



## ALBANY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

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**CURRENT  
MAIN LIBRARY HOURS**  
SUN-TUE: 10AM-6PM  
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THURS-SAT: 10AM-6PM

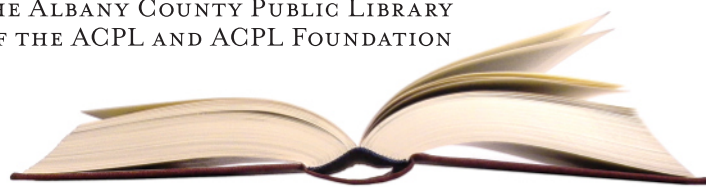
**CENTENNIAL  
BRANCH HOURS**  
MON-FRI: 11AM-3PM

**ROCK RIVER  
BRANCH HOURS**  
WED, FRI, SAT: 11AM-3PM

June  
2025  
Vol. 19 No.2

# THE OPEN BOOK

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALBANY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BY THE FRIENDS OF THE ACPL AND ACPL FOUNDATION



## Color Our World: Summer Reading Program

**C**olor Our World, the 2025 Summer Reading Program will run June 7–August 17. Albany County Public Library will partner with Smile Doctors to offer a summer reading incentive program for all ages. Participants can stop by the library on or after June 7 to sign up for the free program.

ACPL and Smile Doctors will provide a reading challenge, where children, teens, and adults can reach goals over the summer. Participants will use a reading log to track their progress. For kids up through sixth grade, you can cross off an icon on the reading log for every 30 minutes of reading or listening. For teens and adults, an icon can be crossed off for every 60 minutes of reading or listening.

After 10 icons, participants can bring their reading log to the library for a small prize. When you reach 20 icons, you will receive a free book. For each icon crossed off, you can fill out a raffle ticket for a big prize, provided by Smile Doctors. A full read-

ing log equals 30 raffle tickets! There is no limit on the number of reading logs for participants, but the free book is available on the first reading log only.

Even babies can join in the fun! Babies will receive a Summer Reading kit to use for the full summer. This contains a board book, scarf, shaker egg, and a calendar of early literacy activities.

The Summer Reading Program is especially important for school-aged youth, as they often experience a lapse in learning, commonly referred to as the “summer slide.” Summer Reading Programs help motivate children and teens to keep reading, learning, and exploring while they are out of school. The Summer Reading Program also encourages a love of reading and interest in the library and books.

Make sure to check ACPL’s event calendar and watch social media for program locations. Due to construction, many programs will take place

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at Washington Park this year, instead of at ACPL. Locations are noted on the next page.

With this year's art theme for Summer Reading, ACPL recommends wearing clothing that can be worn near paint and other art supplies.

Summer Reading programming will run June 7 to August 17. Participants can enjoy the reading challenge through August 17. Raffle winners will be notified the week of August 18. More information and a full schedule are available on the ACPL website and on social media. 🌈



**Thank you to these grant supporters!**



**Wyoming  
Intertie**  
A Grid United Project

**\$30,000 grant for a needed  
technology upgrade**



**Guthrie Family Foundation**

**\$25,000 grant for programming, library supplies, travel,  
phone/Internet, & professional development.**

**For Connection, For Growth, For Community, Think ACPL!**



## FREE SUMMER READING PROGRAM EVENTS

### Summer Reading Program Kick Off

June 7 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Washington Park, Shelter #1

Come to the park, have some fun, and sign up for Summer Reading! Enjoy art, games, face painting, balloon animals, and more!

### Book Babies

Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. at ACPL

Books, rhymes, and songs for ages birth to 2. Sessions will start June 10.

### Stories @ the Park

Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. in Washington Park

Stories @ the Park is geared toward families and preschool-aged children. Sessions will start June 12.

### Toddler Storytime

Fridays at 10:30 a.m. at ACPL

For ages 3-5 and their families. Sessions will start June 13.

### Kids Lego Club

Saturdays at 1 p.m. at ACPL

For kids in grades K-6th. Build and create with Lego! Sessions will start June 14.

### Storywalks®: Located around the exterior of the Laramie branch of the public library.

Come walk and read a new story every month.

### YAK!

Thursdays at 4 p.m. at ACPL

For grades 4th–6th. Join us every week for crafts, games, art, activities, and more. Sessions will start June 12.

### Preschool Playtime

Saturdays at 10 a.m. at ACPL

Preschool-aged activities to support development for children ages 3–5. Sessions will start June 14.

