



OUTRIDER



WYOMING STATE LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

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FY26 WYOMING PUBLIC LIBRARY BUDGETS: A LOOK AT THE LATEST DATA AND LOCAL TRENDS



The Wyoming State Library is pleased to release the final data from the Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026) Wyoming County Library Budget Survey. The annual survey has received a 100% reporting rate since FY 2012. This year's numbers reveal a complex picture, highlighting both statewide growth and significant localized funding challenges.

The Quantitative Picture: FY26 Budget Overview

Overall, the total operating budget for Wyoming county libraries saw an increase of **\$1.87 million**, representing a 4.04% rise in total library budgets between FY25 and FY26.

However, these statewide figures mask considerable variation at the county level:

- **Significant Decreases:** Nine of the 23 reporting county libraries saw a decrease in their total budgets for FY26. Some of these cuts were significant, with Carbon County reporting a 71% reduction, and Hot Springs County reporting a 33% reduction.
- **Localized Growth:** Conversely, some counties reported large budget increases, such as Platte County with 37%, and Converse County with 33%.

WSL News

(continued from cover page)

Key Themes from Library Director Comments

The survey comments offer crucial insight into the common operational challenges and strategies used by directors to navigate the current fiscal year.

1. The Impact of Property Tax Reduction

The most common theme in the FY26 survey is the direct financial impact of recent state legislation concerning property tax reductions. Many county entities explicitly attributed their reduced funding to this legislation and the resulting downturn in county revenues.

- 12 out of the 23 counties, including Albany, Goshen, Hot Springs, Lincoln, Uinta, and Washakie, all noted that the reduction in property tax revenue has significantly reduced the amount of funding available to their services.
- Sweetwater and Fremont counties noted lower levels of mineral production contributing to the downturn in revenue in addition to the property tax revenue cuts.
- Laramie, Teton, and Weston counties are concerned about the future impacts of the property tax reform.
- Teton County said, “The state legislature’s attempt at property tax

reform has had a direct impact on the library’s budget and the budget of every other county department. Any further attempts at reform without backfill will have devastating effects in future years.”

- Weston County said, “[The] county is having problems with their budget then so are we. When the Sheriff’s office needs more funding, the County Attorney needs more funding, and also the fairgrounds. It makes it hard for the rest of us if they are asking for more than the original amount in the beginning.”

2. Staffing and Service Changes

While many counties worked hard to keep staffing levels intact, budget pressures led to difficult decisions, echoing the staffing struggles reported nearly a decade ago during the energy sector tightening [reported in FY16](#). Local funding decisions and economic pressures continue to be the primary drivers of library finances.

- Several libraries reported reductions in staffing, including lay-offs, the elimination of part-time positions and benefits, or the reduction of weekly hours and levels of pay for existing staff (Albany, Big Horn, Carbon, Fremont, Lincoln, Sheridan, Sweetwater, and Weston counties).
- Cuts to operating hours (Big Horn, Carbon, Lincoln counties) and even closure of branches were necessary in some areas (Big Horn County).

3. Critical Role of External Funding and Reserves

To mitigate cuts to core services, such as collection development and programming, many libraries are increasingly relying on external sources, such as covering budget gaps through library foundation fundraising, grants, fees and fines, and community partners.

Next Steps

As Wyoming's libraries continue to adapt to these evolving financial conditions, the decisions made at the local level about revenue, staffing, and services remain paramount. Transparency and local engagement are vital to ensuring libraries can continue to meet community needs.

For more information about Wyoming Public Libraries:

- [Visit the Wyoming State Library's statistics webpage](#) to view the most recent five years of annual reports (also known as IMLS's Public Library Survey) and budget survey data.
- **Contact your local county library** if you have specific questions about their budget, expenditures, or how they are utilizing local donations and reserves to support library services in your community.

THE WSL HONORS EMPLOYEES FOR THEIR SERVICE AND DEDICATION



The Wyoming State Library (WSL) would like to honor two employees, Melanie Reedy and Paige Bredenkamp, who have recently reached milestone work anniversaries.

