

OCPL Director's Report

May 2026

1. Programs and Services: Attendance at programs in March and April was very good. The Little Walhalla Book club, led by a volunteer and held at Alexander's Coffee House on Main Street in Walhalla, has been very successful. Novel Study (a new program for the Youth Services department) continues to be successful. We also have the Book Buzz program at Mountain Mocha in Walhalla, and the Zoom Book Club in Salem. The branches have also conducted numerous programs. See the branch managers' reports for more on those.

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 FY25/26 to date are attached.

4. Personnel and Training: Dianne Lyles filled the county PT position in Westminster. We have also hired a couple of new PT staff in Walhalla (Staffmark). We are working on a new system of training and evaluation starting with the new calendar year. We adapted this system from Richland Library.

5. Building and Grounds: Facilities Maintenance has done some grounds work for us with the approaching of spring and has started regular mowing. We have submitted a maintenance request ticket for the HVAC issues in Walhalla and have secured funding for them to rent a lift. The Seneca Branch has requested that the facia and exterior trim be painted. KOBA, or Keep Oconee Beautiful Association, has applied for a grant to help with library landscaping at Seneca, Walhalla, and Westminster (the Town of Salem takes care of their exterior).

6. Technology: We are utilizing our 3-D printers more this year to make props and other things for Summer Reading. We also applied for a grant for a new electronic telescope for the Library of Things.

7. Friends of the Library: Used book sales have continued each Thursday from 10:00 to 3:30 p.m. 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 March and April 2026:

Basement \$5,275.50

Booth \$3,088.69

Lobby \$649.00

Seneca \$81.00

2nd Party \$ 427

Online Sales \$289.20

Total Book Sales Revenue \$9,810.39

8. Oconee County: The county's new insurance for full time employees took effect on May 1. While we don't anticipate any personnel changes in the library due to the rising costs, there are some county departments that are seeing retirements and separations due to the change. This will affect departments with which we interact regularly, like Facilities Maintenance and Roads and Bridges, as well as Vehicle Maintenance. It might delay the Seneca project and cause longer wait times for maintenance requests.

9. State Library: The requested increase in State Aid to Public Libraries had passed both in the state House and Senate. While Oconee will not see an increase in the coming fiscal year, the increase will be a boon for the smaller counties in the state. The State Library is also working closely with the Institute for Museum and Library Services on projects for the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. We sent Emily Sluder of the Seneca Branch to "IMLS Library Convening 250: Telling America's Story" on May 11-13, 2026 in Atlanta, GA. This all-expenses paid conference focused on inspiring and empowering "librarians responsible for small and rural libraries to participate in telling both the national and local American story, reaching audiences who are often overlooked."

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. Brittany Castro is participating in the 2026 class of Leadership Oconee. We also continue to work with the Healthy Oconee Coalition, Oconee County First Steps, and the Oconee County Chamber.

11. Other: Summer Reading is almost here. This year's theme is "Unearth your Story." We will be focusing a lot on dinosaurs and paleontology. The kick off is at High Falls County Park on Friday, May 29. Look for a lot more on Summer Reading in the Youth Services report.

	Mar 2025	Mar 2026	Change	Apr 2025	Apr 2026	Change
Visits to Library	12,463	12,268	-1.6%	12,046	11,368	-5.6%
Material Circulation - LOT		110			107	
Material Circulation - Adult	11,272	11,014	-2.3%	10,691	10,065	-5.9%
Material Circulation - Youth	2,126	896	-57.9%	638	822	28.8%
Material Circulation - Juvenile	7,966	7,827	-1.7%	8,443	7,564	-10.4%
Total Material Circulation	21,364	19,737	-7.6%	19,772	18,451	-6.7%
Internet Uses	853	798	-6.4%	679	707	4.1%
Internet Hours of Use	385	391	1.6%	308	376	22.1%
New Cards Issued	136	155	14.0%	126	134	6.3%
Programs - Adult	8	12	50.0%	7	7	0.0%
Programs Attendance - Adult	29	65	124.1%	22	43	95.5%
Programs - Youth 12-18	0	2		0	2	
Programs Att - Youth 12-18	0	8		0	13	
Programs - Juvenile 6-11	4	9	125.0%	4	4	0.0%
Programs Att -Juv 6-11	25	55	120.0%	72	26	-63.9%
Programs - Children 0-5	10	17	70.0%	9	15	66.7%
Programs - Att - Children 0-5	158	253	60.1%	130	242	86.2%
Programs - All Ages	5	3	-40.0%	6	4	-33.3%
Programs Att - All Ages	91	41	-54.9%	80	44	-45.0%
Programs Att - Passive	125	1,391	1012.8%	804	1,611	100.4%
Outreach Activities	0	3		4	8	100.0%
Outreach Act. Attendance	0	#VALUE!		690	1,020	47.8%
Public Training Sessions	4	4	0.0%	4	5	25.0%
Public Training Participants	4	4	0.0%	4	5	25.0%
Public Training Hours	4	4	0.0%	4	5	25.0%
Staff Training Sessions	1	6	500.0%	6	1	-83.3%
Staff Training Participants	1	5	400.0%	28	7	-75.0%
Staff Training Hours	40	32	-20.0%	167	55	-67.1%
Number of New Volunteers	0	0		0	4	
Number of Vol Hours	36	63	75.0%	70	70	0.0%
Meeting Room Use	80	98	22.5%	89	415	366.3%
Meeting Room Attendance	586	687	17.2%	637	677	6.3%
Specialized 1:1 Sessions	5	2	-60.0%	1	4	300.0%
Number of Web Site Hits	10,289	12,121	17.8%	9,353	12,170	30.1%
Wi-Fi Users	122	131	7.4%	113	129	14.2%
Wi-Fi Sessions	695	752	8.2%	753	801	6.4%
Hoopla Checkouts	957	1,744	82.2%	1,128	1,532	35.8%
CloudLibrary Downloads	3,239	3,687	13.8%	3,091	3,380	9.3%
Ancestry.com Hits	85	216	154.1%	115	194	68.7%
Interlibrary Loans	43	36	-16.3%	44	50	13.6%
New Material Added	813	818	0.6%	1,007	1,000	-0.7%

