

Library Director Report: June 2026

Prepared by Tana Elias, July 1, 2026



1 Top left: Messy Art with Amy at Pinney; bottom left: Summer Science at Meadowridge; right: Juneteenth

Summer Is a Whirl of Activity

In summer months, our staff are extra busy with programming and outreach, attending just a fraction of community events that happen throughout the summer in Madison. In June, the library had a presence at the Open Doors for Refugees Picnic, Mobile Madison, Juneteenth at Penn Park, Parks Alive events in Madison Parks, and the Dream Bus hosts weekly visits at Theresa Terrace Neighborhood Center, Elver Park Neighborhood Center, Lussier Community Education Center, Allied Drive Learning Center, Park Cedar Apartments, Bridge-Lakepoint-Waunona Neighborhood Center, Monona Shores Apartments, East Madison Community Center, Mendota Elementary School, Vera Court Neighborhood Center, Kennedy Heights Community Center, Sandburg Elementary, The Meadowlands Apartments, and Harmony Apartments.

A sampling of some of the programs happening in our libraries are listed below:

Alicia Ashman - Tai Chi for All
Central - Podcast Production Workshop
Goodman - Mini-Figure Painting
Hawthorne - Dance Around the World
Lakeview - First Friday Films
Meadowridge - Summer Science Club
Monroe Street - Stories & Songs with Junebug
Pinney - workshops with Carrie Breunig, Artist in Residence
Sequoia - Summer Festival of Poetry

If you're looking for some joy, visit the Library's Flickr account to view [photos of recent library events](#).

International Public Library Fundraising Conference

In June, I joined Foundation Executive Director Conor Moran and several members of the Foundation staff at the International Public Library Fundraising Conference in Columbus, Ohio for three days of learning and discussion about library fundraising and advocacy. We had the opportunity to learn from library fundraisers and library directors from around the country on topics ranging from how to host amazing fundraising events, to creating and maintain strong partnerships between libraries and Foundations, to effective advocacy. It was gratifying to come away realizing that we're doing so many things right here in Madison and to see that the work we've done and continue to do to align the Library and the Foundation pays off.

We also took copious notes about every aspect of the conference because Madison Public Library will be hosting the conference next June! Stay tuned for more information as the conference approaches and we have the opportunity to welcome library directors and fundraisers to Madison next year.



2 Left: A Madison Parks employee stands behind a table during the recent WE READ Kick-Off event at Reindahl Park to get feedback on features that could be included in the new [Accessible Playground](#) being designed for the park. Right: the exterior between the library entrance (left) and shared entrance (right).

Imagination Center at Reindahl Park Update

Staffing: We have hired all permanent staff for the Imagination Center (and the holes that multiple promotions have filled). Starting Monday, July 6, those staff will go through a series of centralized trainings for the first two weeks, then be sent out into their new locations. Our Imagination Center staff will shadow at other open libraries in July and August when they're not doing Imagination Center-related work. Our hourly positions have been posted for hire and close at the end of July; we'll spend late July and August hiring and training those staff. Once we have occupancy (projected for August 14), staff can work on site. Once again, a huge shout out to Krissy Wick for managing the daunting and time-consuming process and timeline of hiring and training 21 new staff members, and also to Rosemary Medrano, Isis Newman, neighborhood supervisors, our City HR team, and our staff trainers.

Construction: Construction continues on the Imagination Center with occupancy projected for August 14th. In the first two weeks of August, we expect to be able to begin installing larger furniture and shelving, followed by technology, collection, and work supplies. We are watching two delays closely – cladding installation and signage – but I've been assured that neither delay will affect occupancy. For the exterior signage, we are going through a Comprehensive Design Review which will go before Urban Design Commission on July 29 to get final approval for exterior signage.

Monthly construction updates are available on the [Engineering Department's project page](#) and shared out through the [Library's email newsletter](#), too.

Grant progress: We are working through our response to the Flexible Facilities Program audit findings and continuing to work through the formal acceptance of our \$1.2 million Non-State Grant award from the Wisconsin Department of Administration.

Events: We had our first Parks Alive event on June 30 – it was hot! We have two more Parks Alive events planned in the park for July 21 and August 18 from 5-7pm, a District 17 neighborhood update meeting scheduled (virtually) on August 20, 6-7:30, a Common Council member tour on August 21.

Save these important dates on your calendar!

Imagination Center gala fundraiser, Friday, Sept. 18, 6-9pm

Grand opening Saturday, Saturday, Sept. 26, 9am-5pm

Ribbon cutting, TBD between Sept. 21-25

Upcoming Imagination Center tours: Fridays, July 10, 24 - 2pm – please [RSVP to attend](#) or email your RSVP to cmoran@madisonpubliclibrary.org

Library Metrics

All monthly key metrics, by month and library, from 2015 to the previous month, are also available on our interactive dashboard: [MPL Monthly Metrics | Tableau Public](#).

Due to the ILS migration, our checkout and collection numbers may be significantly different than the same time last year for several months or more.

For Your Calendar

Here are some dates you may want to save on your calendar:

- Upcoming Library Board meetings – Thursday, July 2, 5pm, Central Library and Thursday, August 6, 5pm, Pinney Library
- Library Closed for Independence Day on Saturday, July 4
- “Flyover Country” – a traveling exhibit that challenges the narrative that LGBTQ+ history lives only on the coasts, at Pinney Library July 2-15 during all open hours.
- Friends’ Book Sale, Saturday, August 1, 9am-2pm, Library Service & Support Center (1301 W. Badger Rd.)

Press Releases & News Stories

Library Press Releases

- No press releases this month

News Coverage

- [Madison Photographer Amadou Kromah celebrates Black beauty](#) (CapTimes, June 1, 2026)
- [Sculpture will be a key feature of Madison’s new Imagination Center](#) (Capital Times, June 17, 2026)
- [Local libraries encourage kids to keep reading this summer](#) (Channel3000, June 26, 2026)
- [Preserving Art and Culture for a Decade](#) (Wort-FM, June 29, 2026)