grinch ornament painting program for ages 3-11. We had 14 in attendance.
- ➲ Our monthly Zoom book club, Page Turners, had 2 attendees in November and 4 in December. November's selection was The Wedding People by Alison Espach. December's selection was Britt-Marie Was Here by Fredrik Backman.
- ➲ We've also had some extra events (Homeschool Hangout, Afternoon Storytime, crafting programs, etc...) hosted by Brittany and Emily J. that have been well-received by our patrons.
- ➲ Our branch was down an employee for the month of November and half of December. Fortunately, staff at other branches were able to cover so that I could host our programs. No events had to be postponed or cancelled during this time.

- » Our new Circulation Assistant, Anna Holbrooks, started on December 16th. She formerly worked at the Walhalla branch in 2022-2023. She's quickly becoming reacquainted with library procedures and is fitting in nicely in Salem.
- » Take and make kits remain popular for those that are unable attend our events. We distributed 12 kits in November and 24 kits (12 for kids, 12 for teens/adults) in December. Since the reception was great for the teen/adult kits, we plan to provide kits for all ages in the upcoming months.

Stats	Nov	Dec
Visits	1255	1490
New Cards	3	4
ILLs	3	1

COFFEE AND CRAFTS:
DIY MINI TIN CASE BOOKSHELF
SALEM LIBRARY
NOVEMBER 2025





PAINT YOUR OWN GRINCH
ORNAMENT
SALEM LIBRARY
DECEMBER 2025



Ann Rogers Memorial Room
November/December 2025
Quientell Walker, Local History Associate

Narrative

SC Room Activity:

I was able to take advantage of this slow period in inquiries. I was able to reorganize parts of the SC Room collection that is located in the Staff Only Area upstairs. I began working through the library's history collection, and determined it would be advantageous to purchase new archival storage boxes as well as move items into smaller boxes. This took several days to complete, but I am pleased with the results. I was able to further rearrange and declutter more items, and was able to move the Seaborn Document Collection upstairs. In short, Mrs. Margaret Mills Seaborn was a local historian, and donated her map and research document collection to the library. The research documents are in multiple older archival boxes, and were housed in the SC Room. I was able to move the boxes upstairs, and I hope to move them into new archival boxes soon.

Out of Moth Ball:

I was contacted by the Genealogy Librarian at the Pickens County Library System, PCLS, and was asked if I could assist in providing guidance in her new position. In short, there was a gap in Historical Room training. Before leaving PCLS I created a training manual for the Historical Room, and offered to answer any questions that could have come up after I left in 2017. However, I did not expect to be contacted after eight years. Yet, the Genealogy and Local History world does follow its own unique pace. I met with my PCLS counterpart, and we spent several hours going over her questions and me attempting to answer as many of them as possible. We now have a new contact/partnership with PCLS.

Oconee SC 250 Committee:

Two Oconee SC 250 Committee members attended a meeting in Camden, and during this meeting were informed about an initiative from SC 250 for all counties to participate in Carolina Days. This observance is to commemorate South Carolina's contribution to the American Revolution as well as the significant victory at the Battle of Sullivan's Island. During the week, June 27-July 5, there are day themes to celebrate South Carolina. The themes are: Celebrate Carolina, Carolina Day, Explore Carolina, Carolina Kids, Our Carolina Story, Made in Carolina, Honor Carolina, Independence Day, and America's Potluck. I was informed about all of this at the Marketing Subcommittee meeting, and I discussed how the library could potentially partner with the Oconee SC 250 Committee to observe Carolina Week.

OCPL-Oconee SC 250 Carolina Week Programming:

After the Marketing Subcommittee meeting, I began work on having a meeting with Adult and Youth Services to discuss the potential of doing parts of Carolina Week with Summer Reading. The reason for having this meeting so early, is that there is a tight deadline to submit a grant application. This grant would aid in covering the majority of the cost of programming and supplies. Our first meeting was scheduled for December 17th at 1:00pm. Unfortunately, due to events beyond Youth Services control they were unable to attend this initial meeting. Brittany, Adult Services Librarian, and I spent time discussing how to best incorporate Carolina Week into Summer Reading. One item that proved the most interesting is having a Gem Mining Program. This is currently a popular topic, and we have the potential to support a local business. Likewise, we discussed the potential of having take-home activities and crafts. During the course of the meeting, I maintained notes and sent them to Brittany and Youth Services. Our next is scheduled in January 8th at 1:00pm.

