

Southeast Steuben County Library

# UNBOUNDED

online and in the community

# 2020

*Response & Transformation*



# Southeast Steuben County Library 2020 Report to the Community

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in office 6/1/2021, with term expiration dates

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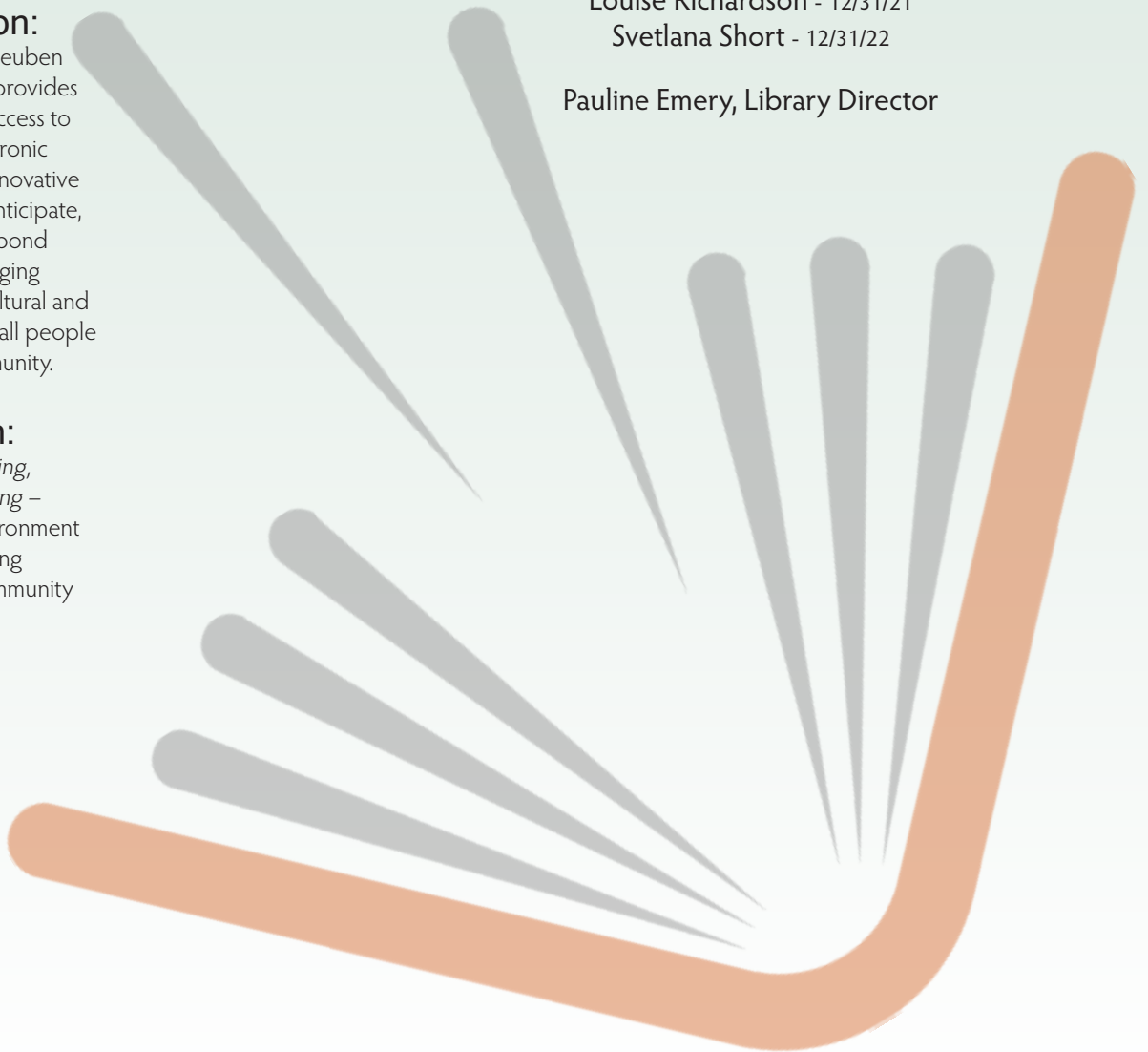
Pauline Emery, Library Director

### Our Mission:

The Southeast Steuben County Library provides free and open access to collections, electronic resources and innovative services which anticipate, support and respond to the ever-changing informational, cultural and leisure needs of all people within our community.