OCPL BUDGET 2025-2026- 5-15-26

Account Number	Description	Budgeted	Spent	Percent	Balance
Local Budget					
010-206-30018-00000	Travel	1500	902.93	60%	597
010-206-30024-00000	Equip. Maintenance	2,600	2,600	100%	0
010-206-30025-00000	Professional -Staffmark	150,000	115,473	77%	34,527
010-206-30041-00000	Telecommunications	0		0%	0
010-206-30056-00000	Data Processing	28,592	28,591	100%	1
010-206-30059-00000	Copier Click Charges - Xerox	8,500	8,493	100%	7
010-206-30080-00000	Dues	750	750	100%	0
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	9,487	9,649	102%	-162
010-206-33022-00208	Bldg Maint - Seneca	4,000	3,774	94%	226
010-206-33022-00209	Bldg Maint - Westminster	3,216	3,309	103%	-93
010-206-33022-00210	Bldg. Maint - Salem	2,000	1,748	87%	252
010-206-34043-00207	Electricity - Walhalla	18,000	13,847	77%	4,153
010-206-34043-00208	Electricity - Seneca	12,000	9,861	82%	2,139
010-206-34043-00209	Electricity - Westminster	9,000	7,974	89%	1,026
010-206-34043-00210	Electricity - Salem	5,000	5,000	100%	0
010-206-34044-00207	Water - Walhalla	1,700	1,615	95%	85
010-206-34044-00208	Water - Seneca	2,000	1,669	83%	331
010-206-34044-00209	Water - Westminster	2,250	867	39%	1,383
010-206-40031-00000	Sm Capital Equip (Loc)	2,729	2,729	100%	0
010-206-40032-00000	Operational	6,000	5,995	100%	5
010-206-40032-00000-A	Youth Services	2,000	1,963	98%	37
010-206-40033-00000	Postage	250	221	88%	29
010-206-40034-00000	Food	500	479	96%	21
010-206-40101-00000	Books (Local)	87,670	87,427	100%	243
010-206-40102-00000	Periodicals (Local)	23,000	23,000	100%	0
010-206-40103-00000	AV (Local)	11,500	11,480	100%	20
010-206-80206-00000	Automobile Maint - Library	1,500	484	32%	1,016
010-206-81206-00000	Gasoline - Library	3,000	2,058	69%	942
010-206-82206-00000	Diesel - Library	2,500	1,750	70%	750
TOTAL LOCAL FUNDS		404,644		0%	47,536
MISC. FUNDS					
013-206-60010-00000	Gift's	77,553			77,553
013-080-00835-92056	Nettles Trust	60,827		0%	60,827
TOTAL MISC. FUNDS					138,380
State Aid Budget - \$216814.35					
240-206-30056-00255	Data Processing (State)	\$16,133.69	13,235.98	82%	2,897.71
240-206-30059-00255	Copier Click Charges - Xerox	\$3,000.00	642.54	21%	2,357.46
240-206-30080-00255	Dues (State)	\$900.00	900.00	100%	0.00
240-206-30084-00255	Schools, Training (State)	\$6,000.00	5,965.17	99%	34.83
240-206-40031-00255	Sm Capital Equip (State)	8,863.35	8,800.56	99%	62.79
240-206-40032-00255	Operational (State)	\$19,885.00	19,825.22	100%	59.78
240-206-40045-00255	IT Equipment	\$11,576.31	11,576.31	100%	0.00
240-206-40111-00255	Books (State)	\$101,500.00	99,153.89	98%	2,346.11
240-206-40112-00255	Periodicals (State)	\$32,356.00	32,355.99	100%	0.01
240-206-40113-00255	AV (State)	\$16,600.00	13,333.39	80%	3,266.61
Total State Aid Funds		\$216,814.35		0%	11,025.30

Programs

I planned a variety of programs for adults in March and April. I held a small paint-along class in Salem for St. Patrick's Day. A Law Talk on Social Security Disability was scheduled for March 19. It was cancelled because no one registered for the program and the speaker was coming from the Rock Hill area. I held a melted crayon art program in Seneca, exploring pointillism. Participants enjoyed the program and stated they looked forward to doing this low-cost activity on their own in the future. Giant Scrabble was planned for Westminster. The program was cancelled because only one person signed up. It's difficult to play Scrabble without more people. The **SC Elections Commission** visited the Seneca Branch on April 29 to discuss what people need to know before heading to the polls. They will be at Walhalla in May and Westminster this fall.

