



ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023

Libraries are about freedom. Freedom to read, freedom of ideas, freedom of communication. They are about education, about entertainment, about making safe spaces, and about access to information.

- Neil Gaiman



About Kanawha County Public Library

Established in 1909 as the Charleston Public Library, the Kanawha County Public Library is now the largest public library system in West Virginia. Branch libraries were first established in 1963, and along with the Main Library in Downtown Charleston, branch libraries are located in St. Albans, Dunbar, Sissonville, Cross Lanes, Elk Valley, Clendenin, Riverside, Marmet, and Glasgow.

KCPL has more than 73,000 card holders, and while the vast majority of our library system patrons are from Kanawha and Putnam Counties, residents from all 55 West Virginia counties are represented in the cardholder database.



There are more than 500,000 items in the library collection; approximately 300,000 of those are housed at the Main Library with the remainder distributed among our 9 branch libraries and Bookmobile.

Patron visits to all libraries in the system total nearly 312,000 per year, and approximately 750,000 library items circulate in a year's time.

Almost 100 percent of the library's services are FREE to the public.

Our Vision

We envision the Kanawha County Public Library as the people's premier source of information in a community where learning and reading are revered and being well-informed is valued.

Our Mission

- Provide free and equal access to information.
- Provide citizens with job training and career development information.
- Enrich individual and family lives.
- Enable patrons to access new information technology.
- Provide opportunities for lifelong learning.
- Serve as the center of community life.
- Use available resources efficiently and seek additional resources.

A Letter from the Board President



The last year has gone by in a blur. We hope that you have gotten out to your local branch in recent months to experience some of the exciting programs that have been offered.

We continue to revel in the community's welcoming reception of the Main Charleston Branch. Our team is graced with smiling faces in the building on a regular basis. We remain proud of what the Library has accomplished with this building and look forward to finding new ways to maximize its potential as the community's living room.

In the fiscal year ahead, we will finalize a long-term strategic plan for the Library. This plan will prioritize growth and service initiatives across the system and focus our team's energy to accomplish achievable goals for our communities. We appreciate all of the community input that we have received and we are excited to share this plan with our various stakeholders once it is completed. We will need help from everyone in the community to make it a reality.

Members of our communities have deep ties to their local library branches. In the years ahead, the Library intends to dedicate itself to caring for the branches outside of Charleston. We aim to strengthen our relationships throughout the county while reviewing the Library's physical resources in certain underserved areas.

We will continue to focus on enhancing the entire patron experience, with emphasis on serving patrons and enriching their interactions with the Library system. Thanks to all of our friends, supporters, and patrons for contributing to our success. We are eager to achieve new and innovative initiatives for our patrons.

Please come visit us soon at a Library branch near you.

Updates from the Library Director

It was a year of transformation for the Kanawha County Public Library system. The Main Library renovation's first year after reopening concluded with an exciting return of library patrons after a nearly two-year closure. While the Main Library continued to operate in the Charleston Town Center mall, the return home was much anticipated by both library patrons and staff. Public libraries throughout the nation struggled with post COVID operations. Not so with KCPL and the excitement generated by the \$32 million project, which included a tool lending library, the IDEA Lab, and Café. The Library System rebounded above the national average for public libraries with post COVID returns.

Library staff capitalized on the energy created by the massive renovation through creative, new programming that included focusing on education and instruction on new and emerging technologies, like robotics, computer coding, and 3D printing. The new IDEA Lab generated programs that are available to all library branches. With the use of these new library tools, the Library team will focus on technology planning for the next five years that increases exposure to technologies that community residents may not have ready or affordable access to.

Although KCPL enjoyed great success over the past year, it also faced several challenges. Challenges in the State legislature arose with several bills aimed at limiting or banning content within public and school libraries, or jailing librarians for questionable materials. West Virginia libraries were not immune to the national wave on attacks to the first amendment and the freedom to read. These introduced bills did not make their way through the legislative process into law this year, but are expected to make a disheartening return in future legislative sessions. While we have much to celebrate this past year, a dark, possible future looms in the distance that challenges the right for an individual to choose their own access to library materials. Public librarians stand firm in protecting those freedoms.



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 Children's Services..... Terri McDougal
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 Circulation Services SupervisorSusan Murphy
 ILS Admin.....Susan Murphy
 Technical Services.....Marian Veld
 Facilities & SecurityTim Venitsanos
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 Assistant Director of Finances..... Adele Thumm

Branch Managers and Librarians:

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 Cross Lanes Brittany Addis
 Dunbar.....Susan Bailey
 Elk ValleyEllie Teaford
 Glasgow..... Vacant
 Marmet..... Vacant
 Mobile Library Vacant
 Riverside..... Vacant
 Sissonville Cathy Mason
 St. Albans.....Melissa Burchett

Branch Highlights

Clendenin

Last year's Learning to Sew program at Clendenin Branch was so popular that we formed a Children's Sewing Club. Meeting twice a month, the club started with about ten children. As time went by, it grew to include teens and adults. The Sewing Club is still active and is gaining new members. We began to focus on family programs, and these were the best attended. Another highlight was support from the community, who gave monetary and material donations for our sewing club, Makerspace, and STEM programs for the Summer Library Club.