### Our Vision:

*Informing, Inspiring,  
Enriching, Amazing –*  
Creating an environment that fosters lifelong learning and community connections



## *FROM THE DIRECTOR:*

Responding to community needs has always been central to our mission. In 2020, the tumultuous first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, our commitment to that mission was tested like never before. Rising to meet these challenges, we devised new ways of delivering library services and engaging with the public. When I look back on the year, it hits home how much we learned by turning limitations into opportunities and by embracing change. We'd become even more 'UNBOUND' by traditional notions of how libraries operate.

When we were forced to close our doors on March 17, we immediately pivoted to virtual programming, converting children's story times into online experiences and following up with real-time interactive events for all ages. We also doubled down in promoting digital checkouts – ebooks, audio books and magazines – as well as online services including Lynda.com tutorials and Mango Languages. We introduced curbside checkouts, and developed hybrid programs with take-home project materials and online demos in crafts, baking and science.

Gifts from our Annual Appeal helped our staff extend virtual programming to include yoga, book reviews, art projects, STEM programs, an online book club and conversational English sessions for speakers of other languages. Writers groups, blogs and weekly Zoom meetings for library volunteers soon followed.

Library trustees and I knew it was imperative to provide quality air filtration during a pandemic. Fortunately we had already secured New York State funding to replace our old heating and ventilation system. Working with HVAC project manager RDE Engineering, we devised a plan that would minimize interruptions in service due to construction and allow us to reopen and remain open through the summer.

On June 29, we opened "the annex," in a vacant office suite on Denison Parkway, a short walk from the library building, with walk-in services gradually phased-in, including browsing and physical checkouts. During July and part of August, library staff responded to hundreds of reference questions and circulated more than 10,000 books while, following strict protocols for materials quarantine and repeated cleaning of all contact surfaces. In September, with HVAC construction on track, staff began to plan for the move back to 300 Nasser Civic Center Plaza, where we reopened to the public on October 26.

Today, the library truly is UNBOUND – online and in the community, embracing the positive aspects of change in ways that benefit the public. We will continue to offer virtual programming, curbside services, high quality free digital content, database resources and fine-free checkouts. We have supercharged our 24/7 Wi-Fi access points both inside and outside the building and continue to provide in-person programming outside in a variety of locations.

As library trustees and I begin the next round of strategic planning, we look forward to an exciting donor-funded renovation of the Children's Department, a forthcoming Laptop and Hotspot lending program, and other innovative initiatives that will empower people to learn, explore and create. Southeast Steuben County Library looks toward the future unbound and full of hope.

