



St.Charles City-County  
**Library**

Fiscal Year 2023  
**Annual Report**

# FY23 Annual Report - Message from the CEO

As we wrap fiscal year 2023, we look forward to the celebration of the Library's first 50 years of service. Fifty years of helping our customers build successful lives, families, and communities. In addition to this we also completed the fourth and final year of our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. Throughout the year we weathered several unanticipated challenges but we also received overwhelming affirmations along the way of how much those in our community value public library services and our staff. Though customer's expectations and habits have continued to shift over the course of this plan it has fortified a foundation that we will build upon for generations to come.

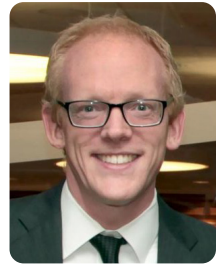
**Facilities for the Future** This year we went through an in-depth process to determine the next steps of our Facilities Master Plan approved in 2019. The goal for each location would consolidate desks/service points, optimize staff areas and workflow efficiencies, enhance spaces for children, rebalance space allocations dedicated to collections, seating, study, gathering, etc., and improve customer experience and ease of use. The two branches identified for this next phase were Middendorf-Kredell Branch, and the Spencer Road Branch.

In late FY23 we made significant infrastructure investments in two key areas. By installing integrated security cameras across all Library locations we better ensure the safety of patrons and staff. We also updated our phone system, replacing the more than ten-year-old system with a flexible cloud-based one.

**Experiences and Outreach** Our Library to You bookmobile launched in late 2022 and welcomed more than 600 customers in its first three months. This library on wheels features access to free WiFi, a small collection for all ages, holds pickups, returns, use of chromebooks, print/copy/scan technology, and free notary service.

**Service Model** Self-service hours at our Cliff View Branch continue to set the standard allowing customers access to library materials and meeting

spaces beyond staffed hours. There were more than 500 visits during our unstaffed hours in FY23 with 32% of those visits occurring on Sunday. The self-service hours, the drive thru, and the covered patio have made this small but versatile branch our 4th most visited location in the district.



Jason Kuhl, Director & Chief Executive Officer

We worked with an outside firm to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Library's existing salary plan to determine the strengths and weaknesses of our current pay plan. The results showed we are 14.71% behind the median market. This will require multiple millions of dollars to implement.

**Digital Leadership** In the fall of 2022, we launched a new customer-centric website that offers users live support, multiple language options, an integrated search field and ADA compliance.

**Public Relations and Marketing** As part of launching the new website, we updated our URL to [stchlibrary.org](https://stchlibrary.org). This was incorporated due to its ease of recollection and conformity with our other digital communications pieces.

The changes the Library experienced in our first 50 years was a reflection of the quick increase in the St. Charles County population. We are now navigating a new normal of growing inflation and adjusting to customers' changing needs and expectations. Those changes along with more recent threats to our limited resources will be the drivers behind our next strategic plan coming in 2024. As always, we will continue to make the best choices to serve the most people with the resources available while using strategic ingenuity as a means to remain a catalyst for customers to build successful lives, families, and communities.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Kuhl'.



## Mission

The Library inspires, informs, and enhances connections across St. Charles County.

## Vision

The St. Charles City-County Library is a catalyst for customers to build successful lives, families, and communities.

## Values

- We offer superior customer experiences
- We encourage learning and discovery
- We are inclusive and provide access to all
- We cultivate collaboration and innovation
- We believe in the freedom to know
- We respect diverse perspectives
- We foster a positive work environment
- We are committed to integrity and wise stewardship of resources

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Staci Alvarez, President

T.J. Rains, Vice President

Melissa Setser, Treasurer

Justin Collier, Secretary

Joann Leykam

Georganne McNab

Josiah Schmidt

Nevada Smith

Renee Tillman

## Financial Statistics

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**Beginning Fund Balance** **24,149,325**

