

Boise Public Library

2023 Report to the Community



Welcoming and
Serving Everyone

Note from the Director

Welcome to the Boise Public Library’s Annual Report to the Community for Fiscal Year 2023

Thank you to everyone who helped make 2023 a great year at the Boise Public Library! Boiseans love their Library and you show it every day. Last year, we welcomed 642,770 people at our five locations, circulated more than 1.29 million books, answered nearly 100,000 requests for information, and saw 116,793 of you attend our 9,040 programs. We were busy and we had so much fun!



This year’s annual report highlights many of the ways the Library serves everyone in our community and provides information, services, and programs that are free and open to all. You’ll learn about our expanded reading programs, strengthened partnerships with local community organizations, and improvements to our locations. You’ll get to meet some of the people who work at the Library, and learn more about how we are achieving our vision of being the place where everyone in Boise goes to grow.

We want to thank everyone who used the Library this year and look forward to engaging with even more of you in 2024!

– Jessica Dorr

Note from the Board President

On behalf of the Library Board of Trustees, I am very pleased to share with you the Boise Public Library’s Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report.

The Board of Trustees provides oversight of the Library, sets policies, and ensures Library resources are well-spent in support of community needs. Last year my fellow trustees and I were heavily involved in the Library’s strategic planning process and we approved the “Strategic Framework for Impact” in our June meeting. Creating the new plan gave us the opportunity to listen to the community, refine the Library’s vision, mission, and values, and set a direction for the Library for the next five years.



Last year the Idaho legislative session featured multiple bills aimed at changing how libraries select and circulate materials. Many of you shared with us your concerns about these bills and your deep appreciation for the Library’s commitment to providing materials which reflect the diverse community we serve. We know how strongly Boiseans support the Library and our values, particularly the freedom to read, seek, and hold different points of view. The Library created an “Advocacy Toolkit” for people to learn about and share important information about the Library’s impact on Boise. Pick up a copy at any of our locations.

It is an honor to serve my fellow Boiseans as a trustee of the Library and I look forward to seeing you at the Library in 2024.

– Nicole Trammel Pantera

KEY STATISTICS FY23



642,770

total visitors to all five locations



1.29 million

physical books circulated in Boise



1.01 million

digital/audio books circulated



99,827

requests for information answered



9,040

total programs



116,793

people attended library programs



3 million+

visits to the library catalog



11,061

new library cards issued



\$1,665,831.90

contributed in economic value to entrepreneurs and businesses in Boise

Boise Public Library is a city department governed by a Board of Trustees which sets strategy and policy for the operations of the Library. The members of the Board are appointed by the mayor and approved by the City Council. Boise Public Library is one of sixteen departments in the City of Boise and is primarily funded by tax dollars through the City of Boise’s General Fund.

Setting a New Path Forward

In their June meeting, the Library Board of Trustees approved a new Strategic Plan. After listening to the community we created, “The Strategic Framework for Impact” to set the direction of the Library for the next five years.

We heard from the community through focus groups, a survey, and discussions in all our locations and community events. We used this input to update our Vision and Mission statements and to refine our Values.

Vision

Boise Public Library is where everyone in Boise goes to grow.

Mission

Our mission is to provide access and opportunity for everyone by connecting people to ideas, information, and community.

Values

- We welcome and serve everyone.
- We provide information, services, and programs that are free and open to all.
- We create respectful, safe, and inspiring spaces for the entire community.
- We uphold the right to privacy and the freedom to read, seek, and hold different points of view.
- We adapt to emerging needs in our community.

We identified four Strategic Priorities which will ensure the Library achieves the impact the community expects.



EXPAND ACCESS:

Making our collections, programs, and services available when, where, and how people want them.



INCREASE IMPACT:

Creating valuable experiences for every resident and meet their needs at every stage of life.



OPTIMIZE RESOURCES:

Modernizing, strengthening, and streamlining our operational capabilities.