*Sincerely,*

*Library Director Pauline Emery*

# Library 2020 Annual Report

## With NY Paused, visits fell, digital checkouts rose

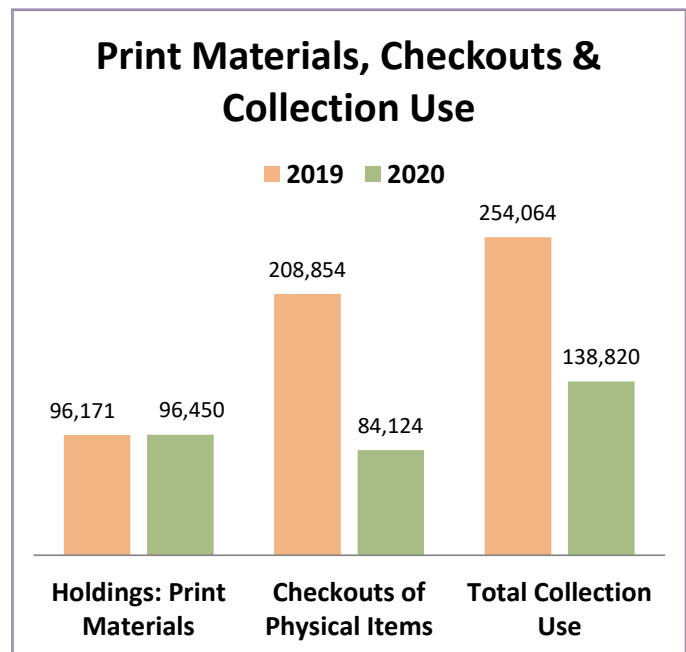
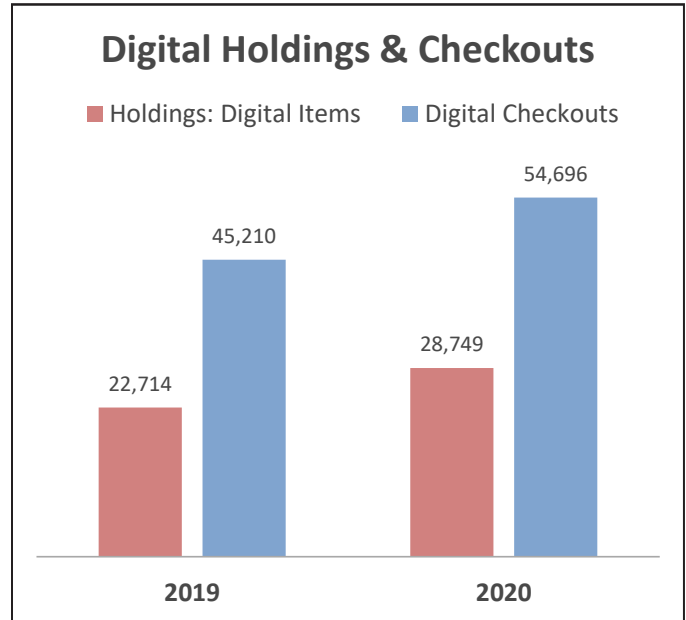
Southeast Steuben County Library closed its doors on March 17, 2020 due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and by order of New York State. Traditional library services including walk-in browsing, physical checkouts, in-house programs, use of the public PCs, in-person reference help, and Periodicals Room access were suspended while New Yorkers sheltered in place. Over the summer and fall, with pandemic-related emergency regulations changing on a near weekly basis, in-person library services were gradually reintroduced.

The prolonged closure and subsequent curtailment of in-person services and open hours was reflected in the library's end of year statistics, with checkouts of physical items dropping precipitously (see bottom chart) and visits to the library falling from 194,114 in 2019 to 45,848 in 2020. The library was open 40 hours per week during NY Forward reopening phases, down from 55 weekly hours normally.

In contrast, use of nontraditional services including digital checkouts of books, audio books and periodicals rose to new highs (see top chart). Anticipating and responding to that likely trend, the library increased its digital holdings by more than 6,000 items early on.

Library programs for children, young adults and adults continued without a break, hosted online and via virtual interactive platforms. Hybrid programs were soon developed, with take-home kits to use while viewing science, baking and children's crafts classes. Writers groups, book clubs and the library's Coffee, Tea and English conversation sessions continued to thrive in new formats.

Despite the pandemic, the Children's Department mounted 866 programs during the year and attracted 23,136 attendees, a remarkable achievement. Reference Department



staff assisted patrons 3,796 times in 2020. Wi-Fi logged 24,516 uses and was available 24/7 outside the building perimeter throughout the year.

Visitors to the library website, [www.ssclibrary.org](http://www.ssclibrary.org), increased from 28,985 in 2019 to 30,170 in 2020.

Southeast  
Steuben  
County

# Library 2020 Annual Report

## Library Milestones from a Year of Change...



ABOVE: Heat pumps are lifted onto the library building roof on August 21, 2020. The HVAC system installed has all new ductwork, MERV 13 filtration and advanced local zone controls.

### HVAC Replacement Complete

In summer through fall of 2020, Southeast Steuben County Library replaced its monstrous old boiler and chiller with an energy-efficient VRF Heat Pump system. During NY PAUSE, while 300 Civic Center Plaza was closed, the library moved to temporary quarters in vacant offices on Denison Parkway. With a materials quarantine and strict pandemic safety protocols in place, the *Annex* opened in June with curbside service by appointment. In-house browsing and other services were added progressively. HVAC replacement was funded in part by New York State's Construction Aid for Libraries Program and with a loan.

### Volunteers, Friends Stand By

Through the long months of lockdown and construction, library volunteers kept in touch via weekly Zoom meetings led by Volunteer Coordinator Maryalice Little. As construction wound down, volunteers came back to help the library reopen; this time in public spaces modified to allow for better social distancing.

Meanwhile, the Friends of the Library Board and the Book Sale Committee searched for ways to mount book sales. The library garage, where Friends sort and store donated books, was off limits to everyone from March through October. We are grateful to the Friends organization for its support of the library, and for its patience during a year with no Friends book sales.