Chess club continues on the third Wednesday of every month. Our monthly book club at **Mountain Mocha** remains steady. We've seen a slight increase in attendance, with 10 people in both March and April.

Our English as a Second Language (ESL) program has been cancelled. One family attended in February. They moved away from the area. We continued the class for a few more weeks, but no one else ever attended. Our other volunteer-led program, "The Little Walhalla Book Club," which began in January and has taken off. An average of 16 people attend. The book club meets at **Alexander's Coffee Shop** on the first Wednesday of each month.

In January, we launched the Spice of the Month Take-and-Make kits at Walhalla. The purpose is to allow patrons to expand their cultural and culinary knowledge. Each month we'll showcase a new spice, herb, or blend from various corners of the globe – some very familiar, some more exotic. Each kit includes a spice sample, a recipe, and a bit about the spice's origins, history, and traditional uses. Patrons get to try a (new) spice without having to purchase a whole container for themselves. We gave away 45 rosemary kits in March and 50 white pepper kits in April.

Library Card Design Contest

Through March and part of April we accepted submissions for our library card design contest. The theme was "Stars, Stripes, and Stories" as a nod to America 250. We opened voting to the public during National Library Week (April 20 – 25). The winning design will be available either this summer or in September for National Library Card Sign-up Month.

In-Service

I had the privilege of planning this spring's staff in-service. We recognized Jonathan Hunter and Leah Price for twenty years of service with the Library. Staff had discussions relating to things coming up later this year, like Summer Reading. We also welcomed Flow Circus for a unique teambuilding session, which focused on growth mindset, curiosity, playfulness, and self-awareness. Feedback from staff was positive.

Professional Development

At Blair's encouragement, I have joined this year's Leadership Oconee class. Hosted by the Oconee County Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Oconee equips emerging and existing leaders with the skills, knowledge, and vision to make a lasting impact in Oconee County. I look forward to the education and networking opportunities, as well as the opportunity to help serve a local nonprofit (Wild Hearts Equine Therapy).

Summer Reading

I've got a full calendar of programs scheduled for adults this summer. The two biggest programs are author events. In June, we'll host Michael Cogdill. Anyone who has lived in the area for a while will recognize him as the former anchor of WYFF 4. He earned 32 Emmys over the course of his career, primarily for long-form storytelling. His presentation will focus on telling deeply human stories. In July, we'll be joined by Deeanne Gist. Her historical fiction novels have won multiple awards, including Christy (Christian fiction) and RITA (romance) awards. Ms. Gist will present "How to Kill a Manuscript: 8 Things I Wish I Knew Before I Started Writing".

I have a lot of big ideas that I can't always accomplish as a department of one. Thank you to Jonathan (Seneca), DJ (Walhalla), and Alexis (Walhalla) for their assistance in creating items for this summer's Jurassic Park-themed escape room. I could not pull everything together without help. This has been a challenging project that has allowed me to stretch my creative muscles.

Bookmobile and Outreach Narrative, March & April 2026

Angie Clark-Bookmobile Manager

Operations

During the month of March, 22 regularly scheduled stops were completed. 5 volunteers assisted along with 1 Seneca staff member.

During the month of April, 22 regularly scheduled stops were completed. 6 volunteers assisted along with 1 Walhalla staff member. Three of my regular stops received last visit for checkouts since we are at the end of the school term. May will be for pickups only.

The Learning Center and Golden Corner Preschool children in 4K all received a "Going to Kindergarten" book. These were presented to each child by my volunteer and myself.

The bookmobile had a popup for the Betty B. Watkins Seed Library. 75 seed packets were given out at my regular stops.

Special Outreach

March:

Kids in the park: The bookmobile was set up in the parking lot at the Walhalla Branch. A portion of the walking trail was dedicated and attendees were encouraged to walk the trail to the Walhalla Library.

James M. Brown Kid Fest: The bookmobile was set up for checkouts. We gave out bookmarks, stickers and library information. One volunteer assisted.

April:

Seneca Classical School: Leah Price, manager at Westminster Library assisted me in giving a talk to students about our Seed Library. Students got to pick out seeds and tour the bookmobile. A total of 257 seed packets were given out. They also received a reading bracelet, bookmarks and pencil. **(See pictures)**

Tamassee Salem Elementary: We attended literacy night again at TSE. After a very successful visit back in December, we were asked to return again. Although we did not have as many visitors, we still had a great time visiting with the kids.

