

2024

ANNUAL REPORT

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



150 YEARS OF SERVICE





**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PRESIDENT
JOHN L. FROLA, JR.**



A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PAMELA HICKSON-STEVENSON**

As we reflect on the remarkable milestone of 150 years of service to our community, we are filled with gratitude and pride. The Akron-Summit County Public Library’s sesquicentennial in 2024 was a testament to the enduring legacy and unwavering commitment of the Library to enrich lives, foster learning, and build connections.

The Library’s journey began in 1874 with a vision to create a space where knowledge and culture could flourish. Over the decades, the Library has evolved, adapting to the changing needs of the community while staying true to its core mission. This anniversary year has been a celebration of history, achievements, and the countless individuals who have contributed to the institution’s success.

Throughout the year, the Library hosted a series of commemorative events, including author talks, historical exhibits, and community gatherings. These events not only honored the past but also highlighted the vibrant and dynamic role the Library plays in the present. We were delighted to see so many of you participate and share your stories, reaffirming the Library’s place at the heart of our community.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue our journey with renewed vigor. Our focus remains on expanding access to resources, embracing innovative technologies, investing in Library buildings, and fostering inclusivity. We are committed to ensuring that the Library remains a welcoming space for all, where curiosity is nurtured and dreams are realized. Thank you for your steady support and for being a part of the Library’s story. Together, we will continue to build a brighter future for generations to come.

Warm regards,

Pamela Hickson-Stevenson
Executive Director

John L. Frola, Jr.
President, Board of Trustees



In June 2024, we marked the Akron-Summit County Public Library’s 150th Anniversary with our Sesquicentennial Gala. The evening honored 150 years of service and commitment to the community.

The gala celebrated the Library’s lasting influence on education and community connection throughout the years. Guests enjoyed an evening filled with inspiring speeches, live music, and meaningful connections—all in tribute to the Library’s enduring legacy.

**Sesquicentennial
Gala Total Revenue:**

\$102,425

**150th Passport
Participants:**

2,270

**Fine Free:
7,150
Reactivated Accounts**

In March 2024, we proudly eliminated overdue fines to enhance access, provide equitable service, increase use, and remove penalties from children and families who can least afford them.



2024 Revenue:

State Public Library Fund: \$14,358,745	Salaries & Benefits: \$19,331,897
Local Intergovernmental/ Levy: \$15,947,502	Supplies: \$642,341
Fines & Fees: \$263,359	Purchased & Contracted Services: \$6,424,873
Interest Earnings: \$533,481	Library Materials & Information: \$4,149,754
Contributions, Gifts, & Donations: \$1,589	Capital Outlay: \$408,325
Other Revenue: \$322,360	Other Expenditures: \$208,900
	Interfund Transfers & Advance Out: \$1,100,000
Total Revenue: \$31,429, 036	Total Expenditures: \$32,266,090

WHAT WE DO

The Library’s broad offerings are carefully curated to meet the diverse needs of the community, ensuring that there is something for everyone. With 19 locations, including Main Library and 18 branches, as well as Mobile Services, we strive to provide extensive access to our resources.

Innovative services and collections such as the TechZone@ Main Makerspace, the Small Business & Nonprofit Resource Center, the Art Library, the Accessibility Library, and the Library of Things exemplify our dedication to fostering creativity, entrepreneurship, and lifelong learning. We have a suite of digital resources accessible 24/7 to customers with a library card. Some of these include databases for leisure and learning, e-books, audiobooks, comics, movies, music, and magazines through apps like Libby, hoopla, and Kanopy.



Overall Circulation
4,598,640
Items Checked Out

281,481
Registered Cardholders

• • • • •

1,461,411
Visitors

↑ **13%** OVER 2023

• • • • •

1,232,300
Digital Items Circulated

737,742
Database Users

Including:
Akron Beacon Journal
Ancestry
Consumer Reports
LinkedIn Learning

• • • • •

227,991
Program Attendees

↑ **66%** OVER 2023

• • • • •

7,662
Meeting Room Reservations

↑ **49%** OVER 2023

• • • • •

Signature Events Attendance At Main Library

GeekFest
2,158

An all-ages event for fans of comics, movies, manga, gaming, and television shows.