ABOVE: Library Director Pauline Emery talks with a television reporter on June 26 about library services and safety precautions at the library Annex on Denison Parkway. More than 10,000 books were moved there, along with network technology and library supplies.



### Marcia Stewart Retires, then Volunteers!

After many years of service, Circulation Supervisor Marcia Stewart retired in March. (Her retirement was planned long before COVID-19.) She is shown above in 2005 with Lost & Found items. Never idle, except of course to read, Marcia came back as a library volunteer to assist with reopening!

### Homecoming, with a Difference

When the library reopened on October 26, occupancy was limited to 25, with a time limit, and visitors began to trickle in slowly. They were greeted and screened for COVID-19 symptoms and contacts by Library Assistant Darryl Turner and by other staff members. Staff and visitor screening continued through the end of the year. By then, library programs online had become a hit, and at last patrons were free to browse the larger collection.



ABOVE: Screenshots from a Corning Adult Writer's Group session hosted by Adult Services Director Michelle Wells [lower pane] and another from the Cases with Kevin series.

# Library 2020 Annual Report

## *Lifelong Learning by the Numbers ...*

### **Registered Resident Borrowers**

**34,729** = These borrowers live or work within the library's chartered service area.

### **Registered Non-resident Borrowers**

**2,869** = Most non-resident borrowers reside or work within the wider STLS region. Others pay an annual fee for borrowing privileges.

**26,764** = **Total Attendees at Library Programs & Events**

**222** = **Summer Reading Program Sessions in 2020**

**5,738** = **Total Attendance at Summer Reading Events**

**1,354** = **Coffee, Tea & English (ESOL) Participants**  
(English for Speakers of Other Languages)

**3,796** = **Reference Questions & Transactions**  
Does not include public computer usage.

**376** = **Digital Literacy (Tech Coaching) Participants**  
Includes one-on-one and group sessions.

**39,732** = **Overdrive Checkouts by Library Cardholders**  
eBooks - Audiobooks - Videos

**6,129** = **RB Digital Downloads by Library Cardholders**  
Popular Magazines; now part of Overdrive.



*ABOVE: Two of the new energy efficient VRF heat pumps installed on the library building roof in 2020; part of the library's \$1.3 million Green HVAC project. The new system includes MERV 13 filtration and state of the art in-duct UV disinfection. The project was funded in part by the New York State Construction Aid for Libraries Program.*



One-on-one sessions with Southeast Steuben County Library tech coaches have helped hundreds learn how to optimize their use of computers and handheld devices. If you have questions about how to use your eReader, tablet, smart phone or computer, we can help. It's free! Call us at (607) 936-3713 Ext. 502 and ask about Tech Coaching, or email [diglit@stls.org](mailto:diglit@stls.org).

## *Library Objectives in 2021*

- Reach out to collaborative partners and community residents to better understand the changing interests, concerns and aspirations of the people we serve. Work with library trustees to develop a new Strategic Plan that addresses leading concerns and supports identified interests.
- Secure an Institute for Museum and Library Services Cares Act grant to fund a new broadband access program. The Access-to-Go program will circulate 30 laptop and Wi-Fi hotspot bundles to adult cardholders. Secure additional broadband access funding through Southern Tier Library System and the Appalachian Regional Commission.
- Reintroduce suspended in-house services including public computing, reference help, children's and youth services, walk-in browsing and checkouts. The library will continue to follow CDC guidance on best health & safety practices. Programs will be held online or in-person or hybrid as conditions allow.

## Message from our President:

The library board has always held the SSCL staff in high esteem for their level of knowledge, resourcefulness, caring, and kindness. But throughout the challenges of this past year, our esteem for them went up several notches. The staff really outshone themselves - in the midst of a pandemic, and a temporary relocation - by being hyper-focused on providing extraordinary services and programs to our patrons. They knew what needed to happen and they just figured out the how through really smart socially-distanced and online options, always putting the safety, health, and needs of others, and the provision of services to our patrons above all else. The SSCL staff is really the greatest asset of our library. They continue to amaze us and we so appreciate them.

- Barbara A. McLean, President

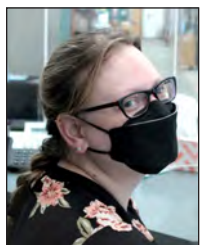
We asked library staff members to tell us about the challenges they faced working during the first year of the pandemic, and about the surprises they encountered and the lessons learned ...