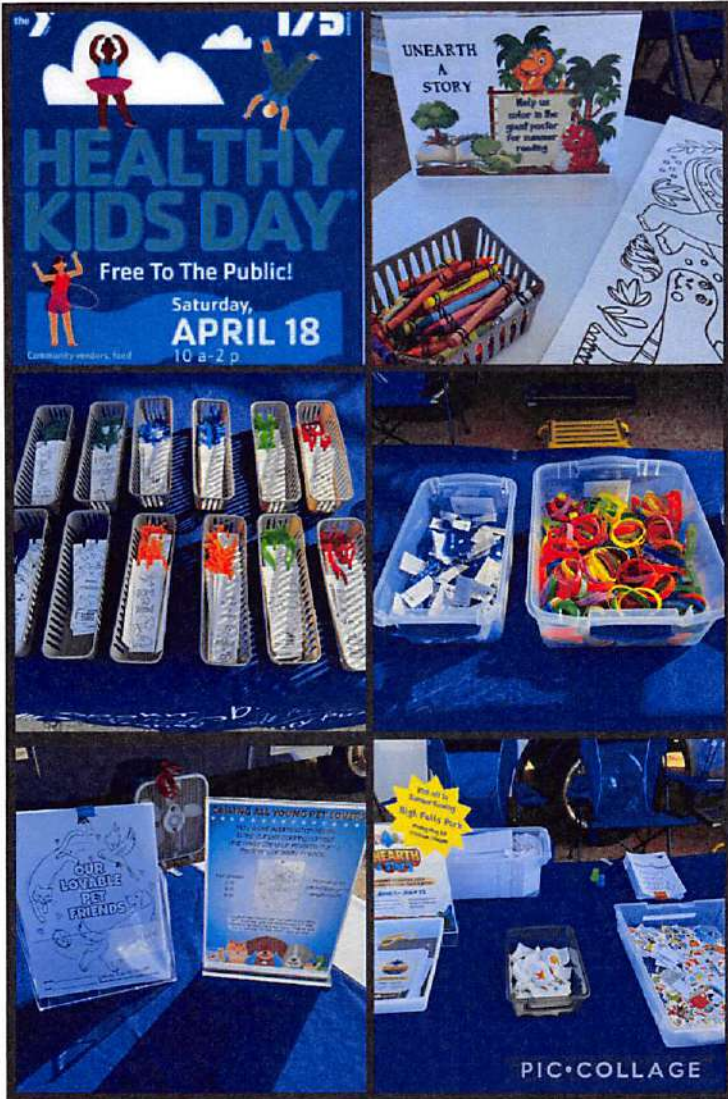
YMCA Healthy Kids Fest: This is our 3rd time participating at the YMCA kids fest. 2 volunteers assisted this year. We had a table set up for our activity which was a giant dinosaur poster. We asked all the kids to help color it in for our upcoming summer reading event. This poster will be displayed at the Westminster Branch during summer reading. We gave out color your own dino bookmarks, stickers, keychains, summer reading info and papers for the coloring contest that our Seneca branch is hosting. **(See Pictures)**

Statistics

Category	March 2026	April 2026
Stops	22	22
Hours Open	19	19
Total Attendance	525	524
Volunteers/Hours	5/34.5 hrs	6/ 39.25 hrs
Outreach Stops	2	3
Outreach Visitors	180	484
Outreach Hours	5	5.5
New Cards	1	0
Programs-Passive	0	332



Seneca Classical School



YMCA Healthy Kids Day

Salem Library
March/April 2026
Kayla Rucker
Branch Manager

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

Now that the cold months are mostly behind us, the Salem branch has picked up more with those interested in gardening, spring cleaning, and other seasonal activities. Our programs and services continue to thrive amongst all ages. We've hosted another successful Tiny Art Show and we are fully prepared (and excited) for what this year's Summer Reading program will bring.

- 📖 Programs for the month of March included: Storytime, Leprechaun Traps, STEM Club, Coffee and Crafts, and Page Turners Book Club.
- 📖 Our most popular program in March was Coffee and Crafts. For this session, attendees were instructed on basic cross stitch techniques, began a cross stitch bookmark keepsake, and were given instructions on how to further their skills and finish their bookmarks at home. We had 14 in attendance for this program.
- 📖 Leprechaun Traps are always a hit with younger children. There were 9 in attendance and all were excited to take their traps home for St. Patrick's Day.
- 📖 Anna continues to excel with Storytime. Our attendance for both sessions in March was 10.
- 📖 Page Turners welcomed a new member in the month of March. We discussed My Other Heart by Nanami Strenner and had 4 in attendance.
- 📖 After a small hiatus, we welcomed back a session of STEM Club. We had 4 in attendance and focused on building a wooden race car.
- 📖 The Salem branch hosted a pop-up Betty B. Watkins' Seed Library during the week of March 16-20. We distributed 92 packs of herb, vegetable, and flower seeds to the community.
- 📖 March was the kit distribution portion of our Tiny Art Show: Spring Into Art. 30 kits were returned to be featured in the show.
- 📖 April was the voting portion of our Tiny Art Show. Each age group was displayed in the library, where patrons were given the opportunity to vote. We received nearly 100 votes for each age level. Our winners will be announced and honored during our Tiny Art Show award reception on May 15th.