Rogers Room Statistics:

Statistics Recorded	November 2024	November 2025	December 2024	December 2025
Walk-In	7	2	5	0
Phone Call	3	3	2	0
Mail	0	0	0	0
Email/Online	1	0	4	0
Books	8	13	1	0
Microfilm	35	11	0	0
Map	0	0	0	0
SC Room Presentations	1	0	0	0
SC Room Presentation Attendance	5	0	0	0
Questions Completed	14	7	16	0
Outstanding Questions	0	0	0	0
Volunteer Hours	51.5	26	59	27.5
Specialized 1:1 Sessions	1	1	2	-

Facilities:

- We have to coordinate with Roads and Bridges about a tree to come down and removing the sign with the old logo. Hopefully they will have time for this whenever they begin work on the new road. We think they may get started in the spring, but they have to hire an asphalt expert from the outside.
- Maintenance has not come look at the vents/ducts. We will have to re-ask Jason.
- I have communicated with Emily J. about purchasing a new couch for the children's area in November as it is damaged. We will also purchase a chair to replace the broken armchair in the Teen area.
- I am going to ask Maintenance to pressure wash the walkways, the windows, and the white fascia at the top of the building. They did not have enough staff the last time I asked as the landscaping crew changed. UPDATE: They have a new member of the landscaping crew. I believe they will have more time after the weather warms up.

Operations: Everything is operating normally. Due to lack of space and workflow we cannot weed as quickly as we need to. The staff is keeping up with shelf reading very well. Bingo and painting/drawing remain our biggest programs. We expected attendance to be slower toward the end of the year but were pleasantly surprised at Bingo attendance.

Staffing: One part time employee resigned for personal reasons and we hope to hire a new person in January. A new volunteer has joined us as of November. I appreciate everyone's extra time filling in the gaps.

Attendance for programs run by Seneca staff:

Bingo – Nov: 15; Dec: 29 Thankful Tree: 10

Watercolor Wreath: 3 Painting Class: 5

Law Talk: 7

Notable Statistics	Nov 2025	Dec 2025
Visits to library	3656	3724
New Cards Issued	49	64

Walhalla Library

November – December 2025

Abigail White, Circulation Manager

Staff Development:

- The previous Circulation Manager, Tucker Brown, left for another job opportunity in October. Abigail White has since taken up the position beginning in November.
- The hiring process for a part-time circulation assistant started at the beginning of December.

Meeting Room:

- November – Friends of the Library board meeting, exam space
- December – Christmas Fiesta, Flourishing Homeschool Group

Programs:

On Saturday, December 6th, the Cultural Outreach Committee hosted a “Christmas Fiesta” in the meeting room. This event was well received with over 50 attendees within the two-hour timeframe, one being Mayor Tim Hall. The Christmas Fiesta provided delicious food and drinks, holiday arts and crafts, and pictures with Santa Claus. Among those assisting with the event from our library staff were Janice Lovinggood, Kerry Leeper Brock, Brittany Castro, and Amy Saylor.

Study Room:

- November – 41 uses
- December – 29 uses

Facilities:

- A few lights in the parking lot blink when they turn on at night. Maintenance has confirmed that they will send someone out with a bucket lift to change the bulbs.
- A sprinkler system inspection was conducted by fire safety services on November 19th. The library met all requirements.
- The library closed an hour early due to a waterline issue affecting the immediate area on December 10th. The library was under a boil water advisory the entire day of December 11th.

Statistics:

Category	November 2025	December 2025
Visitors	2989	3463
New Cards Issued	33	51
ILL	8	4
Hours Open	169	191

November and December at the Westminster Library were full of fun, crafts, and outreach. Everyone is in the holiday spirit so our programming reflects that. Programming for these months can be interesting in that people want to attend, but holidays can make it difficult. Overall, our all of our programs were a success. Staff got to try out new things. Kids were introduced to the library. Special projects continue to thrive. Customers seemed to enjoy the new materials ordered each month and we continue to offer the best customer service we can.

Programs, Staffing,

- We celebrated Dino-vember with a dinosaur themed scavenger hunt. We had 71 kids hunt around the library to find them all. We also gave out 24 Make & Take kits which included a wooden dinosaur, paint, and a paint brush.
- Thirty years ago, the world was introduced to Toy Story. In celebration, we held a Toy Story Party and had 6 attendees (we had a lot of no-shows).
- Our November movie showing was the newest Smurfs movie with 6 attendees.
- Brittany and Emily held several programs during November which helped make sure every age had a program available for them.
- We had almost everyone show for our Mini Book Ornaments with 14 in attendance. Everyone enjoyed using printouts and foam tape to create miniature versions of their favorite books that they then put into an ornament.
- For our December scavenger hunt kids had to find all the items the Grinch had stolen from Whoville and hid around the library. We had 56 participants.
- We had a jolly good time with Old Saint Nick at our Crafts and Pictures with Santa event. There were 30 in attendance.
- We had Kayla Browning come and do a special Gingerbread Storytime in December. She read stories, played some games, and had the kids doing dances. She even used her own laser wood cutter to make cute little gingerbread kits for each kid to color and take home. We had 14 in attendance.
- We gave out 133 Christmas Make and Takes.

