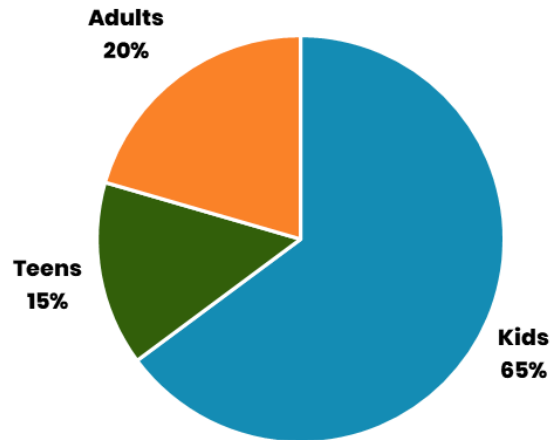




SUMMER READING CHALLENGE 2025

LAND OF 10,000 READS / LA TIERRA DE LOS 10,000 LECTURAS

This year's Summer Reading adventure focused on Minnesota, inviting readers to complete a series of activities, such as reading outside or checking out a cookbook, or simply track when they read or listened to a book for 20 minutes while following a route on their maps from Northfield to the Boundary Waters.



In total, 1,078 people registered for the program, 699 kids, 158 teens, and 221 adults. This was a slight increase of about 3.5% over last year's 1,043 participants (663 kids, 176 teens, and 204 adults).

EVENTS

We tried a new idea to kickoff the Challenge this year, closing down Washington Street in front of the library to create space for people to gather. We invited local pizza and taco producers to donate food and hosted Stephen Shaskan, Minneapolis resident and author/illustrator of the kid-favorite Pizza and Taco graphic novel series. More than 300 folks joined us to kick off summer, creating a one day building count similar to that we see for Winter Walk!

OUTREACH WITH NPS

We once again partnered with Northfield Public Schools to include Summer PLUS and Summer BLAST participants in the Summer Reading Challenge. All of the students in the Summer PLUS program completed the Kids program. For four weeks in a row, they nearly emptied the Bookmobile of children's books. Library staff and summer interns/fellows work together to select items from the main library collection to supplement the Bookmobile stock for popular topics like Taylor Swift, Minecraft, and formats such as graphic novels.

Summer BLAST students also had the opportunity to visit the Bookmobile each week, but interest and participation is not as high. We have some ideas to propose to the BLAST coordinator next summer to increase checkouts.



PAGES

Pages are youth volunteers who have completed 5th–8th grade. Pages assist with summer reading registration, library work like shelf maintenance and weeding, and participate in weekly team building activities. We accepted 15 Pages into the program in 2025. We again had Steve Carras, a local resident with extensive HR experience, talk with teens about job skills. Summer Intern, Hannah Kotek, assisted with weekly Team Time meetings.

In addition, Pages also worked on planning teams for events they brainstormed as a group. Working with staff and interns, they were integral to planning and hosting: a Twilight Party for teens, Greek mythology themed Escape Room, and a scavenger hunt in the library for teens.



DATA-DRIVEN IMPROVEMENTS

In last year's report, we determined an alternative log for repeat finishers would be more sustainable than using more full-color maps. We introduced the "Passport," a black and white booklet with five additional logs participants could complete. Once a participant had completed all five (for a total of 6 raffle entries) they could continue reading, but we did not issue further tickets. This was an attempt to make the program fun for strong readers, but more equitable for less confident readers, or kids who have less access to print materials, time to read, etc.

This year we also extended a program specifically for folks, mostly seniors, receiving our Home Delivery services. A simplified Bingo-style board was given to them to complete with the winners being given the option to choose a reasonable prize (such as a plant, chocolate bar, bottle of lotion, etc.) that they could use or desire.



Thank you to 2025 Summer Reading Challenge planning committee: Cat, Em, Karin, Tyler, and Amy