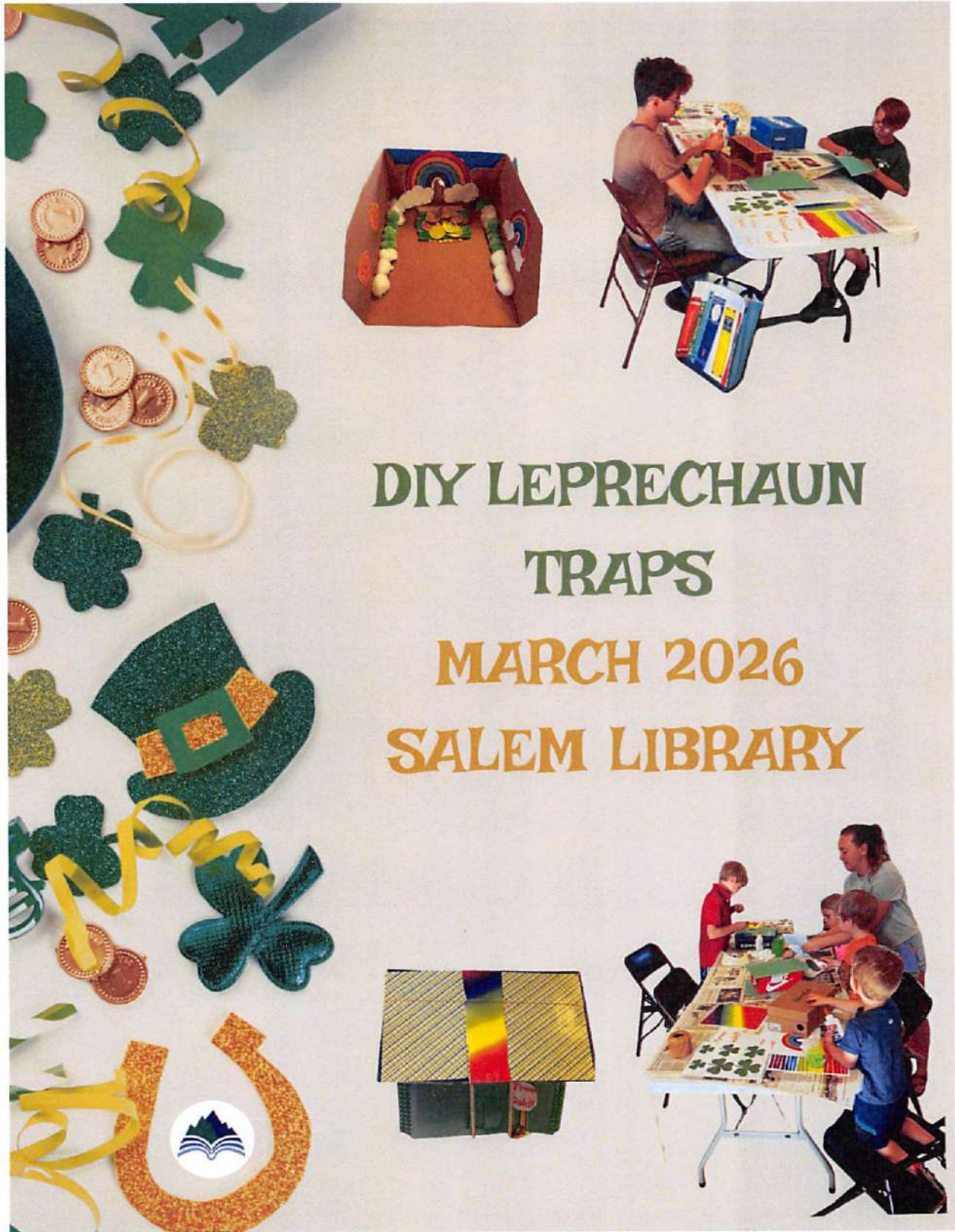
- 📖 Programs for the month of April included: Storytime, Felt Egg Decorating, Rock Painting, and Page Turners Book Club.
- 📖 Storytime in April brought in 9 attendees.
- 📖 Our Felt Egg Decorating program brought in 5 attendees to decorate a festive craft.
- 📖 Rock painting, our most popular program for April, hosted 15 attendees.
- 📖 Page Turners had 3 members in attendance for April. Our selection was Culpability by Bruce Holsinger.
- 📖 For March and April, we gave out 24 take and make kits. During these months, children were able to make a spring flower and Mother's Day craft.