MEASURE VALUE:

Establishing impact and performance metrics and use data for decision making.

Expand Access

Strategy for Impact:

Make our collections, programs, and services available when, where, and how people want them.

Our libraries provide learning opportunities for everyone in our diverse and growing community. We know how much the people of Boise value books and materials by and for marginalized groups, people who speak different languages, and immigrants and refugees. Our goal is to make sure everyone in Boise can easily find a book that can entertain, educate, or inspire them.



Adding More Books

Beginning October 1, 2023, we expanded the number of books available to our eager and curious readers by sharing books with public libraries in Emmett, Mountain Home, and Twin Falls. The number of materials that are now available for our card holders to check out is up to 1.2 million! Boise readers are taking full advantage of the expansion; in the first week alone, more than 1,000 books were shared.

Adding More Voices

As Boise’s population grows and changes over the years, so has the number of languages spoken in our community. Members of our community have asked for more materials in a variety of languages, and they are interested in materials written by authors native to that language. To meet these requests, we’ve joined an effort led by the Library of Congress to purchase materials from all over the world. Some examples of the languages we are adding to our shelves include Arabic, Hindi, Persian, Pushto, Somali, Swahili, and Urdu.

Reaching More People

Our Home-based Services team makes regular deliveries to users who are unable to visit the library due to issues such as age, long-term illness, or disability. This year we extended library access to 440 people and visited 30 residential communities monthly. Working with the Dick Eardley Senior Center, we hosted programs such as movie screenings and a trip to the “Americans and the Holocaust” exhibit. With the Ada Community Library and Spring Creek Manor Assisted Living, we offered monthly themed programs, including topics like Barbie, lighthouses, and coffee. The annual “A Place at the Table” program brought kids from all our locations together to create festive placemats for over 400 individuals during the holidays.



Increase Impact

Strategy for Impact:
Create valuable experiences for every resident and meet their needs at every stage of life.

We're here to support Boise residents at every stage of life. We provide diverse collections, engaging programs, and knowledgeable staff to support resident education. We offer essential access to technology, community resources, and organizational support, serving as a central hub for personal and professional development.

The Library partners with a wide range of organizations that provide support to Boiseans. Highlights from some of these partnerships this year include:

Lawyers in the library

The Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program (IVLP) is a program of the Idaho Law Foundation, a nonprofit organization with a mission to increase access to legal services and enhance public understanding of the law. IVLP held monthly “Lawyers in the Library” free legal clinics to provide advice and counsel on civil legal matters.

As it turns out, libraries are ideal for legal clinics. Libraries are a reliable and trusted source of information and resources for many community members. Libraries are often a first point of contact for individuals seeking legal information or to determine if their problem could be resolved with the law.

VITA tax help

The Boise State University Department of Accountancy operates a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program available at our libraries during tax season. As part of the program, IRS certified tax preparers were available to help prepare tax returns during in-person appointments available at our branches.

CATCH and Our Path Home

The Our Path Home Homeless Street Outreach team, housed under CATCH, came to the library once a week to conduct resource pop ups rotating across our branches. Their presence at the Library provided connection to the team as well as an entry point to resources available throughout the community. In the safe, welcoming environment provided by the Library, users were able to complete housing assessments, and Library staff were able to refer users to these events which minimizes the chance of people falling through the cracks.