Melanie Reedy, the WSL's business manager, is celebrating twenty years of service to the State of Wyoming. After a year at the Substance Abuse Division and a year at Wyoming Game and Fish, Melanie has worked eighteen years at the Wyoming State Library. Melanie began working at the WSL in December of 2007, and she became the business manager for the WSL in 2012. During this time, she has served under three different state librarians. Melanie's favorite part of being the WSL Business Manager is getting to connect with all the wonderful people who serve the libraries across the state. When she's not at work, Melanie likes to teach craft lessons and spend time with her daughter.

*Paige Bredenkamp*

Paige Bredenkamp, WSL eResources and School Library Consultant, recently achieved the milestone of ten years of service to the State of Wyoming at the Wyoming State Library. Paige has worked at the Wyoming State Library since October of 2015, offering support to a variety of patrons, including school library professionals across the state. She also coordinates services with the many eResource vendors that provide services to Wyoming libraries.

Paige loves getting to connect with other library professionals both in Wyoming and in other states. She is proud of both her work with the the School Library Development Project, which involved helping school libraries get new resources for their teachers and students with ARPA funds, and with the AI Summit hosted by the WSL, UW Libraries, and Wyoming State Archives last May. When she isn't at work, Paige loves to spend time sewing, quilting, baking, and painting with watercolors.

Wyoming Library Association

WLLI THANKS OUTGOING CHAIR AND WELCOMES NEW ADVISOR

*Susan Parkins*

With a new year nearly upon us, this is a season of comings and goings, including those serving as leaders for the Wyoming Library Leadership Institute (WLLI).

The WLLI thanks and recognizes their outgoing chair, **Susan Parkins**, for her dedication, commitment, and guidance over the past two years.

Susan graduated from the WLLI in 2021. She has held numerous leadership roles throughout her professional journey, including serving on the Wyoming Library Association board, the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS) board, and completed a term as ABOS President.

She began her library career at Laramie County Library System in 1989 and has dedicated nearly twenty-five years to library outreach. In recognition of Susan's experience and commitment, she was selected to serve as a WLLI Advisor from 2023 to 2025. She values the opportunity to collaborate with fellow WLLI graduates to keep the program active and supportive for those aspiring to advance their careers in library leadership.

Susan has been—and continues to be—a wonderful advocate for the WLLI and an active, engaged member of the WLLI family. Her leadership, support, and steady presence have helped strengthen the Institute and the community it serves.



Meghan Kelly

The Wyoming Library Leadership Institute (WLLI) is also excited to welcome their new advisor, **Meghan Kelly**!

Meghan started working at Laramie County Community College (LCCC) as a faculty librarian

in 2005 and attended the WLLI with an amazing group of Wyoming leaders in 2012. In 2021, she transitioned to her current role of LCCC Library and Learning commons Associate Dean. Over the years, she has served on a variety of local and statewide groups, including the WLLI application and planning committees. As the new WLLI advisor, Meghan is excited to continue collaborating and supporting colleagues across the state as they grow in their leadership journeys.

WLLI graduates and others who are interested in learning more about WLLI are encouraged to follow them on social media:

- Facebook-Wyoming Library Leadership
- Instagram-@wyllinstitute



Youth Services

MUNGER MOUNTAIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HELPS STUDENTS SHOP FOR GIFTS WITH SPECIAL EVENT



Next week, Munger Mountain Elementary School (MMES) in Jackson, Wyoming, students had the opportunity to shop for books for their family members free of charge during a schoolwide event called the Winter Book Giveaway.

Organized by MMES librarian Melissa Snider, this year's event was the fourth of its kind held by the school during the holidays. The Winter Book Giveaway was set up like a book fair, and students are encouraged to select and wrap books to give as gifts. For many kids, it was the first time they've had the opportunity to choose and give a gift of their very own to someone they care about.

"Students are so proud to wrap and take home gifts for their families," said Melissa. "The joy is contagious."

Thousands of books for the event are donated by the Teton County Library and the Teton County Literacy Center, as well as booksellers. Last year, over 1,500 books were given away during the Winter Book Giveaway.

The books available to the students are appropriate for children ages 8 to 11, so when choosing books for older family members, students are encouraged to select books they'd like to read with them together.

"Time spent turning pages with someone you love, learning fun facts or enjoying a story — that's the best gift we can give," she said.

