



FY24 ANNUAL REPORT

WAVERLY PUBLIC LIBRARY

A Library Under Construction

Make Room For Renewal

A major project for the year was the Library's **Make Room for Renewal** building renovation. The project's key goals were to make room for a growing teen population, add space for children's resources and programming, meet adult requests for more technology access and reading areas, and update the entire facility to meet the changing needs of the community.

The \$2.9M campaign kicked off in late 2022, and to date has raised just over \$1,090,000 in private gifts and pledges. Along with allocations of \$700,000 from the City of Waverly and \$25,200 from Bremer County, the campaign received over \$226,000 in grants from the R.J. McElroy Trust, Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, Max & Helen Guernsey Charitable Foundation, Bremer County Community Foundation, Rotary Club of Waverly, Black Hawk County Gaming Association, and MidAmerican Energy Foundation.



The library sits empty before construction commences.



The new teen room provides a much-needed space for our community's young people.

A Library Under Construction



A young patron looks for the hidden animals in the branches of the new tree sculpture.



Cozy seating overlooks the garden on the west wall.

The project was also awarded a \$375,000 Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant from Enhance Iowa. (Note the CAT grant award is adjusted based on final project budget.) The Waverly Public Library Foundation pledged \$525,000 to complete the fundraising, helping us to exceed the \$2.9M goal.

Now, with construction wrapping up, total project costs are anticipated to come in right at the \$2.9M target. The Library has reopened and a donor celebration is scheduled for Nov. 15, followed by the public grand reopening on Nov. 16. The staff are introducing the renewed facility to patrons, and the staff and board are making plans for how to help the community best utilize all of the building's exciting, new features.

A Library Under Construction



Above and Below: The reading den, located in the northwest corner, provides a quiet space for patrons.



The library's Carnegie furniture was professionally refinished.

2023-24 Program Highlights

Bookmobile Provided Access During Library Closures

For the weeks when building closure was unavoidable, the bookmobile was utilized to provide browsing access for patrons in the library parking lot.

Along with being able to browse a curated collection aboard the bookmobile, patrons were also able to request items for pickup, meaning the library retained full collection access.



Summer Reading Program Thrives Despite Construction

2024 was another great year for the summer reading program. The meeting rooms (which normally hold most of the summer programs) were unavailable, so library staff had to get creative with programming locations. Many of the events were held outside and around town at various locations.



606
readers
participated



4,109
reading hours
were logged

A Bubble Party was held beside the library gardens



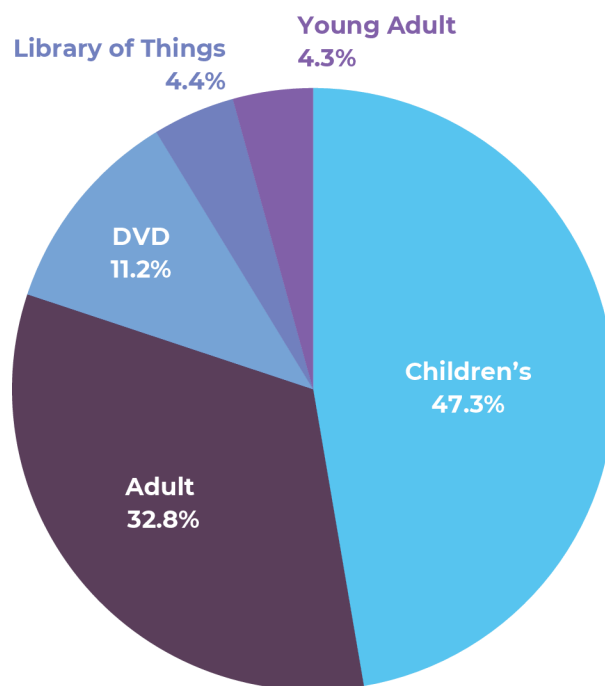
By The Numbers

This year, the library checked out **100,788** physical items.

