

Director's Report: Submitted by Patrick Pittman

June 2026

Director's Focus:

Pending Grants; Summer Reading; 2027 Budget

Personnel: See Personnel Committee report.

Finance: See Finance Committee report.

Facilities: See Facilities report.

Policy: See Policies Committee report.

Library Function: June 2026 saw an abrupt turnaround from the trends beginning to take shape in the prior months. The library had 7,305 patrons use the building in June 2026 over 233 service hours. June 2025 had 6,371 patrons over 222 service hours. The library remained open later during June as a voting station and for its Summer Reading Program Kickoff. Most users came to the library for books and materials, copy and fax services, and to use the meeting or study rooms. However, the library also hosted a school visit from Ginther Elementary over three days. Each day consisted of 32 students and 6 teachers/aides.

Outreach to schools facilitated a successful kickoff program. The library visited Brockport High School, Oliver Middle School, and the Fred W. Hill Elementary School over two weeks in June. The students responded exceptionally well to the outreach, as well as the information conveyed. In turn, despite changing the kickoff date, the library saw between 700-800 people attend the event over two hours on Friday, June 26th. While aligned with expectations for the Summer Reading Kickoff total attendance, the number of sign ups help identify Seymour's audience.

The Summer Reading Program (SRP) had some changes from 2025 in the sign-up demographics. In 2025, the library had 322 Children's SRP sign-ups, 66 Young Adult SRP sign-ups, and 127 Adult SRP sign-ups. In 2026, the library had 255 Children, 90 YA, and 172 Adult. Total sign-ups edged up slightly, from 515 to 517. The demographics confirm the library staff's desired trajectory for more Tween and Teen engagement, as well as more adult participation.

Typically, children older than 10 years old have some autonomy to choose their extracurriculars. Seymour has made a point of targeting this audience to participate in library activities since 2024. Children younger than 10 years old typically require an adult to take them to the library. Therefore, more adults can create more opportunities for young children to participate in library activities. The SRP data indicates the library has moved in the right direction to meet these goals.

The SRP and the library's mission for early literacy work in many ways independently of one another. Based on the data from story times, early literacy engagement has increased dramatically since filling out the professional librarian vacancy in 2025. Since March 2026, Tuesday morning story times have seen a typical increase from 12-17 participants in late-2025/early-2026 to 17-22 consistent participants. In the same period, Thursday morning story times have gone from a typical attendance of 17-22 participants to 22-30+ participants. The stability stems from splitting the workload between librarians, acclimating storytelling styles, and connecting with children and their families. While breaking out the datasets help with the pieces, the total picture remains the same. Specific audiences can find what they need at the Seymour Library.

This year's Summer Reading Program's theme of "Unearth a Story" has given the librarians more room to adapt the theme to programming in a more robust manner. Paleontology and archeology programs can sit comfortably next to gardening programs without losing the theme. Program flexibility allows people with diverse interests to more fully utilize the library's resources which, in turn, gives all core metrics a bump. While June's core metrics look like an aberration when accounting for the months prior, it could also indicate a turning point. Given the response to the SRP and offerings at Seymour, it seems likely to continue an upward trend.

Looking Ahead: While the Summer Reading Program Kickoff focused on getting the community excited to read and learn, the library also hosted a ribbon cutting for the Outdoor Education Pavilion installed last year. The event brought together funders and supporters from the Seymour Library Foundation, BISCO, the Sweden Community Recreation Foundation, and CNB, as well as municipal representatives. The entirety of the project was wrapped nicely in this capstone moment, and the library expressed its gratitude in a meaningful way. The library has started practical use of the pavilion in its outdoor programming. Closing this project means opening the pathways in deciding what comes next, and multiple committees will begin picking apart that question.

Additionally, the board has reviewed and greenlit the next Seymour Community Survey. The board agreed to begin putting the survey out to the public physically and digitally after the conclusion of summer reading, sometime around August 17th. The survey should help provide the library and library board with some insight into what it does well now, where it can improve, and what the community would like to see in the future. Some ideas for future library improvements could come from notes and comments on the survey. The library hopes for a high participation rate with meaningful data.

On the more immediate practical side, the external five-year audit remains ongoing. The preliminary budget for FY2027 went to the Finance Committee for review and recommendations. The financial health of the library remains paramount to its services. Overall, the last several years have supported both goals. The expectations for 2026 remain the same. 2027 could pose some new challenges, although the library found additional resources in the last several years to keep collections, programs, and services competitive within the field.

In Closing: The Summer Reading Program started strong, in part thanks to a strong, coordinated outreach effort to reach the Brockport Central School District. The students, primarily tweens and teens, responded to the information by signing up for the SRP. The library has capitalized on reaching its desired audiences through a variety of methods, which has boosted the core metrics at Seymour. Everything year-to-date has worked to bring it together, although not always seamlessly. We have some room for improvement.

The second half of the year will have some telling information. Between the external audit, the upcoming survey, and the swing in library momentum, it could turn into an excellent year for Seymour. The participation and efforts by the municipalities in library events strengthened an already supportive relationship. Local and region-wide funders/grantors have also recognized the library's strong progress and initiatives. Areas of opportunity represent less of an overhaul and more nudges and tweaks. Q1 and Q2 started slowly but ended strongly. Seymour remains on the right track to fulfill its mission and provide necessary services to the community and population.