Stats	Jan	Feb
Visits	1601	1505
New Cards	4	4
ILLs	5	3



COFFEE AND CRAFTS:
BEGINNER CROSS STITCH WORKSHOP
MARCH 2026 - SALEM LIBRARY





**DIY LEPRECHAUN
TRAPS**

MARCH 2026

SALEM LIBRARY



Tiny Art Show

SPRING INTO ART

APRIL 2026 - SALEM LIBRARY



Ann Rogers Memorial Room

March/April 2026

Quientell Walker, Local History Associate

Narrative

Living History Day:

I received an invitation to present at Living History Day at High Falls County Park. I presented the Genealogy Basics: Genealogy Overview class, and I had several people in attendance. The day was nice in spite of the heat. I did spend the rest of the day with the Oconee History Museum table and with the Oconee SC 250 table. Liz Johnson, High Falls County Park Ranger, informed me that 307 people attended the event. This is my second time attending Living History Day, and I look forward to next year.

OLLI:

I was contacted by OLLI at Clemson University. They have expressed interest in me presenting the Genealogy Basics classes at their facility. I did visit the facility and spoke with the Curriculum Team Chair Sue Schneider and Operations Manager Amanda Turner. I provided them copies of the class handouts, explained how I present the classes, and answered all posed questions. During the course of our conversation, they were able to experience a mini class. In short, a particular question was raised, and I started to go into presentation mode. I will be contacted later to see if they would like me to present.

Rogers Room Statistics:

Statistics Recorded	March 2025	March 2026	April 2025	April 2026
Walk-In	6	7	2	2
Phone Call	6	6	1	3
Mail	0	0	0	0
Email/Online	0	2	0	0
Books	10	5	0	1
Microfilm	3	5	0	1
Map	0	2	0	4
SC Room Presentations	0	0	2	3
SC Room Presentation Attendance	0	0	100	10
Specialized 1:1 Sessions	-	-	1	1
Questions Completed	17	28	9	26
Outstanding Questions	0	0	0	0
Volunteer Hours	82	35	15	28

Facilities:

- From previous reports: 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 thought they might get started this spring, but they have to hire an asphalt expert from the outside.
- From previous reports: Maintenance has not come look at the vents/ducts. We will have to re-ask Jason.
- No one ever responded to my request for pressure washing this year; in the past the answer has been no.
- We purchased a new smart board and it is operating well.
- The staff spent part of the afternoon at in-service cleaning areas that are never cleaned otherwise.
- The carpets were cleaned by a local company.

Operations: Everything is operating normally. Due to lack of space and amount of workflow, we cannot weed as quickly as we need to, so it would be great if we could acquire boxes faster. The staff is keeping up with shelf reading very well. Bingo and painting/drawing remain our biggest programs. This month, we had to cancel the painting program due to illness, and although we contacted them with a new date, we believe the registrants who said they would come to the make-up date forgot.

Staffing: We are currently fully staffed. There are several continuing education/training programs in May that some of us will attend.

Attendance for programs run by Seneca staff:

Bingo – March: 23; April: 21

Origami - 7

Adult Painting – originally cancelled, 2 on makeup date

Trivia - 0

Wall Street Journal Uses: 30

Notable Statistics	March 2026	April 2026
Visits to library	4743	4201
New Borrowers	87	68

Walhalla Library

March – April 2026

Abigail White, Circulation Manager

Staff Development:

- Jahzuby Fajardo was hired as one of Walhalla's newest part-time circulation assistants. Her first day was April 14th.
- Lilli Marcengill was hired as one of Walhalla's newest part-time circulation assistants. Her first day was April 15th.
- Dianne Lyles accepted a part-time circulation assistant position in Westminster. Her last day at the Walhalla branch was April 17th.

Meeting Room:

- March – Part-time circulation assistant interviews, Baby Read, constitution class, cross-stitch group, job fair, census bureau meeting, flourishing homeschool group.
- April – Part-time circulation assistant interviews, Baby Read, Oconee Indivisible meeting, KOBA meeting, WMS school visit, Dignity Project, constitution class, cross-stitch group, WHS multi-class reunion meeting, Guardian Ad Litem Volunteer Appreciation, proctored exam.

Study Room:

- March – 41 uses
- April – 40 uses

Facilities:

- The library closed at 3:30 pm on Wednesday, March 25th due to water-line maintenance that left the library without water.
- The library was under a boil water advisory the afternoon of Thursday, March 26th and the advisory lasted throughout the entire day of Friday, March 27th.
- On Wednesday, April 22nd, maintenance installed a new water fountain in the library lobby.

Statistics:

Category	March 2026	April 2026
Visitors	3823	3472
New Cards Issued	43	39
ILL	9	12
Hours Open	211.5	201

Programs

With a play on the date MAR 10, we celebrated MAR10 Day by borrowing a Nintendo Switch from the SC State Library and having kids come play with each other. They also had cupcakes, made a pinwheel, and did a hidden object search. They had a lot of fun playing. We had 10 people attend. Our March scavenger hunt continued with the Mario theme and had 66 participants.

We offered several programs during the public school's spring break.