Cross Lanes

Cross Lanes Branch staff launched Fiction Addiction, a new book club that meets monthly to discuss diverse fiction genres and sample flavored coffees inspired by the current genre. Our Spice Club and Seed Library continue to be popular in their second year with 700 spice kits and 1,500 seed packets distributed in 2022-23. We hosted a successful Truck-a-palooza and Petting Zoo as part of Summer Library Club.

Dunbar

Dunbar Branch experienced exciting changes, including restoring exterior brickwork, installing new interior and exterior security cameras, setting up new staff computers, and welcoming new manager Susan Bailey. Due to extensive collection growth, we've rearranged library materials to better serve our patrons. We moved our Teen Zone to the front of the library and rearranged most of the media collection to give it a more prominent location near the circulation desk. We've also implemented a lot of new programming, such as Adult Crafternoon, Not Your Average Book Club, Pop-Up Fridays, and Classic Movie Afternoon, which have proven popular. We offer additional passive programming materials, such as Adult Take and Make Crafts and Adult I Spy scavenger hunts.



Elk Valley

Elk Valley Branch staff were able to provide in-person programming for the entire year. Storytime continues to be very popular with large groups of little ones, and the Branch also increased adult programming with craft programs and a new social hour once a month. The Branch created a larger play area in the Children's section with a play diner and large magnetic board. The Branch's puzzle exchange remained popular in 2023.

Sissonville

Sissonville Branch staff are working on meeting their patrons' needs by bringing new resources and programs to the area. This year, a 3D printer was added and will be available for public use soon, as well as a community garden. Besides the new technology, staff have offered bigger programs, such as a highly anticipated petting zoo, while still offering the quality service and providing the beloved craft kits that the Branch is known for.



St. Albans

St. Albans Branch had a very busy year with construction and renovations, including the Branch elevator project. That project will replace the Branch's 50-year-old elevator when complete in the fall of 2023. In December 2022, the Branch suffered a small, contained fire, which closed the library's second floor and moved programming to the first floor for several months. In June of 2023, the Branch began a series of character-building events funded by a local grant.

Eastern Region - Riverside, Glasgow, Marmet

With the retirement of the Mobile Library in 2021, the Eastern Region rolled out mobile pop-up library service in 2022, which operated at the Booker T. Washington Community Center and the Tompkins House through November 2022. The Glasgow Branch reopened in May 2023 after closing in 2021 for renovations and improvements to its home in Glasgow's City Hall. Riverside established a community partnership with Belle Chemical to bring fun, hands-on STEM learning to kids in the region, and the Marmet Women's Club opened their space for our staff to lead programs.



Highlights Continued

Clendenin Kiosk

KCPL unveiled its 24-hour Library Kiosk in Clendenin, located on the site of the old Clendenin Branch Library on Cardinal Street, which was destroyed in the devastating 2016 flood. This library vending machine allows our patrons to access books, audiobooks, and DVDs 24/7, and supplements services at the existing Clendenin Branch, which operates in the former Clendenin Middle School building on Koontz Avenue.



Circulation Services

Circulation Services rolled out a number of new features over the past year, such as Auto Renewals; Fine-Free returns; fresh, animated email notices; and loan limits on several popular formats. Plus, two new services, Hold Lockers and a new laptop kiosk, were activated. To keep displays fresh, a group was formed within the department to share, discuss, and implement display ideas. Staff kept up with patron needs on a daily basis by handling hold requests, overseeing meeting room reservations, and managing the Tool Library and the various self-check machines.

Children's Services

As Children's Services adapted to its new space in the renovated Main Library, its program offerings and patron attendance both increased substantially over the past year. From the 2022 Children's Gala to the weekly storytimes, patrons expressed their appreciation for the variety of free program opportunities offered to children and their families. Children's Services vibrant community programming partnerships have made the department a destination place for the families of Kanawha County.



Public Services

Public Services celebrated the reopening of the Main Library with the 100 Days of Celebration in July-September 2022 and welcomed Programming Manager Ben Ball. The IDEA Lab hosted new programs centered around designing with Cricut and laser-etching, while the Teen Zone created a portable garden center. In June 2023, the department hosted the annual Kiwanis Corporate Regatta, winning the toy yacht library fundraiser for the first time. With more than 3,000 patrons taking part in the program, the Summer Library Club was a huge success in 2023.

