



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## Committee Report

**To:** Chair and Members of the Library Board  
**From:** Rebecca Hine, Chief Librarian  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 08, 2026  
**Subject:** **Library Update March 2026**

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**Background:** To provide the Library Board with an overview of events and activities from across the library system.

### March Break

March Break was a huge success with high door counts and programme attendance across the system. A busy week was predicted because of people travelling less due to global events, and the high cost of living and this was proven correct. The cold, wet weather also seemed to contribute to business in the branches and many parents commented that they were thankful for the free indoor activities. We hosted 21 special guests/activities across the system with a total of 1268 people in attendance for these programmes.

#### March Break Special Events:

Scientists in School Workshop x3  
AbraKidAbra Show x2  
Magic with Scott Dietrich x2  
Paws 4 Stories x3  
Party Safari x2  
The Big Balloon Show x2  
The Simple Machines Show x2  
The Juggling Chef x2  
Club Rex x2

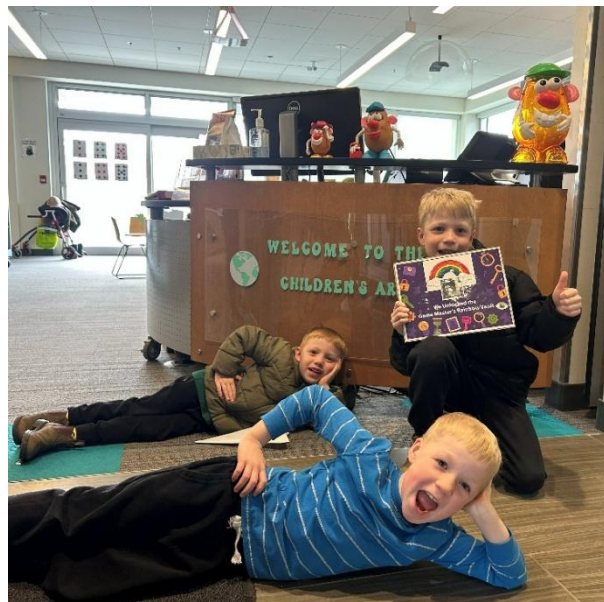
The special events were in addition to our regular programming and staff at all branches really stepped up and created an exceptional week.

Below are a few pictures to illustrate the variety of programmes on offer throughout the week.

The Juggling Chef in Drayton



Fergus staff created an elaborate escape room that proved to be a very popular challenge





Tim Greenwood(Harriston) demonstrating the obstacle course (above)

Participants finding their way through (below)



### **Erin Update**

After a successful grand opening event on March 11, the branch has remained consistently busy. Staff report that Erin residents are very happy to have their library back. They also report that every single person that they have spoken with has raved about the building and that they have had no end of compliments on the building. Erin had 114 new card registrations in February with most of them happening between February 19<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. The door counts have been impressive, and March Break saw attendance over 200 people each day during the week, and 166 people on the Saturday. Staff have also observed that there are many kids stopping by on their way home from school each day creating a busy time between 3:30 and 4:30 during the week. One mother told the Supervisor her 10-year-old son says, “the library is the coolest place”.

The Study Rooms have also been in very high demand. Each of the 3 rooms has been used multiple times a day since opening, clearly demonstrating that we are fulfilling a need for this service in the community. There are also many people enjoying the 4<sup>th</sup> floor all day long, some working, some reading, some doing the puzzle. There has also been a lot of excitement expressed about the balcony opening once the weather warms up.

A new patron told staff that this is the nicest library he had ever been in and he has lived across Canada and visited many libraries. Another long-time patron commented that at the old library he could never get to the shelves because there were always too many students in the way. He said: “Now this is a real library!”.

All in all, the first month has been a huge success.

### **Reciprocal Borrowing**

Library systems often have reciprocal borrowing agreements with neighboring or nearby municipalities in order to broaden the selection of available materials. WCL has borrowing agreements with the following library systems:

- Cambridge Libraries and Galleries
- Guelph Public Library
- Halton Hills Public Library
- Hamilton Public Library
- Huron County Library
- Milton Public Library
- Perth County Information Network (North Perth, Perth East, St. Mary's, Stratford, West Perth)
- Region of Waterloo Public Library (not including City of Kitchener or Waterloo)

Staff have been reviewing our reciprocal borrowing agreements and it's becoming clear that non-resident usage of our Overdrive collection is increasing at a pace that is unsustainable for us. We are able to track both the rapid rise of non-resident users who are signing up for WCL cards, and how they use our library. Many of them are getting a card and only using Overdrive/Libby.

The price of eBooks and eAudiobooks is significantly more than print, so with the increased demand on our collection, we either have to spend more of our budget on digital resources to support it, or else have our own patrons face much longer wait times to borrow material.

We are also aware that as a member of a consortium, we shouldn't be providing access to libraries outside of this group and while in the past usage was minimal by other systems, now, with the growing number of nonresidents accessing our digital collections, it has become a concern.

The decision has been made to restrict access to our digital collections to those who are residents of Wellington County and to non-residents who choose to pay the yearly fee of \$240.00 for a membership to our library system. Reciprocal agreements will remain an option and will continue to provide access to our physical collections, our buildings, computers and programmes but our digital collections will no longer be part of the agreement. This change will take place in phases, with the plan that digital access will be phased out by the end of 2026.

### **Strategic Action Plan:**

This report relates to the following objectives and priorities in the County's Strategic Action Plan:

- Doing what the County does best – Providing Critical Daily Services for your residents

### **Recommendation:**

That the Chief Librarians report for April 2026, including the Next Chapter Newsletter, be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "RHine", is centered at the top of the page.

Rebecca Hine  
Chief Librarian

In consultation with/approved by:  
Scott Wilson, Chief Administrative Officer