

Summer Reading is over! The Library breathes a sigh of relief as we plan for the coming season and some of us take some time off.

Christina and I were both subpoenaed over the theft incident in May at the Coldwater Branch. We made an appearance at the court, but the defendant did not show up. We will have to make another appearance once the defendant has a new court date.

Policy Updates

After the policy changes approved at the last meeting, I have created new pages for [Fees](#) and [Loan Periods and Checkout Limits](#) on the website and linked to them from multiple spots.

Finances

I am happy to report that the transfer from Nationwide Retirement Solutions to MERS is now complete! All prior assets now show in our MERS dashboard.

In other financial news, we received our 2nd and final state aid check for the year this week.

After a pandemic and fine-forgiveness induced hiatus, we are resuming services with Unique Management for Materials Recovery. Our outreach manager, Cheryl Lawrence, has been doing double duty with this job for a number of years now, but as bookmobile and outreach get busier, and increasing circulation bring increased missing items, she no longer has enough time to make calls to try to get our materials back. Unique's services are theoretically revenue neutral for us, since we pass on the referral fee to the patron per longstanding board policy. The referral cost is actually lower now, so that is reflected on our fee schedule.

Facilities

As Teresa reports, the conversion of the old Algansee Township Hall into a library has begun, only slightly behind schedule. Unfortunately, with the completion estimate being the end of October, we will not be able to have our September meeting in a new location. We'll just save that for next May! The builders are being very accommodating of the library with regards to making changes. Like our request to keep the charming old walls and ceiling that they uncovered beneath the drop ceiling and decades-old paneling.



With a signature from the BDL Board President, our updated Sherwood Contract is completed and [posted to the website](#).

At the Coldwater Branch, STP Painting finished the soffit repair. They didn't take photos unfortunately, but they told us that the reason the wood was rotten all over the place was that the gutter liners are failing. This is what happened dramatically in 2012 on the north wing of the building, with water cascading into the northeast emergency exit stairwell. We replaced the bad galvanized steel liners with copper to last the next century, and it looks like we might need to do the same now to the south wing. As reported elsewhere in the packet this month, the Building Committee recommends prioritizing this repair before things get as bad as in 2012.

Bookmobile

On Tuesday, August 5, we had an official ribbon cutting for the bookmobile at the fair. About 20 were in attendance, including representatives from a couple of our donors. I gave a short speech, which I converted to a post on the website and put in the consent agenda of this packet.



IT Department

After literally many hours on the phone with Verizon tech support, we have finally solved the issue of our network connectivity. It was either a problem on their end, or an issue with how our hardware interacts with them. Either way, I am very grateful they provided an answer and all it well on the vehicle.

The new telephone system will be activated on Tuesday, August 26 at 11:30am. We may have a brief service outage at that moment. The new hardware has arrived this week, and the IT department has been testing things out and readying documentation. We have had loads of activity in the past month setting up the configuration and call flow.

Meetings Attended

Library of Michigan Directors, Branch County Community Foundation, Legg Middle School Principal.

Submitted by John Rucker

Marketing

We're excited to welcome back Meagan from her parental leave! I am looking forward to getting some projects wrapped up with her this year!

We are in full swing as we gear up to promote our Fall events and programs. The latest edition of our Event Guide is now available at all library locations and on our [website](#).

Looking ahead to September, we're preparing for our second annual [Show Your Library Card and Save](#) campaign. We're fortunate to have the support of local businesses who are offering special perks and discounts to library cardholders throughout the month. September is also Library Card Sign-up Month, a time when Branch District Library joins the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries nationwide to remind everyone about the valuable resources available with a library card. So show your library card to enjoy \$1.00 off your favorite coffee drink or treat yourself to a relaxing visit at the local spa. It truly is the most valuable card in your wallet.



Digital Services

Working with our Hoopla vendor, Midwest Tape, and after careful data analysis, we implemented some changes on August 1 to improve access and borrowing ability for our patrons. The changes were setting a price cap on audiobooks and a separate price cap on other the other circulating items (ebooks, music, TV show, etc.). Prices are set by publishers and with this change unfortunately, some titles have been removed from our collection.

However, Hoopla continues to offer a large catalog of over one million titles, so a wide variety of content remains available to borrow. Early data seems promising. Since the changes went into effect, no patrons have been blocked from borrowing due to our daily budget since the 1st of the month. The first day of the month is always our busiest, as borrowing limits reset and patrons are eager to check out items.

Meetings

- Kiwanis Club of Coldwater

- Noon Club of Coldwater presentation with Children's Services Coordination, Erica Donihue
- Unique Services regarding materials recovery services
- Branch County Community Foundation

Submitted:

Kimberly Feltner

- The Branch County 4H Fair was a wonderful success! This year brought an exciting change with the Bookmobile making its debut at the fair. Fourteen staff members covered shifts throughout the week, welcoming hundreds of fairgoers aboard to explore and enjoy.
- The 2025 Summer Reading Program was an outstanding success, with a record-breaking 55% completion rate! In the past seven years, our average has hovered between 32-35%, so having more than half of participants finish is truly remarkable—that's over 500 dedicated readers! On top of that, 19 staff members completed the Staff SRP Challenge, with Tracy and Christina each winning gift cards provided by the admin team.
- The Stay Interview data was reviewed by admin staff this month, with lots of information to takeaway and digest. In broad strokes, the data shows that most BDL staff are happy with their jobs, largely because of supportive coworkers, flexibility, and a sense of purpose. People appreciate the benefits, family-friendly environment, and freedom in how they work. There are occasional frustrations—mostly related to coworker dynamics, challenging patrons, or personal life stress.
- The 1,000 Books Before Graduation celebration will take place on Saturday, August 16th, honoring 15 amazing graduates! This marks our third graduation, and participation has nearly doubled each year—an exciting sign of the program's growing success.