### Revenues:

Property and Other Taxes 22,018,443

State Aid, Federal Aid and Grants 787,878

Investment Earnings 302,972

Charges for Services 336,812

Donations 2,371

Miscellaneous 97,916

**Total Revenue** **23,546,392**

### Expenditures/Expenses:

Salaries and Benefits 11,758,901

Library Materials 3,345,341

Operations 2,640,664

Technology and Telecommunications 2,131,779

**Total Operating Expenditures** **19,876,685**

### Capital:

Special and Building Projects 2,753,452

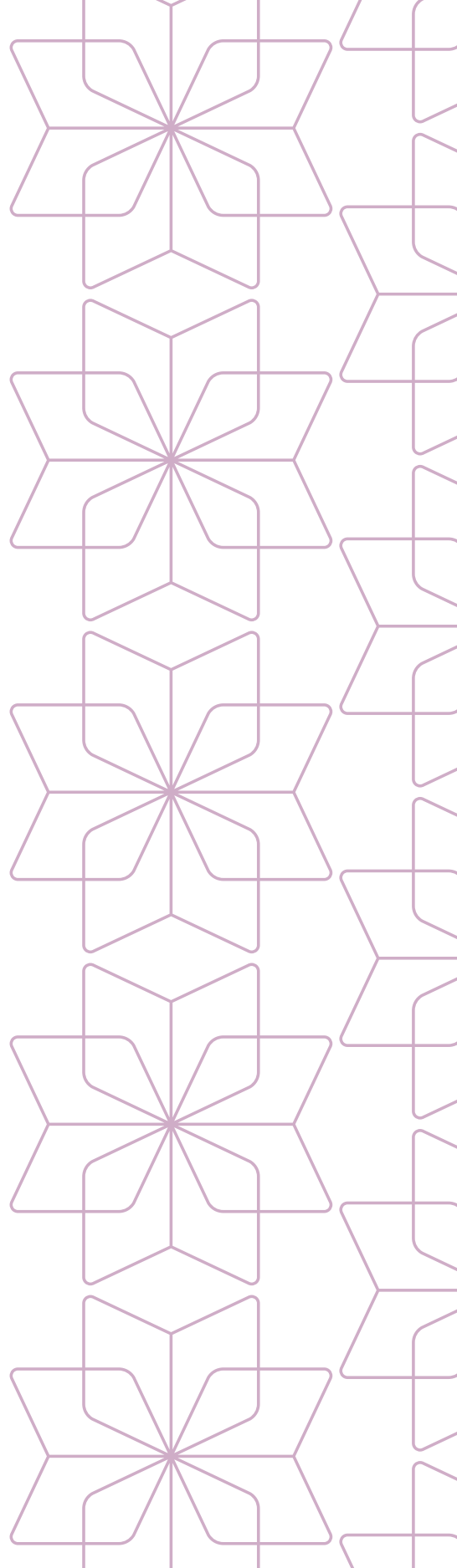
**Total Expenditures** **22,630,137**

**Change in Fund Balance** **2,837,318**

**Ending Fund Balance** **26,986,643**

## Additional Information

Revenue is primarily based on property tax. The fiscal year 2023 tax rate was set by the Board of Trustees at the September 2022 Board meeting. The tax rate collected for the FY 2023 budget was \$0.1908 per \$100 of valuation. The most recent voter approved tax rate is \$0.2600.