Outreach & Staff

- We had second, third, and fourth graders from Foothills Christian School come visit us on two days in November. We spent 45 minutes learning all about the library, our services, programs, and then did a tour. The first group spent their extra time looking up books and discovering things in the collection. The second group knew about the dinosaur scavenger hunt from the minute they stepped into the library and that was all they wanted to do. The ten of them spent their extra time searching the library enthusiastically for dinosaurs.
- Cindi volunteered to ride with Blair in the Westminster Christmas parade. It was her first experience being in a local parade and she said she really enjoyed it.
- I (Leah) was able to help cover at Salem for a few hours during December. It is always nice to work at another branch and feel the different atmosphere and customers.
- Our weekly bread delivery continues to be popular with our community members.

Period project

The Period Project continues to be utilized by our community. We gave away 121 items in November and 160 in December.

Betty B. Watkins Seed Library

The BBW Seed Library has wrapped for the year, but staff are busily preparing for our 2026 launch. It continues to grow in all the ways it needs to. See infographic below for 2025 totals.



Youth Services Department
November – December 2025
Emily Johnson, Youth Services Librarian

Programs

Storytime

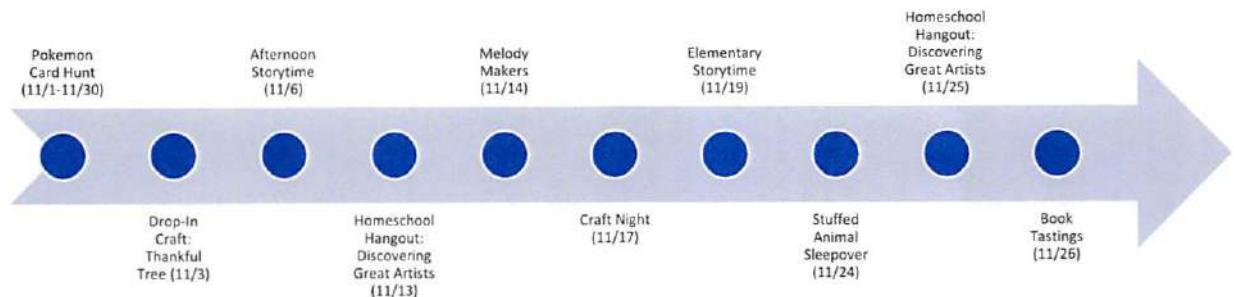
As in previous months, we held four storytimes a week for these two months. Walhalla meets on Mondays, Salem on Tuesdays, Westminster on Wednesdays, and Seneca on Thursdays. Each storytime meets at 10:30 AM. The Walhalla, Westminster, and Seneca storytimes meet in their respective meeting rooms, and the Salem storytime meets in the Salem town hall conference room.

In November, Walhalla's average attendance at storytime fell a little, with 14.5 attendees per week. Salem's also fell, dropping them down to 2 attendees per week. (Salem's mode was 0, though, a point which becomes crucial later in this narrative.) Seneca and Westminster grew, however, averaging 19.7 and 10.7 attendees respectively. Our November themes for storytime were fall, individuality, thankfulness, and turkeys. Individuality especially went well, as the stories were all very interesting and different.

December's numbers are a little more complex, as I was out sick for a few weeks in a row. Walhalla's average out of five weeks was 11 attendees, dropping it below the usual average for that branch. Westminster also dropped, with an average of 9 attendees for three weeks. I only presented storytime at Seneca once, but 20 people attended. At Salem, the average rose—2.25—but the mode remained at 0. The themes for this month were being yourself, families, robots, seasons, and winter. Overall, I would say the families theme was the biggest hit. The kids were very drawn to the stories of this theme.