Tech Services

Tech Services added 40,687 new items to the collection, 4,119 newspapers and magazines, and pursued hundreds of Inter-Library Loans for KCPL and other libraries nationwide. The department completed RFID tagging at the branches in preparation for beginning RFID checkout in the 2023/24 fiscal year. Standing order lists were reviewed and updated to meet current patron demand. In May 2023, the department welcomed new manager Marian Veld.

Reference Services

Reference Services worked on a variety of projects to promote the reference collection during the past year. Building a new audience for adult programming with the reopening of the Main Library was a priority. The Reference team also brought back training sessions to help nonprofits learn about fundraising and how to better manage their organization. The Department continued to work on digitizing the KCPL photograph collection in order to make it available online.



Marketing & Development

The Department continued to celebrate staff and promote programming through a live monthly spot with Charleston's community radio station WTSQ, a monthly *More Than Books* episode produced by the WV Library Commission, and a custom READ poster campaign for National Library Week. Staff created marketing and promotional events around the reopening of the Main Library and the Legacy Wall Gala. They also organized promotional activities for the successful 2022 levy election. Fundraising efforts generated \$97,114 for the KCPL annual fund, the highest ever.



NICK WINOWICH

In February 2023, KCPL bid farewell to its longest serving Library Director with the death of Nick Winowich, who served as Director from 1956 to 1986. During his tenure, Mr. Winowich oversaw the move of KCPL's Main Library from Lee Street to its current location on Capitol Street as well as the addition of the first KCPL Branch Library in St. Albans. As Director, he also spearheaded the addition of the Dunbar, Sissonville, Elk Valley, Cross Lanes, Glasgow, and Marmet branches to the KCPL system. Mr. Winowich was 100 years old.



2022-2023 Community Report



752,606
ITEMS CHECKED OUT



311,326
VISITORS TO THE LIBRARY

8,685
NEW!

CARDHOLDERS

73,684
TOTAL



ITEMS IN COLLECTION
518,695



37,224
PUBLIC COMPUTER SESSIONS



1,390,728
WEBSITE VIEWS



23,681
HOURS SPENT ON PUBLIC COMPUTERS

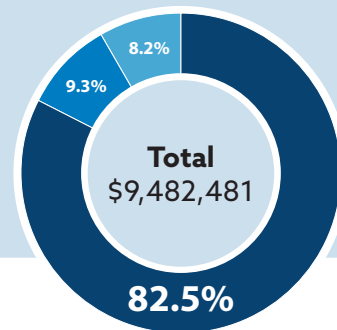


EVENTS & CLASSES: **2,894**

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: **74,344**

INCOME

Levying Authorities	\$7,824,648
State Grants	\$884,456
Other	\$773,377



REFERENCE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

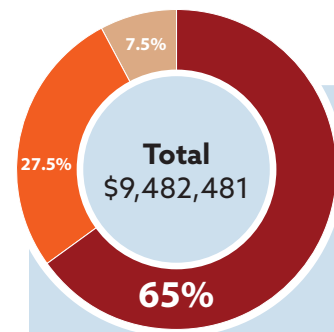


139,355

PEOPLE USING PUBLIC MEETING ROOMS



26,680



EXPENDITURES

Salaries/Benefits	\$6,167,251
Other	\$2,736,566
Materials	\$855,000

Upcoming

KCPL Bookmobile

KCPL's new Bookmobile service is expected to roll out in the fall of 2023. Farber Specialty Vehicles of Columbus, OH spent much of early 2023 building the new vehicle while Applied Graphics Ltd. provided its new creative look. Bookmobile service was first introduced by KCPL in 1934, and since then has provided quality mobile library service to underserved areas of Kanawha County.



Otis Laury Nutritional Literacy Initiative

KCPL officially kicked off its new nutritional literacy program - the Otis Laury Initiative - in June. Otis is an acclaimed Charleston area chef, artist, and business person, and this new fundraising venture in his name will allow KCPL to offer new nutritional health programs across the county. The program will include a dedicated space on the Main Library's 3rd floor, and plans are to unveil the space and roll out the first programs this fall.

St. Albans Elevator

Construction of a new elevator for the St. Albans Branch Library is nearing completion. The original elevator was installed when the branch added a second floor in 1971. The \$300,000 project is expected to be completed in the fall of 2023 and will provide the branch with safe, ADA-compliant access to the second floor children's department and community room. Access to the Library's second floor has been limited during the construction process.



Thank you!

In recognition to all those who contributed to the 2022/2023 Annual Fund.

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Jo Ellen Yeary
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of their operating expenses.
We thank the following donors
who directed their Annual Fund
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Terri Williamson



MORE THAN BOOKS



The Kanawha County Public Library system has much to look forward to in the coming year, with the arrival of a new bookmobile and a five year roadmap, a long range plan to improving facilities around the county and introducing new services and technologies.

- Library Director Erika Connelly