# Core Services

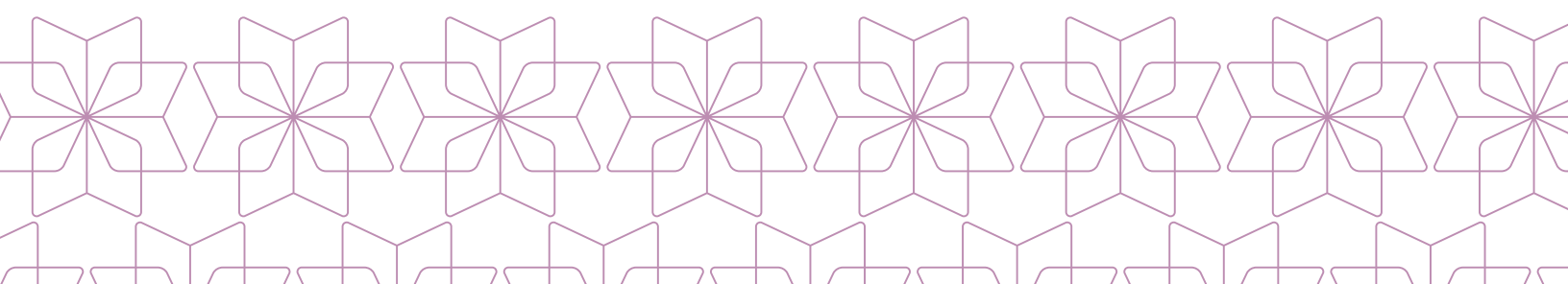
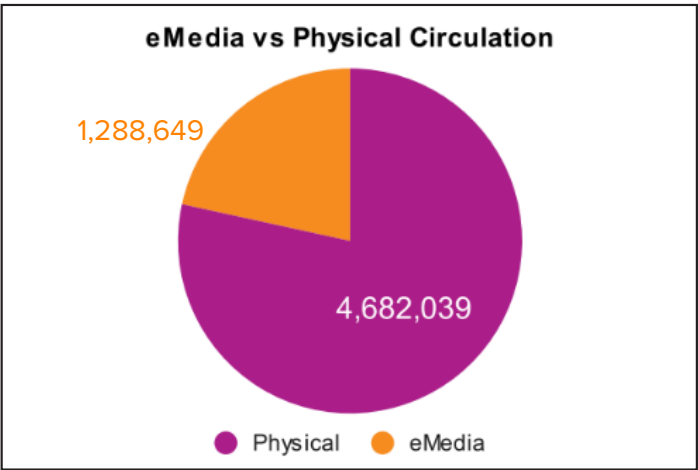
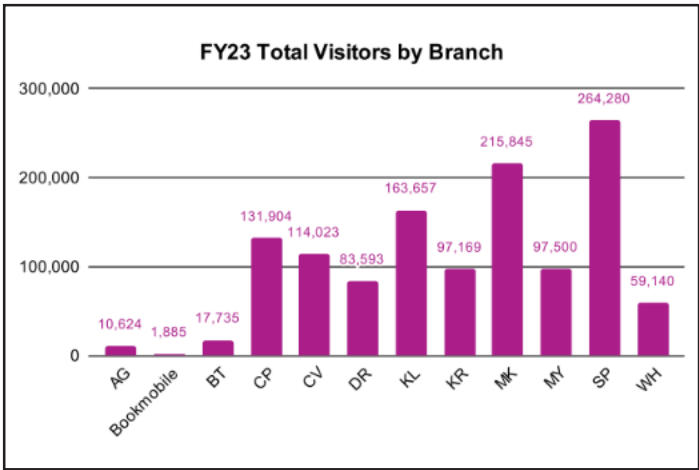
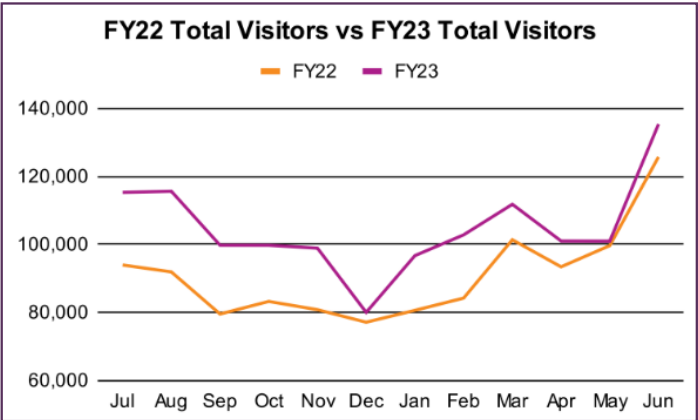
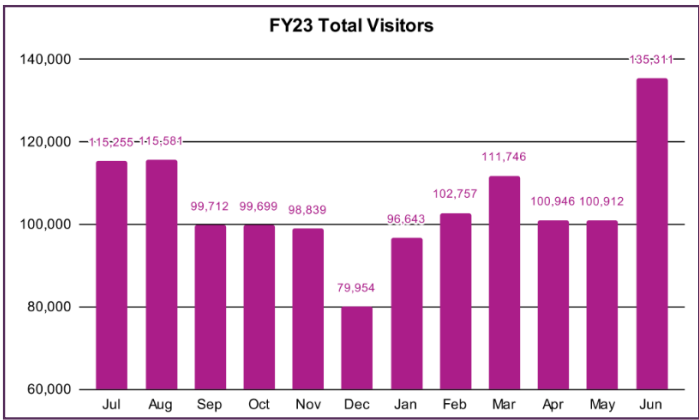
- The Library’s core services are the central, essential services that we provide to the community. They include offering classes and events, lending materials, filling holds, welcoming visitors, and answering questions. The Library monitors how many residents use these services and how often they are used.