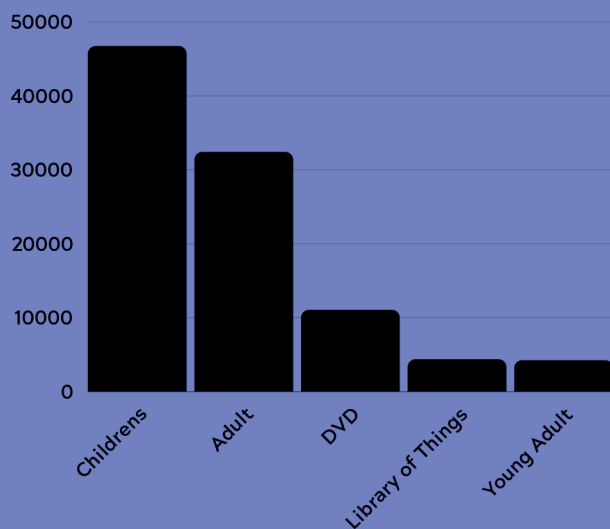
(That's about **2,000** items weekly)

We think this year's circulation stats are an incredible accomplishment: specifically because the library spent such a large portion of the year with restricted space.

Even though only 25% of the collection remained browsable to patrons, the library staff was able to keep 90% of the collection accessible by request. The circulation of physical items only decreased by 22% from the year prior.



Collection checkout percentages



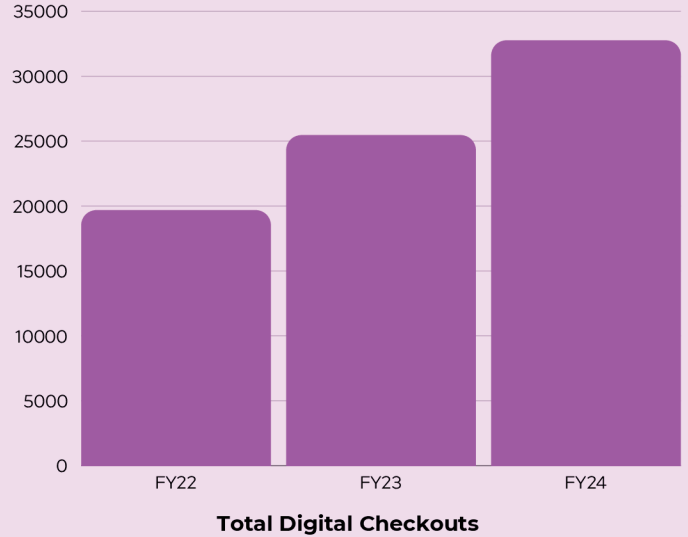
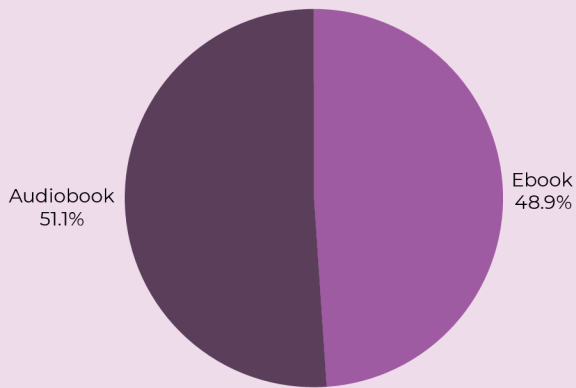
The Children's collection led our numbers at **46,750** total checkouts.

♥ This means children in our community were reading **3,895** books each month.

By The Numbers

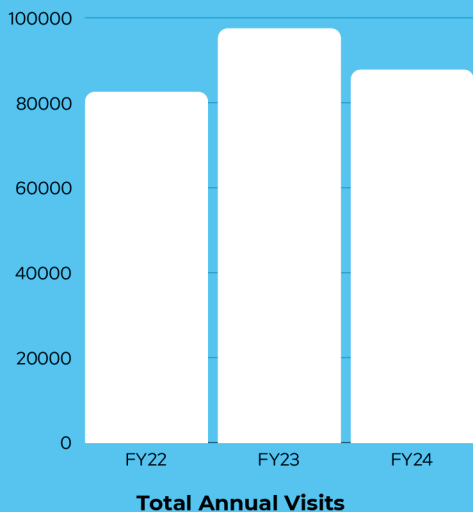
E-book & Audiobook usage increased by **28%** from the previous year.