MMES is one of seven elementary schools in Jackson, Wyoming, and serves over 350 students in grades K through 5. All students visit the library regularly to check out books and benefit from instruction in how to use the library effectively to learn and read for enjoyment.

What's Up? If you have great happenings at your library, we'd like to know! Send news to Christi Weinzierl at christi.weinzierl1@wyo.gov.

WYOMING PBS OFFERS SCREENER IN A BOX PROGRAM



Did you know that Wyoming PBS offers partnerships with museums and libraries to help bring Wyoming stories to communities across the state?

Their “Screener in a Box” program provides institutions with everything needed to host a public screening of a Wyoming PBS program at their facility. Because Wyoming PBS must protect the rights and integrity of our content, all screenings require prior approval. Once permission is granted, they will work with your organization to ensure a smooth, meaningful event.

When your request is approved, your organization will receive:

- A digital or physical film file of the selected Wyoming PBS production (ie Vimeo, thumbdrive)
- Event-ready promotional assets (graphics, descriptions, and copy)
- Guidance and oversight for hosting a panel discussion, if you choose to include one
- Promotion of your event through Wyoming PBS social media channels and, when appropriate, to our membership and in a statewide or local press release

- Depending on staff availability and resources, a Wyoming PBS representative may be able to attend your event (in person or virtually) or participate in a Q&A session

To request a Screener in a Box:

- The screening must be free and open to the public.
- You must seek permission from Wyoming PBS by submitting a formal request on your organization’s official letterhead.
- Wyoming PBS maintains oversight of any panel discussions or public conversations associated with the screening to ensure accuracy and respectful dialogue.
- Your request must include the name and description of the event, the date and time of the screening, the location where the screening will take place, and the purpose or reason for hosting the screening.

Screening sponsors and partners must be approved by Wyoming PBS, and Wyoming PBS reserves the right to deny screening requests.

Please email Christina George at christina@wyomingpbs.org or snail mail your formal request to: Christina George, Director of Marketing, Outreach, and Communications, Wyoming PBS, 2660 Peck Ave., Riverton, WY 82501

People News



Rachel Hammer

Rachel Hammer joined the University of Wyoming Libraries as the Transfer Support Librarian. She earned her MLIS from the University of Denver and also holds a MA in English from the University of Northern Colorado. Prior to her new position at UW Libraries, Rachel was a research and instruction librarian at the University of Nebraska, Kearney. Her research interests include information literacy instruction, the role of humor in an academic setting, 20th-century British literature, and detective fiction. Rachel enjoys baking, photography, amigurumi crochet, musical theatre, and reading cookbooks.

Training and Professional Opportunities

2026 AI SUMMIT CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The University of Wyoming Libraries, the Wyoming State Archives, and the Wyoming State Library invite **YOU** to submit session proposals for the upcoming **2026 AI Summit**, which will be held **Friday, May 29, 2026**, at the University of Wyoming Conference Center in Laramie, WY.

More details and a link to submit session proposals can be found on the [2026 AI Summit website](#). Proposals are due by **January 30, 2026**.

Library Jobs

[Senior Librarian](#)

Wyoming State Library
Cheyenne, WY
Open until filled
Posted October 15, 2025
[Vacancy Announcement](#)

[Library Director](#)

Carbon County Library System
Rawlins, WY
Open until filled
Posted October 24, 2025
[Vacancy Announcement](#)

[Assistant Librarian – Scholarly Communications
& Open Publishing Librarian](#)

University of Wyoming-Digital & Distinctive
Collections Unit

Laramie, WY

Open until filled

Posted September 18, 2025

[Vacancy Announcement](#)

Grant and Award Opportunities

[Aerie Real Foundation](#)

Deadline: December 27, 2025

The Aerie Real Foundation, the philanthropic arm of American Eagle Outfitters, supports nonprofits that create a more positive and inclusive world. Its Community Grants program funds initiatives that empower women and promote confidence through education, advocacy, and community connection. Grants are open to nonprofit organizations based in the U.S. or Canada.