As mentioned above, the mode for Salem's storytime attendance was 0. This fact, along with the fact that the only family who has consistently attended storytime at Salem now travels to Walhalla on Mondays instead, led Blair and I to discuss canceling Salem storytimes going forward. We were going to cancel them indefinitely, and indeed, we pulled them from the January OCPL calendar. However, Anna Holbrooks, the new assistant branch manager at Salem, has offered to take over the program. Since she will already be at the branch on Tuesday mornings, it would not be inconvenient for her if no one shows up for storytime. This would free me up to have about three extra hours of work time on Tuesday mornings, and would save the county gas money. Anna will begin to conduct storytimes in Salem the first week of February. I will send her via courier the storytime books, outline, and manipulative from the week before. That way, we do not have to worry about getting the books, etc., back quickly. Anna and I are excited about this transition, as we feel it will work best for everyone.

Timeline - November



Pokémon Card Hunt

In this passive program, Pokémon cards were hidden throughout the library at Walhalla. Finding a card meant you earned a piece of candy, but finding a Goldeen card meant you earned a special Pokémon card and a Pokéball. Photo of one of the winners and her prizes below.



Drop-In Craft: Thankful Tree

Inspired by my mom and a craft she used to do with my family every year for Thanksgiving, we held a drop-in craft night at the Seneca Branch on November 3rd. Attendees filled a glass jar with rice and then stuck a small tree branch into the jar. They then filled out leaves with things they were thankful for, one thing per leaf, and tied these leaves to their branches. The result is a decoration for your house that reminds you of all the things you're grateful for. We had 11 official attendees for this program, but we also had three attendees call and ask if we could leave the supplies for them to make their own at home, because something had come up and they could not make it. These particular patrons are regular attendees of our programs, and we were happy to leave the supplies for them. Counting those patrons, we had 14 people participate in the craft.

Afternoon Storytime

In November, we held an afternoon storytime at Westminster that garnered great turnout: 15 attendees. We read books about Thanksgiving, sang and danced, and made leaf crowns at the end.

Homeschool Hangout: Discovering Great Artists

In September, I started a program that will continue every other month—Homeschool Hangout: Discovering Great Artists. This program is based on a book I read by MaryAnn F. Kohl and Kim Solga, wherein the authors create fun, child-friendly ways to explore famous artists' art styles. In November, we focused on John James Audubon and nature journaling. While I did not announce this to the attendees, I also used some principles of nature journaling as taught by John Muir Laws. We held two of these programs in November, anticipating larger turnout.

The first took place at W.P. Anderson Park, the park next to the Westminster library, on November 13th. 6 people attended, and Ranger Liz Johnson from South Cove County Park helped run the program. We looked at Ranger Liz's own nature journal and soaked in the beautiful outdoors. The second program took place at the Seneca branch on November 26th. We had 9 total attendees and had a great time looking at a variety of field guides and learning to replicate Audubon's style of journaling.

We then took a break from the Discovering Great Artists program in December, but it will return in January with pointillism and Georges Seurat.

Melody Makers

Perhaps my favorite program is one I began implementing in September which continues every month at different branches: Melody Makers. Based on a program my mom and her best friend used to run at their local library, Melody Makers is a way for children to celebrate music, rhythm, and sound. We read a music-related book at the beginning of the program, then we sing and dance. At the end, children are given the opportunity to strum a guitar, pick an autoharp, or play with child-sized musical instruments, depending on the week. 8 people attended on

November 14th at the Salem Community Center. The December program had to be canceled due to staff illness. We will continue this program throughout 2026, with the next instance happening on January 9th.