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When the library locked down on March 17, 2020 Children's Department Director Sue McConnell wasn't fazed. Without missing a beat or a scheduled live Storytime, McConnell used her smartphone and a social media account to stream Children's Storytimes from her home.

"The biggest challenge was how to provide programs for kids. Storytimes immediately went to Facebook Live without missing a week. I also recorded storytimes for schools, but first I had to navigate the different permissions book publishers granted to presenters during the pandemic. At first I used my own data and equipment for the Facebook Live streams and recordings."

- Children's Librarian Sue McConnell



"My thoughts were with the educators in our community as I navigated my way through Google Classroom, created a virtual library environment, and Zoomed my way through the days with everyone else. I loved seeing my regular teens in their home environment during our virtual meetings, and seeing the pride and excitement as they showed off

their rooms, pets, and more."

- Youth Services Coordinator Kayla Crane



"It surprised me how quickly everyone was able to adapt to the constant changes and challenges that we faced. We all stuck together and supported each other through these hard times. I am very grateful

to have worked with such amazing people throughout the pandemic, it really made things easier."

- Library Assistant Kelly Wright

"Expanding our library programming capability through online platforms has been the most fascinating and energizing to me - from writers group to poetry programs and potential future speakers. The ability to provide programs while keeping people comfortable and healthy is fantastic."

- Adult Services Director Michelle Wells

Abby Watson created an online weekly science program for young people, Virtual Science Time, for children and young adults.

"I chose to do experiments using very common household supplies so kids and families could do these experiments at home at little to no cost. While conducting each experiment, I explain the science behind everything in a way that kids of different age levels and learning levels can understand."



"The virtual programming we have provided has given younger patrons a way to see our familiar faces regularly from the safety and comfort of their own homes, while we provide them with fun educational activities.

"What surprised me was how resilient we are. As staff, we faced many transitions in 2020 and we handled them all to best of our abilities, learning as we went. At first we made the transition to working fully from home. Then we then adapted to working from the Annex on Denison Parkway while the Library underwent construction, and then we moved back to the regular library location.

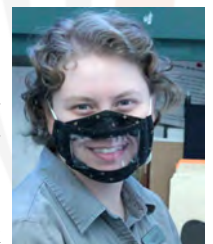
"We have been through countless new rules, regulations, systems, procedures, and guidelines, all while continuing to serve the public. We have been through greeter stations, sanitization checklists, curb-side pickups, virtual programming, ever-changing mask policies, and we are still here going strong."

"Library staff now have more of an appreciation for each other, and our ability to roll with the punches."

- Children's Specialist Abby Watson

"I faced the challenge of starting a new role as Circulation Supervisor. In March, my mentor and then supervisor Marcia Stewart retired. Her retirement was planned, but New York State on Pause was not.

I responded to the challenge by engaging with Circulation Staff virtually and by planning for the move to the temporary location and designing its floor plan. Working with my



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## Challenges, Surprises and Lessons Learned

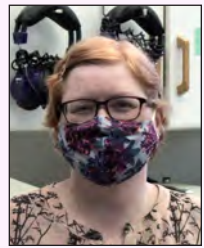
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department and our designated safety officer, I developed safe work plans for curbside service, for the quarantine of materials and for other Circulation services.

"It was especially interesting to me because my college internship had given me skills in arranging library spaces, my leisure time activities prepared me for virtual interactions, and my years of experience with our staff made the job of implementing COVID-19 safety measures much more approachable."

- *Circulation Supervisor Hannah Waschezyn*

"The year 2020 was filled with great turmoil and uncertainty. It started out in the beginning



with an unprecedented global pandemic. It was like nothing that we had ever experienced in our lifetime. I was blown away by the library's resilience and by the way our community pulled together. It was impressive to watch our administrative staff and supervisors go above and beyond with innovative service ideas. They kept the community connected and helped to reinforce with the public that the library would always be a community hub and place of togetherness."

- *Library Assistant Elizabeth Dean*

Library Business Manager Lori Reenan faced challenges during the annual independent financial audit. Getting materials to the auditors while working remotely during lock-down was the main problem.