Total Circulation  
**5.9M**

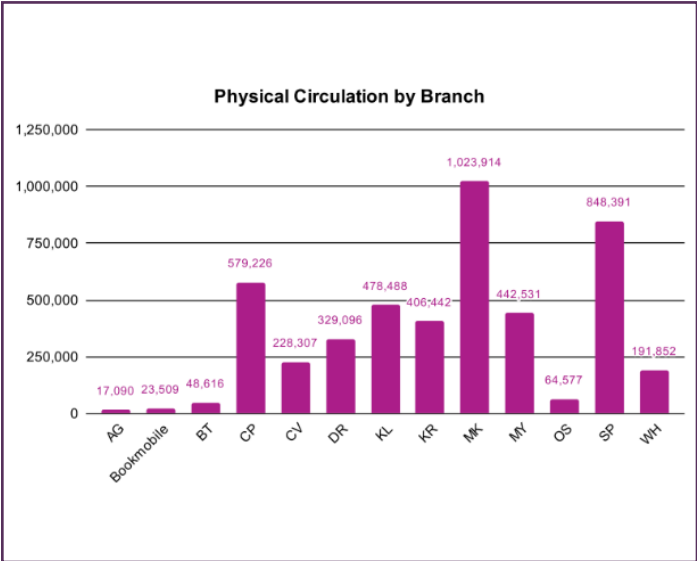
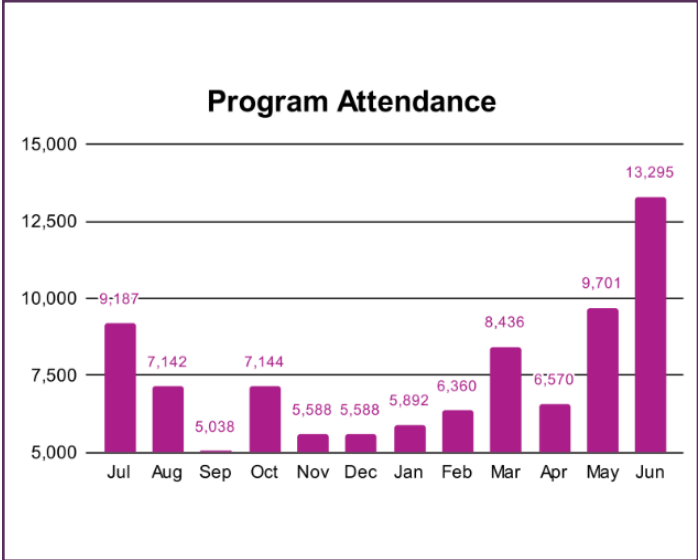
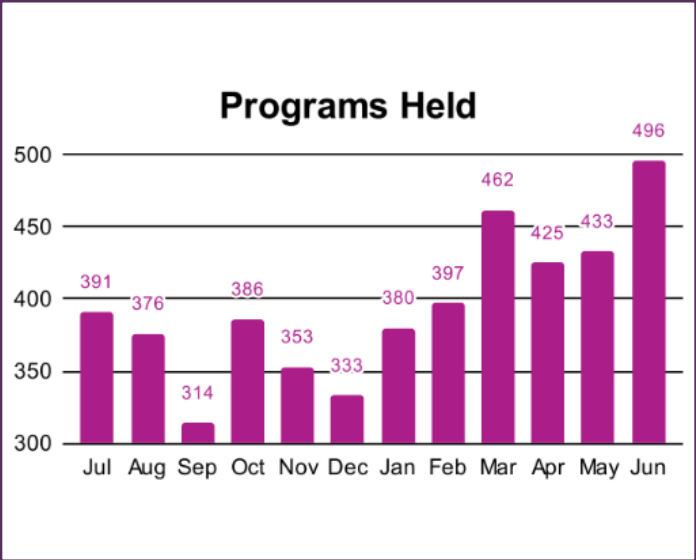
200K increase compared to FY2022