- Easter Egg Shaker Craft—11 attendees
- St. Patrick's Day Craft—7 attendees
- Zootopia 2 Movie Showing—3 attendees
- Easter Bunny Craft—zero attendees
- Bunny Scavenger Hunt—61 participants
- Make and Take Easter Sticker Sheet —24 participants

We hosted an egg coloring contest with 30 entries. They were displayed at the library for everyone to enjoy. Several were chosen as winners and received a coloring kit as a prize.

During National Library Week I wanted to highlight some of the non-traditional items we offer so we held a Library of Things Showcase. We had almost all of the items available out so that people could touch them or use them. We set up the badminton and Jenga and people had fun playing those. We had six people come through.

Our free tree giveaway through Neighborhood Forrest was a great success. We had 141 registrants and were able to give away 150 Laurel Oaks. The hope is that the library will be selected again next year to participate so even more trees can be given away. This pairs very well with our seed library and the library offering things that are helpful for the community.

There were seven attendees who came to our Earth Day Seed Ball program. Seed from the BBW Seed Library were used along with soil and clay to make balls that make it easy to plant wildflower seeds.

There were six adult attendees who came to the library to paint ceramic sunflowers for April's Maker Monday.

Staffing

After interviewing several candidates, we decided to hire Dianne L. Dianne started working at the Walhalla Library in January, but lives in Westminster so this would be a good fit for her. At the same time, the Walhalla Library lost several of their employees and we do not want them to be without. Dianne will continue to work at Walhalla until they can get more help.

Facilities

The carpet was cleaned in March.

Community & BBW Seed Library

I was invited to participate in Orchard Park Elementary's Career Day on March 25. I met with 90 second and third graders and told them about the day in the life of a librarian. They all received a goodie bag

with a pack of seeds, a bracelet, and information. This is the second year I have attended and the students are always fun to interact with.

In previous years we have given out seed starting make and take kits but the demand had skyrocketed to more than we could provide. Instead, we hosted a seed starting program in March. There were 9 attendees who were shown several different items you could start seeds in and were able to get their own start with provided supplies and seeds from the BBW Seed Library.

March started ramping up the Seed Library. We had the Orchard Park Career Day and Salem hosted our first pop-up library of 2026. Things really started to ramp up in April with a record-breaking total of 1,820 seed packs given out. The Bookmobile and Seneca hosted pop-ups with great numbers. I am very thankful to Angie for setting us up to give out seeds at Seneca Classical. She promoted the bookmobile and let the kids come aboard. I had a part of the seed library available for the kids to pick up packs. We gave out 257 packs in just that one visit. They were great kids and you could tell they enjoy gardening.

Including the Westminster main collection, several pop-ups, and outreach like mentioned above, we gave out 2,925 packs of seeds in March and April. The Oconee History Museum has been resupplied as well and has been sent 1,360 so far.

I am very grateful for the many seed donations we have received this year. I am also very thankful and proud of Tiffany, Patsy, and Cindi for all their hard work packaging multiple thousands of seed packs. They started in January and have continued to package seeds as supplies run out. There would be no seed library if it weren't for them.

WYFF 4 news station promoted our seed library and the pop-up libraries two days in a row in April.

Youth Services Department
March – April 2026
Emily Johnson, Youth Services Librarian

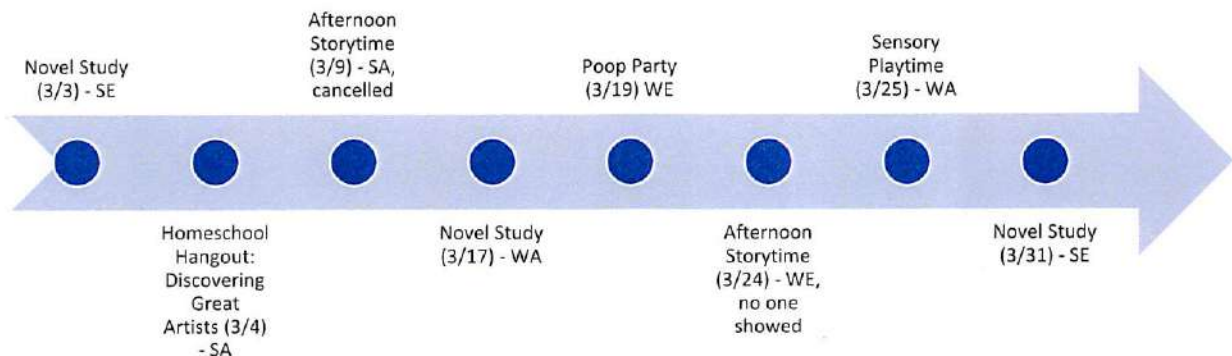
Programs

Storytime

I run storytimes at Walhalla, Westminster, and Seneca. Walhalla meets on Mondays, Westminster on Wednesdays, and Seneca on Thursdays, and each storytime meets at 10:30 AM at each branch’s respective meeting room. Anna Holbrooks conducts storytime at Salem every second and fourth Tuesday at 10:30 AM. I send her the storytime books, outlines, and manipulatives via courier the Friday before so she can prepare.

