

Director's Report: Submitted by Patrick Pittman

October 2025

Director's Focus:

Pending Grants; Future Construction; Staff Development

Personnel: See Personnel Committee report.

Finance: See Finance Committee report.

Facilities: See Facilities report.

Policy: See Policies Committee report.

Library Function: October began the upswing in building usage anticipated from prior year data. The library had 7,646 patrons come into the building in October 2025, with 241 service hours. It brought the library close to 32 patrons per hour. October 2024 had 7,007 patrons come into the building at 242 service hours. The total number of patrons per hour averaged lower, at nearly 29. The building serves as a multi-purpose space, with programs and library services, including study rooms, acting as the largest draw for usage. However, the library has several groups that use the library for meeting space, in addition to outside partnership participation.

The question posed during the 2025 Municipal Budget Presentation has come into focus. At what threshold does the library require more staff to ensure patron satisfaction by meeting everyone's needs? The urgency with which the library must answer this question has come earlier than anticipated. The statistics show broad trends. The library will need to get more granular with the data to determine peak times and days for more than one person on the circulation desk. How the library board and management handle the adjustment will correlate directly with the budget for 2026. It may require some creative solutions, though, it will come part and parcel of a year-end review.

Increased utilization of grant funds to purchase electronic titles, as well as new and popular physical copies, flattened the decreases in 2025 circulation. The targeted use of grant funds to supplement the collection evened year over year circulations. The library staff remained cognizant of best use of funds when purchasing, as well as patron borrowing patterns, and adapted to the change. The end of the year should demonstrate an overall increase in total circulation, with electronic materials pulled out to examine the rate of use from 2022-2024 and 2025 alone. The spending in the next fiscal year may need adjustment, depending on the conclusions drawn from the data.

Programming continued increased participation through the library's Homeschool Hour, story times, and October's Seymour Escape Room. These programs cut across a wide swath of

children, teens, and families, in turn drawing more people in the door. The library offered another 3D printing class, in which 16 people attended. The 3D printing program continues to see popularity, regardless of day and time. The library has offered programming specific to critical thinking, transferable knowledge, and literacy, in place of the October programs traditionally held at Seymour. The public had reservations about the shift in 2023 and 2024 but appears to have accepted and welcomed the pivot.

The Friends of the Seymour Library held their book sale from October 15th to 18th. The Friends raised over \$2,700 in book sales, which has a few implications. Overall, it represents an excellent showing from the Friends and support from the community. The library also hosted its Star Party on October 4th, alongside the Foundation's After Hours event. The Star Party had between 114 and 130 attendees, and the Foundation raised over \$5,000. This, too, speaks to the support and interest the service population has in the library's well-being. The success in programs and fundraising correlates with one another, as people see value in what the library offers to its patrons. This extends to support organizations as well. Each cross-section of deliverables saw success in October.

The library launched its second Story Trail at the Sweden Town Park in October. The interest and participation in the temporary walk increased from 2024. Cooperation, collaboration, and bringing literacy outside the walls of the library resonates with the community and its leaders. The entire staff, including the work-study students, enjoy getting into the community to promote engaged reading. The library had 52 signatures on the Story Trail logbook. This initiative went hand-in-hand with the installation of the Outdoor Education Center on the Seymour lawn.

The launch of the Seymour Mifi program also went without issue. Borrowers checked out all 20 Mifi units in the month of October. A holds list began building shortly after patrons began borrowing the units. Two main points of significance emerge from this information. First, residents and people in the area do have a need and demand for broadband internet. The current infrastructure does not support the needs of the community. Second, piloting this program at Seymour has major implications for the role and reputation Seymour has built over the last several years. The most important anecdote came from a patron who borrowed a Mifi for their child. Their child had online homework and could not have otherwise completed the assignment without a Mifi. These stories do not get overlooked by the library staff and reinforce the library's mission.

Looking Ahead: As Seymour begins to wind down its year, the anticipated use of the library should increase in November and December. A portion of the increases come during school breaks around Thanksgiving and the winter holidays. Librarians plan programs around this time to bring some of those into the library for education and literacy. These days represent peak times for library engagement.

Some of the more notable events occurring in November and December consist of a writing group for children and teens. This program emphasizes literacy but also gears the library up for

an author visit from Neal Shusterman. Shusterman wrote several bestselling books for children and young adults. Brockport Central School District has underwritten the honorarium for Shusterman but would like him to do an off-site community visit. The high school library chose Seymour for this site. Lift Bridge will come with Shusterman's books during a signing event.

The Monroe County Library System administration also assigned a Rochester Amerks player to come to the Seymour Library in December. The player will talk about their time on the ice, as well as read a story. Seymour has not had the opportunity to host an Amerks player in conjunction with the MCLS/Amerks program in 4 years. The social media post and e-mail blast received significant attention, and it will likely result in a large turnout. This, again, speaks to the reputation Seymour has built within MCLS over the last several years, something everyone from the staff to board should feel proud of in their respective contributions.

In Closing: The Seymour Library has seen an anticipated increase in library usage as fall begins turning into winter. The scaffolding offerings of programs and services at the library demonstrate a demand from the service population, as well as recognition pertaining to the transformation of Seymour over the last several years. The library operates in uncertain times at the macro-level. At the local level, Seymour has significant support from outside organizations, its municipalities, and its patrons. The core of local support will keep the library moving and growing, regardless of the circumstances elsewhere.