Craft Night

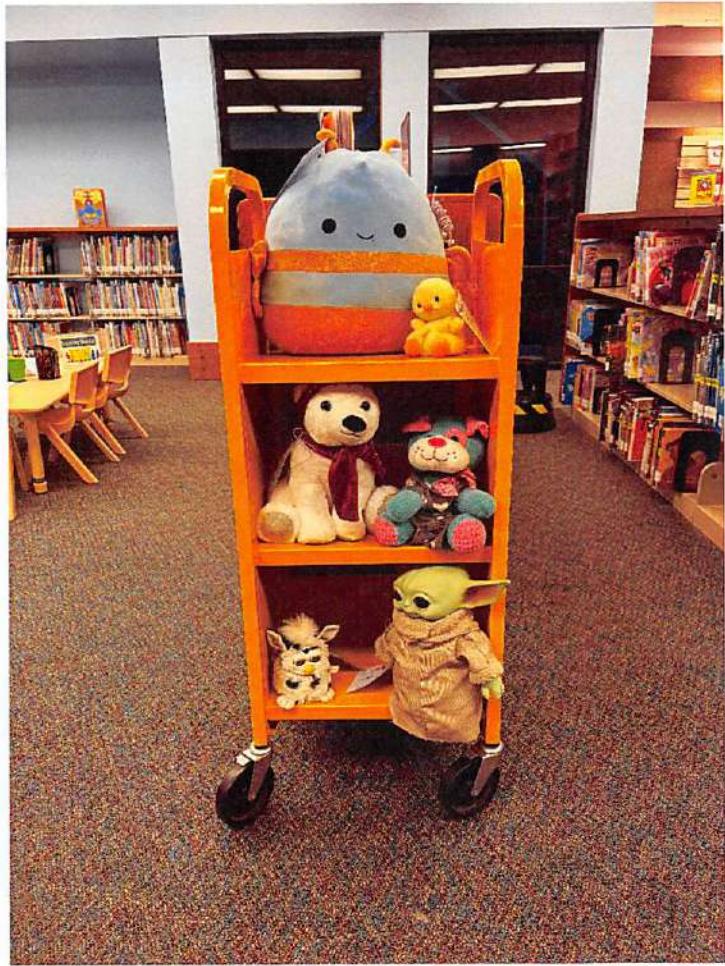
At the Salem Community Center on November 18th, we held a craft night. At this craft night, we taught the attendees how to make leaf string art using pushpins, corkboard, and embroidery floss. This was a fun craft with easy clean-up, and attendees seemed to really enjoy it. We had 13 people present for this program.

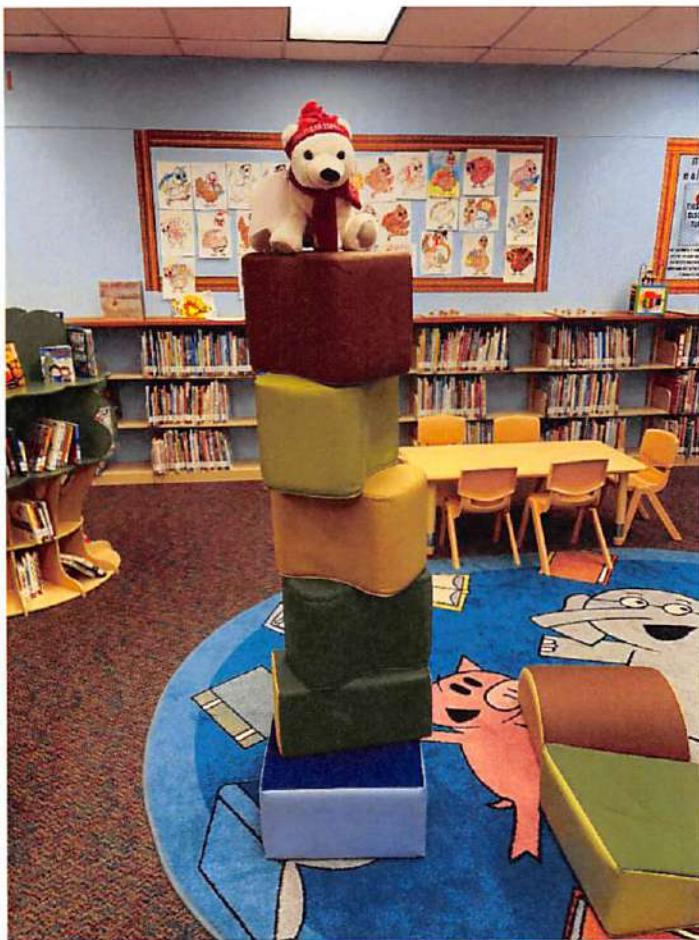
Elementary Storytime

We held an elementary storytime in November on the 19th at Walhalla. This program was centered around pie, which was a fun way to theme a storytime. We read three “pie” books, sang, and danced. We ended the afternoon by crafting a pie garland out of felt and eating Ingles’ apple pie. While only 1/3 of those signed up actually attended, we had a great time, and as one attendee said, “everyone else was missing out.”

Stuffed Animal Sleepover

We held a stuffed animal sleepover at Walhalla on November 24th, where kids were encouraged to bring their stuffies to the library to spend the night. We had 6 stuffed animals spend the night with us that night, and we got up to some crazy antics. Pictures below.