[Laura Bush Foundation for America's
Libraries 2025 Grant](#)

Deadline: December 31, 2025

The Aerie Real Foundation, the philanthropic arm of American Eagle Outfitters, supports nonprofits that create a more positive and inclusive world. Its Community Grants program funds initiatives that empower women and promote confidence through education, advocacy, and community connection. Grants are open to nonprofit organizations based in the U.S. or Canada.

[Walmart Spark Good Local Grants](#)

Deadline: December 31, 2025

Walmart believes that investing in local communities strengthens our business as well as the communities they serve. Local grants are designed to support local organizations that meet the unique needs of the communities where they operate, build pride among all associates, and deepen relationships with their customers. Each year, Walmart U.S. stores, Sam's Clubs and Distribution Centers award local cash grants ranging from \$250 to \$5000.

[Geico](#)

Deadline: December 31, 2025

The GEICO Philanthropic Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations nationwide that deliver programs to support and uplift diverse communities. Its funding priorities include expanding access to education, particularly in STEM, early childhood learning, and safety. The Foundation also invests in community engagement efforts that address issues such as

Share the News!

Do you have colleagues who aren't on the *Outrider* mailing list? Encourage them to [sign up](#) and catch all the library news.

financial literacy, food insecurity, environmental conservation, animal welfare, and health and wellness. In addition, it supports organizations advancing equity, justice, diversity, and inclusion to create fairer opportunities for all.

Digital Pathways: Online Health Literacy Programming for Adults Guidelines

Deadline: December 31, 2025

The GEICO Philanthropic Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations nationwide that deliver programs to support and uplift diverse communities. Its funding priorities include expanding access to education, particularly in STEM, early childhood learning, and safety.

The Foundation also invests in community engagement efforts that address issues such as financial literacy, food insecurity, environmental conservation, animal welfare, and health and wellness. In addition, it supports organizations advancing equity, justice, diversity, and inclusion to create fairer opportunities for all.

NEA Big Read

Deadlines: Intent to apply-January 15, 2026/Final application-January 29, 2026

In celebration of the 20th annual National Friends of Libraries Week, Penguin Random House and United for Libraries announced new grants for Friends of Libraries serving rural and small libraries across the country. Grants of \$500 and \$1,000 (totaling \$25,000), will be awarded to support libraries in need. These funds will assist Friends of Library groups, or nonprofit groups that support and fundraise for libraries in their communities, with priority

projects. In-kind book donation grants of \$500 will also be awarded to 20 libraries to purchase Penguin Random House titles. In addition, recipients will also receive complimentary eLearning from United for Libraries, including a year of access to United for Libraries Learning Live monthly webinars which present in-depth training to library Trustees/Board Members, Friends, Foundations, advocates, and those who work with them, and training on how to leverage the grant funds to build support for the library and the Friends group. Recipients will also receive complimentary registration for Friends of the Library Day of the United for Libraries virtual conference (July 30, 2026) and United for Libraries Friends virtual retreat (spring 2027).

Grants for Friends Groups

Deadline: January 21, 2026 (Application opens on December 17, 2026.)

In celebration of the 20th annual National Friends of Libraries Week, Penguin Random House and United for Libraries announced new grants for Friends of Libraries serving rural and small libraries across the country. Grants of \$500 and \$1,000 (totaling \$25,000), will be awarded to support libraries in need. These funds will assist Friends of Library groups, or nonprofit groups that support and fundraise for libraries in their communities, with priority projects. In-kind book donation grants of \$500 will also be awarded to 20 libraries to purchase Penguin Random House titles. In addition, recipients will also receive complimentary eLearning from United for Libraries, including a year of access to United for Libraries Learning

Live monthly webinars which present in-depth training to library Trustees/Board Members, Friends, Foundations, advocates, and those who work with them, and training on how to leverage the grant funds to build support for the library and the Friends group. Recipients will also receive complimentary registration for Friends of the Library Day of the United for Libraries virtual conference on July 30, 2026, and United for Libraries Friends virtual retreat in the spring of 2027.

Dr. Scholl Foundation

Deadline: January 31, 2026

The Dr. Scholl Foundation was established by William M. Scholl, M.D. in 1947, almost 40 years after he founded the foot care company. The foundation is a private, independent grant-making foundation for charitable purposes, and is committed to improving the world.