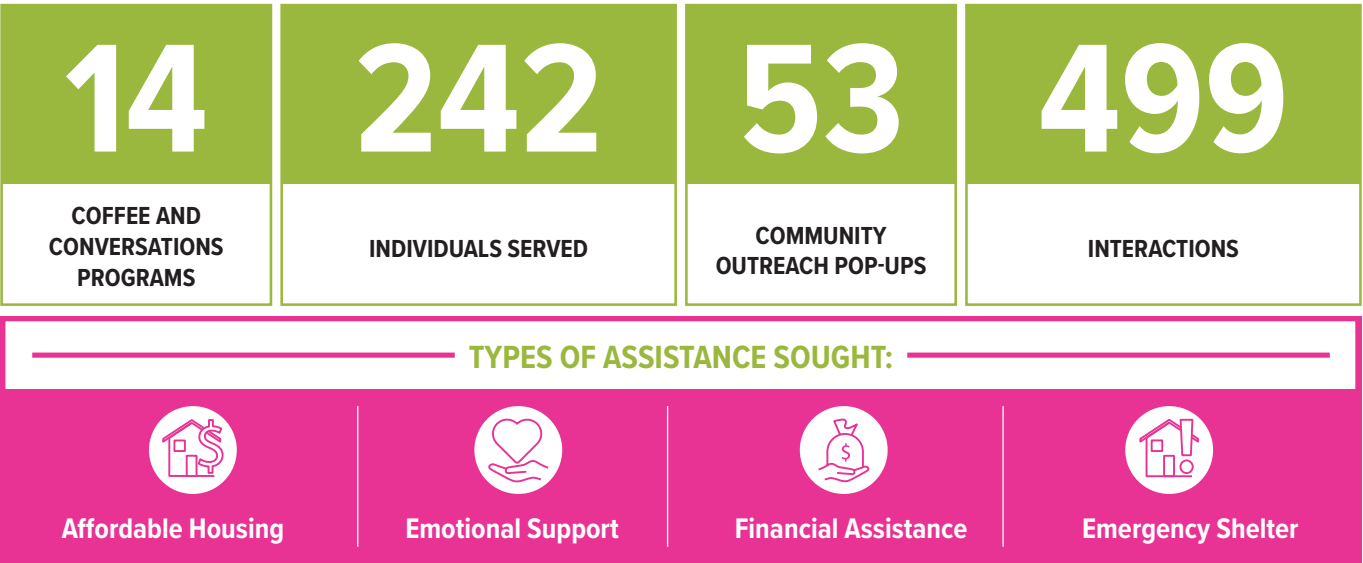
“As a homeless outreach team, we understand the numerous challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness, including limited access to resources, social isolation, and a lack of safe and welcoming spaces, all of which are prioritized by the Boise Public Library.”

-CATCH

Supporting Our Most Vulnerable Residents

Last year the Boise Public Library joined a growing group of public libraries across the country who’ve added a dedicated social worker to the Library staff.

This year Ashley Hammond, our Mental Health Coordinator, helped more than 242 individuals access help in areas such as affordable housing, emergency shelter, financial assistance, and emotional support. She hosted monthly Coffee and Conversations to help connect people to resources and helped plan 53 Community Outreach pop-up events.





Measure Value

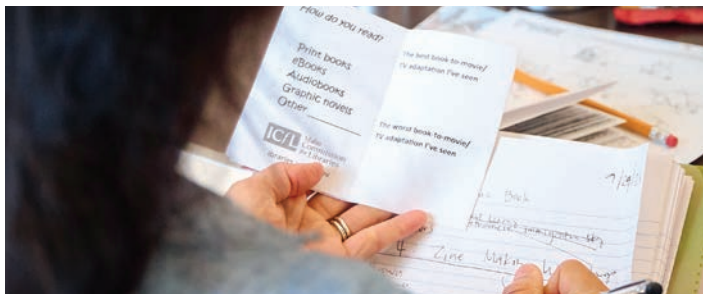
Strategy for Impact

Measure and communicate the impact of the Library on the Boise community.

We are constantly looking for ways to use data and community input to better meet the needs of our growing city.

Supporting local businesses and economic development

Boise Public Library plays a huge role in supporting our local businesses and entrepreneurs. From research services to meeting rooms to technology support, our libraries keep Idaho in business. **According to the Urban Libraries Council’s Business Value Calculator, the value of this support in 2023 was equivalent to \$1,665,831.90.**



Research Services Value
\$1,556,254.00



Physical Space Value
\$48,348.00



Training and Education Value
\$10,800.00



Technology and Equipment
\$50,429.90

Reading Support

We heard during our strategic planning process that Boiseans want the Library to elevate literacy and lifelong learning for everyone in our community. This year we did some great work to get more kids ready to read and to keep readers of every age engaged.