### Read with a Ranger

June 17, July 22, & August 5 at 2 p.m. at Washington Park, Shelter #1

Stories, activities, and snacks with our friends from Wyoming State Parks.

### Teen 360 Board Games

June 10, June 24, July 1, July 29, & August 5 at 2 p.m. at ACPL

For grades 7th–12th.

### Seed Planting with 4H Extension

Tuesday, June 10 at 2 p.m. at Washington Park, Otto Dahl Shelter

A fun seed planting class for kids to kick off your summer fun.

### Mad About Hula Hoops

Friday, June 13 at 3 p.m. at Washington Park, Shelter #2

Join us for a fun hula hoop fitness program for kids!

### Touch a Truck with ALBY, the Bookmobile

Saturday, June 14 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Laramie Recreation Center

Stop by to see ALBY and to get a free book!

### Art in the Park with the UW Art Museum

June 24 at 2 p.m. at Washington Park, Shelter #1

This free kids event will include activities such as: cyanotypes, watercolor painting, and suncatchers.

### Spray Bottle Art

July 8 at 2 p.m. in Washington Park, Otto Dahl Shelter

Kids can grab a spray bottle and have fun making art.

### Rocky Mountain Puppets

July 21 at 2 p.m. at Washington Park, Bandshell

Meghan Casey presents Prism Break, a fun kids event with puppets.

### Process Art with Local Artist Tara Pappas

July 24 at 1 p.m. in Washington Park, Shelter #1  
Join us to design, decorate, and fly your own kite!

July 29 at 1 p.m. in Washington Park, Shelter #1  
Join us for beaded bubble wands! Create your own wand and colorful bubble container.

### The Magic Bookcase

July 31 at 2 p.m. in Washington Park, Bandshell  
This free kids magic show will feature Wyoming magician Byron Grey.

### Summer Reading Bash: Foam Party with Smile Doctors

Sunday, August 17 from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Smile Doctors parking lot (2710 Grand Ave.)  
Ann Lincoln is back with a hilarious, fun, and awesome foam party! Bring the kiddos for some fun in the sun, with lots of foam. Kids will get wet, so we recommend wearing a swimsuit and bringing a towel. Don't forget to wear shoes and sunscreen. This event is sponsored by the ACPL Foundation and Smile Doctors.

### Bookmobile Stops

Kiwanis Park: Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Undine Park: Tuesdays from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Out of Town Visits on Thursdays (check online for locations)

Washington Park: Fridays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

# Infrastructure Grant – Multi-Purpose Spaces Project Update

Construction continues at a steady pace at the Laramie Branch. We are happy to report that we are on schedule! There has been quite a bit of progress in the last few weeks.

The project is focused on three community-use spaces in the library. Grant funding will support a renovation of the ACPL large meeting room and the small conference room. The third part of the project is the creation of an Activity Center for children and families.

Each space will focus on enabling health, education, and job functions to improve the Albany County community. This project will allow ACPL to host more simultaneous programs, increase its partnerships in the community, and provide higher quality areas for public use.

Here's an update on how construction is progressing in each space:

## Meeting Room

- Large trenches were dug to put in the lines for the new plumbing needed for the kitchenette and single-user bathroom in the lobby. These trenches were then filled.



- After being completely demolished, the Meeting Room has undergone the first steps to put it back together and create an improved space for the community. The wall framing is up for the new

entrance off the lobby, the new kitchenette, and the storage closet. A portion of the HVAC system was also installed.



- The kitchenette will have a sliding service window for ease of use. The storage closet will have a large garage door to more easily access tables and chairs.

## Conference Room

- The construction crew recently started work on the Conference Room!
- The first step is to examine the ceiling and support system and determine the best course of action in taking out the Conference Room's south wall to enlarge the room. A beam will be installed to support the ceiling and the room will double in capacity.
- Watch your step around the taped off areas when shopping in the Friends of the Library Book Nook.



## Activity Center



- The Activity Center's concrete floor was removed to lay a new foundation. The new foundation was recently poured and looks great. Extra installation was



also installed to keep the room warmer in the winter.

- Work has begun on the HVAC system and roof above the Activity Center and lobby area.



## Miscellaneous Extras

- A portion of the floor and concrete were removed from the front entrance area. A new slab was poured in the new footprint of the lobby.
- Plumbing was put in for the single-user bathroom in the lobby area, and brick was removed to open the space where the new entrance to the Meeting Room will be located.