FY22 Total Visitors  
**1.2M**

15% increase compared to FY2022



# Core Services Continued



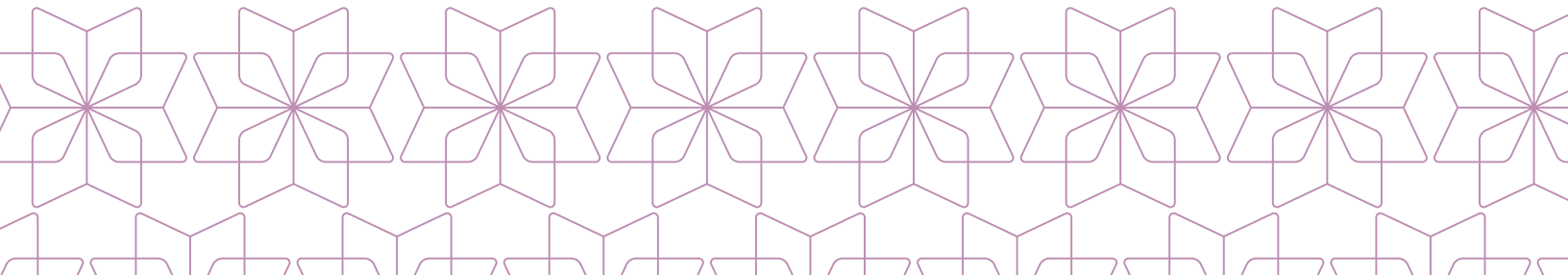
# Adult and Youth Services

## Summer Reading Challenge

- Participants: **20,493**
- Super Readers: **1,507**

## Winter Reading Challenge

- Participants: **2,172**
- Super Readers: **678**



## Adult and Youth Services Continued

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- **\$119,000** funds were raised by the Friends of the Library during the Book Fair. A portion of the proceeds helps to fund the Library's Annual Summer Reading Challenge.

### Passport & Notary Services

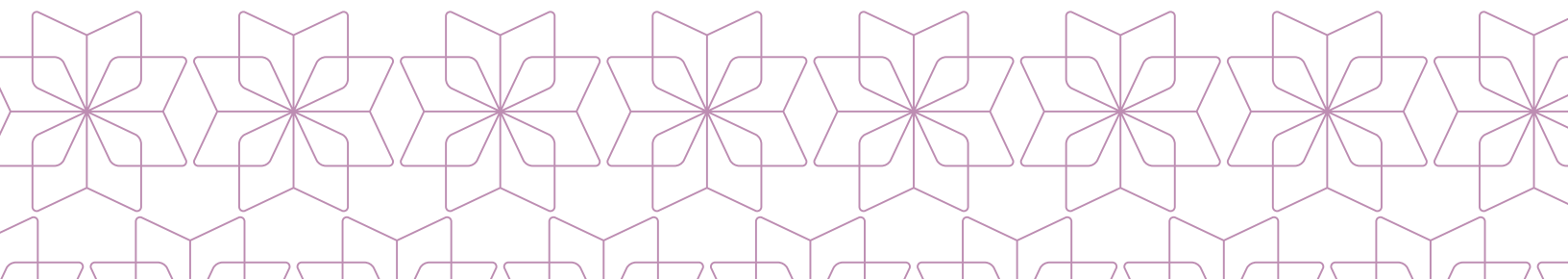
- **3,498** Passport Applications Completed
- **3,389** Photos Taken
- **1,905** Notarizations Performed
- Revenue: **\$173,265** (Increased by 259% since FY22)