Creating New Readers

We supported families with kids starting kindergarten through two separate programs:

- 1. Kindergarten Registration** - On Kindergarten Registration Day, Library staff from all locations visited nearby schools to hand out materials including books and library card information to 1,022 people.
- 2. Kindergarten Readiness Kits** - Our five locations handed out over 500 Kindergarten Readiness Kits to make sure as many kids as possible could start the first day of school with the supplies they needed to start learning.

Helping Readers Grow

Our Summer Reading program helps kids retain their reading skills during the summer break. The goal is simple: read for 20 minutes a day to earn books and prizes! Without consistent reading and engagement, kids may experience a decline in literacy proficiency over the summer, impacting their academic performance when they return to school. Encouraging reading during the summer helps foster a lifelong love for learning, boosts cognitive skills, and contributes to overall academic success.

We saw an increase in every category for Summer Reading in 2023, including participants, prizes earned, and days read!

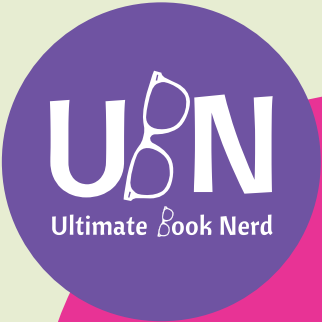
READER PARTICIPATION

| | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | Increase from 2022 |
|----------------------|---------|---------|--------|--------------------|
| Registered | 5,490 | 4,445 | 3,614 | 24% |
| Readers who logged | 3,506 | 2,568 | 2,233 | 37% |
| Prize earned | 2,292 | 1,440 | 961 | 59% |
| 3rd book | 1,228 | 616 | 114 | 99% |
| Total books redeemed | 7,718 | 5,518 | 3,566 | 40% |
| Days read | 189,829 | 127,498 | 77,391 | 49% |

With grant funding from the Idaho Commission for Libraries, we were able to hire two summer interns who helped us with outreach and purchase books and supplies. We were able to provide 57 programs in the summer reaching 2,625 participants.

Supporting Readers of All Ages

Back by popular demand, our Ultimate Book Nerd program challenged participants to read 50 books in 50 different categories over the course of the year. This year 275 people reported completing the challenge earning the title of Ultimate Book Nerd.



Events



Dia de los Niños

We partnered with the Idaho Commission for Libraries, the Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs, the City of Boise, and KISS FM to host the Día de los Niños event in April. “Día”, a celebration of children, families, and reading, has been observed in Mexico since 1925.

- The free-to-attend event featured bilingual storytimes, family literacy fairs, and community programs promoting literacy and cultural understanding.
- Local celebrities read books by Latinx authors, Mayor McLean delivered a proclamation, and food trucks lined Cecil D. Andrus Park.
- Over 20 exhibitors from non-profits, businesses, and libraries provided information and activities.



Summer Reading and Learning Celebration

In preparation for our Summer Reading program, we partnered with the Ada Community Library to organize the 2nd annual Summer Reading & Learning Celebration.

- People visited JUMP during the event, engaging in numerous fun and enriching activities.
- Libraries and organizations gathered to provide activities.



Boise Comic Arts Fest

This year we celebrated the 11th annual Boise Comic Arts Festival (BCAF) made possible through the generous financial support of The Library Foundation, Marathon, and Sparklight. It featured several new programs, thirty guest creators from across the country, and an expanded Teen Mentorship Program and Librarians & Educators Day.



BCAF at the Idaho State Museum

- Free professional development day for librarians and educators, promoting comics as a tool for enhancing curriculum, inspiring creativity, and empowering young readers.
- Panels, workshops with comics and library professionals, creator spotlights, instructions on making comics with kids.