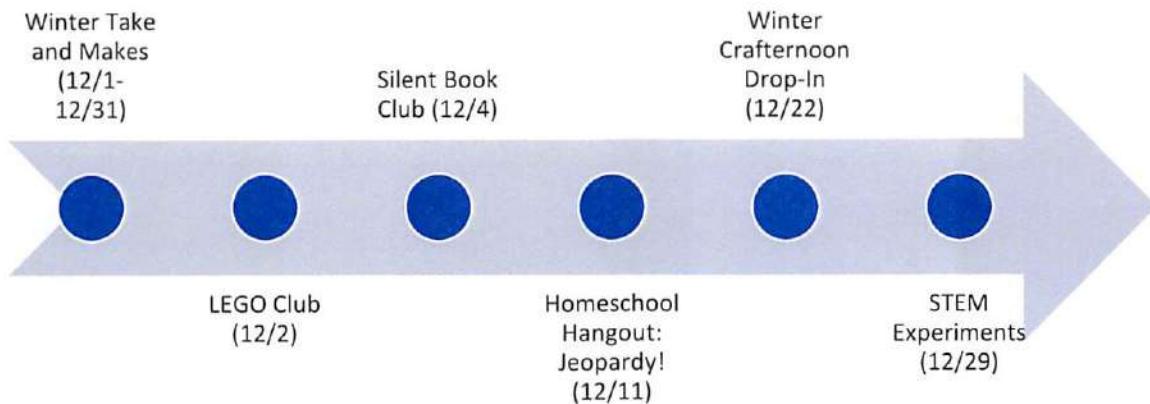






Book Tastings

The program I was most excited about in November was the Book Tastings program on November 26th, the day before Thanksgiving. This program was held at Westminster, and unfortunately, only 2 people attended. Despite the low turnout, we had a great time “sampling” books and getting ideas for our to-be-read (TBR) lists. One attendee said this was her favorite library program this year.