### Ask Us Appointments

- In order to better serve the public, the Library began Ask Us appointments at most of its branches in August 2022. These 45-minute appointments match patrons with staff members who can help with in-depth questions concerning electronic devices, Library databases, and other Library resources. Like Passport and Notary Services, Ask Us Appointments utilizes the website to allow the public to make appointments on their own via the Library website.
- Total Ask Us Appointments: **272**

### Early Literacy Computers(AWE)

- We currently own **16 Early Literacy computers** located at various branches. These computers contain literacy and STEM games and are popular in the branches, often located next to computers with internet access to allow parents and caregivers to work while kids are playing and learning as well. Thanks to our donors and a grant from **The Employee Community Fund of Boeing STL**, the Library Foundation was able to update all 16 computers to improve literacy and STEM learning opportunities.



## Adult and Youth Services Continued

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### Vidcode

- VidCode is a creative coding platform where customers can independently set up accounts and learn computer science and coding skills. Staff can also utilize VidCode to teach coding classes at the Library. Research shows coding helps develop problem-solving skills, as well as improve one's ability to think critically and logically. With the support of the Library Foundation, we were able to retain these resources.

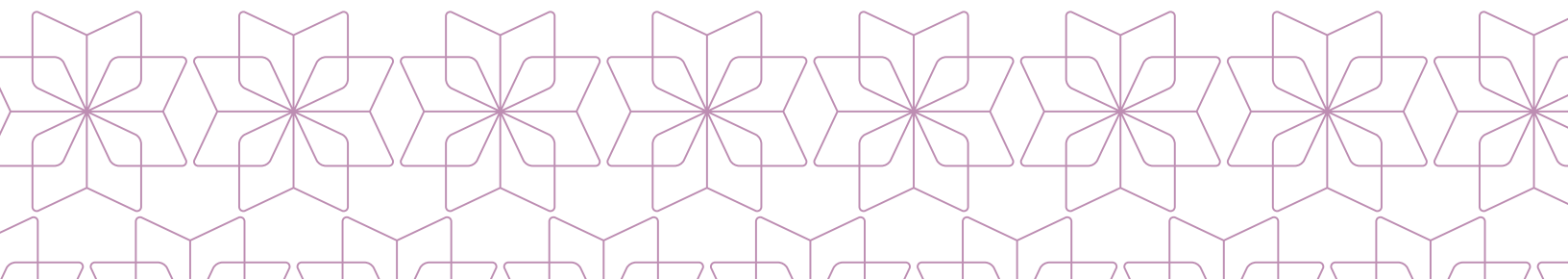
## Collection Services

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- **15,522** new cardholders

### Dewey the After-Hours Chatbot

- In early 2023 our vendor LibAnswers recently rolled out a new (and free) feature called Chatbot. It is an automated response tool that the Library decided to offer outside of branch hours, when staff are not on Libchat. Our chatbot is called Dewey and debuted on our website on Thursday, April 27, 2023.
- Data from LibAnswers/LibChat was used to pinpoint some of our most frequently asked questions that could easily be answered by a chatbot. Most answers connect the customer with the relevant page on our website. Our most common chatbot question is about the Library's passport and notary services.
- Since launching our customers have asked Dewey 1,170 questions.