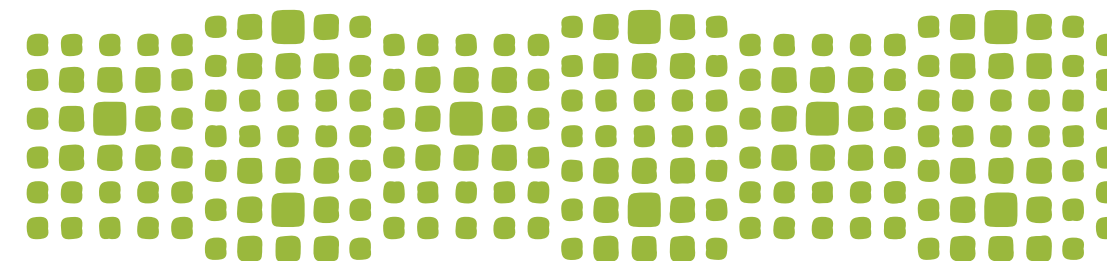
BCAF at Zoo Boise

- Cosplay competitions, presentations, performances, and an outdoor Artists’ Alley with creators, vendors, and exhibitors. Pictured: Strawberry Shortcake creator, Muriel Fahron.



BCAF at the Erma Hayman House

- “Creating and Publishing Comics for Underrepresented Communities” included guest creators Tony Weaver, Jr., Joamette Gil, and Rose Bousamra.



Branch Highlights

Library! at Bown Crossing

Throughout the year, we consistently assessed and managed our collections to ensure easy accessibility for all community members. Our major focus was reorganizing the children’s area, expanding space for readers of children’s graphic novels, and creating a subject/character-based Easy Reader section for emerging readers. We collaborated with various community organizations to develop educational programs, including the Bown Crossing Business Association, Boise Philharmonic, and Friends of Minidoka. This year we made sure all our public programming contributed to the health and wellness of our community. To do this, we collected data that helps us understand how programs can support our physical, social, and economic health. Going forward, we will continue to measure our impact on the community and refine our initiatives as the population we serve continues to grow.

! JONI HANSEN
Branch Manager



Library! at Cole & Ustick

This year we strengthened our connection with the community through outreach to our Learning Lab partners, church groups, Morley Nelson Community Center, and through ICfL’s My First Books program. In response to increased program attendance, we added four new programs for ages 0-5. Our building underwent a major facelift with all new carpet and furniture allowing us to reorganize our collection, increasing access to adult and large print collections, and creating a dedicated space for our youngest users. We also color coded our new furniture and flooring to create passive visual cues to highlight our different collections by age-group. Every day we have seen and heard stories from our users creating connections with other parents, forming new creative writing groups, and getting back into reading and creative hobbies!

RENEE ADDINGTON !
Branch Manager



Downtown Library

Downtown Library’s Youth Services expanded access to ICfL’s My First Books program and STEM outreach for teens. We introduced new programs like a New Baby Support Group for caregivers with babies under 12 months and the Laid-back Craft Club for New Adults (18-25 years old). Our Information Services librarians hosted a variety of programs with community partners including grant writing with the Boise City Department of Arts & History, and health screenings with Central District Health. We strive to reflect the diverse needs of our community. One memorable highlight was our Taylor Swift Night; people shared their gratitude for the free, all-ages event that let them experience the cultural phenomenon across generations.

! HEIDI LEWIS
Branch Manager



Library! at Hillcrest

This year our program attendance more than doubled, from 2022, indicating a growing interest and engagement from our community. We continued to foster existing community partnerships with AARP (taxes), Headstart, CATCH, and others, ensuring their continued success. We also established new partnerships with New Refugees and an Alzheimer’s support group, expanding our reach and impact.