Snapdragon Book Foundation

Deadline: February 8, 2026

The Snapdragon Book Foundation was started in December, 2008 to provide funds to improve school libraries for disadvantaged children. Grants will be awarded to public, private, and experimental schools. Grants typically range from \$2,500 to \$10,000. When you apply for a grant you should ask for the amount that the project requires. At times Snapdragon is not able to fulfill the complete request, but offers a partial grant. Money from Snapdragon Book Foundation may ALWAYS be used for books that will be used repeatedly by school-aged children through classroom libraries, central library (or something similar), processing or cataloguing

fees from book vendors (for processing of the books ordered in conjunction with your Snapdragon project), reference materials for use by students, or magazine or newspaper subscriptions. Any **school library** that serves disadvantaged youth may apply. Funds must be used as promised within nine months.

McMurry Library Endowment Grants

Deadline: Rolling

The Carol McMurry Library Endowment was established in 2000 within the [Wyoming Community Foundation](#) to provide support to Wyoming library staff and volunteers and to publicly accessible Wyoming libraries in three areas: Education and Training (Library and individual), Library Resources, and Library Foundation Development. There are multiple grant cycles per year. Visit the link above for specific application and deadline information.

W. K. Kellogg Foundation Grants

Deadline: Ongoing

Do you envision a world where every child and family sees the road to success? Where a community's future is determined by the people who live there? A world where all kids receive nurturing early care and education, health care for mothers, birthing people and babies is readily available where they live, good food is a given, along with support for the people who grow it, parents and caregivers land career pathways that sustain their family, and where everyone can heal from the harms of racism and contribute to a more equitable world. That's the world the W.K. Kellogg Foundation wants to see, too!

[Labcorp Charitable Foundation](#)

Deadline: Ongoing

The Labcorp Charitable Foundation invests in community-based nonprofits advancing health, education, and well-being. From supporting food pantries and summer meal programs for children to expanding healthcare access and STEM education, Labcorp's giving reflects its mission to improve health and lives. Recent grants have funded medical screenings, patient support services, and educational programs that inspire the next generation of scientists and healthcare professionals.

[The Esther and Harold Mertz Foundation](#)

Deadline: Ongoing

This grant of \$10,000-\$1,000,000 supports nonprofit and faith-based organizations across the U.S. that serve vulnerable communities through education, recreation, health, and social service programs. Funding may be used to improve curricula, upgrade facilities, offer scholarships, or expand access to medical and community care. Priority is given to initiatives that promote self-sufficiency, wellness, and long-term community impact.

[Daniels Fund Grant](#)

Deadline: Ongoing

The Daniels Fund provides grants to organizations delivering programs in Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, and Utah that align with our funding areas, as defined by their founder (Aging, Amateur Sports, Disabilities, Drug & Alcohol Addiction, Early Childhood Education, Homeless & Disadvantaged, K-12 Education Reform, and Youth Development).

[National Leadership Grants for Libraries](#)

Deadline: Ongoing

The National Leadership Grants for Libraries Program (NLG-L) supports projects that develop, enhance, or disseminate replicable practices, programs, models, or tools to strengthen library and archival services for the American public.

[The Courage Project](#)

Deadline: Ongoing

The Courage Project seeks to recognize individuals and organizations that embody the foundational values of our nation through acts of courage that strengthen our communities, our democracy, and our shared future. The Courage Project distributes awards to organizations and honors everyday people for acts of courage and compassion that demonstrate bravery in their communities. For organizational awards, local nonprofit organizations will receive recognition for specific actions, whether that's supporting free speech, championing equality, or building community. For individual recognition, recipients may recommend donations to values-aligned American non-profit organizations, seeding civic engagement in their communities and strengthening our democracy. By allowing recipients to "pay it forward," the project gives Americans the chance to seed lasting change in their own communities. The award amounts will range from \$10,000 to \$50,000. Whether it's a librarian defending free speech, a teacher protecting vulnerable students, or a local leader bridging divides, these recipients embody core national values: kindness, empathy, and community. For individual honorees, The

Courage Project also provides an opportunity to “pay it forward” by directing funds to nonprofit organizations aligned with their values – helping to foster long-term impact at the grassroots level.