Book Fest
1,426

ASCPL’s literary showcase featuring area authors, illustrators, and publishers. A celebration of books and writing.

Dr. MLK Jr. Lecture
500

For 40 years the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Lecture Series has honored the legacy of Dr. King by featuring guest speakers on a wide range of relevant topics.

Books, Bites & Beats
by North Hill Branch
Attendance:
575



Haunted Library at
Tallmadge Branch
Attendance:
742

Large Events Attendance At Library Branches



Enchanted
Story Land Forest
at Richfield Branch
Attendance:
517



Christmas in the Village
at Mogadore Branch
Attendance:
2,574



Boo Bash at
Springfield-Lakemore
Branch Attendance:
482

ASCPL PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES



FAMILY
READING
FESTIVAL

912
Attendance

Songs, dance, and play are at the heart of the Family Reading Festival. 2024 marked our 16th year hosting the event, which features literacy-rich activities, special performers, and free book giveaways for families in our community.



Studies show that reading with young children is the single most important thing adults can do to prepare them for kindergarten. 1000 Books Before Kindergarten is a fun way to develop early literacy skills!



Early Childhood Events

2,062
Programs

53,364
Young Children
Attended

Library
On The Go
1,556
Borrowed Items



Storytimes



Main
Library

205
Events | 4,412
Attendees



Library
Branches

659
Events | 10,537
Attendees

Lit Loot

Lit Loot is a themed monthly box that is available to those in grades 4-12. Each box contains two books to borrow and an assortment of goodies to keep! Lit Loot is designed to introduce young readers to new materials and to support a love of reading.



1,117
Kits
Distributed
in 2024

Teen Event Attendance



9,472
up 22% Over 2023

“Through the Zoom library programs, including history talks, cooking classes, book club and music classes, I was able to find something of my own, at a time when I was adjusting to being a new mom.”

LEDS

Library Express Delivery Service (LEDS) is a free home mail delivery service of library materials offered to residents of ASCPL's service area. Those who participate in the program may be experiencing illness, disability, or injury and may be permanently homebound, recuperating, or caring for a family member. The LEDS librarian selects items based on customer preferences, and participants can receive almost anything the Library has to offer.

16,180
Circulated Items

Mobile Services

The Mobile Services division operates our bookmobiles, van, LEDS program, and Library On The Go.

235,094
Borrowed Items

50,394
Visitors Who Utilized Mobile Services

StoryWalks®



A StoryWalk® is a self-directed activity that allows all ages to read a picture book page by page along a park trail. Free and open during park hours, ASCPL has three permanent StoryWalk® Trails, which provide a unique opportunity to connect with nature and our community.

Bath Community Park Trail
(Fairlawn-Bath Branch)

Trail at the John Torok Community
& Senior Center (Green Branch)

Carter-Pedigo Trail
(Richfield)



COMMUNITY IMPACT & PARTNERSHIPS



Friends groups contribute to special events featuring guest speakers, authors, crafters, and other presenters, as well as many other Library initiatives. To raise funds for the Library, each location's FOL group welcomes donations for their regularly scheduled and ongoing book sales. Additionally, the Friends of Main Library operate the Library Shop at Main.

68 Book sales in 2024

ASCPL's Friends of the Library (FOL) groups play an important role in supporting the Library system. Each of the Library's 19 locations receives assistance from that location's FOL group, in support of programming, resources, and more.



ASCPL's long-running Paws for Reading program pairs early readers with certified therapy dogs. Studies show that reading to a therapy dog is a great way for children to build reading fluency and confidence in a criticism-free environment. Therapy dogs are known for their gentle and patient nature, and these interactions create a positive association with reading and encourage children to engage with books.



A project in partnership with the Akron Art Museum, the Akron Art Library features 91 original works of art. These pieces can be borrowed for up to four weeks, and can be checked out at Main Library and Odom Boulevard, North Hill, and Ellet branches.