We are thrilled to share that we have made significant improvements to our library’s physical space by installing new floors, furniture, and shelves, creating a more visually appealing and welcoming environment for our library users. These upgrades have not only enhanced the overall aesthetics of the library but also improved the functionality and accessibility of our collection.

HUDA SHALTRY !
Branch Manager



Library! at Collister

We continued our tradition of creating programs and delivering excellent service with artistic flair. From Afternoon Soirees where world travelers shared their stories to Mending Cafes where library users learned to sew, our diverse range of programs and services catered to the wide variety of needs and interests of our community members. We found unique ways to engage with the community like: March Madness: Battle of the Characters; our cardboard tree art installation that served as a base for people to add animals, leaves, and ghosts; our seed library, which continues to be popular year-round; paper chains created by kids during summer reading and displayed around the library; and our free poetry machine! We also took significant steps to elevate the appeal and functionality of our space by implementing beautiful shelving enhancements. These improvements were a testament to our commitment to providing an inviting and efficient environment for our library users.

! JENNIFER VILLALOBOS
Branch Manager



Looking Ahead

2024 is going to be another great year for the Library.

This Spring the Library will debut a new website. Our website is our sixth branch or our “welcome mat.” In fact, some of our most frequent users only visit us virtually and we want to serve them – and all website users – better. With the City of Boise’s Information Technology department and Office of Community Engagement, we are working to build a website that is as user friendly and dynamic as our physical locations.

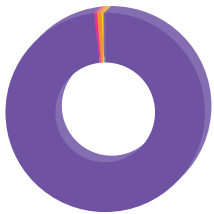
Building on the new Strategic Plan, we are poised to develop a long-term Facilities Plan. The last time the Library created a Facilities Plan was in 2000 when the Library consisted of the downtown library and a small storefront rental at the mall. The time is right to work with the community to create a long-term plan for the entire system. We heard during our Strategic Planning process how much the community wants to engage in the Facilities Plan and how they want it to be a comprehensive look at the whole Library – facilities, technology, staffing, and funding. We look forward to a rich community discussion through this process.

And, always, we will continue to provide books, materials, and programming that reflects our vibrant and diverse community. This is what the people of Boise expect the Library to do and we are proud to serve everyone.

Thank you for being supporters and users of the Boise Public Library!

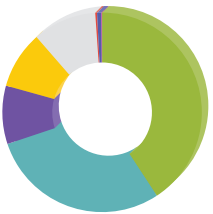


Financials



REVENUE:

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| General Fund | \$15,245,345 |
| Lynx Consortium | \$73,012 |
| Capital Fund | \$0 |
| Donations | \$106,149 |
| Other Revenue | \$40,657 |
| Internal Charges | \$26,436 |
| Departmental Revenue | \$21,833 |
| Fines & Forfeitures | \$5,511 |



EXPENSES:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Personnel | \$7,270,240 |
| Indirect Cost Reimbursement (IRC) | \$5,191,290 |
| Maintenance & Operations | \$1,685,327 |
| Materials (Including Digital) | \$1,656,212 |
| Capital Fund | \$1,837,408 |
| Lynx Consortium | \$52,108 |
| Donations | \$127,644 |
| Other (Transfer Out) | \$15,883 |



Library

Board of Trustees

Nicole Trammel Pantera, President
Rebecca Lemmons, Vice-President
Reshma Kamal, Trustee
Brian Klene, Trustee
Ron Pisaneschi, Trustee

City of Boise

Mayor and Council

Mayor Lauren McLean
Jimmy Hallyburton, Council President
Patrick Bageant, Council President Pro Tem
Luci Willits, Council Member
Latonia Haney Keith, Council Member
Colin Nash, Council Member
Meredith Stead, Council Member

The impact of the Library is made possible by generous donations from the Friends of the Library and the Boise Public Library Foundation. These organizations provide support for our reading programs, BCAF, and staff development.

To learn more about the Boise Public Library, including how to support the Library, please visit our website, www.BoisePublicLibrary.org.