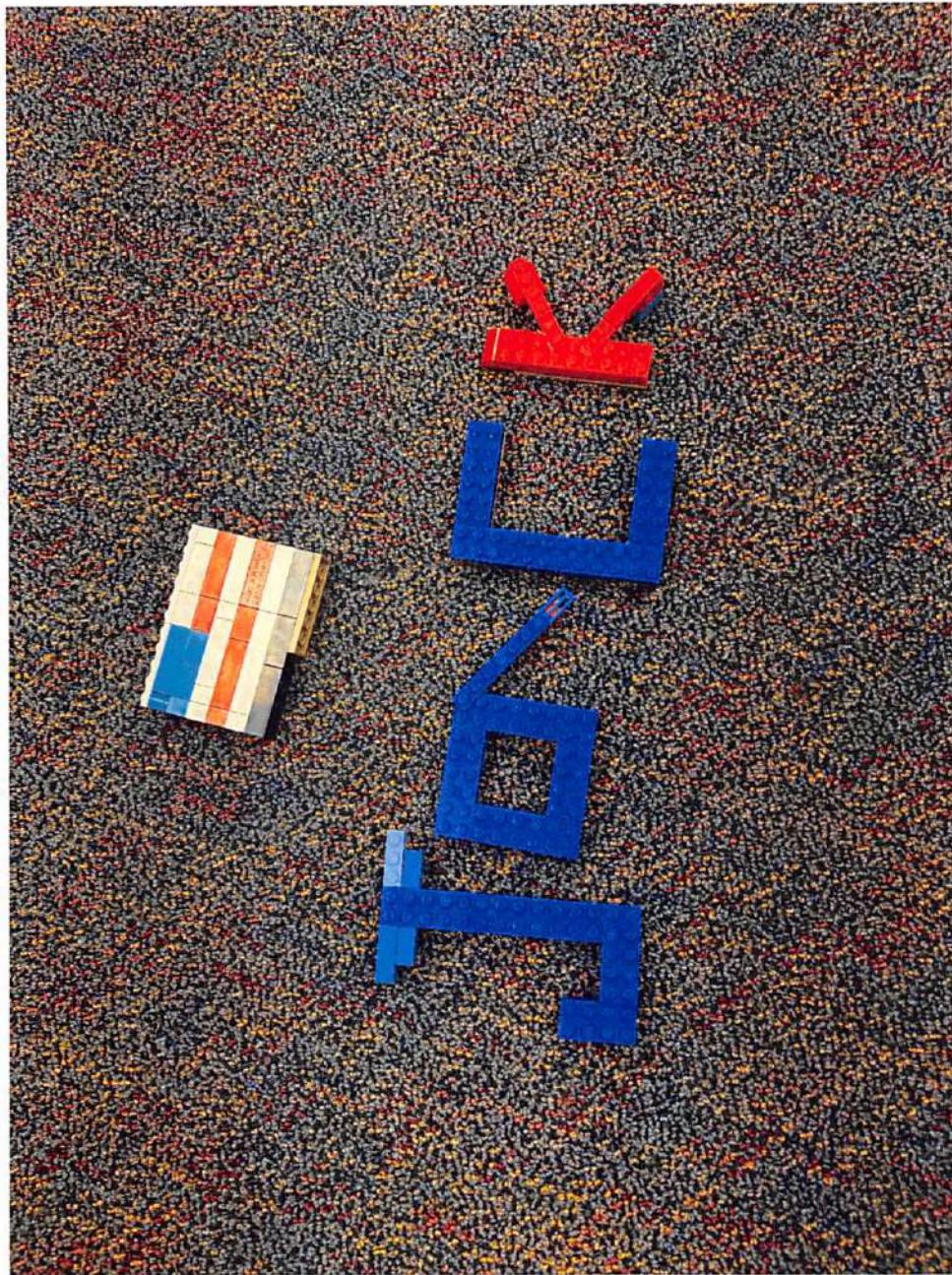
Winter Take and Makes

For this passive program, we had a variety of winter craft kits sitting out at the Walhalla branch for kids to take as they passed by. This lasted from December 1st-31st.

LEGO Club

For LEGO Club in December at Westminster, the attendees were encouraged to create their name in 3D out of LEGOs. We had 14 attendees for this program. Photos are below.





Silent Book Club

This event, scheduled to be held at Seneca on December 4th, was canceled after no one signed up. This is the second attempt to have a type of silent book club, and it looks like this is not the type of program people are interested in attending, so I may not try this again.

Homeschool Hangout: Jeopardy!

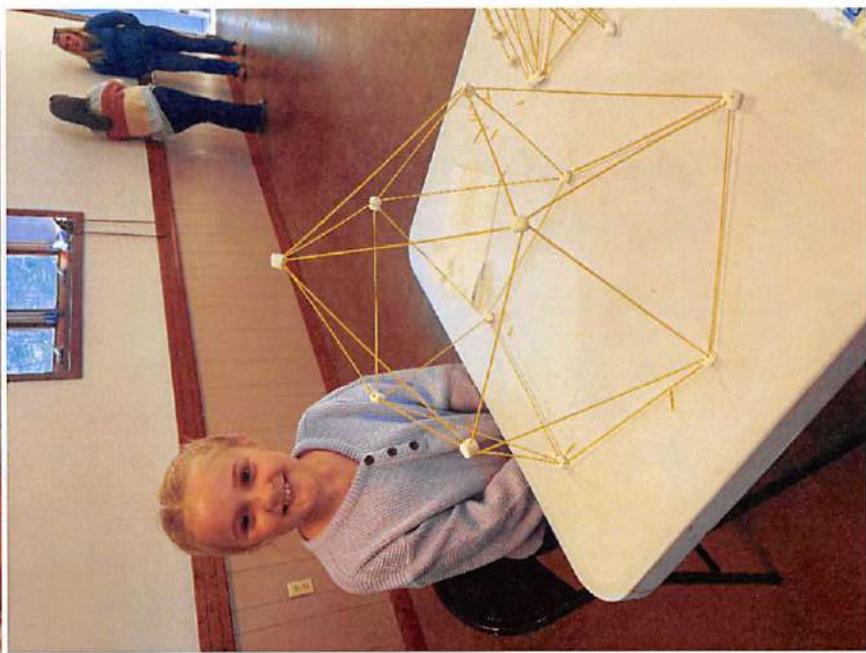
On December 11th, DJ ran the Homeschool Hangout: Jeopardy! program, where attendees were put into groups and played winter holiday trivia. Winners (and all attendees) picked free books to take home.