The digital collection has continued to steadily grow in popularity.

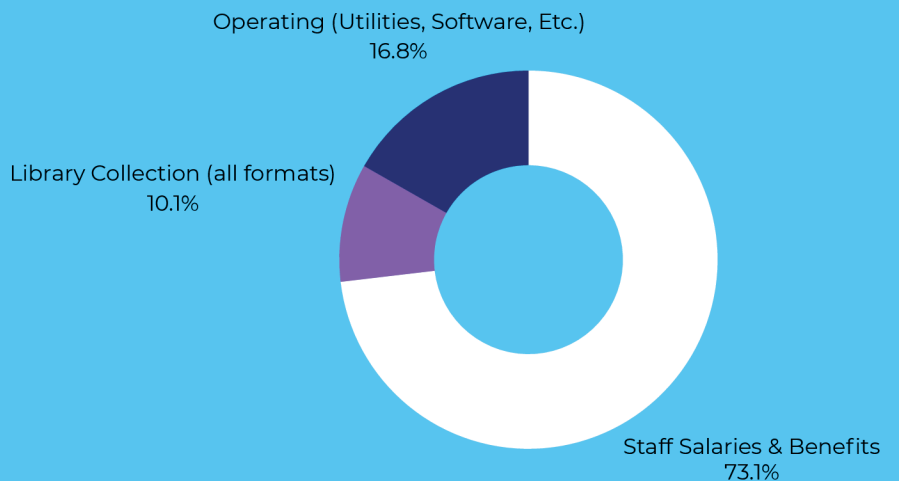


Audiobooks were slightly more popular than ebook reading with **15,009** total checkouts.

Door Count



Budget Use



Other Improvements

New Integrated Library System

At the end of FY24, library staff installed and trained on new library management software. After 20+ years with the old system, there was a lot for staff to learn.

This change was made in an effort to reduce the library's recurring annual expenses. ILS systems are paid on contract and typically climb in price each year. With this new vendor, the library will save roughly \$20,000 annually.

Fortepan Database

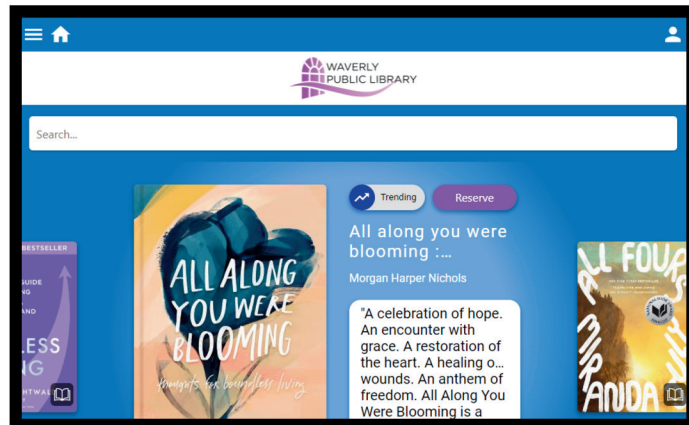
Did you know the library has a collection of over 10,000 historic photos? Some of them go all the way back to 1860.

The problem with such a large collection has always been ease of access. How does one navigate so many pictures? Where do you start if you were looking for something specific?

Our solution until this point has been index binders. To find a photo, a community member would look through 20 image binders, searching through them for descriptions of a relevant photo. After that, the physical photo could be located in a box according to a listed accession number. It was a complicated process and created a significant amount of work to view the collection.

Enter Fortepan.

Late in 2022, library staff members attended a presentation at the Iowa Library Association conference where they heard about a new historic photograph database platform (Fortepan) and its power to bring historical photos into a community.



A view of the new catalog from the patron-facing side.

A discussion was immediately started with the University of Northern Iowa (a partner in the Fortepan project). Over the course of the following year our photos were digitized and tagged.

We owe a huge thanks to UNI for helping us digitize these photos and making them digitally browsable for free. We are thrilled with the results.



A view of the Bremer Avenue bridge. 1909

Want to browse the photo collection?

waverlyia.com/fortepan