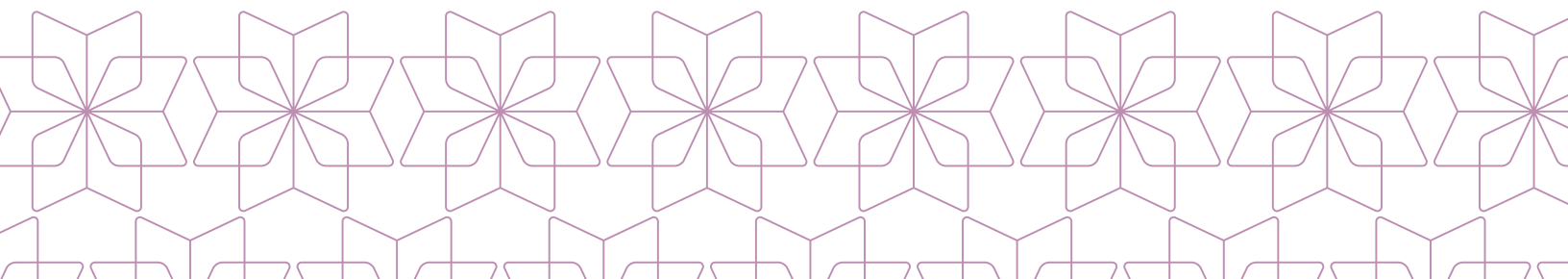


## Collection Services Continued

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### Libby App

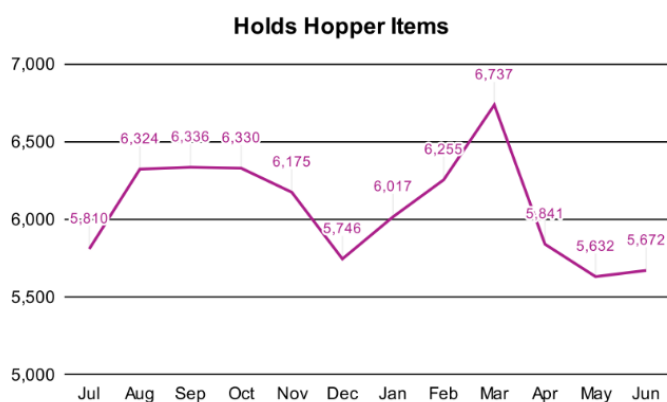
- Overdrive announced their app would be discontinued at the end of April. Customers needed to begin using the Libby App to access Overdrive content. Fortunately, the Library already had a large percentage of users on Libby before this news was announced. The Collection Services and Marketing Teams worked together on a communication plan for customers. Libby was also upgraded with some new features at this time.
- The first feature, called Deep Search, allows users to discover titles not yet in the Library's collection. Expanded search results show when a user searches for something that returns no results, or a user's search results contain fewer than 100 titles and they manually turn on a filter (called deep search) to expand their search.
- The next feature was expanding on tags by using a 'Notify Me' Tag. Titles from Deep Search have a Notify Me button and selecting Notify Me sets up a smart tag in Libby to alert customers if we purchase the title at a later date. Behind the scenes we can review tags and use them to assist in making decisions about what to purchase and how many copies are needed.



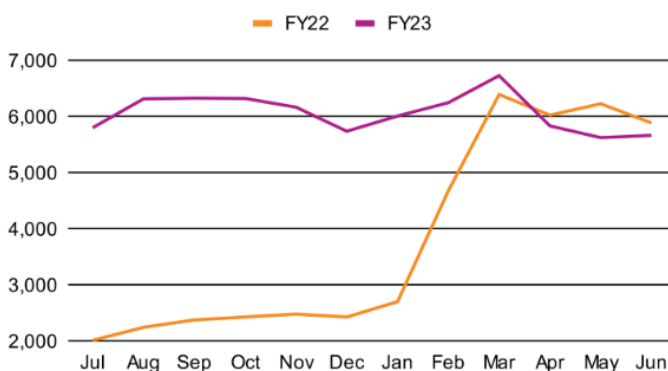
## Collection Services Continued

### Holds Hopper

- Our first outdoor Holds Hopper went live at the Spencer Branch in September.
- Total Hold Hopper Items: **72,875** (58.5% increase compared to FY2022)