"I never saw any of the auditors for the entire audit. I sent what I could from home," she said. But not all documents were available. "For what I didn't have, I would come to the library and scan and send to them in a secure folder."

- *Business Manager Lori Reenan*

As the library's public relations coordinator, Marshall Hyde had to be on top of whatever was going on, and *wherever* ...



"When the Library closed last March, the only change to my workday was working from home. If anything, I was busier than ever!

"Staff quickly began producing online programming, and services like free Wi-Fi accessible from outside the building, and there was the move to the annex ... All of that needed to be promoted to the community. I was grateful to have meaningful work, and proud of how everyone at the Library continued to make our programs services available throughout the year"

- *Public Relations Coordinator Marshall Hyde*

"The challenge I found most interesting during the 2020 months of the pandemic, was using the communication technology of today to stay connected to others, even while working outside the walls of the library.



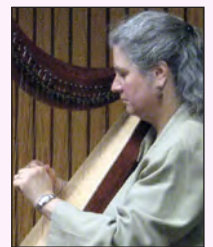
"We have been able to offer access to a variety of materials, programs and services for patrons to enjoy wherever they happen to be at any given time. These offerings include the Adult Book Club I host monthly, Michelle's weekly writers' group and Sue's weekly storytimes. We offer engaging prerecorded programs including Cooking with Abby, and my weekly readers' advisory series, Library Connections.

"The benefits of hosting an interactive book club during the pandemic were enormous. Each month, we discussed the book we read and any other books attendees had read. We had time to catch up with what was going on in attendee's lives. SSCL Adult Book Club via Zoom kept its members connected

with the library and with each other during the pandemic, and that was both a great, and fun thing."

- *Acquisitions Librarian Linda Reimer*

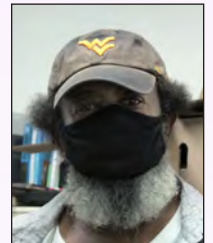
"Learning to navigate technology to host Coffee, Tea & English sessions virtually was a bit of a challenge, especially with a less than optimal internet connection from home. A delightful consequence of virtual programming was that people who had been a part of this group while living in Corning and had since returned to their countries of origin were now able to participate. We continue to have attendees in Poland, Taiwan, and Columbia".



- *Volunteer Coordinator Maryalice Little*

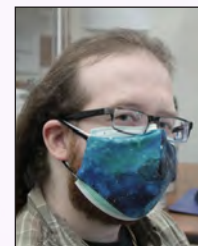
Library Assistant Darryl Turner greeted and screened library visitors during NY Forward reopening phases.

"There were a lot more people who seemed to care than those who don't care," he said, adding that most visitors followed the safety protocols without complaint."



- *Library Assistant Darryl Turner*

"What surprised me most about people in 2020 was our impact on the community, the excited (and albeit delayed) reactions when we re-opened, and the slew of questions we had at the annex. Most importantly, it was the willingness of the community to cooperate and go with the flow!"



- *Reference Assistant Robin Lash*



# Library 2020 Annual Report

## Financials in Brief

In 2020, the library tax levy covered 55 percent of the library's total expenses for the year, including operational and capital expenditures. Grants and donations totaled \$520,680 and covered another 34 percent of expenses. The remaining 11 percent was covered by the endowment and fines & fees. Total expenses were \$1,505,791.

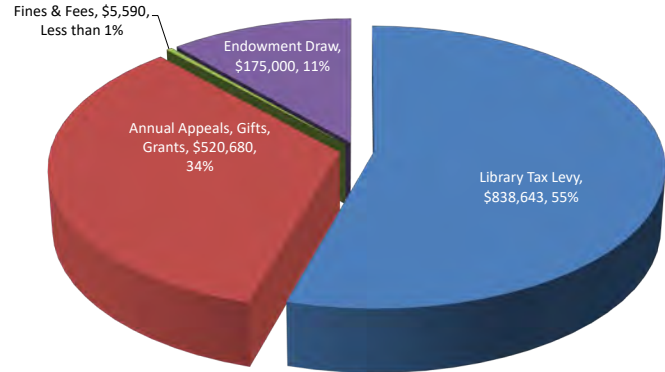
Patron services, library materials, equipment, programming, utilities and other facilities costs made up 86 percent of spending, with only 14 percent of outlays used for administrative and business expenses. Total fund-raising expenses were \$2,654, less than 1 percent of expenses. The library spent \$857,007 on employee compensation and awarded \$3,000 in scholarships to graduating high school seniors. The library spent \$209,027 on circulating materials in 2020.