GRANTS RECIEVED

\$2,000

City of Akron
Neighborhood Partnership
to support a proposed
StoryWalk® at Hyre Park

\$5,000

Rotary Club of Akron to
support the Youth Author
Spotlight

\$10,000

Burton D. Morgan Foundation
to support StartUp Akron
Pitch Competition



Department of Development

Summit County Department of Development (SCDD) is dedicated to enhancing the overall quality of life in Summit County. ASCPL partners with SCDD to offer lead abatement education, home weatherization assistance, housing rehabilitation, and more.



OhioMeansJobs

OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) is Ohio's free career counseling center that connects job seekers with businesses and provides career services to all Ohioans. ASCPL partners with OMJ career coaches to provide guidance on resumes and job searches, as well as with interview preparation.



Hope & Healing

The Hope and Healing Survivor Resource Center (HHSRC) aims to empower survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking through emergency shelter, crisis services, and enhanced support. ASCPL partners with HHSRC by hosting drop-in hours to connect the public to case managers who provide resources, emotional support, and education.



Summit County Job and Family Services

Summit County Job and Family Services (SCJFS) Case Managers provide guidance with turning in documents, applying and reapplying for assistance, reporting case changes, and answering case or eligibility questions. ASCPL partners with SCJFS to provide on-site office hours at several Library locations, allowing the public to meet one-on-one with case managers.

Sponsored in part by the Akron Rotary Foundation (ARF), the Youth Author Spotlight provides students in Summit County the opportunity to meet a best-selling author and engage with them in a public Q&A. This year's featured author was Ohio native justin a. reynolds. Thanks to generous ARF support, each student who attended this year's event was able to take home an autographed copy of justin's book, "Miles Morales: Shock Waves."



87 Active Members in 2024

SMALL BUSINESS & NON-PROFIT RESOURCE CENTER

ASCPL's Small Business & Nonprofit Resource Center (SBN) provides entrepreneurs, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations with the information, resources, and referrals necessary to reach their goals. SBN membership is free and grants access to custom programming, a free coworking space, and help from our dedicated SBN Librarian.