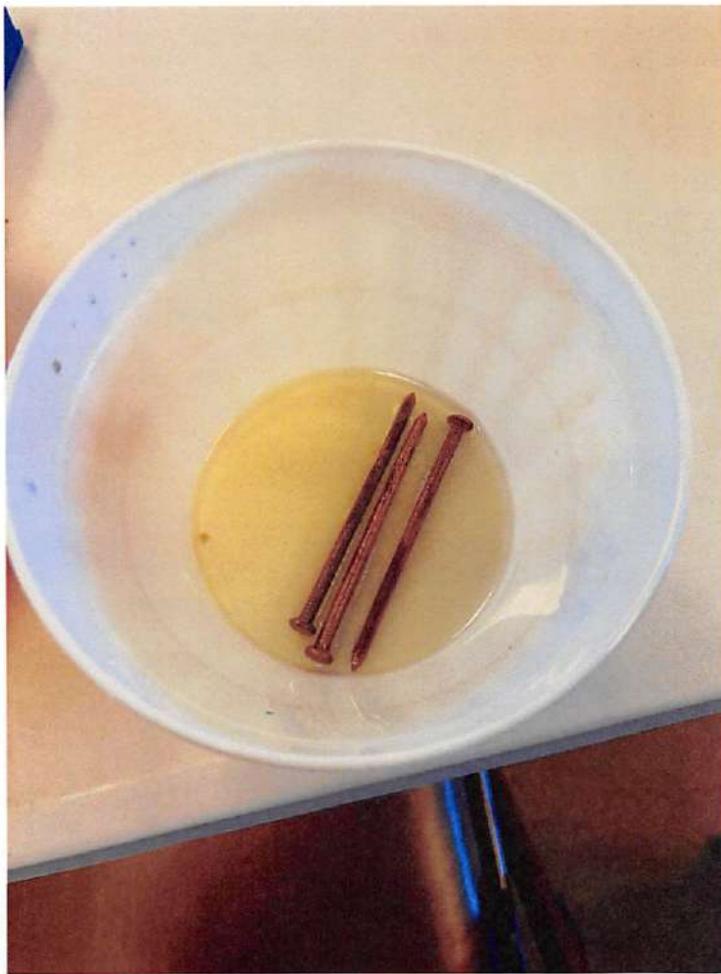
Winter Crafternoon Drop-In

At this event in Walhalla on December 23rd, 14 attendees were given the choice of two crafts: ornament scratch art, or drawing the Northern Lights with oil pastels. They were also allowed to choose both crafts, if they wanted. Attendees really enjoyed this program, especially using the oil pastels, which were a new art medium for some of them. It was fun to see the variety of talents during this program.

STEM Experiments

This program took place on December 29th at the Salem Community Center. 15 people were signed up, but only 6 attended. The *Seneca Journal* turned up for a story, as well. During this program, we “cleaned” pennies using salt and vinegar, then used the leftover solution to coat ungalvanized steel nails in copper. We also learned about the strength of triangles while building structures out of spaghetti noodles and marshmallows. Pictures are below.





Collection Development and Maintenance

During November and December, I had little time to spend on collection development and maintenance—at least not as much time as I had in August when I was only hosting one storytime a week. However, I still managed to continue weeding the easy section at Walhalla, and I kept up with requests for new or replacement books from branch managers and patrons. I also had time to find a few books in monthly catalogues that I thought would be beneficial to the library, and I added these to Ingram carts as well.

Community Outreach/Collaboration

Building off of what I started in July and August, we held storytimes for three preschools in November: Trinity Baptist Preschool, The Learning Center at Open Door Baptist, and Golden Corner Preschool. DJ Wharton led The Learning Center's storytime, while I led the other two. We had great turnout for these programs, especially the Trinity Baptist Preschool storytime, which was held for their 2s, 3s, and 4s classes. (The Learning Center, in contrast, only sends their 4s class.) In total, we held storytime for 144 attendees in November. We had to cancel the outreach storytimes for all three preschools in December. Once because I was sick, and twice because the preschools asked to cancel due to December events.

Planning Ahead

In the past two months, I have planned the storytime themes and outlines, complete with books and songs, through July of 2026.

Also during this time, I added the programs for March to Skedda and created everything needed on Canva.

I am also working on a future recurring video program I would like to begin in January—First Chapter Friday, where I read the first chapter of a juvenile/teen book out loud. These videos would be available on the website. I have written the script for the introductory video and have recorded about 20 weeks of books so far.

DJ and I have also begun planning for the Summer Reading Program 2026. We previously spent several long days making a detailed, chronological list of what needs done each month of the year for future SRPs. We are following that list now as we begin to think about and plan SRP '26. We have begun reaching out to several partners and many places that could run programs and have already booked several programs. We have also begun to plan prizes for SRP '26, and have even ordered a few already.

Displays

The juvenile and teen displays have been kept up with throughout November and December. For November, we ran displays that showcased “hidden gems,” or books that are usually shelved on the bottom shelf and thus overlooked. For December, we wrapped books and put brief synopses on the outside of them so that people could take home surprise books. This was a big hit and has had a lot of checkouts so far. We are continuing this into January, as we still have some wrapped books and we want to have a chance to put them all out. Once the wrapped books have all been put out, we will switch to our January/February display theme: the winter “blues,” or books with blue covers.

Continuing with DJ’s idea for the children’s area display, we have a “gallery” wall of children’s coloring and artwork in the children’s area. For November, we had children color or “disguise” turkeys to help them hide for the holiday. For December, they colored and designed snowmen.