The Community Heart & Soul Grant Program

Deadline: Ongoing

The Community Heart & Soul Seed Grant Program provides \$10,000 in funding for resident-driven groups in small cities and towns to start the Community Heart & Soul model. Grant funding requires a \$10,000 cash match from the participating municipality or a partnering organization.

Believe in Reading – Grants for Literacy Program

Deadline: Ongoing

Grants are made to organizations with 501(c)(3) status or its equivalent for educational institutions, including public libraries. Believe in Reading will consider funding programs that serve any age or aspect of supporting reading and literacy, including adult literacy, English as a second language projects, or Braille projects for the blind or visually impaired. Believe in Reading will supply funds only if they are earmarked for literacy, not just a general campaign. Reading must be the prime activity. Because addressing literacy is not a short-term process, Believe in Reading’s grants are renewable for up to a maximum of three years, but a first-year award does not guarantee any subsequent awards. Currently, the maximum grant amount is \$10,000; however, the vast majority of grants are for \$3,000 or less. First-time applicants will not be funded for more than \$3,000.

Rural Technology Education & Assistive Technology (AT) Grants

Deadline: Ongoing

Grants are typically \$500 - \$2,500 for staff and student-led projects in public schools and libraries. The projects funded are designed to help spark student interest in technology-based careers like computer science, computer engineering, information technology, programming, cyber security, robotics, or similar areas. In some cases, these project donations may include a few smaller items like a Raspberry Pi microcomputer or a robotics kit or entire Maker Spaces equipped with things like circuit development kits, 3-D printers, robotics kits, and classroom sets of individual microcomputers to build upon. Other projects include early-stage robotics classes, teams, and clubs interested in project-based learning that culminates in competitive events like FIRST. The focus is on funding libraries and schools in rural or high-poverty areas that are designed to reach multiple students equitably and help establish ongoing student interest groups like maker spaces and coding clubs.

Wyoming Humanities’ Indian Education for All Program

Deadline: Ongoing

One of the best ways to fulfill the Indian Education for All Act is to have Tribal Knowledge Keepers visit Wyoming classrooms. This is not always feasible because costs for travel and honorarium to those wanting to share their valuable wisdom. To address these challenges, Wyoming Humanities is offering funds for K-12 educators in Wyoming to bring an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper into their school, classroom,

or field trip. All requests for support should help fulfill Indian Education for All standards and requirements. Wyoming Humanities will offer one-time compensation to support the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge Keeper in the classroom, including a \$350 honorarium and \$200 in travel funds (if 100+ miles roundtrip.) Payment will be made directly to the Indigenous Knowledge Keeper. Funding is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. If payment is required prior to the classroom visit, apply at least six weeks before the visit. If payment is NOT required prior to the classroom visit, apply at least four weeks before the visit.

Wish You Well Foundation

Deadline: Ongoing

The Wish You Well Foundation supports adult and family literacy in the United States by fostering the development and expansion of new and existing adult literacy and educational programs. The focus is on supporting nonprofit organizations that teach adults the literacy skills they need to communicate, grow, and thrive within their communities. Grants amounts range from \$200 to \$10,000.

Scholastic Possible Fund

Deadline: Ongoing

The Scholastic Possible Fund was established to provide a single repository of quality children's books to be donated to charity partners that share the Company's mission to improve global literacy and put books into the hands of children who might otherwise have none. The Fund seeks to improve access to books in underserved communities and to provide relief in communities recovering from crises or natural disasters. The non-profit partners receiving donations from this fund have demonstrated the

ability to effectively educate children and families in diverse communities about the importance of books and reading from birth through adulthood.

Jan Stauber-Sherlock Holmes Literacy Grant

Deadline: Ongoing

The mission of the Jan Stauber Grant is to provide needed financial assistance to persons and organizations developing literacy programs and other educational experiences that will introduce young people to Sherlock Holmes. Educators or librarians can be awarded up to \$1,000 for a project that encourages young people to read and introduces them to Sherlock Holmes.

Art Resources Transfer's Library Program

Deadline: Ongoing

This program provides free books on contemporary art to public institutions nationwide. Public libraries, public schools, prisons, and reading centers that self-define as under-served are eligible to order free books through our Library Program. Institutions can order anytime throughout the year. Books are entirely free and shipped free of charge.