On the income side, local taxpayers contributed \$838,643 to the total, covering 98 percent of employee salary and compensation expenses. Government grant sources, including New York State Construction Aid and the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program contributed \$377,148. Donations to the library's Annual Appeal totaled \$84,521.

Library fines and fees were a minor income source in 2020, bringing in \$5,590.

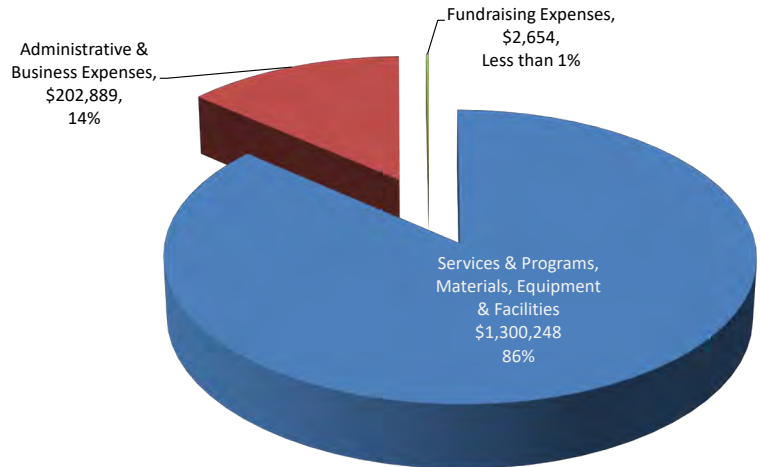
Savings over budgeted expenditures were realized due to the extended building closure and due to reduced in-person program expenses. The library's operational budget ended the year with a net income of \$34,122. These funds were transferred to the Capital Reserve account for future facilities upgrades.

## Operational and Capital Income



Total Income - \$1,539,913

## Operational and Capital Expenses



Total Expenses - \$1,505,791

\*\$34,122 added to Capital Reserve



**CHANGED LANDSCAPE:** Looking south across Nasser Civic Center Plaza, Denison Parkway sports an altered profile with new apartments (left) and a Corning Community College facility (right).

## 2020-21 Annual Fund Drive

### Thank You, Donors

#### Trustee's Circle (\$2,000 and above)

Corning Incorporated Foundation  
Corning Enterprises, Inc.  
Flaws and Weber Family  
Kim Frock and Wendell Weeks  
Charlie and Trudy Craig  
Sarah and Dan Collins  
Barbara B. Cook  
Kate Paterson & Patrick Tepesch\*  
First Heritage Federal Credit Union  
and Mary Ann Thomas

#### Leadership Circle (\$1,000 - \$1,999)

Pronob and Gail Bardhan  
Catherine Caneau  
Rakiba and Dipak Chowdhury\*  
College Center of the Finger Lakes  
Ellen Luce  
Dr. and Ms. David L. Morse  
Ann and Barry Nicholson  
Edmund R. Reif, in memory of Carole Reif  
Margie Lawlor and Mike Scalzone  
Chris and John Sharkey\*  
Richard and Susan Vermillion\*  
Kristine and James West\*

#### Director's Circle (\$500 - \$999)

Mary and Jim Bacalles  
Alethea Bernstein, in memory of  
Keith Vaughan  
Dr. Dana and Andrea Bookbinder  
Janet and Bill Cleary\*  
Edward Andrewlavage and  
Madonna Cornelissen  
Corning Incorporated, Wendell Weeks  
& Senior Leadership, in memory of  
Mary Ughetta  
Alan & Lynn Eusden  
Garrett Piech and Julie Fromer\*  
Nancy Golomb\*  
Robert C. McGregor  
Philip LeBlanc and Barbara A. McLean\*  
Tom Snow and Karen Meriwether  
Mark Riesbeck, in memory of  
Eileen Riesbeck

Gary Swarthout  
Gilbert and Harriet Sweet  
Tony and Mary Tripeny\*  
Derek and Mary Woollatt