## Upcoming

- Construction will continue on the ACPL roof and three multi-purpose spaces. ACPL's public restrooms will be closed for a period of time. We are excited to have completely updated restrooms and new water fountains with water bottle fillers!
- ACPL is working on putting in technology upgrades and a new AV ecosystem across the three spaces to dramatically improve meetings, presentations, and events in each room.

## Other Details

- ACPL will have Wyoming Washroom restroom trailers on the south side of the building while the public restrooms are closed. There will be an accessible stall. The restrooms will have running water and A/C. Please be patient with us, as we navigate the challenges of having the public restrooms closed for an extended period.
- ACPL expects to use the temporary entrance until fall 2025, as it approaches the completion of

construction. The temporary entrance is located behind the blue book drop on the south side of the building.

- ACPL's front parking lot is closed during construction. Patrons can park in the two south lots or on the street. There are four marked handicap parking spaces in the southwest parking lot.
- Portions of the construction project will create noise disruption in the building. ACPL will work to communicate with the public about dates where noise is expected to be high. There are also free earplugs at the entrance.

Special thanks to ACPL's construction team: Dwel, Inc. with Christie Roberts, ARCON with Brandon Ahrenholtz, TAG Technologies with Tim Gaddis, Forte, and many awesome subcontractors!

ACPL recently held a construction character naming contest for our Activity Center mascots. Check our social media to see the official names!



## Activity Center



The majority of this project is funded by the American Rescue Plan Act funding for the Wyoming Library Multi-Purpose Community Facility Program.

ACPL will provide an infrastructure grant update in each library newsletter moving forward. 🌈

# FY26 library budget outlook

ACPL’s budgeting process is a collaborative effort between library administration and the ACPL Board of Directors. As a department of Albany County, ACPL’s budget is approved by the Albany County Commissioners. The new fiscal year for the library begins July 1, 2025.

**Budget Timeline:**

- April 2025: ACPL Board of Directors approved the draft budget.
- June 2025: Library Director, Rachel Crocker, will present the proposed budget to the Albany County Commissioners.
- June/July 2025: The final decision on Albany County’s contribution to the library budget will be announced.
- TBA: ACPL Board of Directors will host a public hearing and approve the final budget. Dates for upcoming board meetings are on ACPL’s website at [acplwy.org](http://acplwy.org).

**Budget Outlook:**

In order for the Albany County Public Library to operate effectively and be open to the public, it relies on a variety of income sources. In FY26, the library is expected to have a total budget of \$1,472,147. This is about a 4 percent decrease from FY25.

The budget decrease can be attributed to recent property tax exemption legislation passed by the Wyoming Legislature. While this will lower property taxes for homeowners, the estimated 2025 impact to all taxing authorities in Albany County is a decrease of \$2.2 million. You can learn more about the property tax relief at: <https://www.albanycountywy.gov/1557/Tax-Relief>.

**Mill Levy:**

The greatest portion of income for the library comes from Albany County mill levy, which is predominantly funded by Albany County property taxes. For the past several years, this funding has stretched to cover personnel costs and a portion of operational expenses. The funding for all other library budget needs must come from other sources or be fund raised.

From FY25 to FY26, income from the mill levy to ACPL is estimated to decrease by \$63,095. With the decrease, mill levy funding will only cover the majority of personnel costs. However, a portion of the needed personnel funds - \$17,205 – will need to come from ACPL’s Personnel Reserve.

ACPL has already been running its three branches on a small number of staff, yet the staff is pivotal to the library’s ability to be open and to provide essential resources and services. ACPL has 16 full-time staff members and 8 part-time staff members. Nineteen of these 24 staff members work a public service desk during ACPL’s open hours across its three branches and the bookmobile. During any given week, ACPL needs 141-163 staff hours to run public service desks.

This is just a portion of the hours staff put in to directly serve the public. When not overseeing a public desk, ACPL staff are researching materials to add to the collection, preparing items to be checked out, planning and executing programs, and performing many other essential tasks.

**1% Optional Funding:**

Another income source is from the Albany County portion of the 5th Cent Sales & Use Tax. The 5th cent tax is levied upon retail sales and consumption of tangible personal property. Albany County voters must renew this tax every four years.

This income, referred to as 1% Optional Sales Tax, Direct Aid, or Hardship Funds, must be requested by ACPL to Albany County. The funding source assists with operational expenses not covered by mill levy. In FY26, ACPL is requesting \$132,365 1% Optional Funds. This is a larger request compared to previous years to offset part of the mill levy shortfall to the budget. If the request is approved in full, this funding will cover other basic operational costs for ACPL.