The Pilcrow Foundations Children's Book Project Program Grant

DEADLINE: Rolling

The Pilcrow Foundation, a national non-profit public charity, provides a 2-to-1 match to rural public libraries that receive a grant through its Children's Book Project and contribute \$200-\$400 through a local sponsors for the purchase of up to \$1,200 worth (at retail value) of new, quality, hardcover children's books. We provide a list of over 500 quality hardcover children's

books from which Children's Book Project grant recipients can select books best suited for their community. The book list includes award-winning and star-reviewed titles from educational and literary organizations.

Black Hills Corporation Community Giving

DEADLINE: Ongoing

Areas of focus are arts and culture, civic and community development, education, environment, human services, and youth development. Giving limited to Black Hills Energy service areas.

BNSF Railway Foundation Grants

DEADLINE: Ongoing

These grants are given to organizations and programs that support and improve the general welfare and quality of life in the communities in which BNSF Railway Company operates. Generally, requests that clearly fall within one or more of the following categories will be considered for funding: civic services, cultural organizations, educational institutions, health and human service organizations, youth organizations, and a federally recognized tribal government.

T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program

DEADLINE: Ongoing

T-Mobile is investing \$25M in 500 rural towns over 5 years to jumpstart projects and build stronger communities. These grants can be used to help upgrade tech at your local library, build new hiking trails, revitalize historic buildings, and more.

Upcoming Celebrations



Happy (almost) 2026! Here are few library and literacy related holidays coming up during the first month of the new year—January:

- [New Year's Day](#) - January 1
- [Copyright Law/Public Domain Day](#) - January 1
- [National Science Fiction Day](#) - January 2
- [National Trivia Day](#) - January 4
- [World Braille Day](#) - January 4
- [Thesaurus Day](#) - January 18
- [International Holocaust Remembrance Day](#) - January 27
- [Martin Luther King, Jr. Day](#) - 3rd Monday of January
- [Library Shelfie Day](#) - January 28

News in Brief

Here is an updated roundup of news and articles regarding literacy, libraries, and library professionals.

Literacy Night in Community-Host a literacy night that focuses on library services and the Five Activities to Raise a Reader to encourage children and their families who otherwise might not come into the library to further develop their literacy skills.

Striking the Right Balance: Opportunities and Challenges of AI in Metadata Workflows-As with any transformative technology, AI adoption requires thoughtful consideration of its limitations, ethical implications, and impact on professional practice.

Solve This! Gamify Readers' Advisory with Virtual Escape Rooms-If you have never played a virtual escape room before, you are in for a treat! These programs are puzzle-filled adventures based around a theme. Instead of real-life puzzles, each is created and played on a computer.

Library of Congress' New Anywhere Adventures Features Wyoming Monument-The 2025 Innovator in Residence project, [Anywhere Adventures](#), the brainchild of comics artist and web developer Vivian Li, Anywhere Adventures invites the public to engage with the histories of three locations: Li's home of Seattle, Washington, and two other communities selected through a crowdsourcing campaign earlier this—**Southeastern Wyoming** and Chicago, Illinois.

Exploring Literary Movements with your Book Club: Modernist Literature-The innovations of Modernist literature movement writers such as Barnes, Woolf, and Hemingway not only mirrored the anxieties of their time but also established a new artistic paradigm that continues to influence contemporary literature, ensuring Modernism's legacy as a pivotal moment in the history of art and ideas. This blog post explains more about this important movement and how to incorporate its books and authors into your library's programming.

News in Easy English: What is an AI librarian?-Visitors to a certain library in Japan's capital were greeted by a poster reading, "Please try the 'AI (artificial intelligence) librarian!'" But what is an AI librarian?

Evaluating Books About Youth with Disabilities-As librarians, it is essential to highlight individuals with disabilities in our programs and our collections. This blog explores how to critically evaluate titles that are in your collection or that you are considering adding to the collection to ensure that they portray people with disabilities in an appropriate manner. This blog explores how.

Homeschool Support with Library Programs-Libraries can do more to support homeschooling families through targeted programming. This blog offers a glimpse at the homeschool program developed by one library and how it has evolved to support off-site field trips and in-library meetings.