**FY22 Holds Hopper Items vs FY23 Holds Hopper Items**



## Outreach Services



### Born to Read

- After years of providing “Ready to Read” to our community we decided to phase out the service and introduce “Born to Read.” These kits share the same name that St. Louis County Library and St. Louis Public Library use and provides bags to hospitals in St. Charles County for newborns. The bags themselves are small insulated lunch bags (perfect for a nursing mother or any new parent who needs to keep food cold for a baby) and include a board book, baby bib, information on the Library, and a Library card. Sponsored by the St. Charles City-County Library Foundation.
- Purchased **4,000** kits

## Outreach Services Continued

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### Bookmobile

- Served **1,885** people, made **74** stops at **9** locations.
- The Library's new mobile branch began operations in the fall, bringing the Library to more remote areas of the county where a brick-and-mortar Library building is not physically feasible. Their first stop was in September at Portage Des Sioux.



## Marketing

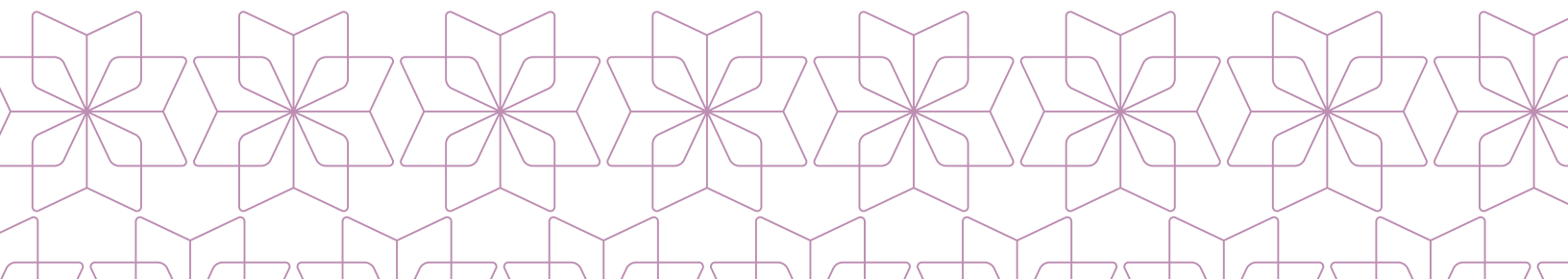
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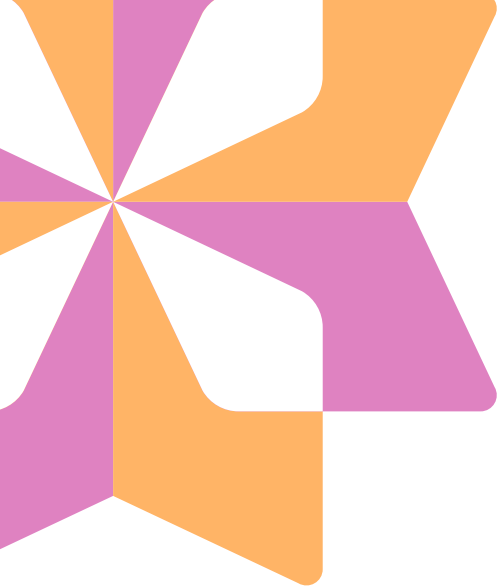
### Social Media Stats

- Facebook: **13,038** followers
- Instagram: **3,406** followers
- Tiktok: **1,133** followers, **12.5k** likes

### Launched a New Website

- The new website went live in September and has since had **124k** users with an engagement rate of **67%**.
- The Library's website URL changed from mylibrary.org to stchlibrary.org.





# Marketing and Public Relations

\*Oct-Feb data missing due to system migration