The request includes:	
\$37,608	Building utilities: gas, electricity, water, and trash removal.
\$29,760	IT services for the public and staff.
\$14,965	Statewide consortium fees: ACPL is part of a statewide library consortium. This fee allows ACPL to have a shared cataloging system and access to statewide databases and electronic resources.
\$11,017	Contractual services: snow removal, pest control, and regular building maintenance for the elevator, HVAC, and fire extinguishers.
\$4,565	Phone and Internet for all three branches.
\$4,000	ACPL liability insurance.
\$3,200	Payroll services, legal notices, and security bonds

If the 1% Optional Funding request is not funded or only partially funded, ACPL will evaluate how to proceed. The costs in the funding request are not expenses ACPL can cut from the budget. The library will need to consider using more funds from its payroll reserve to bridge the budget gap and determine if the ACPL Foundation and Friends of the Library can increase fundraising efforts.

Ultimately, if the budget shortfall is larger than estimated, ACPL will be forced to look at cutting personnel hours. Decreases to personnel will result in a reduction in the number of open hours at the library.

**Other Funding:**

The library also receives 5th cent sales tax funding through the City of Laramie Community Partnership grant. This upcoming fiscal year, Community Partnership funding, \$12,945, is designated for phone and Internet utilities and vehicle maintenance for the library van and bookmobile.

A small portion of the library’s income comes from operating revenue including copier/printer fees and meeting room rentals.

**ACPL Foundation and Friends of the Albany County Public Library:**

You may have noted that the budget explanation has yet to explain how ACPL funds its programs or materials for the collection. Due to funding limitations in Albany County, the library relies on the ACPL Foundation and Friends of the Library to fund these essential expenses.

This is not new in FY26 – the two organizations have raised funds to provide for these important purposes for many years. As part of our community of library supporters, you play an essential role in ensuring ACPL can offer needed materials and services.

As part of its annual disbursement, the ACPL Foundation contributes funding for the entire ACPL programming budget. In FY26, the ACPL Foundation will provide \$18,500 for programs.

The ACPL Foundation also contributes to other purposes, emergency costs, and special projects determined by needs each fiscal year. Normally, the ACPL Foundation’s total contribution is about \$120,000. In FY26, the ACPL Foundation is also assisting financially with the current construction project.

The Friends of the Library contribution is dependent on funds raised from memberships and sales on books and other items. ACPL is estimating receiving \$68,000 to cover check-out materials, library supplies, and postage. The majority of this funding will be used to maintain and grow ACPL’s collection of books and other items.


**How Can You Help:**

The ACPL Foundation accepts donations online, through the mail or in person. Donors can contact the ACPL Foundation office to discuss which giving opportunity works well for you. Please contact ACPL Foundation Executive Director, Caitlin White (307-460-2481 or [cwhite@acplwy.org](mailto:cwhite@acplwy.org)) with any questions or stop by the Foundation office, located in the public library.

Visit the Foundation website at [foundation.acplwy.org](http://foundation.acplwy.org) for more information.

You can donate to the Friends of the Library in three ways: by becoming a Friends member, by purchasing items at a book sale, or by donating books or other items for to the Friends of the Library that are then sold at the book sale.

Annual memberships are \$10/individual, \$15/household or \$50/benefactor. Becoming a Friends member allows you to attend Friends-only hours at the book sales so you can have early access to the items for sale. A benefactor membership also includes recognition in the library newsletter.

For more information, or to become a member visit the Friends of the Library website at [friends.acplwy.org](http://friends.acplwy.org). 

\*These budget numbers exclude income/expenses for the ACPL infrastructure construction project.

Each fiscal year, the ACPL Foundation commits to providing a minimum of \$60,000 to ACPL for specific needs. In addition to \$18,500 for programming in FY26, the organization will cover:	
\$9,600	for building maintenance.
\$9,402	for technology purchases, web hosting, and IT subscriptions and fees.
\$7,600	for check-out materials.
\$5,931	for library supplies.
\$5,000	for ACPL staff professional development.
\$3,367	for travel.
\$600	for marketing.



Albany County Public Library

# Foundation

## Friends of the Library

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<< **Become a** >>  
***Friends Member***

<< *Save the Date* >>  
**JULY 12-13, 2025**  
**Saturday & Sunday**  
**10:00 am-5:30 pm**  
**Public 2-Day Book Sale**

<< *Membership Benefits* >>

- Admission to Friends only book sales
- Vote for board members and officers at our annual meeting
- Personal shopping experience between sales

310 S. 8th St.  
Laramie, WY 82070

Friends of the Albany County  
Public Library