#### Community Circle (\$250 - \$499)

Anonymous donors, via United Way  
Robert E. and Leslie C. Bayer  
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John and Margo Brown  
Thomas and Deborah Buechner III  
Edward and Louise Bush  
Marie McKee & Robert Cole  
Vera Dauman  
Pam and Matt Dejneka\*  
Dr. Heather Boek and Paul B. Dohn  
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Marianne Furfure  
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Amy Schwartz and Bill Gudenrath  
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James and Pamela Hunter  
Clinton S. Janes Jr.  
Johnson-Schmidt, Architect, P.C.,  
in honor of Vincent Sementilli  
Evelyn and Edgar Lewis  
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Sue and Charles Milazzo  
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Louise Richardson,  
in memory of Jaqueline Welles  
Kay Rogus  
Eleanore L. Shepson  
John & Bonnie Sirianni  
Steven Smith

Dick and Judy Sphon  
Kristin and Charles Swain  
Beth and Tom Tranter  
Beth Hylen and Brad Turner,  
in memory of Dr. William Plummer  
Pam and Bob Walker  
Diane Legendre and James Webb  
Elizabeth and George Welch Sr.  
Ristiina Wigg

#### Enrichment Circle (\$100 - \$249)

Douglas and Carol Allan  
Hilda Allington  
Karen and Jim Alpha  
David and Mamie Anderson,  
in honor of Marcia Stewart  
Donna and Angus Andrews  
Roger Araujo  
Linda and Bill Baird  
Gail and Elijah Baity  
Margaret Barber  
Betty J. Bennett  
John Benson  
Carmela Bertron  
Rick and Karen Biesanz  
Warren and Rose Blackwell  
David A. Blumer,  
in honor of Barbara Blumer  
Thomas and Barbara Blumer  
Bill and Sue Boland  
Dianne Box and Daniel Box  
Barbara Burmeister  
Amy Castle  
Tim & Judy Coleman  
Edward Cordes  
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas L. Cotton  
Cheri and Ken Crozier\*  
Martin J. Curran and Susan S. Curran  
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Nancy F. Douth  
Loretta E. Drouard  
Eric and Angie Elder\*

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The Southeast Steuben County Library extends thanks to Annual Campaign Co-Chairs Marcia D. Weber and Mary H. Bacalles. We gratefully recognize the individuals and organizations that contributed to our 2020-21 Fund Drive, ending March 31, 2021. More than 280 donors contributed \$84,521 to enhance library resources and programs for everyone.

Donations received after March 31, 2021 will be acknowledged in next year's 2021 Report to the Community. We are grateful for your support!

## 2020-21 Annual Fund Donors

### Enrichment Circle (Continued)

Jennifer Fais  
Linda J. Fields  
Anne and Michael Foster  
Robert and Judy Garrett  
Kathryn Gerwig  
David and Sylvia Ginnan  
Bruce and Judy Graf  
Steven and Bonnie Grinnell & Family  
Ann and David Grossman  
Bill and Mary Hallinan  
Kathryn and William Hanley,  
in memory of Keith Vaughan  
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in memory of William Plummer  
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Bruce and Lynn Peffley  
Connie and Chuck Petro  
Pamela W. Porter\*  
Gunars Reimanis  
Anna K. Rice  
Daniel Ricketts  
Anonymous, in memory of Eileen Riesbeck

Anonymous, in honor of Deb Rittmeyer  
Philip J. Roche  
Jeffrey and Andrea Rubin  
Katherine Hughes and Paul Schelling\*  
Eleanor Sementilli  
Christine Sharkey and Dollars for Doers  
Robert W. Shaw  
Inge H. Smith  
Christine M. Smith  
Harrie and Bev Stevens  
Louise A. Sullivan-Blum  
Pat and Sharon Tamaro  
Paul and Whitney Trifoso\*  
Jim and Jane Trondsen  
William L. Vincent  
Robert G. and Mary Jo Wich  
Ashlee Wilmier  
Virginia Wright  
Michiko Yamaguchi

### Owl's Nest (\$1 - \$99)

Sally and Frank Anastasio  
Robert Avvampato  
Patricia A. Bachman  
Trudie. and Roger Bartholomew  
Richard J. Bauer  
George A. Burnett  
Susan and Jeff Cadel  
Betsy B. Carisetti  
Jadie, Isaac and Sara Case  
Anastasia M. Castilone\*  
Joyce H. Clark  
James Clark  
Linda Clayman  
Corning Museum of Glass,  
in memory of Dr. Bill Plummer  
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