

Director's Report: Submitted by Patrick Pittman

September 2026

Director's Focus:

Pending Grants; 2027 Budget; End of Year Operations

Personnel: See Personnel Committee report.

Finance: See Finance Committee report.

Facilities: See Facilities report.

Policy: See Policies Committee report.

Library Function: Library use in September aligned with expectations, as visits typically decline when public schools reopen after Labor Day. During this seasonal slowdown, librarians and staff remained productive while continuing to attract visitors through programming. The library recorded 5,150 visits across 222 service hours in September 2026, compared with 5,309 visits across 220 service hours in September 2025. Year to date, visits totaled 56,448 in 2026 and 57,172 in 2025, a difference of 724 visits, or approximately 1.25%. Community interest remains strong, and visits will likely increase when the busier cycle begins in mid-October.

Circulation remained essentially flat compared with 2025. In September, the library recorded 2,703 digital circulations and 6,497 physical circulations. Physical books continue to be in strong demand at Seymour and other libraries, while digital demand is exponentially increasing. The library has maintained an effective balance between spending on physical and digital materials. Separately, the system will begin reviewing the issuance of out-of-county cards. These cards benefit residents of contiguous counties and contribute to circulation, but the system has identified tradeoffs that warrant further consideration.

A high-interest September program was Homeschool Hour, which divided participants into age groups. The session began with general information-searching instruction for all ages. Children under age 9 then moved to the Children's Room to locate fiction and nonfiction books, while participants age 9 and older remained in the Duryea Room for introductions to databases, scholarly work, and source verification. More than 30 people participated, and the program received very positive feedback.

The annual Seymour Truck Rodeo, held on September 25, gave the library an opportunity to collaborate with the municipalities of Sweden, Clarkson, and Brockport, as well as the Brockport Police Department and Brockport Fire District. Nearly 200 participants learned about operating heavy equipment and large machinery, along with drone technology, through a hands-on program designed to stimulate curiosity and discovery. Municipal and departmental staff remained on site to answer questions, further supporting the learning process. The library

is grateful to all participating municipalities and departments for making this engaging community program possible.

Adult programming focused on the history and legacy of the September 11 attacks. Peter Spagnola shared firsthand information about his experience working at the site after the attacks. The program connected with the America 250 themes and attracted strong community interest. A display of artifacts illustrated how individuals and communities preserve and interpret historical memory.

The annual tri-municipal meeting and board meeting provided municipal funders with valuable context about library finances and operations, including the 2027 capital appropriation implementing the board's June 2026 action to establish a restricted fund for the children's room and accessible-door projects. The full financial audit by MMB + CO also provided a transparent view of the library's internal operations and identified areas for improvement on which the board has begun acting. In addition, the board meeting and retreat, facilitated by Livingston Associates, are expected to produce tangible steps that will help define the library's identity and guide improvements in the coming years. Although this work requires significant time and effort and can be challenging, it will help set the tone for the library's continued success.

Looking Ahead: Two major fundraisers hosted by Seymour Library's support organizations will take place in October. The Seymour Library Foundation will host its After Hours event on Saturday, October 17, at 7:00 p.m., bringing community members together to engage with the library and support future initiatives. The Friends of the Seymour Library will hold its biannual book sale from October 21 through October 24. Revenue from the sale returns to the library and primarily supports the Summer Reading Program. Board members and the public are encouraged to attend and support both events.

The 2026 community survey remained open through September 30. Early results indicate high satisfaction with the library's services and operations. The library and board will review the comments to identify specific improvements and community priorities. An appendix containing the compiled raw data and comments will be added to the October 2026 board packet. The Marketing Committee will then analyze the information and prepare a presentation for the board and the public.

In Closing: September reflected steady library use, strong community programming, and meaningful progress in planning for the future. The October fundraisers, community survey findings, and 2027 budget process will help shape the library's next priorities. Continued collaboration among staff, the board, support organizations, and community partners will position Seymour Library to build on this momentum and strengthen its service to the community.