Summer Reading

Winter Reading

21% over 2023

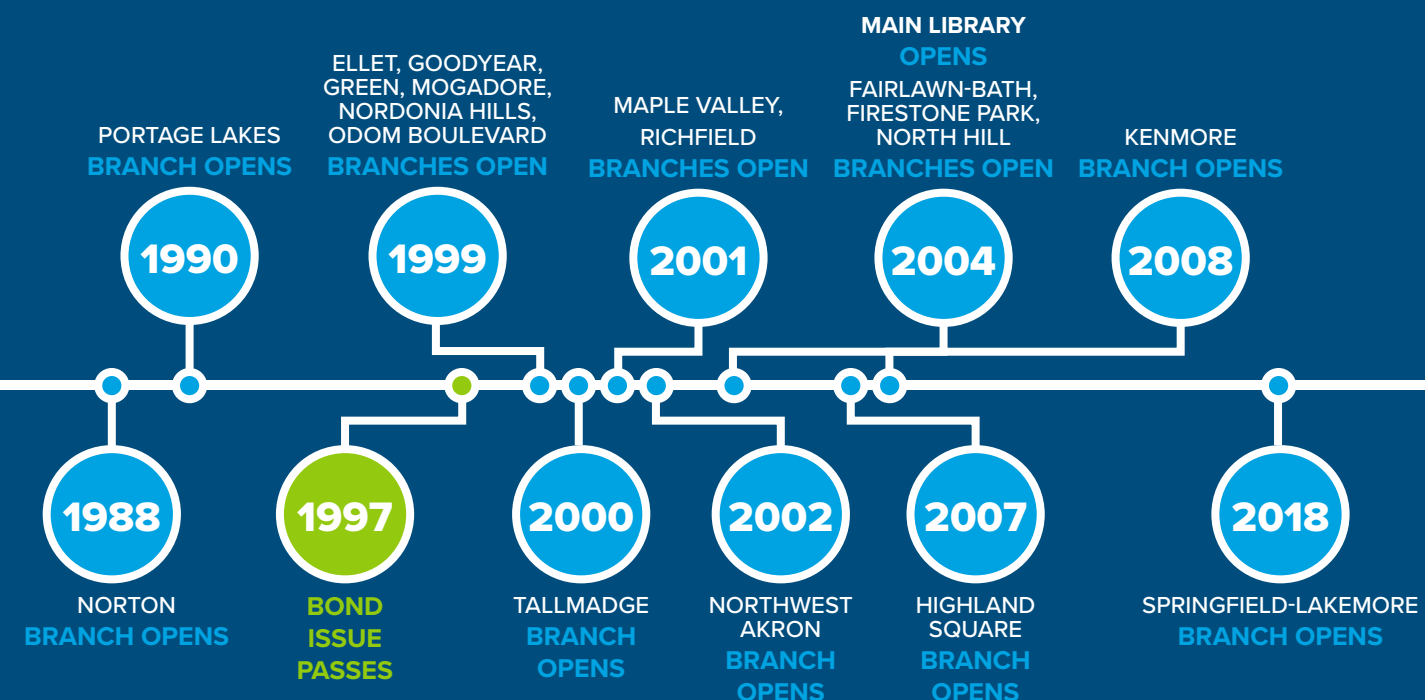
12,400
Participants



71% over 2023

3,767
Participants

ASCPL Locations Timeline



Participant Feedback

“

As an adult without children, I'm used to being overlooked in many summer reading activities. I'm new to the area and just joined the library in mid-June. I was pleasantly surprised that the Akron library did have an adult summer reading program as well.

”

“

Summer reading is a wonderful tradition in my life dating back to the '70s when I would read as an excuse to not have to go tend the garden with my granny. I read so much one summer that my dad made a “no reading at the table rule.” It filled my life with great adventures while living in the country with no other kids my age.

”

“

Our nighttime routine includes reading books and this was the first time hearing about the contest, so it was neat to participate in it. My twins and I snuggled together on the couch under our cozy blankets. They would pick out what books they wanted to read. I hope they will always love books and continue to read before bed, even when they are grown!

”

“

I do the winter reading program with my 2 children as a fun way to bond and to incentivize reading! When we finish the book (we've been reading Harry Potter), we watch the movie & drink hot chocolate from our library mugs! It's creating fond memories and positive attachments to reading.

”

Work That Needs To Be Done



Library facilities are aging, and customers' needs continue to evolve. To meet these needs, ASCPL facilities must be reenergized to enhance usability.

Our comprehensive Space Usage Feasibility Study addresses these needs and contains recommendations that will allow the Library to continue meeting the needs of our community in the 21st century.



Evolving Demands

The needs of our community have evolved with cultural, economic, and technological changes over the last three decades. ASCPL's strategic priorities and services need to keep pace, requiring facility infrastructure updates to support new demands.



Facility Age

Branches have not benefited from any significant capital improvements since they were built. By 2030, most branches will be 22 to 31 years old, with two facilities over 40 years old.



Akron-Summit County Public Library
60 S. High St. Akron, OH 44326
akronlibrary.org



facebook.com/AkronLibrary



instagram.com/AkronLibrary

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
AKRON, OH
PERMIT NO. 157

MAIN LIBRARY

Monday - Thursday: 10 am - 8 pm
Friday: 10 am - 6 pm
Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm
Sunday: 1 pm - 5 pm

Drive-Up Window closes ten minutes early.

BRANCH HOURS

Monday - Thursday: 10 am - 8 pm
Friday: 12 pm - 6 pm
Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm
Sunday: Closed

SPRINGFIELD-LAKEMORE BRANCH

Monday: 12 pm - 8 pm
Tuesday: 10 am - 8 pm
Wednesday: 12 pm - 6 pm
Thursday: 12 pm - 8 pm
Friday: 12 pm - 6 pm
Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm
Sunday: Closed



Donor support of the Library's Endowment Fund at the Akron Community Foundation helps individuals and families in our community access the essential library services, programs, and resources they need to make their lives easier and better. To donate today, scan the QR code or mail your donation to:



Akron Community Foundation
Attn: ASCPL Endowment Fund
345 West Cedar Street
Akron, OH 44307