

July 2025 Children's Department Report

Children's Programming Highlights

Summer reading in the Children's Department comes to a close this month. The program ended with 229 children's participants and 45 teen participants!

In July, we hosted 19 programs with 387 attendees! Some of our best attended programs included **Wacky Water Day** with water games and sprinklers out on the library lawn, a **Picnic Bingo**, the **Silly Safari** animal show, and **Sandcastle Storytime** at Whihala Beach.

Oilmen Fundraiser

Although originally rained out, our rescheduled Library Night with the Northwest Indiana Oilmen turned out to be a huge success and a valuable learning opportunity. Due to initial miscommunication about how the library could earn proceeds from ticket sales, we faced a challenge—by Sunday, July 6, no tickets had been sold. Fortunately, I received a timely phone call from Don Popravak who clarified the process, allowing me to quickly adjust our approach.

With updated advertising and personal outreach, we were able to sell 120 tickets by game day—raising \$720 for the library. Thanks to the Friends of the Library, who hosted a bake sale and raffle during the event, we raised an additional \$257, bringing our total to **\$977**.

I would like to extend special thanks to:

- **The Friends of the Library** for their time, effort, and delicious baked goods;
- **Kate Funk of Funky Photography** for generously donating her time and talent to photograph the evening;
- **Christina Hammermeister and Ashley Cooper** for their help promoting and selling tickets at the last minute – including standing outside the gates and taking ticket orders online to catch those who may not have seen our social media advertising!
- **Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Member Bella Davidson** for playing Dewey the Dog as the library mascot;
- **Everyone who came out to support the library!**

Don Popravak has expressed interest in making this an annual fundraiser. While it was a huge undertaking and the first time I've organized such a large fundraiser by myself, I'm eager to build on this year's success—with lessons learned—to grow the event and raise even more for the library next year.

Fall 2025 Youth Programming Update & School Partnership Efforts

Beginning in August, the Children's Department will launch a more structured and consistent schedule for Children & Family programming to better serve our community during the school year. This updated approach allows families to more easily plan visits to the library by offering age-targeted programming on set days each week:

- **Tuesdays at 6:00 PM:** *Weekly Family Programs* that provide opportunities for families to gather, learn, and have fun together.
- **Wednesdays at 2:30 PM:** *Elementary Aged Programming* and activities aligned with the school's early release day.
- **Thursdays after school:** *Teen Programs* focused on socialization and creativity.
- **Wednesday and Friday mornings:** *Toddler and Preschool Programs* to continue supporting early literacy, socialization, and school readiness.
- **First Saturdays (my working Saturday):** Larger day-long *Family Program or Event* working together with the Teen Advisory Board to give them additional volunteer hours and offer opportunities and working experience in planning events.

This consistent schedule is designed to support working families, promote routine engagement, and help make the library a more predictable part of weekly family life.

Additionally, I recently met with Whiting's new superintendent and began building a strong line of communication. Our discussion laid the groundwork for the library to not only continue to be a trusted and safe after-school space for students, but to additionally maintain regular outreach to the district to explore how we can best support each other, classrooms, and households—through resources, partnerships, and educational support that strengthens the library's role in our broader learning community.

Indiana Library Federation (ILF) Strategic Plan

I'm pleased to share that I have been selected to participate in a statewide focus group as part of the Indiana Library Federation's (ILF) strategic planning process. ILF is partnering with the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS) to develop its next five-year strategic plan, and submissions were recently accepted from members interested in helping shape the organization's future direction.

Out of all submissions received, only 15 individuals were chosen to participate in the focus group taking place in early August via Zoom. Participants will share insights on what ILF is doing well, areas for improvement, and how the organization can better support library professionals and communities across Indiana.

I'm honored to have been selected to contribute to this important work. This opportunity allows me to represent Whiting Public Library on a statewide level and engage in meaningful dialogue with peers about the future of ILF and how it impacts libraries statewide.

Children's Program Attendance

Date	Children's In-Person Programming Attendance	Ages 0-5	Ages 6-11	YA	GA
7/1/25	Night Owls Storytime		10		
7/2/25	Preschool Storytime	10			
7/5/25	Wacky Water Day		35		
7/8/25	Family Bingo				29
7/9/25	Preschool Storytime	22			
7/10/25	Tween/Teen Makers			12	
7/11/25	Itty Bitty Storytime	21			
7/11/25	Silly Safari				73
7/14/25	Sandcastle Storytime	41			
7/16/25	Preschool Storytime	21			
7/17/25	Creativity Club; Perspective Drawing		7		
7/18/25	Little Explorers	11			
7/18/25	Istvan & His Imaginary Band				13
7/22/25	Family STEAM Squad				0
7/22/25	Pride Social Club			0	
7/23/25	Preschool Storytime	17			
7/24/25	Teen Anime			6	
7/28/25	Rock Painting				36

7/30/25	Preschool Storytime	23			
Total		166	52	18	151

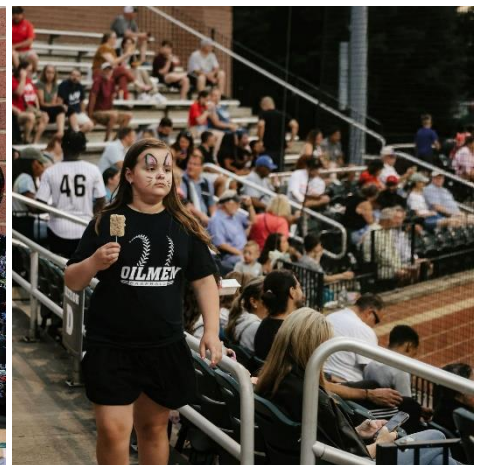
Wacky Water Day



Tween/Teen Makers: Snail Snow Globes



Oilmen Fundraiser





Sandcastle Storytime



Istvan & His Imaginary Band