Walhalla’s average attendance for March was 17.2, and its average attendance for April was 16. Westminster’s average attendance for March was 15.5, up 8.5 since January and up 3 since February! Its average attendance for April was 14.25. We have been seeing several new faces at Westminster lately, and storytime is booming. Seneca’s average attendance for March was 21.25, and its average attendance for February was 23.2. Our overarching theme for March was feelings. We spent one week on feelings in general, then spent a week each on feeling sad, feeling scared, and feeling angry. Our themes for April were hair, frogs, dragons, flowers, and rhyming. The children especially enjoyed the “rhyming” books. I even had a patron at Seneca who was sitting outside the meeting room comment that it sounded like we were having fun.

Timeline - March



Novel Study (3/3, 3/17/ and 3/31)

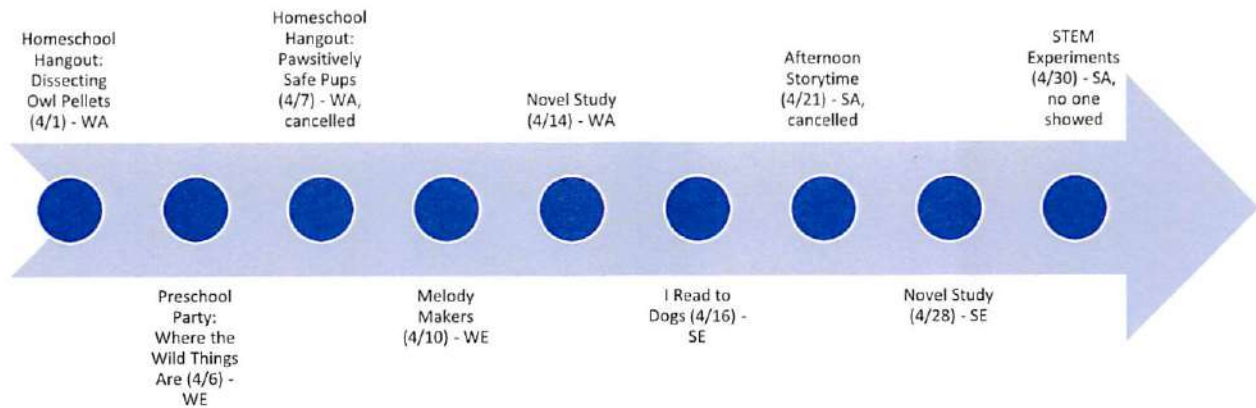
In March, we continued our novel study program. As a reminder, this program was designed for grades 6-8, but older students are allowed to attend. In this program, which is run similarly to a classroom-like experience, homeschoolers come together and discuss a novel they’ve been reading. For this series of novel study, the novel we are studying is *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. For March, we learned about and reviewed plot structure and theme. We also discussed how to write a response to literature and how to write a discussion question. This program, while

not specifically a “Socratic circle,” is led very “Socratically.” Students are asked open-ended questions and asked to support their answers with evidence from the text. When students do not know how to answer a question, more questions are asked rather than giving them the answer.

Sensory Playtime

Sensory Playtime, which took place on March 25, is a fun way for babies and preschoolers to investigate new sounds, textures, shapes, etc. This program is always a big hit! We had 10 participants this time around.

Timeline - February



Homeschool Hangout: Dissecting Owl Pellets

What a fun program! We had 6 people attend this program, where we used wooden sticks and gloves to dissect owl pellets to find the bones and remains of mice, voles, and other creatures the owls had eaten.

Homeschool Hangout: Pawsitively Safe Pups

This program was designed to be a way for children to meet, pet, and play with licensed therapy dogs while learning about dog safety and pet safety in general. Children would learn how to adequately take care of dogs as well as take care of themselves around dogs they are not familiar with. Unfortunately, when we only had two children sign up, the therapy dog group running the program asked if we could cancel.

Special Projects

During March and April, I revamped and created new subject index binders for the Easys, Juveniles, and Teens/Older Teens for both the Wahalla and Seneca branches. This project, which involved determining what subjects were most popular and should be used as categories then searching to see what books we had like that at each branch, took a good bit of time. I started with revamping the Easy subject index at Walhalla, then discovered the need for one for the Juveniles and Teens/Older Teens. I mentioned to Jonathan Hunter that I had done this, and he requested some for Seneca. Those are all finished now, and I'm now asking Leah Price if she'd like some for Westminster.

Community Outreach/Collaboration

Building off what I started in July and August, we held storytimes for three preschools in April: 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 did not hold outreach storytimes in March due to scheduling conflicts within the preschools, including school picture day and spring break. In April, we held outreach storytimes for 129 attendees.

Planning Ahead

DJ and I also continued our planning for the Summer Reading Program 2026. We received the grant in March, contacted sponsors, gave a presentation at in-service about the Summer Reading Program 2026, ordered all of our materials for programs in June and July, added everything to the website calendar, and more.